

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Federation of Indian Associations of ACT Inc



Annual General Meeting 27 July 2024

Bristol Clubhouse 16 Georgina Cres, Kaleen ACT 2617

FINACT Annual Report 2023-24

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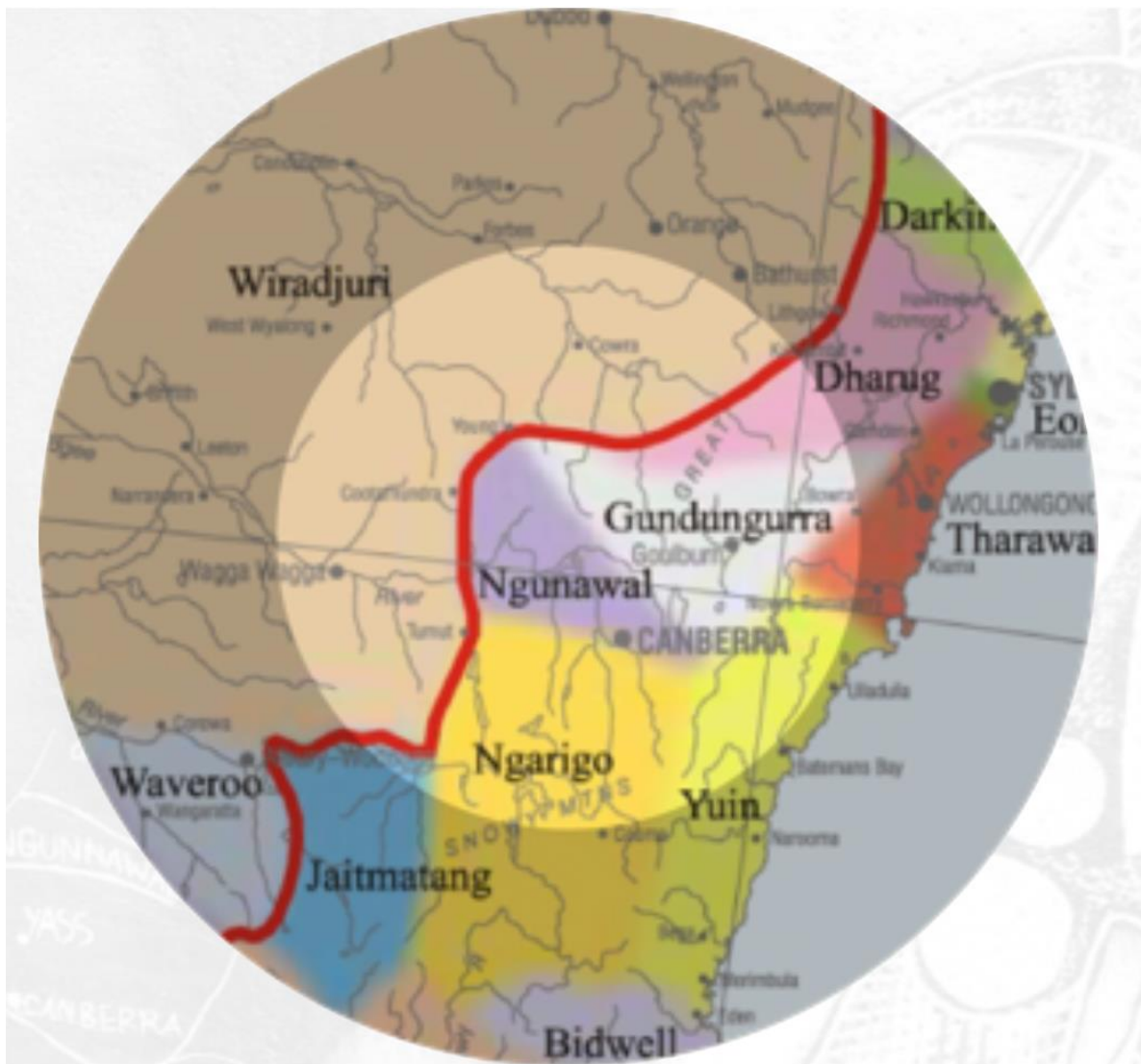
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Acknowledgment of Country

The Federation of Indian Associations of ACT Inc (FINACT) acknowledges the traditional custodians of Canberra and the surrounding regions, the Ngunnawal people. We respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of Canberra and surrounding regions.



President's Message

FINACT is an aspiring organisation, and it has immense potential to continue to serve the community. Since its inception in July 2011, FINACT has grown from a seedling to a strong tree, and it is still growing. Over the last 13 years, the environment and demographics have changed considerably and so have the community issues and needs.

I have been actively involved with FINACT since 2015 and have participated in its evolution and growth in response to the changing times to meet the needs of the Indian Australians and the broader Indian diaspora. I have been instrumental in starting and organising the AusIndia Fair, a FINACT initiative.



Over the last twelve months, leading FINACT has been very rewarding. It had been a very busy time while organising, attending, making submissions and representing FINACT. This work is reflected in the annual report, and I feel very proud of the FINACT Team, Sub committees, volunteers and performers who made it happen. Between us, we have contributed over 18,000 hours to the value of over \$1.05m in economic terms. If we add volunteer hours by member organisations for their community activities, the monetary value goes into millions. This is an example of the generosity exhibited by the community. The value of tangible and non-tangible benefits this generates for the community and broader society is above and beyond any monetary value.

FINACT has taken solid steps through its two social initiatives, Chetna and Sakhi, held two cricket tournaments, consulted with international students, engaged children through painting competition, and after one year hiatus organised Harmony Day and its signature event AusIndia Fair. These events can only be successful with community support, and I greatly appreciate that. I now have a better understanding of some challenges faced by the society and realise that they could be gradually addressed mainly through education and awareness. At the same time, I am very impressed by the talents shown by children, youth, and adults in various events.

While leading FINACT, the team has improved its fiscal status, and a term deposit of \$22,000 has been setup to support operational needs eg., insurance and sundries.

In this time, I have observed that for FINACT to be a constructive influencing force, it must stay strong to withstand pressure (internal and external), maintain its apolitical and secular presence, and continue to be an authentic voice of the Indian Australian community. It must continue to be responsive to community issues and concerns, and proactively engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that community voice is heard, needs are met, and we are part of the decision making.

With changing demographics, the need to address requirements of the community are gaining urgency. We thank the ACT government for starting renovation of the Fitzroy Pavilion at EPIC and for allowing it to be used for community events. We are still

awaiting a multicultural centre with large capacity, and we hope that the government will see the benefit of building it. FINACT must continue to advocate to both the ACT and Federal governments to:

- Build a large multicultural centre and a large function hall to meet community needs
- Develop culturally appropriate aged care facilities and provision of culturally appropriate home support services
- Build a fully functional and resourced hospital in Gungahlin to meet the growing healthcare needs of half a million residents of the ACT and many more of the surrounding regions.

Every leader builds on the foundations laid by the previous leaders. Hence, I pay my respect to community elders whose advice and experience benefitted me and the community. I thank the past Presidents and their teams for positioning FINACT strategically. I thank all the volunteers who helped enrich FINACT over the years with their contributions.

The strength and vitality of FINACT resides in its general council. I want to thank the members for their support, trust, cooperation and engagement. It has been a privilege and a big responsibility to serve FINACT and the communities.

It has been an honour to lead the representative body of a 25,000 strong diaspora and to work with various stakeholders and the communities for the betterment of our society. With contributions and support from FINACT's sponsors, well-wishers and members, FINACT continues to be a strong voice for the people and to responsibly lead the community.

Through the FINACT team, I had the pleasure of working with dedicated individuals and together we have strengthened the position of FINACT as a responsible umbrella body. I thank them for trusting and supporting me.

I have been serving the community for the past 33 years in Australia, and I will continue while I have ability to contribute. But for now, I will pass the FINACT baton, and I am taking with me memories of many achievements and successes, some interesting challenges, and many lasting friendships.

Harjinder S Dhindsa

"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." – **African Proverb**

Summary of FINACT Activities and Achievements in 2023-24

The year 2023-24 had been very busy for FINACT and its member organisations. FINACT organised many events and activities, met with stakeholders, made submissions, supported and attended events organised by members, various community organisations, ACT and federal government departments and the High Commission of India.

In summary, FINACT engaged in the following:

- 2 x T20 community cricket tournaments
- 5 x Sakhi events
- 3 x Chetna events
- 1 x Indian International students' consultation
- National Multicultural Festival
- Harmony Day celebration
- AusIndia Fair
- Submission on federal Multicultural Framework review
- Submission on upgrade of Fitzroy Pavilion for community use
- Submission on the proposed ACT Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill
- 12 x Meetings with stakeholders
- Over 41 x Representation of FINACT at various events
- FINACT Constitution review
- 1 x Newsletter (following newsletters could not be sent due to technical issues)
- 3 x media articles
- Raised issues of community concern: associations' insurance, grants, after hours bus service between Canberra and Sydney airport, multicultural facility and function centre, aged care facility, India centre, and started petition for direct flight between Canberra and Delhi
- Improved fiscal status of FINACT and set up a term deposit
- 3 x General Council Meetings
- 1 x Annual General Meeting
- Raised money to establish a FINACT term deposit to pay for insurance and sundries.

The work of FINACT Executive Committee, Sub-committees and General Council amounts to more than 3000 hours of volunteer input. If we multiply it with the hourly rate of \$100 which a majority members earn, FINACT has contributed \$300,000 towards the community work. Further, 400 volunteers and performers also contributed which totals 15,025 hours and \$715,125. The total in kind contribution only from FINACT conservatively equates to approximately \$1,051,250 of economic activity and valuable community service. In addition, when we further add the hours devoted by the member organisations in their communities, the in-kind contribution by FINACT and its members rises to millions. The value of tangible and non-tangible benefits this generates for the community and broader society is above and beyond any monetary value.

The above figure highlights that the not-for-profit community organisations run by volunteers make immense contribution to the fabric of the Australian society. The governments need to take this contribution when they develop policies about value of multiculturalism and the support they can provide to the community organisations.

Our Profile

The Federation of Indian Associations of ACT Inc (FINACT) was officially launched on 31 July 2011. It is a not-for-profit, apolitical, secular community organisation run by volunteers. It is the peak umbrella body in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) with membership of diverse organisations of Indian origin representing various aspects of the community such as regional, linguistic, youth, women, seniors, sports, culture.

It promotes advancement and integration of the Indian Australians as responsible citizens of the broader Australian society. FINACT promotes strengthening of social cohesiveness, shared values, mutual respect and harmony in the Australian society through increased participation in policy, sports, cultural, social, and recreational activities, in government initiatives, and to improve the well-being of all Australians.

FINACT provides a responsible and responsive channel of communication between the Indian Australian community and the Governments (Federal, the Territory/State and the Indian Government). We value our relationship with the government, and we develop and nurture productive working relationship with key community service organisations and non-government stakeholders in the ACT community. We value our Canberra community, and we continue to endeavour to be responsible and productive members of the community.

