

# INDO-AUSTRALIAN

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# B U S I N E S S

The Business Magazine for Indo Australian Region

Jan-Feb 2004 Vol. 1 Issue 1

Rs. 100/-



NEW MEDIA

# In This Issue

Published in partnership with  
AUSTRADE & WATO

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**Printed & Published by**

**Veerendra Bhargava** and printed at M/s Young Printers,  
A-2/237, Shah & Nahar Industrial Estate, Lower Parel,  
Mumbai - 400 013 and published from B/302,  
Twin Arcade, Military Road, Marol,  
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 059.

The news items and information published  
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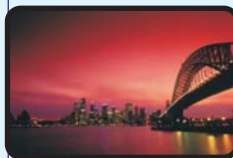
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## ENTERTAINMENT

More Multiplexes Mean  
Rising Stakes For  
**ENTERTAINMENT**

Shravan Shroff





***Dear Friends,***

New Year's greetings from New Media. The current issue of Indo-Australian Business highlights the immense potential waiting to be tapped by both the countries whose perception of each other has undergone a sea-change in the recent past. Bilateral trade between India and Australia is on the



upswing because of their dovetailing common economic interests. Both complement each other in services sectors such as Information Technology, education and entertainment to name a few. As Mr. David Campbell, Minister for Regional Development & Small Business in New South Wales, aptly put it in an exclusive interview to us, the Australian government, led by Premier Bob Carr, considers India as a very important economy. It is a clear indication that Australia is seeking to enlarge its business association with India, whose economy is booming. With India's economic growth slated to rise upwards of 8.0 per cent per annum, its foreign reserves crossing the \$ 100 billion mark and foreign direct investment flooding its markets, the country is in a position to barter goods and services with Australia on a gigantic scale. If Australia has high quality educational institutions, India has bright students to fill them. If Australia has breathtakingly beautiful locales and highly developed infrastructure and world-class crews for making films, India has the world's largest film industry that can take advantage of them. If India has agricultural products, Australia has the value-added processes for them.

As Mr. Neville Roach (AO), Chairman, Australia India Business Council, put it in his interview to this magazine, India has been marked for special attention by Australian authorities and businessmen alike. We also feature an enterprising feat by the Indian IT giant, Infosys, which has acquired an Australian company in the same sector to bolster its global services. Further, we are delighted to showcase the fabulous Australian wines. Enchanted as we are by the Australian landscape, we offer it to both Indian tourists and film-makers, who are forever searching for exciting locales. Mr. Anupam Sharma, a Sydney-based reputed actor-director, talks about the advantages of filming in Australia. We have packaged it all to make the current issue worth preserving. We take this opportunity to thank all our readers from both Australia and India for their overwhelming response from issue to issue. And finally, we salute both nations on this day - January 26 the National Day of Australia and the Republic Day of India.

Happy reading

***Satya Swaroop***

*Managing Editor*

*satya@newmediacomm.biz*

David Campbell, Minister  
for Regional Development &  
Small Business in New  
South Wales flanked by  
Don Cairns, Consul General,  
Australian Consulate, and  
Satya Swaroop



***Dear Readers,***

It is especially pleasing to support the current edition of Indo-Australian Business, which falls on Australia Day and India's Republic Day. The happy coincidence of these two important days on 26 January is a reminder of the many things that our two countries have in common, not the least in business.

2003 was a year in which we saw a step-up in Australian and Indian business relations. Ministerial visits in both directions and a strong flow of corporate visitors to and from India marked the growing understanding that each country has a lot to offer the other. Investment in both directions is forming an important part of the business mix.

One of the very pleasing things we are finding at the Australian Trade Commission is that it is now much easier to convince business people from both countries to jump on an airplane and visit.

Two-way trade in goods and services reached almost A\$4 billion in 2002. I predict that this trade will grow to A\$5 billion by the end of 2004. The exports of both countries are performing strongly and diversifying, particularly in services. In two of the key services sectors, film and tourism there are great mutual benefits to be had by Australia and India.

Booming Bollywood and Australia's smaller but highly skilled film industry make for excellent partners. And there is no doubt that both our countries have a wealth of attractions to offer foreign tourists. Australian tourists are drawn to the vast diversity of India's landscape and cultures. And for the traveling Indian contemplating a holiday Down under, well, do not contemplate too long!

Congratulations on your first edition for 2004.

***Peter Kane***

Acting Senior Trade Commissioner  
Australian High Commission  
New Delhi



## **"Our government led by Premier Bob Carr considers India as a very important economy"**

**David Campbell**

Regional Development Minister, New South Wales

**"Whenever Indian business people are looking to trade and investment in another country, they should look at Australia, and look at New South Wales," says Mr. David Campbell, the Minister for Regional Development and Small Business, New South Wales, on his recent visit to India.**

**In a brief discussion with Satya Swaroop and Rojita Padhy, he talks about the business opportunities available in the fields like education services, film, tourism and engineering services for both countries and his vision towards establishing a strong business relation with India.**

***The purpose of this trade mission to India is to explore and develop business opportunities ...***

This is the third year the New South Wales (NSW) state government has organized a trade mission to India. We see India as a place of opportunity for NSW companies we have many businesses who can supply India with a wide range of goods and services and indeed many are already doing so. But trade is a two-way street and there are opportunities for Indian companies to make investments in our State and export to NSW companies. Our government led by Premier Bob Carr considers India a very important economy. In fact, he has taken a very keen interest in developing links between our countries.