FINACT stands for: **F**raternity, **I**nclusiveness, **N**etworking, **A**ssistance, **C**ooperation, and **T**eamwork.

Our Vision

To be the peak umbrella body and work through coordination, cooperation and collaboration for our shared objectives to provide a unified voice for member associations and the people of Indian Origin in Canberra and surrounding regions on matters of relevance, including social, economic, cultural and environmental.

Our Objectives

- Provide a unified front for all its member associations and promote the advancement of people of Indian origin in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and surroundings
- Act as a channel of communication between the Indian community and the Federal, State/Territory and the Indian governments on welfare, social and economic matters
- Promote an awareness about Indians being responsible Australian citizens and to cultivate a feeling of mutual respect through increased social & cultural interaction, sport and recreation
- Advocate on matters of interest to the Indian communities and broader Australian society
- Establish and maintain an “India Centre” – a Community and Resource centre in ACT for use and benefit of member organisations and of the community.
- Endeavour to cultivate mutual respect through increased social and cultural interactions, sports and recreation.

Our members

FINACT welcomes all Indian organisations whose membership includes a majority of persons of Indian origin and whose aims and activities are consistent with those of FINACT to be its member and join hands to achieve shared goals. Currently FINACT has 26 members and information about them is available at 'FINACT Members At A Glance' later in this Annual Report:

1. ACT Telangana Association (ACTTA)
2. Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra
3. Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN)
4. Australian Tamil Cultural Society of ACT (ATCSA)
5. Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand (BJSM)
6. Canberra Hindu Mandir (CHM)
7. Canberra Jain Mandal (CJM)
8. Canberra Malayalee Association (CMA)
9. Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association Inc (CPSCA)
10. Canberra Telugu League (CTL)
11. Gujarati Samaj of ACT
12. India Australia Multicultural Sports Association (IAMSA)
13. Indian Australian Association of Health and Well-being (HAWAII)
14. Indian Senior Citizens (ISC)
15. Indian Students Association (ANU)
16. Integrated Cultures ACT Inc
17. Karnataka Association of Canberra (KAC)
18. Madhya Pradesh Association
19. Mandir School of Music
20. Mehak Punjab Di Radio
21. Navya Andhra Telugu Association (NATA)
22. Pink Umbrella
23. Rajasthani Samaj of Canberra
24. Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra
25. Telugu Association of Canberra (TAC)
26. University of Canberra Indian Association (UCIA)

Team FINACT



FINACT Executive Committee 2023-24

Core Committee

President: Dr Harjinder Dhindsa
Vice President: Mr Roshan Menon
Secretary: Mrs Priyanka Mishra
Treasurer: Mr Vaibhav Mathur



Coordinators

Cultural: Viji Santosh
Community: Mr Venkat Gun Reddy
AusIndia Fair: Mr Tejinder Hunjon
Chetna: Dr Pravati Panigrahi

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Representatives

Women: Prof. (Dr) Dipti Talakaulikar

Seniors: Mr Vijay Puri

Students and Youth (INSA) Mr Mihir Panday

Students and Youth (UCIA) Mr Sanjeevan Suresh

Others

Ex-Officio: Dr Shanti Reddy

Public Officer: Mr Praneeth Gala

FINACT's Financial Health

The FINACT team has worked strategically and conservatively to manage the financials. When we started, the FINACT account balance was \$23,500 plus which included \$10,000 AusIndia Fair grant (to be expended in 2023-24). The financial status on 30 June 2024 was \$30,000 plus. From this, a term deposit of \$22,000 has been created to offset costs for operational needs such as insurance and sundries. For majority of not-for-profit community organisations run by volunteers, having enough finances to meet their operational needs is always a challenge. We are proud of setting up FINACT in a strong financial position.

FINACT Activities 2023-24

Meetings with External Stakeholders

FINACT Meets with the High Commissioner of India

FINACT Executive committee (EC) Met with HE Mr Manpreet Vohra High Commissioner of India (HCI) to Australia, Nr Suneet Mehta Deputy High Commissioner and Mr Narendra Rana Councillor in his office and introduced him the new EC. President also briefed him about the upcoming FINACT activities, events and initiatives. HE appreciated the work FINACT is doing and offered support for future initiatives.

FINACT EC meets with the ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs

FINACT EC met the ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ms Tara Cheyane on 4 October 2023. FINACT team provided the history and origin of FINACT, its activities, and about its member organisations. FINACT EC has raised concerns about Chief Ministers and other Ministers not attending the Community events instead sending the advisors. Also raised the issue of suitable venues for various community events, lack of afterhours bus services to Sydney airport, grant money, National Multicultural Festival and insurance. Minister assured that she will look into these issues.

Prior to the meeting President had a pre-meeting in October 2023 with Assistant Directors of Office of the Multicultural Affairs.

FINACT EC meets with the Shadow ACT Minister for Multicultural affairs

FINACT EC met with the Shadow ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs Mr Peter Cain MLA on 2 August 2023. FINACT team provided the history and origin of FINACT, its activities, and about its member organisations. Also raised the issue of suitable venues for various community events, lack of afterhours bus services to Sydney airport, grant money, National Multicultural Festival and insurance. Shadow Minister assured that he will raise these issues with the Minister.

FINACT EC meets with the Hon David Pocock Senator ACT

FINACT EC met with the Hon David Pocock Senator on 29 Sept 2023. FINACT team provided the history and origin of FINACT, its activities, and about its member organisations. Also raised the issue of suitable venues for various community events and lack of afterhours bus services to Sydney airport. Later President provided a concept diagram of a large-scale multicultural centre to Senator's office.

FINACT EC meets with the new High Commissioner of India

The new High Commissioner (HC) of India to Australia, HE Mr Gopal Baglay took office in January 2024. The FINACT Executive committee (EC) met the HC H.E. Mr. Gopal Baglay along with Deputy High commissioner Mr. Suneet Mehta and

Counsellor Ms. Sweety Agarwal at the High Commission of India office on 23 January 2024. FINACT team provided an update on history, role and activities of FINACT and about its member organisations. FINACT EC officially invited HC and HCI staff as chief guest for the FINACT Australia Day and 75th Indian Republic Day celebration on 26 January 2024. HE expressed special interest to interact with international students, seniors and community leaders of Indian diaspora.

Meeting with Mr Michael Petterson MLA

FINACT President met with Mr Michael Petterson MLA on 4 October 2023 and raised issues about suitable venues, access to grants and lack of after-hours service between Canberra and Sydney airport. FINACT thanks Mr Michael Petterson MLA for following up with Murrays Coaches regarding after hours services between Canberra and Sydney airport.

From 1 May 2024, Murrays Coaches has restored a 1.00am service from Canberra to Sydney airport.

FINACT meeting with EPIC CEO

FINACT president met with EPIC CEO Mr Matthew Elkins and his team on 24 October 2023 after meeting him at Fitzroy Pavilion Consultations on 16 October 2024. FINACT raised the concern about Event spaces, EPIC not entertaining FINACT members and booked Fitzroy Pavilion for AusIndia Fair.

FINACT EC members meetings with other elected representatives

At various times and occasions EC members took the opportunity to raise community issues with Mr David Smith MP, Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA Opposition Leader, Ms Suzzane Orr and Ms Leanne Castley MLA.

FINACT attended Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Canberra Bureau Meet and Greet

President FINACT and some members of the community were invited to attend ABC Canberra Bureau Meet and Greet on 26 June 2024 and raised the issue of balanced reporting.

FINACT Events

FINACT Australia Day celebrations

In partnership with Rotary Club and Fair Canberra, FINACT successfully celebrated Australia Day and 75th Indian Republic Day at Margaret Hendry School Hall in Taylor, on 26 January 2024. The event was graced by many dignitaries including H.E. Mr. Gopal Baglay High Commissioner of India and Ms Sweety Agarwal Counsellor, Hon Andrew Leigh Minister, Hon Shane Rattenbury Attorney General, elected members for Yerrabi – Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Ms Leanne Castley MLA, Mr Andrew Braddock MLA, Mr Peter Cain MLA, Ms Gulia Jones - CEO Pain Australia, Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM - Chair of Fair Canberra, Dr Shanti Reddy - Deputy Chair of the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism, members from FINACT family - Mr Ravi Kris, Mrs Radha Ravi, Mr Vijay Puri, Dr Sunita Dhindsa OAM, other community leaders, and over 500 community members who participated in the event.

Special thanks to the Australian Government and National Australia Day Council for their support through the National Australia Day Council grant. For immigrants, Australia Day is a time to reflect, respect and celebrate on their journey to this country, their integration into Australian society, and their contributions to nation-building. It symbolizes the aspirations, challenges, and fresh starts for millions who come here seeking a safe, inclusive, and prosperous life. Migrants play a crucial role in making Australia a world leader in numerous fields.

The program began with children singing the Australian and Indian national anthems. H.E. Mr. Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India, spoke about the day's significance to both Australia and India. Our dignitaries highlighted the importance of Australia Day, its history, and its relevance to modern Australians.

A highlight of the event was the display of over 50 impressive artworks submitted by children, depicting what Australia Day means to them. Special thanks to Mr Tim Hardy from the Artists Society of Canberra (ASOC) for judging the artworks. The panel had the challenging task of selecting six winners from nearly 50 submissions and winners were awarded with cash prizes.

Mr Sivaram Narayanamoorthy delivered an incredible fusion music performance, combining beatboxing with his didgeridoo. The event also featured Indian and Australian cultural performances and concluded with a mouthwatering BBQ hosted by the Rotary Club Ginninderra and Indian snacks by Indian Pantry, Florey.



3 to 8 years
 1. Jhanavi Indirajith
 2. Akshara Dilipan
 3. Aliza Abraham
 Consolation – Kashi Soni

9 - 12 years
 1. Ishleen Sahn
 2. Anna Joseph
 3. Saanvi Mathur
 Consolation – Adhriti Karadi

National Multicultural Festival 2024

FINACT had an information stall at the National Multicultural Festival (NMF) which was held on 18 Feb 2024. Free henna tattoo, sari draping demonstration and Indian literature books were on display. Henna tattoos done by a professional henna artist attracted many people, mostly youngsters, from various cultural backgrounds and was a huge success, with a room full of people wanting to apply henna on their hands. Sari draping demonstration was a women-focused event and promoted community interaction on cultural diversity and provided a valuable networking opportunity. With many participants from non-Indian backgrounds, the activity offered new cultural experiences and insights into India's traditional attire. A variety of saris from different regions of India were on display for browsing. The demonstration attracted women of all ages, sparking interest among the younger generation in wearing saris and other Indian accessories.

H.E. Mr. Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India and other dignitaries visited the stall. Thanks to the ACT Govt, the High Commission of India and FINACT members for supporting the FINACT stall.