***Education services are the most fascinating fields for me, apart from food processing...***

The mushrooming service sector provides opportunity to collaborate with any country and same is the case with India. Education services are something I am particularly interested in. Through education, there is a huge potential for India to get a strategic support for its economic growth. Around 9000 Indian students are studying in Australia. Their experience in our country will benefit both Australia and India, and will generate much mutual understanding.

***There is a diverse range of companies on this trade mission ...***

The businesses on this trade mission are involved in food, wine, high-tech flooring and even fire protection. I have had very positive reports from these people who feel they meetings they have had will lead to new deals, some being substantial. One of the business persons, who already exports to Asia, said he had wanted to break into the Indian market but was unable to do that until he was assisted by the NSW Government on this trade mission. Of course, that is very satisfying to me as it shows this trade mission is very worthwhile. The businesses here with us in India really showcase NSW from our clean, green agricultural products to our excellent value-added products like wine and food. Of course, our technology sector is strong. Our CSIRO a scientific body has been here with us and is looking to work with the Indian

emergency services.

***During this visit, Mumbai is my second destination...***

I have been to Delhi and had a number of good meetings, including with Dr CP Thakur, Minister for Small Scale Industries, as well as FICCI and CII. We talked about trade, of course, and I stressed to them how keen we are to increase our business links with India..

***My trip to India has been great...***

It's a fascinating country and my only regret is that I have too little time here! In seven days I am visiting four cities, having 20 meetings and attending a range of functions so there is very little time to look around. I hope I can come back one day and see more.

***A huge potential lies in film and tourism sector...***

The people of NSW and India both love going to the movies but of course our population is tiny compared to yours! Our government is very supportive of the film industry and we encourage film production in our State. Recently we had a film tour throughout the Illawarra region (south of Sydney, around Wollongong), which showed location scouts, and others involved in the industry, the sort of scenes we can offer in that part of the State. One participant was an Indian filmmaker. Some Indian films have already been shot in Sydney. It is an ideal location for movie shoots. The links between the Australian and Indian film industries will be strengthened thanks to the Australia India Business Council, which is launching a special chapter devoted to this important field. To be known as The Australia-India FAME Council with FAME standing for Film, Arts, Media and Entertainment - will be headed by Sydney based film-maker Anupam Sharma. Films can showcase our beautiful country and hopefully encourage more tourism.

***There are a number of famous tourist spots in New South Wales...***

Sydney, the capital of NSW, is our country's biggest city. The Sydney Opera House is spectacular, as is the Sydney Harbour Bridge, which is an international icon. Our beaches and bush are beautiful. We have many wonderful attractions close to Sydney for those having a short holiday, and many throughout NSW for those who have a little more time.

***My work is my hobby. I am always keen to work and I enjoy politics.***

*In conclusion, I would like to thank Don Cairns - Australia is lucky to have him as consul-general in Mumbai. He is a hard worker and a very experienced diplomat. I am sure he can assist any company of Mumbai to do business in Australia.*





# INFOSYS flies high on EXPERT'S wings

**Srinath Batni**

**In its first ever acquisition, the Indian IT company Infosys Technologies acquired the Expert Information Services Pty Ltd. of Australia. The Australian Company was acquired for \$22.9 million (Australian \$31 million). Infosys will acquire Expert's 330 employees as well as its client base of 40 in the telecom, financial and government segments in Australia. In an exclusive interview, Srinath Batni, Member of the board, Incharge of Australian Operation, Infosys talks to Satya Swaroop, about this recent acquisition and the company's future plans.**

**Infosys was the first Indian IT Company to be listed in the NYSE and NASDAQ. Since then, how vigorously have you been working to expand your activities globally?**

Our focus on markets globally continues, as we would like to derisk a single geographical focus as well as expand the market globally. We have set up independent units to focus such a drive in Europe and APAC regions.

**Please tell us about your strategic acquisition of Expert Information Services Pty Ltd.**

Expert was one of Australia's leading IT service providers specializing in the design, build and integration of business solutions and products to leading companies in Australia. Its client includes medium and large enterprises, which span across various industry verticals such as Telecom, Financial services, retail and

**The acquisition will help strengthen our presence in Australia. It is also a reaffirmation of our commitment to the Australian market**



**-Nandan M. Nilekani**

government businesses.

**Is this your first 100% acquisition? What are your future plans for further expansion globally.**

Yes, it is a 100% acquisition. We continue to focus our footprint and markets globally. We are setting up a center in China, we have acquired this company in Australia, our BPM subsidiary Progeon is planning to set up a center in Czech Republic.

**Keeping in mind the recent developments in IT sector. How do you think this acquisition will help in furthering the bilateral relationship between Australia and India?**

Through this acquisition, we believe that we have strengthened our local presence in Australia and are in a position to bring the global capabilities and best practices to the Australian clients. This would help our Australian clients to become competitive globally. We also believe that we create an opportunity of Australian ICT to learn from the best practices and quality framework of Infosys.