Harmony Day

The Harmony Day celebration was organised by FINACT on 16 March 2024 at EPIC. It was a warm, inclusive and cohesive celebration of harmony, multiculturalism and an opportunity for networking and catching up. The program was graced by many ACT's elected representatives, Acting High Commissioner of India, dignitaries, diplomatic staff, interfaith leaders, distinguished guests, community leaders and members of several communities. A harmony cake was cut to celebrate this event and books on Indian cultures, landscape and religion were given to the guests (kindly donated by the High Commission of India).



FINACT International Students Meet and Greet

FINACT, in association with the High Commission of India, the Indian Student Association of ANU (INSA), and the University of Canberra Indian Association (UCA), organised a meet-and-greet event on 18 March 2024 at the ANU campus to welcome newly arrived Indian students studying in Canberra.

The event was attended by H.E. Mr. Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India, High Commission staff, FINACT President Dr Harjinder Dhindsa, FINACT Executive committee and FINACT community leaders and 100+ students from University of Canberra and Australian National University. High Commissioner and FINACT President shared their student life experiences, personal experiences and life

learnings and advised on the importance for students to stay connected to communities and their roots.

FINACT wishes the students success and looks forward to providing any help to support their studies in Canberra. Thanks to the High Commission of India in Canberra, INSA, UCA and FINACT members for supporting the event.



Community Meet and Greet and Welcome to HE Gopal Baglay

FINACT organised a community meet and greet lunch to welcome the new High Commissioner of India to Australia at Magic Masala Restaurant Belconnen on 2 March 2024. The event was attended by 40 community leaders along with diplomatic staff from the High Commission of India Canberra. Food, venue and ambience was great. On behalf of FINACT members, President welcomed HE Mr Baglay to Canberra.





Farewell to HE Mr Manpreet Vohra High Commissioner of India

FINACT organised dinner to farewell the High Commissioner of India to Australia HE Mr Manpreet Vohra and Mrs Naseem Vohra at Magic Masala Restaurant Belconnen on 2 December 2023. It was a warm, friendly and fun-filled evening. Both food and venue were excellent.

HE Mr Manpreet Vohra also launched the AusIndia Fair 2024 poster.

On behalf of FINACT members and the diaspora, President bid farewell to HE Mr Vohra and Mrs Naseem Vohra and wished them the best in their future endeavours. On behalf of FINACT, President also welcomed Ms Sweety Agarwal Counsellor.



FINACT INITIATIVES

FINACT T20 Community Cricket Tournament 2023

The FINACT's T20 Community Cricket Competition 2023 concluded with a spectacular grand finale that marked the triumphant return of cricketing action after a hiatus of 2-3 years due to the global COVID pandemic. The event brought together four formidable teams – Rising Stars, CTL Lions, Kerala Strikers, and Canberra Masters – in a thrilling showcase of sportsmanship and talent.

The climactic final, held on Saturday 12 August 2023, the Rising Stars emerged victorious, clinching the title in a captivating contest. Congratulation to Rising Stars.

The tournament success was made possible by the collective efforts of numerous individuals, including, Sanjay Sharma, President of the Indian Australian Multicultural Sports Association (IAMSA), and Sudheer Mandure, President Canberra Telgu League (CTL) and Mr Roshan Menon (Vice President FINACT) who played a pivotal role in organising the event.

The closing ceremony was attended by Ms Elizabeth Lee Opposition Leader of ACT, Mrs and Mr James Milligan MLA, Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Dr Shanti Reddy, Mr Vijay Puri JP and Dr Harjinder Dhindsa.



FINACT T20 Community Cricket Tournament 2024

The FINACT's T20 Community Cricket Competition 2024 concluded with a spectacular grand finale. Eight teams: Gujrat Lions, Haryana BJSM XI, CMA Canberra, TAC Stars, CPSCA Canberra, CTL Titans, IAMSA XI and Maratha Worriers participated in the competition.

Semifinals were held between Gujrat Lions vs CMA Canberra and IAMSA XI vs CTL Titans.

The finals were held between CMA Canberra and IAMSA XI. The competition winner was IAMSA XI. Congratulations to both the finalists and big congratulations to the winners IAMSA XI.

Thanks everyone for being part of FINACT T20 Tournament. Special thanks to Mr Sanjay Sharma, Mr Roshan Menon and Mr Sudheer Mandure and other members of Subcommittee for help with this tournament.

The grand final ceremony was attended by Sanjay Ji from the HCI, Mr Kanti Jinna OAM, Mr Vijay Puri, Mr Jacob Vadakeddathu, Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Dr Shanti Reddy, Mr Ravi Kris, Mrs Radha Ravi, Mr Pradeep Sonraj and Dr Harjinder Dhindsa.



The FINACT T20 Subcommittee comprised:

- Mr Sanjay Sharma, Sports Coordinator and member IAMSA
- Mr Sudheer Madnure, member CTL
- Mr Roshan Menon, Vice President FINACT and member CMA
- Mr Praneeth Gala, Public Officer FINACT and member HAWAII
- Mr Vaibhav Mathur, Treasurer FINACT and member RSC
- Dr Harjinder Dhindsa, President FINACT and member CPSCA

AusIndia Fair 2024

The AusIndia Fair (AIF) is FINACT's signature event, and it fosters unity, brings communities together, and celebrates the robust friendship between Australia and India. This year's AIF showcased India's vibrant cultural diversity, highlighted creative artistic talents and provided opportunity for various stall holders to display their goods and services, and sell their merchandise.

Held at Exhibition Park on March 16, 2024, the event was a resounding success, attracting over 2,000 attendees. It featured more than 100 performers from Indian, Chinese, Mauritian and Australian backgrounds, creating a rich multicultural experience. Attendees greatly appreciated the chance for in-person social interactions, which had been limited during the pandemic.

The event received widespread acclaim and congratulations from distinguished guests, including HE Mr Suneet Mehta, Acting High Commissioner of India to Australia; Hon David Pocock, Senator; Hon Shane Rattenbury MLA, ACT Attorney-General; Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Representative for Multicultural Affairs Minister; Ms Rebecca Vassarotti MLA Minister of Environment; Ms Emma Davidson MLA Minister of Veterans and Science; Mr Peter Cain, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs; Mr Nic Manikis PSM, Chair of MARSS; and members of the interfaith forum and many community leaders and community members.

The AusIndia Fair embodies the extraordinary relationship between India and Australia, celebrating the strong bond between the two nations.

Thanks to the ACT government, the High Commission of India and the sponsors for supporting the event.

The AusIndia Fair Subcommittee comprised of:

- Mr Tejinder Hunjon, AusIndia Fair Coordinator and member MPD
- Dr Harjinder Dhindsa, President FINACT and member CPSCA
- Mr Roshan Menon, Vice president FINACT and member CMA
- Mrs Priyanka Mishra, Secretary FINACT and member BJSM
- Mr Vaibhav Mathur, Treasurer FINACT and member RSC
- Mrs Viji Santosh, Cultural Coordinator and member KAC
- Mr Praneeth Gala, Public Office FINACT and member HAWAII
- Dr Shanti Reddy, Past President and Ex-Officio FINACT
- Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Past President FINACT





Chetna, The Power of Perception: A Social Initiative

Chetna is a FINACT initiative to raise awareness about and promote prevention of domestic and family violence in the Indian Australian population in the ACT region. It promotes domestic abuse awareness and culturally inclined early intervention through focusing on relationship dynamics in a family setting which includes all genders.

The Chetna sub-committee’s new team for 2023 created activities focused on an innovative and culturally sensitive family based primary prevention model.

Information on Chetna and resources for domestic abuse in Canberra and the ACT region are available on the FINACT website

<https://finact.net.au/portfolio/chetna-a-power-of-positive-perception/>

One Small Step: The Introductory Session by Chetna

Chetna's first introductory information session took place with participation from both men and women. The event, held on 3rd December 2023 witnessed concern and willingness to create a platform for people to reach out. The feedback and discussion assisted Chetna in constructing future events towards the objective of creating awareness about domestic abuse and its drivers.



Daughter and Dad: Prevention & Awareness Event Series

Chetna's inaugural awareness event, Daughter and Dad, was launched on 2nd June 2024 at Bristol Clubhouse, Kaleen. The event focused on fostering self-reflection and understanding relationship dynamics at home, emphasising their impact on future generations. The awareness activities included customized theatre performances and quizzes, designed to encourage self-reflection.

Held in partnership with Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS) and led by Chetna volunteers, the event saw attendance from many dad-and-daughter pairs, families, frontline community workers, and staff from MARSS and the Domestic Violence Crisis Support services. MCed by a Radio Manpasand Dad and Daughter duo, participants engaged in various sessions, including discussions, quizzes, role play by a Dad and Daughter duo from Perform Australia, relaxation workshop by Art of Living, and a Bollywood workshop. The celebrations included honouring the participants and the sponsors.





Let's Learn Together: Workshop Series by Chetna

Chetna's workshop on positive relationships was held on 23rd June 2024 at Bristol Clubhouse, Kaleen in partnership with Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services. It was a follow up to the Dad and Daughter event to enable in-depth discussion and understanding.

This was achieved through two presentations on domestic and family violence drivers in migrant communities and an Art of Living workshop. This platform allowed for reflection and discussion on real-time community case scenarios and suggestions for productive solutions.



Subcommittee: *Dr Pravati Panigrahi (coordinator), Dr Sunita Dhindsa OAM, Mr Kanti Jinna OAM, Mr Roshan Menon.*

Peer support team: *Mrs Deepti Jeji, Ms Arushi, Mrs Raji Samprati, Mrs Shubra Roy, Dr Harjinder Dhindsa*

Supported by: *Ms Nishma Kanchi Trainer Art of Living, Mr Manish Raj and Ms Nisha Gupta, Radio Manpasand*

Partnership: Mrs Sonia Di Mezza Interim CEO Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services

Media:

https://issuu.com/desi_australia/docs/june_2024

<https://the-riotact.com/this-canberra-cultural-group-adopted-an-innovative-way-to-tackle-domestic-and-family>

For more information, contact Chetna

Email: chetna.finact@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/finact11>

Website link: <https://finact.net.au/portfolio/chetna-a-power-of-positive-perception/>

Sakhi

Sakhi was set up in July 2023 to support women of the Indian community, and over the space of one year, has obtained two community grants and ran five events with the last one held on 21st July 2024.

Events have included those held to celebrate Mothers Day and International Womens Day, as well as mental health month and a workshop on women's safety. These were attended by more than 350 women overall. In collaboration with ICOSA, Sakhi also held a workshop on first responder training for women experiencing domestic and family violence. Sixteen women received training in the first workshop.

It has proven to be a highly successful platform to support women, especially those who are new to Canberra, and has been able to engage members from almost all Indian associations in the ACT.

Since its inception, Sakhi has organised several successful events and training programs, including:

- Mental Health Awareness in October 2023
- DFV First Responders' Training in February 2024
- International Women's Day Celebration in March 2024
- Mother's Day Celebration in May 2024
- Suraksha - Women's Safety in July 2024

Sakhi continues to stand out as a highly successful platform for supporting women, particularly newcomers to Canberra, by engaging members from various organisations across the ACT. This initiative is supported by the FINACT Executive Committee and managed by the Sakhi sub-committee (founding team):

- Dr. Dipti Talaulikar, Women's Representative FINACT and member CGS.
- Mrs. Radha Ravi, Chair AMAN.
- Mrs. Priyanka Mishra, Secretary FINACT and member BJSM.



FINACT Constitution Review Subcommittee

The FINACT constitution is a dynamic guide which has continued to evolve to reflect the changing times and FINACT's activities. To review the constitution as special purpose constitution review subcommittee was formed by the General Council. This special purpose subcommittee was formed by the General Council in the first GCM 2022-23 and was reapproved in first GCM of 2023-24.

The sub committee put in many hours of work to amend the constitution to bring it in line with current FINACT operations and new model rules requirements issued by the ACT government. The amended constitution was circulated to members on 1 July 2024 for consultation and constructive feedback in accordance with the current Constitution guidelines. Constructive feedback provided by some members were incorporated in the amended constitution. The constitution will be presented for adoption at the AGM to be held on 27 July 2024.

On behalf of the Constitution Subcommittee, I thank Dr Sunita Dhindsa OAM, Past President FINACT for reviewing the document and providing constructive feedback.

The members of the subcommittee are:

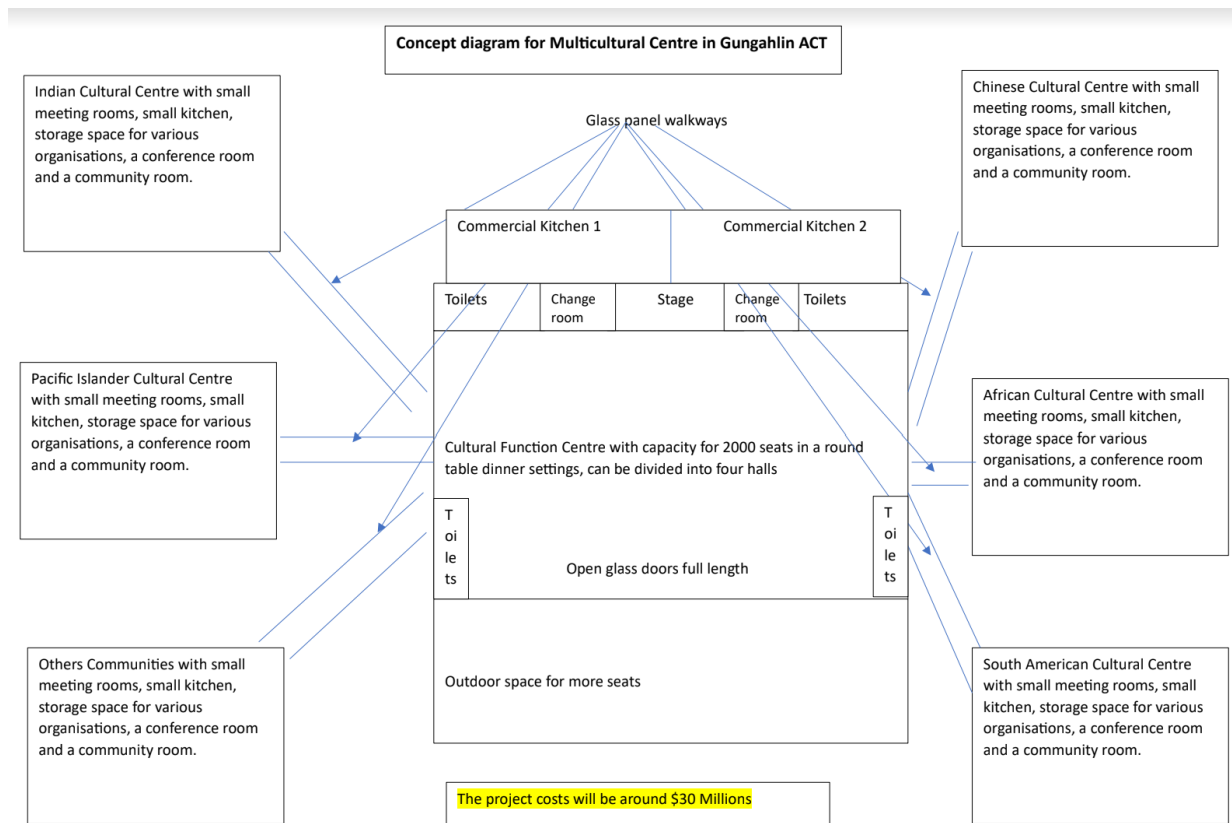
- Dr Harjinder Dhindsa, President FINACT and member CPSCA
- Mr Vijay Puri, Senior's Representative of FINACT and member ISCA
- Dr Shanti Reddy, Past President FINACT
- Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Past President FINACT
- Mr Lakhan Sharma, Member RSA
- Mr Sanjay Panday, Member BJSM

Lobbying for Suitable Venue for Community Use

FINACT has continued to lobby for affordable and accessible venues that can accommodate up to 1000 people and allows for own catering and cultural practices. The communities also need a multicultural centre as the current Theo Notaras Centre is unable to meet the needs of the multicultural communities as they have increased in number and size. In addition to raising the dire need with relevant decision makers, FINACT also raised it in the media through the following article in Riotact.

<https://the-riotact.com/canberras-cultural-groups-left-without-options/736857>

A concept diagram for a multicultural centre was created and provided to Hon Senator David Pocock and Shadow Multicultural Minister Mr Pater Cain MLA.



Participation in Consultations

Federal Multicultural Framework Review

Department of Home Affairs organised a consultation on review of the Multicultural Framework in September 2023. The purpose of the review was to look at ways for government and the community, to work together to support a cohesive multicultural society and to advance a vibrant and prosperous future for all Australians.

FINACT attended the consultation and provided written submission (available on FINACT website www.finact.net.au).

The panel provided their final report in March 2024 to Hon Mr Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration. Minister Giles announced the release of the Review report: '*Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for all*' and government's response which can be found at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/multicultural-framework-review/towards-fairness>

Fitzroy Pavilion Upgrade for Community Use

EPIC management organised an on-the-site consultation on upgrade of the Fitzroy Pavilion at EPIC for community use. Several sessions were held on the day. FINACT attended one of the sessions and provided feedback.

ACT Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill

The FINACT made a submission in response to the consultation on the Voluntary Assisted Dying bill. The ACT *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2024* legislation will come into effect from 03 November 2025. <https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2024-24/>

FINACT Meetings

Annual General Meeting 30 July 2023

FINACT Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday 30 July 2023 at Gungahlin Library. An annual report and financial report were presented, and other businesses were discussed. Mr Nic Manikis PSM was the Returning Officer.

A new Executive Committee was elected for 2023-24:

- President: Dr Harjinder Dhindsa (CPSCA)
- Vice President: Mr Roshan Menon (CMA)
- Secretary: Mrs Priyanka Mishra (BJSM)
- Treasurer: Mr Vaibhav Mathur (RSC)
- Public Officer: Mr Praneeth Galla (HAWAII)

On behalf of the new committee, President Dr Harjinder Dhindsa thanked the outgoing President Dr Shanti Reddy and the team and returning officer Mr Nic Manikis PSM.



First General Council Meeting

Hon Mr David Smith MP hosted the first general council meeting (GCM) in the Australian Parliament House on 16 November 2024. He welcomed FINACT members to the Parliament House. Mr Smith emphasised that if racial discrimination or religious discrimination is experienced by anyone to let him know. He also discussed about the much-needed multicultural facility and advised that there will be some discussion about the funding during the ACT election.





Second General Council Meeting

The second GCM was held on 24 February 2024 at 24 Care, Dundas Circuit Philip ACT. Attendees discussed key activities, achievements of members in the past three months and upcoming events including key priorities for the next quarter. Meeting minutes from the first GCM meeting were tabled. President presented an update and the Treasurer presented the financial report.



Third General Council Meeting

The third General Council Meeting was held on Friday 31 May 2024 at Bristol Clubhouse Kaleen. Attendees discussed past and future activities of FINACT and member organisations. Meeting Minutes from the 2nd GCM were tabled. President presented an update on activities and financial report. Reports from FINACT initiatives e.g. AusIndia Fair, Chetna, Sakhi and Cricket T20 were presented by the coordinators and representatives.



Attendance at Member Associations' Activities

ACT Tamil Cultural Society (ATCS)

ATCS celebrated Deepavali at Taylor. It was a well organised program with traditional food which was delicious. Congratulations to the ATCS, organisers, especially Mrs Matty Pradeep and Mrs Sangeetha Raman and team.



ACT Telangana Association (ACTTA)

ACTTA hosted a fabulous event at the Kambri Theatre, ANU on Saturday night 5 August that was attended by more than 800 community members.

The event was graced by the ACT Chief Minister Hon Andrew Barr. Special highlight of the program was veena performance by Ms Srivani who had come from India to entertain the audience with outstanding melodies. Congratulations to the ACTTA, organisers, especially Mrs Rajitha Konda President and team.



ACTTA celebrated Holi at Black Mountain Peninsula.



Congratulations to ACTTA, the organisers, and in particular Shekar Sarangi and team.

Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN)

AMAN ACT organised the "Story Circles" event, to celebrate both International Women's Day and Harmony Day. Inspiring narratives were shared by extraordinary women from diverse cultural backgrounds. Their tales of courage and resilience resonated deeply with attendees, leaving an indelible mark on their hearts and minds. Ms Elizabeth Kikkert MLA, Mrs Nishi Puri OAM, Ms Yvette Djomani, Mrs Azra Khan, and Ms Anita Gupte graced with their eloquence, each echoing the profound influence of the matriarchs in their lives, like beloved mothers and grandmothers, who sculpted their identities.

Congratulations to the AMAN members, organisers and in particular Mr Ravi Kris and Mrs Radha Ravi.



Canberra Hindu Mandir (CHM)

Taylor community and CHM committee and members celebrated Diwali at Margaret Hendry School Taylor. It was a well organised function. Congratulations to the CHM, organisers, CHM team specially Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM.



Canberra Jain Mandal (CJM)

CJM celebrated Diwali on 18 October 2023 and Mahaveer Jayanti at Florey Temple on 21 April 2024. Canberra Jain Samaj organised a picnic for meet and greet. The events were proudly supported by FINACT. Thanks to CJM, organisers, CJM team and specially Mr Praveen Jain and Mrs Deepali Jain for providing the opportunity to meet members of the Jain community.



Canberra Malayalee Association (CMA)

CMA organised an incredible cultural night where they celebrated art, tradition, and unity with amazing cultural performances and connections. In the last 10 years CMA has taken the cultural night to a new height.

Congratulations CMA, organisers, CMA team and specially Mr Udayakumar Vasu.





Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association (CPSCA)

CPSCA hosted the fourth Canberra Khed Mela (CKM) on 1 Oct 2023 at the Taylor Sportsground Taylor ACT.

The sports activities included kabbadi, soccer, volleyball, athletics, tug of war and some fun games. CPSCA also organised a free concert by popular Punjabi singers. The CKM had multiple stalls including food, traditional clothing, footwear and jewellery, and promotional stalls by sponsors. Jumping castle, henna and other free fun activities were provided for attendees.

The event was covered by local and international media. The High Commissioner of India, diplomatic staff, many local dignitaries, elected representatives and community leaders attended the event. Punjabi Community from all over Australia and local Canberrans participated in the CKM. It had a footfall of over 5000 attendees.



CPSCA organised annual planting event of native plants at Guru Ka Baag at John Knight Park Belconnen to celebrate Guru Nanak's birth anniversary. So far CPSCA has planted more than 1000 plants at the Guru Ka Baag site.



Congratulations CPSCA, organisers, CPSCA team, especially Mr Jatinder Majithia, Mr Iqbal Deol, Mr Bhupinder Singh, Mr Rajiv Khullar and Dr Harjinder Dhindsa.

Canberra Telugu League (CTL)

CTL has organised its end of 2023 - 24 season prize distribution function on 25 May 2024 at Albert Hall. It was a wonderful event recognizing the talent in the community. Congratulations to Telugu Mates CC from winning Major Cup Premiership Award. Congratulations to CTL, organisers, CTL team, especially Mr Sudheer Madnure.



Indian Australian Multicultural Sports Association (IAMSA)

FINACT congratulates IAMSA on receiving the national award of 'Association of the Year' by Cricket Australia and its President Mr Sanjay Sharma for receiving the national award for 'Inclusion and Diversity Initiatives' and being nominated as a 'Multicultural Ambassador' by Cricket Australia.

IAMSA celebrated these achievements on 10 June 2024 at Bristol Clubhouse Kaleen.



Pink Stump Cricket Tournament was organised by IAMSAs to support McGrath foundation on 13 April 2024. It was attended by the High Commission of India HE Mr Gopal Baglay.



Congratulations to IAMSAs, the organisers, the IAMSAs team and especially Mr Sanjay Sharma and Mrs Jasmine Sharma.

Karnataka Association of Canberra (KAC)

KAC celebrated Deepavali and Karnataka Rajyotsava at Canberra College.



KAC also organised a cultural night showcasing Karnataka's culture and food.



Congratulations to KAC on very well organised events, organisers, KAC team, and especially Dr Roopa Rao and Mrs Viji Santosh.

Navya Andhra Telugu Association (NATA)

NATA celebrated the Yug-Adi (New Year) celebration which was attended by the High Commissioners of India and Mauritius, Senator David Pocock, ACT Ministers, Shadow Ministers, ACT current and aspirant MLAs and community leaders. FINACT President Dr Harjinder Dhindsa took the opportunity to raise the need of Multicultural Centre during his speech.

Congratulations to Mr Venkat Gunreddy FINACT Community Coordinator for well-deserved recognition by NATA.

Congratulations to NATA for wonderful events, organisers, NATA team and especially Mrs Sahithi Paturi.



Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra (RMMC)

RMMC organised an excellent program at the Hindu Temple Florey. Congratulations to the RMMC, organisers, especially Mr Yogesh Mulye and team.



Telugu Association of Canberra (TAC)

TAC organised Ugadi Celebrations at Harrison School Harrison. The function was attended by HE Gopal Baglay Ji, Mr Suneet Mehta DHC, Mr Michael Petterson MLA, Mr Peter Cain MLA, Mr Leanne Castley MLA, Mr Garry Humphrey ex CM, Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Dr Harjinder Dhindsa, Dr Sunita Dhindsa OAM, Mr Jacob Vadakeddathu, Mr Yusaf Mansuri, Mr Harini Rangajaran, Dr Shanti Reddy, Mr Kammy Singh, Mr Ravi Kris, Mrs Radha Ravi, Mr Prasad Tiperneni, and many other Community leaders. It was a well organised event.

Congratulations to TAC, organisers, TAC team and especially Mr Srisatya Prasad.



Other Activities

High Commission of India

FINACT and its members participated in the flag hoisting ceremony on 77th Independence Day (15 August 2023) at the High Commission of India Canberra. The High Commissioner HE Mr Manpreet Vohra hoisted the tricolour, followed by reading of the address to the nation of the Hon. President of India.

On this occasion, Indian diaspora members from different corners of India shared stories of growing up years in India and presented beautiful performances in Indian regional languages.

HC also administered Panch Pran Pledge holding maati/diya in hand. A Shilaphalakam, dedicated to the spirit of sacrifice of veers was also erected. High Commissioner paid his respects laying wreath, followed by others.

A digital exhibition in remembrance of horrors of partition was also put on display for the public.

FINACT members also attended Reception on 16 August 2023 hosted by the High Commission of India.



High Commission of India celebrated Gandhi Jayanti at Glebe Park on 2 October 2023. Tributes were paid to Mahatma Gandhi and some community members recited poems.



Members of FINACT Executive and member organisations participated in India's Republic Day (26 January 2024) celebrations at the High Commission of India. FINACT supported the High Commission with cultural events.

To mark the holy month of Ramadan, the High Commission of India organised Iftar Dinner on 7 April 2024 at the Abbey Nicholls, attended by diplomatic corps and members of the Indian Diaspora.



The High Commission of India supported by Bengali Association and FINACT celebrated the 163rd Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on 8 May 2024 at the Theo Notaras Centre. The program was attended by HE Gopal Baglay High Commissioner Of India, Mr Suneet Mehta Deputy High Commissioner, Ms Sweety Agarwal Counsellor, Ms Tehleel Dilawar Moon Councillor Bangladesh, community leaders and members from India and Bangladesh. Dignitaries spoke about the life and contribution of Gurudev to society and nature. Poems of Gurudev was recited by kids and adults. Prizes were given to winners and participants of drawing competition.



FINACT Executive and some members attended an interaction meeting organised by the High Commission of India, at India House on 15 June 2024 to discuss community matters. HE Mr Gopal Baglay addressed the members.

Canberra Ayyappa Samajam

Canberra Ayyappa Samajam organised the festival of Onam on 2 September 2023 in Canberra. The hard work of the participants and organisers was well showcased throughout the event.

FINACT was privileged to participate in this event and was represented by the Vice President Mr Roshan Menon and Secretary Mrs Priyanka Mishra.



Canberra Ayyappa Samajam celebrated Vishu festival in 14 April 2024. It was celebrated with traditional and contemporary cultural performances followed by sandhya (traditional food on banana leaf).



Congratulations to the Canberra Ayyappa Samajam, organisers, team and especially Mr Roshan Menon.

Bengali Cultural Association (BCA)

BCA organised Durga Pooja on 20 October 2023. It was wonderful to meet the community.

Congratulations to BCA, organisers, BCA team especially Mrs Shubra Roy.



Hindu Council of Australia (HCA) Events

The HCA, in association with the Hindu Council of Australia ACT Chapter, and the office of Governor-General of Australia organised Deepavali at the Government House in Canberra. It was attended by the High Commissioners of India and Fiji, and their Excellencies the Governor-General the Hon David Hurley and Mrs Linda Hurley at a morning tea event and served as inauguration of the Deepavali Festival in Australia. Several community leaders from Canberra, Sydney and other places attended the event.

Hindu Council also celebrated Diwali at the Parliament House on 17 October 2023.

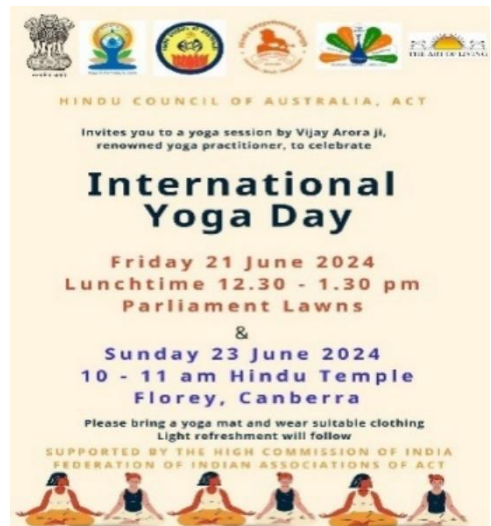


Hindu Council of Australia (ACT chapter) organised an event to honour Mr Kiran Chukkapalli at the Hindu Temple, Florey. We appreciated that Mr Kiran Chukkapalli, a young person is making a big difference in the lives of people in need. He is the founder of many camps for refugees in India and was touring Australia to create awareness about them. On behalf of FINACT, Dr Harjinder Dhindsa wished him success in his community work.



The ACT Chapter also organised yoga workshops on 22 June on the lawns of the Parliament House and on 23 June 2024 at the Hindu temple Florey to celebrate the International Yoga Day.

Congratulations to the HCA and the ACT chapter, the organisers, team and especially Mr Prakash Mehta, Mr Kanti Jinna OAM, Dr Shanti Reddy, Mr Santosh Gupta and Mr Lakhan Sharma.



Diwali Celebrations by the ACT Chief Minister

The ACT Chief Minister Hon Mr Andrew Barr MLA hosted a Diwali Reception in Canberra. Many officials, community leaders and diplomats from several countries graced the event. The initiative is reflection of inclusion, acceptance and celebration of diversity.

Congratulations to the Office of the CM for organising wonderful Diwali function. It is appreciated by the community.



BAPS Grand Annakut

Grand Annakut was organised by BAPS at Ngunnawal Primary School. It was a very well organised event.

BAPS also organised “Timeless Wisdom from the Hindu Scriptures” Conference 2023 at Swaminarayan Mandir Canberra on the opening of the *BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir and Community Centre, Taylor ACT.

The main message given was to learn from the Shastras. Knowledge brings light in every one’s life by removing ignorance. Learning from Saints improves the learning experience.



Congratulations to BAPS community, organisers and volunteers. Thanks to Mr Parag Shah, Mr Sitesh Bhojani, Mrs Chhaya Bhojani and Mrs Harshita Kakkad.

Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services (MARSS)

MARSS celebrated 50 years of multiculturalism in Australia and 40th anniversary of Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services of Australia at Hellenic Club of Canberra. BHANGRA by Knights of Bhangra was one of the best performances of the evening sponsored by the CPSCA.



MARSS also organised its Christmas dinner at the Hellenic Club Woden. Met with the MARSS board and discussed issue related to multicultural communities and need for a multicultural centre.



Congratulations to MARSS, organisers, team and especially Mr Nic Manikis PSM and Mrs Sonia Di Mezza interim CEO.

Refugee Week

Hon. Andrew Giles MP, the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, and Multicultural Affairs, hosted an event to celebrate Refugee Week at the National Museum. HE

David Hurley Governor General of Australia and Mrs Linda Hurley were chief guests. Event was attended by UNHCR delegates, Members of Parliament, community leaders, staff from the department of Home Affairs and family members of eight refugees who undertook oath of citizenship.