**Acquisition is like falling in love - One plus one must make three if not eleven**

**- N.R. Narayan Murthy**



**What will be the management structure of the new company? How do you propose to make the company a multicultural organisation? What will be the ratio of Indian and Australian employees?**

A new board with representation from the parent company as well as expert has been formed. Mr. Gary Ebeyan who was the CEO of Expert IS will be the CEO of the new entity. The employees of Australia based infosys employees and Expert IS are combined to take the advantage of global delivery model expertise and the local capability.

**What kind of services is Infosys planning to exclusively provide through this acquisition?**

All the services that are available to the clients of Infosys globally.

**Infosys was acknowledged as the best employer in India. Please elaborate.**

Infosys has been a choice for prospective employees in India. This has been possible due to the brand Infosys has been able to build by providing a conducive, challenging, open and transparent work environment along with huge investment Infosys is able to make in training and other infrastructure related aspects.

**What message would you like to give to the Indian Business community and Indian IT professional through the recent achievement of yours?**

Sky is the limit if people, companies with high aspirations and synergies in goal join hands.



# India has huge potential

**Neville J. Roach AO**

Mr. Neville Roach AO, is Chairman of Fujitsu Australia Limited, having been head of the Company from 1989 to 2000. He has had an extensive career in Information Technology and recently was appointed Chairman of National ICT Australia (NICTA), the consortium recently selected by the Australian Government to establish the pre-eminent ICT Center of Excellence for research, research training and commercialization in Australia.

Mr. Roach has been an active advocate of closer links between Australia and Asia, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) on Australia Day, 2000 for service to business, particularly in the Information Technology Industry and for his contribution to the development of Australian multiculturalism.

Mr. Roach has been Chairman of the Australia India Business Council (AIBC) finds unlimited growth opportunities in India for joint ventures that could benefit the economies of both countries. In an interview with Rojita Padhy Mr. Roach identifies tourism and the film as industry as potential areas for collaboration, apart from Information Technology and education. Following are the excerpts.

## **'People are getting serious about India'**

AIBC is the national body, which helps in facilitating business in Australia, and our counterpart in India is India Australia Joint Business Council run by FICCI. We both have the responsibility to conduct joint business council meetings once a year. It usually coincides with a meeting with the Minister of Trade and the Minister of Commerce. The two ministers meet with joint business councils. The last meeting we had in India was in February 2003 and it was a success. Almost 55 delegates from Australia were there, which indicates that people are getting serious about India.

## **AIBC has been functioning for the last 15 years'**

Moreover, we are giving it an additional recognition as we realize, like Australia, all other countries are getting to acknowledge what India is achieving and how important India has become. Therefore, works on government as well as business front is in resurgence.

## **As the President and Chairman of AIBC, I have a big responsibility'**

We just had a revised constitution. We now have two-year terms and a maximum of three terms. I have completed two terms and am at the end of the first year of the third term of two years. I would like to hand over a pioneering organization in another year's time.

## **We have now 150 members and the number is increasing'**

We are getting a lot of support not only from the federal government but also from the state governments. Only in state governments and territories government money flow is more critical. Hence, last year for the first time the NSW government decided to focus on India. The government had its own advisory council called the East Asia Business Advisory council. That is the purpose of focusing in South East Asia, China, Korea and Japan. Last year they decided to focus specifically on India. A personal responsibility has been given to the council. We committed them to send new delegations to India, one came last year in December and this is the second one with the Minister. I think this is the time, which is driving all to serve the mission. The minister himself is taking so much interest.

## **'We are very realistic about the trade missions'**

In the case of trade missions, the outcome is seen faster than during the normal visits. In this current mission, we have certain businessmen who want to re-establish their links with India and some who are new. Others are those who have been successful in China and other countries and are now exploring possibilities in India. The significant thing is the range of people who are taking interest in India. It has huge potential. Not just the agricultural products, but also the processed food, engineering companies, technologies, fire equipment, and chemically resistant materials. So there are many products to look forward to. I think India offers a lot of opportunities.



The opening up of the economy in India has resulted in the growth of the domestic economy. I believe the advancement in NSW's technology can go hand in hand with this growth in India. There is a fast track informal application. Australia is the kind of partner, which makes sense for India. No doubt, that India is a huge country and it is heading towards a super power status but at present, we are better people to do business with, not criticizing the competitors. We consider the mutual benefit part of business.

**'Industry based chapters are the talk of the hour and I see India and Australia relationship strengthen in near future'**

We just formed a chapter on Film, Media and Entertainment in Melbourne. Film Council will be another chapter. We believe both countries have significant producers of films who take interest in site scenes and location shoots. IT is definitely another area of interest. We think Indian companies are beginning to do very well in Australia. Australian applications have huge potential also. For example, the State Bank of India has chosen an Australian company for partnership to offer banking services in NSW and the company is called FMS. It's a huge contract. There is also a big hardware and software contract with JUPITER in Australia.