National Day of Mauritius

The High Commission of Mauritius celebrated National Day and 54 years of bilateral relations with Australia at the Diplomatic Club Yarralumla. H.E. Mrs. Marie Claire J. Montyats, High Commissioner of Mauritius spoke about relationship with Australia and welcomed diplomatic community, politicians, community leaders & members of Mauritius community who attended the event. High Commissioner of India HE Mr Gopal Baglay was also present. It was a fun filled evening. Thanks to the High Commission of Mauritius for the invitation.



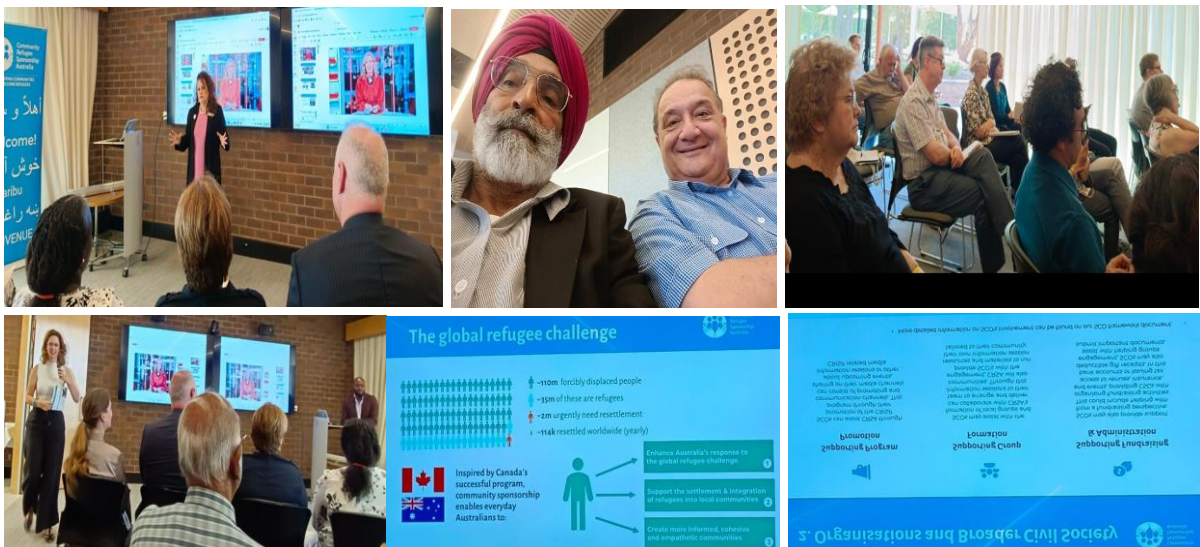
National Community Language School Day - ACT

National Community Language School Day - ACT was celebrated on 11 May 2024 at Albert Hall by the ACT Community Language Schools Association. Many Indian language schools were present. It was great to see performance from various communities including, Bangla Language and Cultural School, Malayalam Vidhya Vedhi, Canberra Tamil School, Canberra Tamil School, Canberra Punjabi School, and Chennai Tamil. Telgubadi, Punjabi and Tamil schools put their stall too. Thanks to Dr Fuxin LI President ACT Community Language School Association for involving FINACT.



Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP)

CRISP organised an information session on settling refugees with the help of communities, and shared success stories. For further information please check the following link. <https://refugeesponsorship.org.au/what-we-do/crisp/>



Interfaith Harmony Day

Interfaith Forum celebrated Harmony Day at the Bahai Temple Weston Creek. Congratulations to the forum, the organisers, and especially Amardeep Singh



FINACT Sponsors

Without sponsors it is difficult to organise events. We sincerely thank our sponsors who supported FINACT in multiple ways to organise community events. Please support our sponsors so they can support us and the community!

- The High Commission of India
- Australian Government through National Australia Day Council
- The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government
- Canberra Institute of Education and Technology
- HSBC Bank
- Bison Glass
- Aussie Home Loan Gungahlin
- Capital Green Energy
- Punjab Homes
- A One Decor
- Sunny Homes
- Impact Properties – Raj Sahu
- Indian Pantry
- Magic Masala
- Bristol Clubhouse
- Molonglo Constructions
- Associated Accounting Services
- Pink Umbrella
- Dosa Hut
- The Canberra Multicultural Artists Associations Inc
- Desi Bazar



Venkat Kantipudi



FINACT Member Associations At a glance

Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN)

AMAN promotes and fosters better connections among multicultural community including youth, women and seniors.

AMAN aims to achieve this by: providing opportunities to connect, develop and maintain interest-based activities;

developing and promoting friendships with other multicultural groups within the community; promoting art, education and cultural of the multicultural community; and where possible, providing opportunities to learn from each other in a fun environment



Contact details

- Contact person – Mrs Radha Ravi
- Email - president.amanact@gmail.com
- Facebook - [facebook.com/AmanActCanberra](https://www.facebook.com/AmanActCanberra)
- website - www.amanact.org.au(under construction)

ACTTelangana Association (ACTTA)

ACTTA is a not-for-profit association of like-minded Australians of Indian origin from the Telangana State, South India. Objectives of the ACTTA are:



- To provide a platform for Telangana people to promote the rich cultural diversity and traditions of Telangana.
- Celebrate Telangana festivals with fellow citizens.
- To strengthen collaboration between the two countries.
- ACTTA also aims to strengthen community harmony by engaging with the broader ACT community.

Contact Details

- Contact Persons – Mr Shekar Sarangi, President
- Email : members@actta.org.au
- Website: <http://www.actta.org.au/>

Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra

The Association works to cater to the needs of the Anglo-Indian Community in Canberra.

Contact Details

- Contact Person - Joe Bailey, President
- Email: joe.bailey@bigpond.com

Australian Tamil Cultural Society (ATCS)

ATCS provides cultural and social functions and helps Tamils and people from India to settle in Australia. Organises debates and educates people in relation to Tamil literature. Classes

teaching Tamil for children. Participate in the Multicultural programme at the ACT.



Bring together the Tamil Community. Teach Cultural activities such as Dancing, Singing etc to our community people. Running the Chennai Tamil School to teach Tamil Language to our community. Organize tours etc. Organise cultural programmes. Bring together our community people and mix with the Australian Society.

Contact Details

- President– Mrs Shridevi Ember Gopinath,
- Email: atcs.act@gmail.com
- Website: <http://www.atcs.org.au/>

Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand (BJSM)

With 'Connecting people abroad' as our objective and acknowledging 'संघे शक्ति कलियुगे' (unity is strength in this age), we organise family get together, celebrate festivals, assist new migrants, share information and cooperate with other community groups across Australia and New Zealand. The association has been organising three Milans (get together) in Canberra uninterrupted for since 2006 - Holi Milan, Sharad Milan, and Diwali Milan on the last Sunday of March, July and October respectively.



Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Sanjay Pandey
- Website: <https://www.bjsm.org/>
- FaceBook - @BiharJharkhand
- Twitter - @BJSMAusNZ

Canberra Hindu Mandir Incorporated (CHM)

The aim of CHM is to provide a platform based on Agama Sastra (traditional temple architecture) in meeting the religious and spiritual needs of those who seek God realisation through His various manifestations, in accordance with traditional Hinduism following the doctrine of Sanatana Dharma.



Some of the key Activities of CHM –

- Monthly meets, important festival celebrations including Ram Navami, Guru Poornima Dussehra and Diwali.
- Fundraising events donations to communities at work blood donations Cedric classes and music other activities incidental to the functioning of the temple.
- Activities include fund raising at multicultural festival celebrations of Guru poornima, world curry festival, procured statues from India for the temple in June 2016 and celebrated the anniversary of the statues' reception day.

Contact Details

- Chairperson – Mr Prasad Gutta
- Website – www.hindumandir.org.au
- Email: info@hindumandir.org.au
- Facebook - @canberrahindumandir

Canberra Jain Mandal (CJM)

CJM is the representative association of the Jain community in Canberra. The aim of the organisation is to promote the principles of Jainism and keep the community members associated with these principles. We aim to achieve it by organising recognised Jain religious events, such as Mahaveer Jayanti, Diwali etc. and social gatherings to discuss the principles of Jainism and its relevance in the present world.



Contact Details

- President – Mr Praveen Jain,
- Email: president.cjm@gmail.com, secretary.cjm@gmail.com

Canberra Malayalee Association (CMA)

The CMA celebrates festivals and organises cultural programs relating to Keralite/Malayalee culture. CMA organises four get-togethers during the year: for Onam, Christmas, Cultural Nite and Malayalee barbecue. Sports activities include cricket (Canberra Malayalee Cricket Club), soccer, basketball, and badminton.



Contact Details

- President : Mr Udayakumar Vasu
- Email: coordinators@canberramalayalee.org
- Facebook: @CBRMalayalees
- Website: <http://canberramalayalee.org/>

Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association (CPSCA)

CPSCA promotes Punjabi culture through literature, music, dance, food, traditional knowledge and sports; provides guidance and support to community; and advocates for community issues. CPSCA participates in the ACT multicultural activities and promotes interaction with community groups and broader Australian society, shares information and supports social cohesiveness, and integration.



Contact Details

- President: Mr Jatinder Majithia
- Email: info@cpsca.org.au
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cpsca2014/>
- Website: <https://cpsca.org.au/>

Canberra Telugu League (CTL)

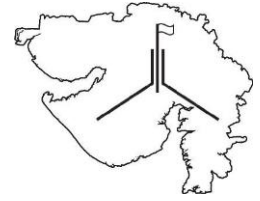
CTL has been formed in 2019, following the ICC Cricket World Cup format, with 10 Telugu teams currently participating in the annual competition.

Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Sudheer Mandure
- Facebook: @ Canberra Telugu League

Gujarati Samaj of ACT (GSA)

GSA organises many Gujarati cultural events and programs in Canberra. It has organised various events such as Navaratri celebrations, Gujarati movie screenings, kite flying festivals, etc. GSA also provides ongoing support to new migrants for settlement in Canberra.



Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Jay Patel
- Email: volunteers@gujaratisamajcanberra.com
- Facebook: @Gujarati Samaj of Canberra

India Australia Multicultural Sports Association (IAMSA)

IAMSA is a vibrant organisation committed to promoting sports and fostering multicultural harmony within the community. Established to unite individuals from diverse backgrounds, IAMSA organises various sporting events and activities that encourage participation and engagement among Indian Australians and other cultural groups. The association aims to build strong community ties, enhance social integration, and promote a healthy lifestyle through sports. IAMSA recently won awards from both the ACT Cricket Association and the National Cricket Association, presented by Cricket ACT and Cricket Australia, recognising its significant contributions. With a commitment to inclusivity and unity, IAMSA plays a pivotal role in celebrating cultural diversity and fostering mutual respect through the power of sports.



Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Sanjay Sharma
- Email: sanjay231sharma@yahoo.com
- Web - <https://iamsacanberra.com.au/>

Indian Australian Association of Health and Well-being (HAWAAI)

HAWAAI was formed with the aim of fulfilling what its name denotes namely the Health and Well-being of the Indian diaspora in Australia. The organisation was formed after noting the need for Health and Well-being initiatives to be organised with the increase in the number of Indian origin people in the ACT and considering the need for awareness to be increased. HAWAAI organises programs such as Yoga, Spiritual discourses, health advisory through qualified health professionals and partnering with several organisations in organising events to promoted good health and well-being.

Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr ChittiBabu Divi
- Email: divi.haritha@gmail.com

Indian Senior Citizens' Association (ISCA)

Recognising the cultural differences and demands, ISCA was formed in Canberra (ACT) to cater for the social,



welfare and cultural needs of aged persons of Indian cultural background. The Association has the following objectives

- To facilitate the provision of welfare and social services for aged persons
- To act as spokesperson on behalf of aged persons
- To organise cultural and recreational activities for our seniors.

Contact Details

- President – Mr Vijay Puri
- Email: vijaypuri63@hotmail.com
- Website: <http://indianseniors.org/>

Indian Students' Association - ANU (InSA)

InSA is a nodal association for the Indian students pursuing their studies at the Australian National University (ANU). With about 300 members registered with the Association, it is affiliated to the clubs and societies of the ANU Students Association (ANUSA) and the ANU Postgraduate and Research Students Association (PARSA). The association's key objective is to ensure the common welfare of its members and the student community in general at the ANU. InSA acts as a platform for its members to network with each other as well as other students in the ANU through various social and community building events.

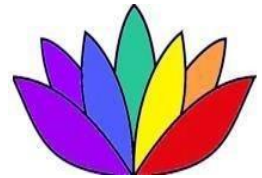


Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Mihir Pandey
- Email – weareinsa@gmail.com
- Facebook - @ Indian Students' Association-ANU

Integrated Cultures ACT

Integrated Cultures ACT Inc. aims to bring different cultures into an interaction that allows them to adjust their personal norms to accommodate others' norms and, in the process, deal effectively with the tensions of cross-cultural interaction and develop a harmony that allows for better understanding, inter-mixing of races and cultures. It allows for expressions of that harmony to occur through the medium of the arts, social engagements, exchange of ideas on issues of common concern and, through a variety of interactions between and amongst the different people that compose Australia.



Contact Details

- President – Mr Arvind Gupta
- Email - iwomensnetwork@gmail.com
- Website: <http://www.integratedcultures.org/>

Karnataka Association of Canberra Inc (KAC)

KAC is a non-profit organisation primarily aimed at networking for Kannadigas in Australian Capital Territory. KAC was founded in 2004, after Kannada speaking community leaders of the time envisioned a bright future for the Kannadigas of Canberra. By November 2010 KAC was a registered association, where office-bearers were elected. The organisation hosts numerous festival events, ceremonies, and excursion throughout the year. KAC has



history of celebrating these events with pomp and glamour and dedicated to members of KAC.

Contact Details

- President – Dr Roopa Rao
- Email - kac_committee@yahoo.com
- Website: <https://www.kannadaincanberra.com/>

Madhya Pradesh Association of Australia (MPAA)

MPAA is a vibrant and dynamic organisation dedicated to fostering connections between the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh and Australia. This unique association serves as a cultural bridge, bringing together people of Madhya Pradesh origin living in Australia and promoting the rich heritage, traditions, and opportunities of both regions.

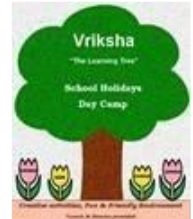
Founded with the vision of creating a strong community network, MPAA has quickly become a cornerstone for individuals and families from Madhya Pradesh who have made Australia their home. The association recognises the importance of maintaining cultural roots while embracing the diverse Australian society, and strives to create a harmonious balance between these two worlds.

Contact Details

- President – Mr Vijay Dubey
- Email – vicdubey@gmail.com

Mandir School of Music

The school operates in Canberra to enable the members of the Indian community to pursue their passion for Carnatic music. The school offers shastriya sangetham classes to students of all age groups as well as shloka classes to children. The school provides an opportunity to the local Indian community to continue to connect and keep alive our rich Indian culture. The students have access to a structured classical music curriculum and children sit through exams starting with basic to advanced levels. Mandir School of Music conducts annual stage concerts and actively participates at the local events e.g. multicultural festival, Diwali mela. Vriksha is a group of professionals with branches of education, culture, music and mathematical learning for your kids.



Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mrs Ragini Santhanam
- Email - raginis@iinet.net.au
- Website: <http://vriksha.org/>

Mehak Punjab Di Radio

Mehak Punjab Di Radio aims to engage community from the Indian subcontinent through the Punjabi language, catering to all tastes and interests, while promoting Punjabi language, literature, and culture, from both sides

of the border. The program provides local and subcontinental news, sports news and weather updates, including information on current activities in the ACT and the region. Also featuring Punjabi music, both old and contemporary. Mehak Punjab Di Radio broadcasts every Saturday from 8am to 9am.



Contact Details

- Contact Person– Mr Amardeep Singh
- Email - mehakpunjabdiradio@gmail.com
- Website: <https://www.cmsradio.org.au/programs/punjabi-program/>
- Facebook: @ Mehak Punjab Di Radio

Navya Andhra Telugu Association (NATA)

Representing Andhra Pradesh in Australia NATA was formed in 2014 after Andhra Pradesh evolved as new state with an old name. Our motivation is to support everyone associated with Andhra Pradesh in every possible way. We put our best efforts to integrate culture from our homeland with Australian culture. We strive to help community and other local communities to understand different lifestyles associated and develop harmony within. NATA on its part contribute to help local communities in various aspects. NATA conducts Yoga seminars to promote healthy lifestyle. NATA conducts IT Seminar every year where successful subject matter experts from various domains run a workshop with information of emerging technologies & associated career opportunities. NATA takes every opportunity to organise cultural & spiritual events.



Contact Details

- President– Mrs Sahithi Paturi
- Email - president@nata.org.au
- Website: <http://content.nata.org.au/>
- Facebook: @ Navya Andhra Telugu Association-Canberra (NATA)

Oriya Association (OriOz)

OriOz is a collective of residents of Australia who originate from or have connections to the state of Odisha in India. The vision is to sustain an Odia Community in Australia that is engaged, vibrant and inclusive. We work to build an active, engaged, and inclusive Odia community in Australia. We maintain a community platform so that members can support each other for social and emotional wellbeing. We provide a community infrastructure and facilitate existing and newly arrived Odias to be active members of the local community and the Odia community of Australia.



Contact Details

- Contact: Dr Nalini Pati
- Email: oriozcommunity@gmail.com
- Website: <https://www.orioz.org.au/>
- Facebook: @ORIOZCommunity

Pink Umbrella Inc

The Pink Umbrella Inc is a registered public charity established in 2014. It works for the immigrant communities for their physical and social health, awareness of mental health stigma, social issues like domestic abuse prevention, and empowerment of youth and women.



Pink Umbrella International
Educate The Educated

Contact Details

- Contact Person - Dr Pravati Panigrahi
- Email: pinkumbrella01@gmail.com
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pinkumbrella/>

Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand (RSANZ)

RSANZ is a group of individuals who originate from the State of Rajasthan and work together to promote the Rajasthani Culture in Australia and New Zealand.



Contact Details

- Contact Person – Mr Lakhan Sharma
- Email: lsharma.act@gmail.com
- Facebook: @rajsthansabha

Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra (RMMC)

RMMC caters to the needs of the local Marathi community of Canberra as a non-profit and a non-political organisation. RMMC aims to:



- Promote Marathi culture e.g. literature, music, dance, drama, and community activities in general.
- Promote mutual understanding and goodwill between the people of Marathi origin, the Indian sub-continent, and other communities in Australia with interest in Marathi culture.
- Provide and promote social and cultural contact among its members and the broader Australian community in general.

Contact Details

- President– Mr Yogesh Mulye,
- Email: rmmc.can@gmail.com
- Facebook: @Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra
- Website: <https://canberramarathi.org/>

Telugu Association of Canberra (TAC)

TAC is a cultural and non-profit organisation representing the Telugu speaking people. We promote language, culture, music, dance and drama and our rich heritage among the Telugu and non-Telugu speaking people. It works to reinforce and refine our outreach efforts by bringing people and traditions together and being there for each other in the hour of need.



Contact Details

- President – Mr Sree Prasad
- Email: teluguassociationcanberra@gmail.com
- Website: <https://tacanberra.org/>
- Facebook: @TACanberra

UC Indian Association (UCIA)

UCIA is a non-profit organisation aimed at facilitating a space of sharing for the students of the University of Canberra away from their homes. The association is aimed to support the Indian students currently studying at University of Canberra through various social and cultural events.



Contact Details

- President – Mr Sanjeevan Suresh
- Email: uc.indianassociation@gmail.com
- Facebook: @UCIndiAssoc

Acknowledgements

FINACT sincerely thanks the following for their help, ongoing support and encouragement with FINACT events and activities and community matters:

Elected Representatives

Federal

- Hon David Pocock, Senator
- Mr David Smith MP

ACT Legislative Assembly

- Hon Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Chief Minister ACT
- Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, Leader of Greens; Attorney General ACT
- Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Ex Minister for Multicultural Affairs ACT
- Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA, Leader of the Opposition ACT
- Ms Suzanne Orr MLA Government Whip
- Ms Elizabeth Kikkert MLA
- Mr Michael Petterson MLA
- Ms Leanne Castley MLA
- Mr James Milligan MLA
- Mr Peter Cain MLA
- Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Government Delegates

- HE Mr Gopal Baglay, High Commissioner of India Canberra
- HE Mr Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India Canberra
- Mr Suneet Mehta, Deputy High Commissioner of India Canberra
- Mr Narendra Rana Councillor, High Commission of India Canberra
- Ms Sweety Agarwal Councillor High Commission of India Canberra
- Mrs Ruchika Jain, First Assistant Secretary High Commission of India Canberra
- Ms Naheed Hafiz, Community Engagement Officer Department of Home Affairs
- Ms Jackie Torry and Ms Nichole Lee Assistant Directors Office for Multicultural Affairs.

Individuals from FINACT Family

- Mr Sanjay Pandey for supporting with the social media, website and newsletters
- Dr Sunita Dhindsa OAM and Mr Vijay Puri for helping with the review of the FINACT constitution
- Mr Parneeth Gala for photography at events.

FINACT Past Presidents

- Dr Shanti Reddy (2021-23)
- Dr Sunita S Dhindsa OAM (2019-21)
- Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM (2017-19)

- Mr Amardeep Singh (2015-17)
- Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM (2014-15)
- Mr Amardeep Singh (2013-2014)
- Mrs Jayanti Gupta (2012-13)
- Mr Jacob Vadakkedathu (2011-12)

Volunteers

Special thanks to all the volunteers who helped during FINACT events.

For Australia Day

Dr Shanti Reddy, Dr Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Mr Vishwajeeth, Ms Brinda, Mr Murli Krishna, Mrs Tes Manuel, Mr Pradeep Sonraj, Mr Tim from Rotary Club Ginninderra.

For AusIndia Fair

Mr Sandeep Singh, Mr Iqbal Deol, Mr Jatinder Majithia, Mr Bhupinder Handa, Mr Aman Mahal, Ms Amritha Bangera, Ms Shilpa Ajay, Mrs Tes Manuel

For FINACT Financial Report

Special thanks to Jane Zhou, qualified accountant, for providing voluntary service in auditing the FINACT financial reports both this year and last financial year.

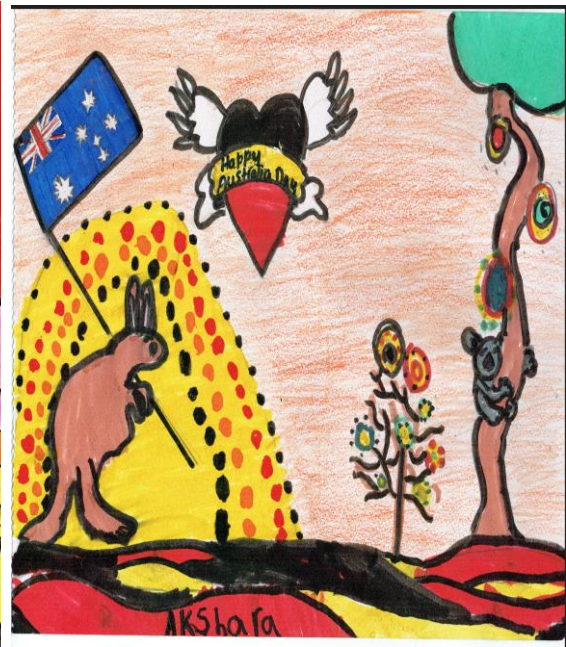
Australia Day Drawing Competition Winners

Age 3 to 8 years

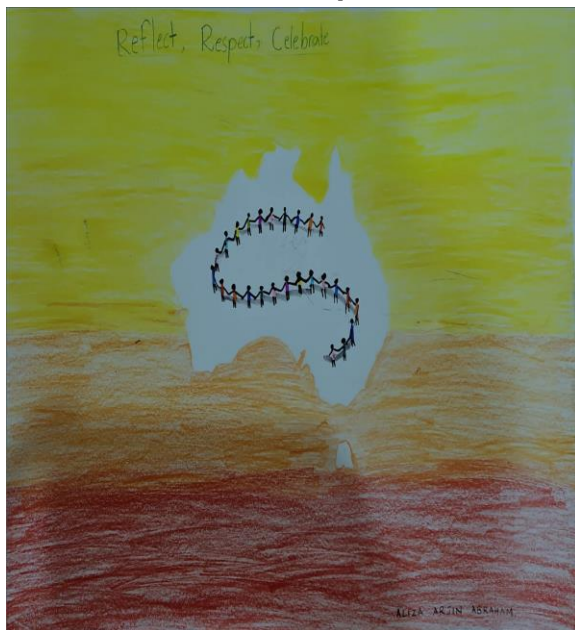
Jhanvi Indirajith - first prize



Akshara Dilipan - second prize



Aliza Abraham - third prize



Kashi Soni - consolation prize

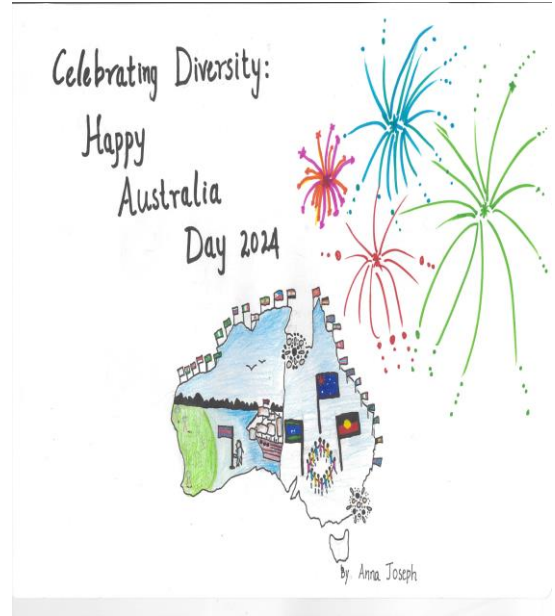


Age 9 to 12 years

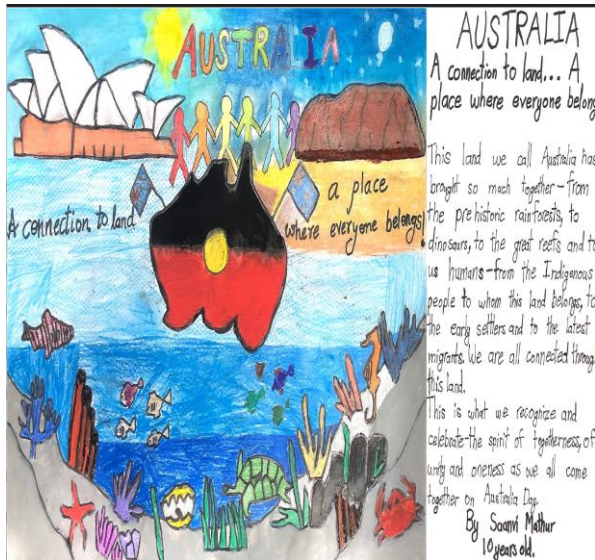
Ishleen Sahni first prize



Anna Joseph second prize



Saani Mathur - third prize



Ashriti Karadi - consolation prize



Thanks

FINACT thanks all its sponsors, supporters, volunteers, partners and members for their support during 2023-24 and looking forward for the same in future.

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Federation of Indian Associations of ACT Inc

A year of Accomplishments



REPORTED BY ACT
FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF ACT (FINACT)
PROUDLY PRESENTS

AUSindia FAIR 2024

SATURDAY 16TH MARCH
10:00AM - 6:00PM
FITZROY PAVILION
EXHIBITION PARK, MITCHELL ACT

LIVE PERFORMANCES, CULTURAL PROGRAMS,
ROVING ARTISTS, MAGIC SHOW, JUGGLING SHOW,
HUPAHOP AND MUCH MORE.

FREE ENTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
TEJINDER HUNJON 0484 003 944 - HARJINDER DHINDSA 0490 082 930



FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF ACT (FINACT)

IAMSA XI vs CMA Canberra
Match Start at 10:00pm

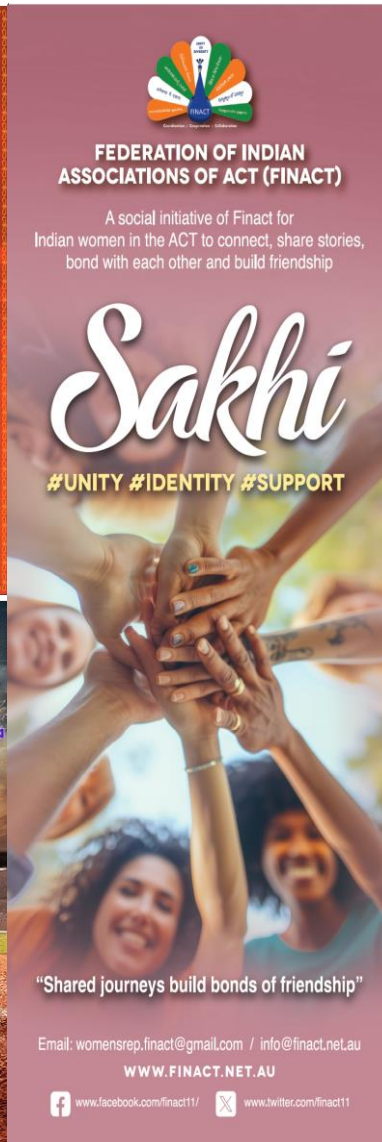
FINACT T20 COMMUNITY CRICKET TOURNAMENT

Prize Distribution
Sunday 26 May 2024
Timing - 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
TAYLOR SPORTS Grounds (Trevor Gibson Way, Taylor, ACT 2913)

PROUD SPONSORS:
PUNJAB FINANCE, CAPITAL GREEN FINANCE, A ONE DOOR, SPECTRA STORE

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
DR HARJINDER DHINDSA 0490 082 930 MR. ROHMAN MEHON 0400 101 825 MR. SANJAY SHARMA 0420 559 139

WWW.FINACT.NET.AU



FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF ACT (FINACT)

A social initiative of Finact for Indian women in the ACT to connect, share stories, bond with each other and build friendship

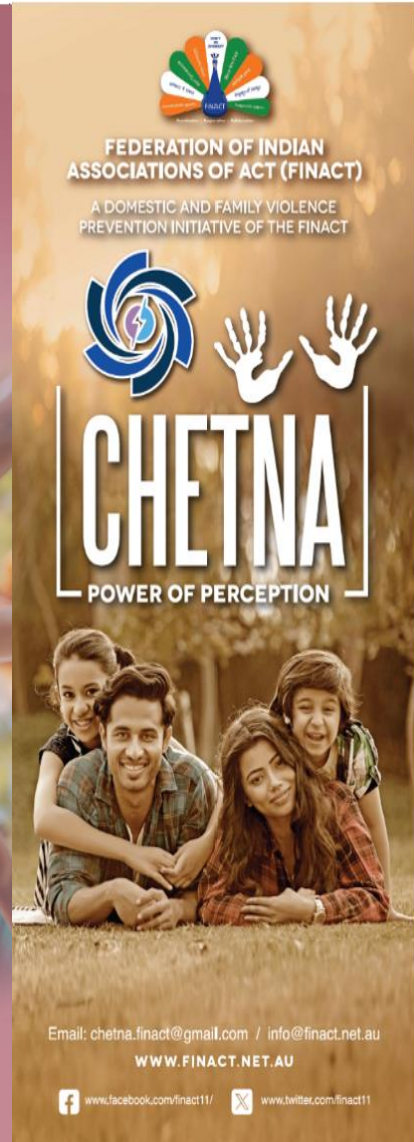
Sakhi

#UNITY #IDENTITY #SUPPORT

"Shared journeys build bonds of friendship"

Email: womensrep.finact@gmail.com / info@finact.net.au
WWW.FINACT.NET.AU

www.facebook.com/finact11 | www.twitter.com/finact11



FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF ACT (FINACT)

A DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE OF THE FINACT

CHETNA

POWER OF PERCEPTION

Email: chetna.finact@gmail.com / info@finact.net.au
WWW.FINACT.NET.AU

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Federation of Indian Associations of ACT
Coordination :: Cooperation :: Collaboration

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