**'My vision would be to see Australia being accepted in Asia as a part of the region'**

My own vision would be to see Australia being accepted in Asia as a part of the region. That is a challenge and we can do it I believe. It is fantastic to have a chance to do something for the two countries. The other big thing happening is the changing of image of the countries in each other's eyes. India had an old stereo typed image. But actually Australians are sports lovers and very good in wine production, highly technology-based and same is the case with India. India is also a developing country with a stable, growing economy. My dream is that both India and Australia see each other as world class and we do well with mutual respect and benefit.

**'Travel and the film industry have a broader scope to grow, apart from education'**

You have to come to India to see how the country has changed. And it is same with any other country or place. Therefore, you need to have people traveling from one place to another. First thing to do is to get people visit Australia. Education is one purpose for which people come to Australia after the US. Australia has now overtaken UK. But tourism is relatively small, about 40,000 people traveling. And both countries have huge potential. If we can link tourism then we can link specific industry sectors too where both can work together. If you get one student to study in Australia, four people may come to visit the country for a year as his family. Film people can come to Australia and our people should come to shoot in India.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Organisers	Venue, Timing, Cost	Description	Contact
Feb-2004	Buyer / Seller Meets with Sport Promotion Council of India	AIBC	Melbourne and Sydney (tbc)	Business delegation from Sport Promotion Council of India seeking Buyers and Sellers for range of sporting goods & toys	AIBC Executive Director / Secretariat on <a href="mailto:tim.storer@aseanfocus.com">tim.storer@aseanfocus.com</a>
Mar-2004	India Budget Review Seminar	AIBC Victoria	Free to AIBC Members	Specific focus on India Budget 2004. Also, information and practical advice on doing business with / into India, as well as networking opportunities.	Mr Shabbir Wahid, Asiaworld Shipping (National Director - Events for AIBC) on <a href="mailto:swahid@asiaworld.com.au">swahid@asiaworld.com.au</a>
Mar-2004	India Budget Review Seminar	AIBC WA	Free to AIBC Members	Specific focus on India Budget 2004. Also, information and practical advice on doing business with / into India, as well as networking opportunities.	Ms Donna White, (Vice Chairman - WA for AIBC) on <a href="mailto:WhiteD@murrayhouse.training.wa.gov.au">WhiteD@murrayhouse.training.wa.gov.au</a>

# Fun, frolic & adventure that's Australia

Australia, a continent of vast open spaces, azure sky and golden beaches is relatively unknown to Indian tourists. Indian filmmakers, who are forever in the pursuit of fresh locations for their song and dance sequences, may find Australia eminently suitable to their needs. Rightly, Indo-Australian joint business councils are keen to promote two-way tourism between the two countries. Australia, with a warm sunny climate, is the ideal place for adventure sports such as parasailing, paragliding, bungee-jumping and outdoor camping. Tourism in Australia can be sheer fun and an adrenaline-pumping adventure!

This country is also distinguished for world-renowned cricket, Formula One Grand Prix World Championship, Australian Open Tennis and sports galore.

A magnificent medley of Australia's culture is reflected in its affluent cities, offering its own distinct character, which is finely depicted in its arts, design, food and entertainment. These cities are lifestyle destinations, each offering a novel experience.

## Sizzling Sydney:

Australia's oldest, largest and glittering city Sydney is the capital of the State of New South Wales, gifted with a sparkling harbour, golden beaches and national parks in propinquity. Serene climate enables Sydneysiders to spend much time outdoors, during most of the year.

The opulent Opera House and the famous 'coathanger'- the Harbour Bridge, are the pride of Sydney, making it one of the world's hot spots for the visual & performing arts.

Sensuous Sydney exudes fervor & vehemence. Ebullient with Entertainment Centers, night pubs, discotheques and dinner cruises, it is a city that never sleeps. Sydney style emanates exuberance and radiance.

This city houses some of the finest gourmets and connoisseurs of the country, making it a palatable delight. 'Fusion food', a collage of cultural and culinary influences is on offer.





## Magnificent Melbourne

Australia's second largest metropolis and Victoria's capital Melbourne is a city of elegance & élan, with overflowing grace & panache. A cheery, happy & stylish Melbourne instantly makes one feel at home, for its people are friendly and full of character. The vibrant city, proud of its past, is always progressing with new developments.

Melbourne is known as one of Australia's premier shopping destinations and continues to set standards in style & substance. "Shop till you drop", however hackneyed may it sound, is the motto of all visitors. Shopping is a passion here and one could go on for days, with an array of choices to suit all tastes.

When it comes to night life, the Melburnians want it the exotic way style, attitude and oomph, to rage until the wee hours. As the sun goes down and the stars begin to twinkle, the city illuminates with jazz & rock. Its incandescent spirit is hard to resist.

Melbourne is a grand city of Victorian architecture, trams, fashion, theatre, art galleries, entertainment complexes, restaurants, brasseries, bars and pubs. This city is indeed the cultural capital of the nation with an abundance of rich theatre, ballet, opera, musicals, comedy and performance arts.

Something for your taste buds. Melbourne is a city of culinary delights, offering the greatest variety food, drawn from cuisines the world over.

## Brilliant Brisbane:

Brisbane Australia's only subtropical capital city has lots in store. It is blessed with great weather. So, no matter when and what time of the year it is, there's always something vibrant amidst the relaxed paced life and the cosmopolitan bustle.

The subtropical ambience is apt to visit the numerous islands, savour lip-smacking delicacies, fine local wine or drown in its arts & sports. Music, dance, lights, shows, and the fun filled times make the city alive.

## Gorgeous Gold Coast:

Situated to the south of Brisbane, is the Gold Coast a long stretch of golden beaches, lush rainforests, picturesque villages, national parks and extravagant view. It has 70 kms. of uninterrupted coastline.

You could sink your feet in the white sand; explore the hinterland, bathe in the sun, or opt for fun, excitement and entertainment that will leave you breathless. Bungee jumping, Para-sailing, mountain biking, Harley rides and abseiling guarantee an adrenaline rush! There's a lot for the kids too. Big colourful rides at theme parks, cuddly animals, miniature trains, go-karts, et al.

Just as the stars glitter in the dark skies, the Gold Coast dazzles at night with a display of nightclubs, musicals & concerts, cabaret shows, intimate bars, theatre restaurants - the list seems endless. No wonder it has been aptly christened 'The Ever Changing Always Amazing Gold Coast'.

## Colorful Cairns

Very few places manage to combine a relaxed pace with oodles of nature like Cairns in Tropical North Queensland. This tropical city offers great access to reef & islands and is an excellent base for visiting verdant rain forests, beaches, reef, outback and the vast wilderness. Cairns is a great jumping off point for bungee jumping, skydiving, taking a skyrail journey or viewing wildlife at dawn from the serenity of a hot-air balloon.





Eateries in Cairns offer an eclectic choice of Australia and International cuisine; fresh seafood and unusual tropical fruits being the highlight of most menus.

## Great Barrier Reef:

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest living organism and the only one visible from outer space. It is also referred to as the eighth wonder of the world.

It stretches over 2000 kms, and homes umpteen number of luminously coloured fish, coral and other marine life including whale, dolphin & turtles.

You could indulge yourself in a variety of activities scuba diving, snorkeling, fishing and marine animal watching. Truly spectacular!

## Pulsating Perth

Famous for its blue skies, stunning natural setting and friendly, spirited people, Perth is truly one of Australia's most beautiful cities. Basking in a sunny Mediterranean climate, Perth is an alfresco city, which invites visitors out onto the streets, into the cafes and down to the water's edge. It is also unique for its heritage architecture and relaxing blend of culture, maritime history and entertainment.

There are many activities to be found within easy reach of Perth. Take a cruise along the river, taste some Swan Valley wines, enjoy pristine white sandy beaches, ramble through the Perth Hills or journey south to the tranquil town of Rockingham.

## Amazing Adelaide

Adelaide, the graceful capital city of South Australia, is often referred to as the 'Athens of the South', for its enviable quality of life, beautiful architecture, classy wining 'n' dining, elegant buildings and parkland. It is home to some of the finest wines in Australia with the Barossa Valley vineyards on its doorstep and has a reputation for innovative cuisine.

Adelaide has beautiful beaches and if you're lucky whilst swimming, you might be joined by a pod of dolphins!!

## Heritage Hobart

Hobart, Tasmania's capital is Australia's second oldest city and the state's rich colonial heritage is apparent everywhere you go with gracious Victorian and Georgian architecture. It blends legacy & lifestyle, panorama & culture. Hobart is celebrated for its fine restaurants and culinary delights.

## Delightful Darwin

Darwin is an effervescent, tropical city offering a blend of cosmopolitan and city pleasures. It's rich diversity has filtered into all aspects of city's cultural, banquet & art scene. It is a city affluent in splendor, flora & fauna and indigenous culture.

## Captivating Canberra

Canberra, Australia's national capital is a well-planned city with parks, gardens, art and a perennially four season's climate. It's also home to some of Australia's best museums, galleries and the Australian Institute of Sport. With the country on its doorstep, Canberra is the perfect base to explore the best of Australia from the snow filled slopes of the ski fields to the pristine beaches of the South Coast.

There is ecstasy and enchantment to this country that creates a sense of having not just a holiday, but also a thrilling experience.

*For planning an exhilarating holiday in Australia, visit: [www.australia.com](http://www.australia.com)*



# Queensland makes you feel good!

**Wendy A. Levy**

*Marketing Communications Manager,  
Tourism Queensland, Singapore*

**Don't be shy to stop and ask a local where to eat, drink, shop and play. You'll be sure to find the hidden gems in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. All you need to do is hire a car, pack the kids and come on down for a refreshing getaway!**

**Wendy Levy shows you the way.**

## Gold Coast Shines

From dawn to dusk, you could enjoy a never-ending whirl of world-class action and adventure on the Gold Coast.

Pick up the pace by heading to Dreamworld first. The Guinness Book of records confirms that Dreamworld has the tallest, fastest freefall ride in the world - so bring your courage with you! Dreamworld also offers the kids their very own area 'Nick Central' the only Nickelodeon themed kid's zone outside of the United States.

Just up the road from Dreamworld is Warner Bros. Movieworld. The newest addition to Movieworld is the official Matrix Reloaded exhibit, featuring a variety of original sets, props and costumes from the film. Those ride-lovers out there will not be let down either with the inverted roller coaster 'Lethal Weapon' & the newest ride 'Scooby Doo Spooky Coaster'.

Finish the day at play on the broadwater near Seaworld in an amphibious Aquabus, or Champagne sailing with a glass of champagne in hand!

Pack the party gear; the Gold Coast is alive and kicking after dark. Some of the not-to-be-missed activities for night owls include Island Queen Dinner Cruise, Conrad dinner and show or a Glow Worm Night Tour.

## **Brisbane Beckons**

Known as 'Australia's most liveable city' or just 'Brissie' to the locals, Queensland's capital city Brisbane's biggest feature is its laid back lifestyle. Be sure your trip includes a weekend to enjoy the top quality markets. Join the locals at the Farmer's markets at Powerhouse building for some gourmet treats or the Sunday Riverside markets to pick up some unique hand-made souvenirs.

## **Brisbane City Escape Wild Dolphins Await**

Located on Moreton Island, just 75 minutes by catamaran from Brisbane is Tangalooma Wild Dolphin Resort. Venture knee deep into the water by the jetty in the evening with a fish in hand & you will be met by a friendly wild dolphin who will look you in the eye as it gently takes the fish from your hand. The dolphin will offer you a smile as only a dolphin can before it swims away. Pick up the pace the next morning & get the adrenalin & blood flowing by hurtling down a 70metre sand dune on a piece of wood. The locals call this 'sand tobogganing' & it is a lot of fun just



be sure to keep your mouth shut to keep out the sand!

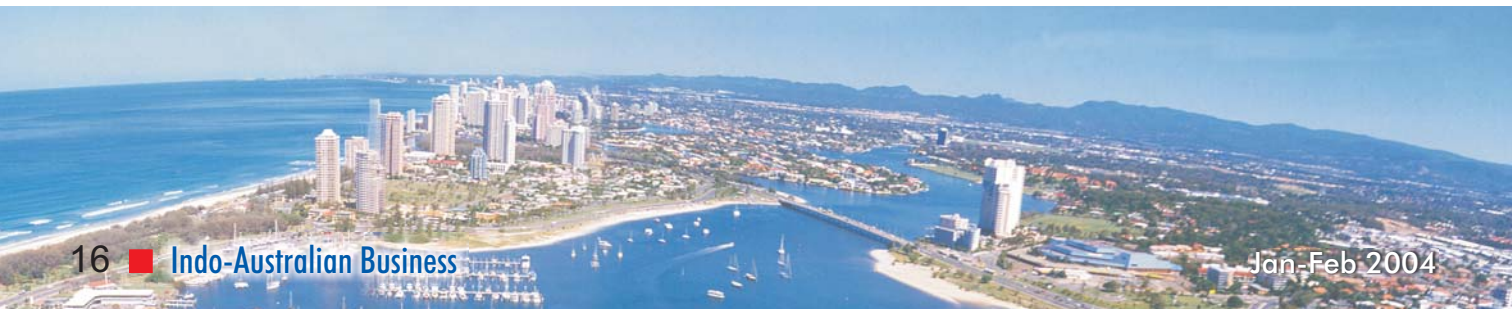
## **Sunshine Coast Self Drive**

So much to see, so much to do! The best way is to hire a car, grab a map & get out on the road. Stop at Superbee & while the kids go mad taste testing the 30 different honey on tap, you can stock up on Royal Jelly & other bee products. Drive down the road to the Big Pineapple for a passion fruit parfait, but be sure to work up an appetite by taking a ride around the working plantation on the train first. You will not want to miss Australia Zoo, located on the scenic Glasshouse Mountain tourist drive, this is the home of Steve Irwin the Crocodile Hunter. Apart from the daily crocodile shows, the whole family will love getting up close to the gentle giant 172 year old tortoise "Harriett".

## **Fraser Island Day Trip**

Imagine the size of the sand castles you could build on the world's largest sand island! Fraser Island is this island and it is located just north of the Sunshine Coast.

*For more information, go to [www.queensland.com.sg](http://www.queensland.com.sg)*





*Education & immigration*

# Australian experts enlighten Indian aspirants

Two eminent speakers from Australia enlightened a large gathering in Mumbai on January 22 on issues concerning immigration and education and the opportunities available in that country.

Rajesh Vasa, a lecturer at Swinburne University addressed the audience first, followed by

Peter Vlahos, a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria, who also heads an accredited immigration agency called Universal Migration. Both speakers belong to the state of Victoria.

Vasa spoke in-depth about the application process and the job prospects available after pursuing higher studies at the university. He pointed out that all universities in Australia came under the government, except the university in Queensland.

Mr. Vlahos, who made an audio-visual presentation on immigration, had his audience listening to him in rapt attention. Explaining in detail, he took them through the various categories of immigration application with their sub categories.

Both speakers fielded questions expertly from the eager audience after their respective presentations. .

The audience comprised aspirants from institutes like Aptech, some of them accompanied by their parents and one-to-one clarifications followed over refreshments before they made up their minds about pursuing education or immigration or both.



## Rio Tinto celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Indo-Argyle Diamond Council (IADC)

Rio Tinto and the Indian Diamond Industry celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Indo-Argyle Diamonds Council at a function held on January 20, 2004 in Mumbai..

Mr. Brendan Hammond, Managing Director, Argyle Diamonds, who attended the function, spoke about his organization's 23 years of experience with Rio Tinto diamonds.

He said Rio Tinto believed in the principle of sustainable development for a variety of reasons first, for good business and second for the community development.

Mr. Hammond said his organization not only believed in employing people and educating their children. He also spoke about their Indian operation, and

the result had been positive and overwhelming. "There is a huge potential in India to provide service to the diamond industry worldwide," he said.

The Argyle Diamond mine, located in Western Australia has been in operation since the early 1980s. It is the world's largest producer of rough diamonds, accounting for nearly 30 million carats per year - over a fifth of the world's total output. Its production consists mainly of affordable white and champagne-coloured gems.

The function, held in the presence of the eminent diamond merchants and industrialists was very informative and had a detailed presentation on the community development programmes carried out in each diamond mining regions in Australia where the aborigines are respected and entitled to their rights.

The diamond mines are non-renewable resources and anyone exploring it needs to bare the obligation to have a carefully developed alternative work place for people in that mine area.







# Uncover Wine's Velvety Texture With ZEEMAN

**Bahman Marzbani, JP**  
Managing Director, Zeeman Wines

Australia has established a reputation for fine wines concomitant with the right kind of climate and soil. The question that arises next is how to pick up the right kind of wines from the available so many. And none other than Zeeman does it with its eye on the best of the available ones.

ZEEMAN WINES is an Australian wine exporting & contract wine producing company with a comprehensive knowledge of, and access to, many premium Australian wines. They have access to the international market as they have a good connection with Australian producers and are considered to be one of the fastest growing exporters in the international market.

Born of Blue Skills International Pty Ltd in 2002, it is based in Sydney.

Zeeman Wines parent company Blue Skills International Pty Ltd has been operational since 1992. Zeeman Wines was established in 2002. The company is registered in New South Wales. It is based in Sydney and is privately owned by a group of Directors who work full time in the business.

Zeeman manufactures a wide range of bottled and bulk wines to suit every mood and occasion. They include: Zeeman Dry Red, Zeeman Dry White, Zeeman Colombard Chardonnay, Zeeman Cabernet Merlot (2 types), Zeeman Shiraz, Zeeman Chardonnay/ Semillon, Zeeman Semillon, Zeeman Mudjee Chardonnay 2002, Zeeman Mudjee Shiraz 2001, Koala Blue Shiraz, Zeeman Pendarves Estate Verdelho, Zeeman Pendarves Estate Chambourcin.

Zeeman wines have also been actively marketing on an exclusive distribution basis the Koala Blue &

The Wine Doctor range of wines into India, China & UAE. Koala Blue Wines is a partnership between founders of the Koala Blue brand, Olivia Newton-John and Pat Farrar, and Victorian-based winery, Snowdon Wines Pty Ltd.

Guided by the prime philosophy of "Customer Service", Zeeman provides a range of services under this broad headline:

Identify consistent high quality Australian wines that meet the criteria set by our customers.

Prepare for shipment, facilitate export documentation and customs clearance, and arrange freight shipment from Australia to the nominated Port of Entry.

Advise continuing developments in the Australian wine industry, including Wine Show results, emergence of new brands and general information about vintages, winemakers and producers.

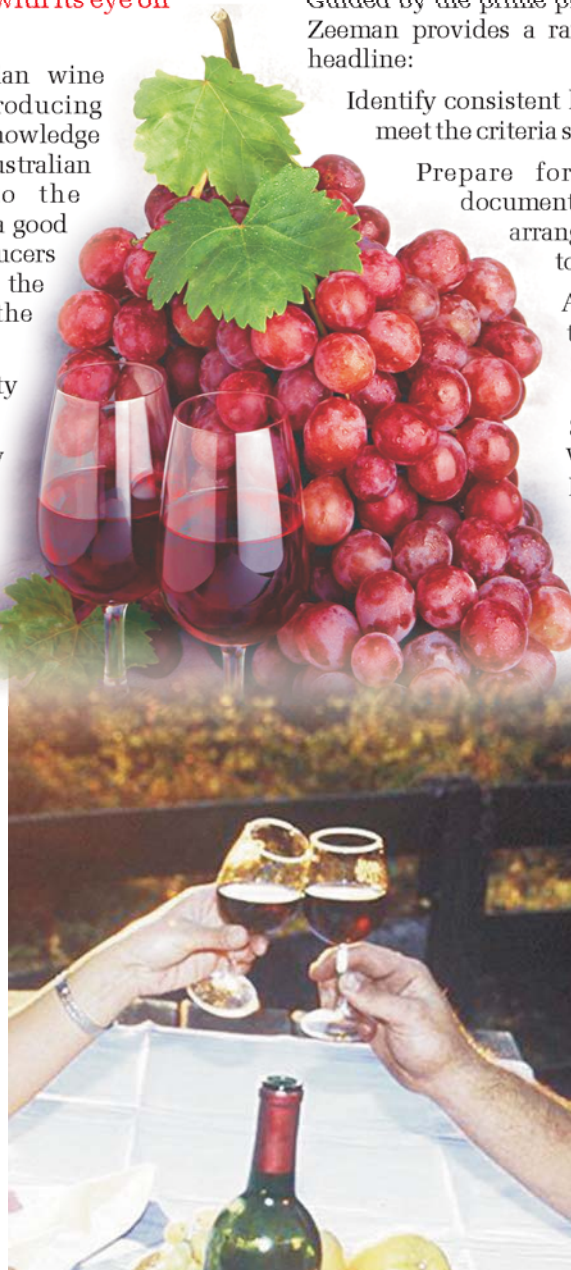
Provide comprehensive details of wines purchased, including tasting notes, promotional literature, winemaker's notes, export Instructions and wine analysis.

Assist in public relations opportunities that promote the sale of our wines.

Maintain appropriate administrative records of all sales, credits, returns and ullages.

Ensure all business dealings are conducted with professionalism, integrity and enthusiasm, and in accordance with International Best Practice.

Apart from this, Zeeman has gone a long way in popularizing wine by emphasising upon its positive effects on health and its ability to prevent several diseases.



# Wine as medicine DRINK AND BE HEALTHY

**Dr. Phil Norrie**

(MBBS, M.Sc., M.Soc. Sc.(Hon), FPA Cert. FIBA)

## INDIA, RECLAIM YOUR WINE AND HEALTH HERITAGE

The purpose of these notes are to change your perception of wine as a drink only for special occasions to one that is a daily health drink when consumed in moderation. Wine is man's oldest medicine, most documented and the best preventative medicine having been used as such by the medical profession for over 5000 years.

**"Wine helps you to die young as late as possible."**

Wine was first made in Persia, by accident, several thousand years ago. It found its way to Egypt where it was first used as a medicine over 5000 years ago. Since then wine, in moderation, has been used as medicine. The

father of modern pharmacology, the German physician Paracelsus (1493 -1541) said, *"Whether wine is nourishment, medicine or poison, is a matter of dosage"*. The famous French scientist Luis Pasteur (1822 -1895) called wine *"the most healthful and hygienic of beverages"*.

In Australia, wine was given daily to the convicts on their long voyage out from England and this was the first

large-scale experiment in the use of wine as a preventative medicine in the modern era. This led to many vineyards in Australia being founded by doctors thus starting the tradition of Australia's "Wine Doctors" which still continues today.

Modern medical and scientific research has now shown why red or white wine in moderation, is so healthy and how it can reduce the death rate by up to 50% by significantly reducing the diseases such as vascular disease (heart attack and stroke), dementia, diabetes, cancer, as well as many others, which are now in epidemic proportions. Moderation is a maximum of 4 standard drinks per day for a male and 2 for a female, where a standard drink contains 10 gms. of alcohol i.e. 120 -150 mls of wine, depending on the percentage of alcohol contained in the wine. Women get half the amount of men because they have only half the amount of alcohol dehydrogenase, the enzyme which breaks down alcohol.

People with any significant stomach diseases such as gastritis or ulcers should avoid alcohol.

**Wine helps in five ways in helping to prevent heart attack or stroke.**

1. It lowers low density lipoprotein the "Bad Cholesterol"
2. It raises the high density lipoprotein the "Good Cholesterol"
3. Wine has very strong anti-oxidants (5 times that of vitamin E)
4. Wine acts as an anti-coagulant (stops blood from clotting)





## 5. Wine is a relaxant and also reduces stress.

Latest research has also shown other vascular disease benefits from moderate wine consumption. The rate of deep vein thrombosis, or clotting in the leg, can be reduced by up to 50 percent. It can reduce osteoporosis and dementia and the rate of macular degeneration, an incurable form of blindness, can be reduced up to 20 percent. Half of all renal failure is caused by vascular disease that can be reduced and prevented by wine therapy.

Medicine should now be switching its emphasis from treating a disease, such as vascular disease, with expensive bypass surgery or angioplasty to preventing the disease with sensible lifestyle changes such as consuming wine in moderation, not smoking, watching your BP, sugar, cholesterol, weight and exercising. The main anti-oxidants in wine, resveratrol, quercetin and epicatechin, have been shown to reduce cancers by up to 24% by protecting the DNA from being damaged by harmful free radicals. Researchers found that resveratrol made the nerve cells grow extensions, which enabled them to connect to neighbouring nerve cells. This helps explain why wine drinkers have less of the neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. In neurodegenerative diseases these connections break down. Dr. Bertelli has stated, "By daily reinforcing these contacts we can prevent neurodegeneration".

Consuming wine in moderation would also mean that the vascular tree within the brain would be less diseased, hence able to supply the brain's nerves with more blood containing essential oxygen and glucose. This is another mechanism by which wine helps the brain to function better. So, wine in moderation could be referred to as "brain food" or "brain friendly" as it prevents strokes and nerve cell degeneration, which is in marked contrast to what was previously thought about the effects of any form of alcohol on the brain.

Wine is to be enjoyed with food and not taken too seriously. It should be a part of a health lifestyle and the ultimate drink the thinking person's health drink. Consider wine as a preventative medicine that tries to give people the maximum quality and quantity of life...in other words wine helps one to die young as late as possible.

In summary, if there is no contradiction, consuming wine in moderation daily is the single most important preventative health measure one can do other than giving up smoking.

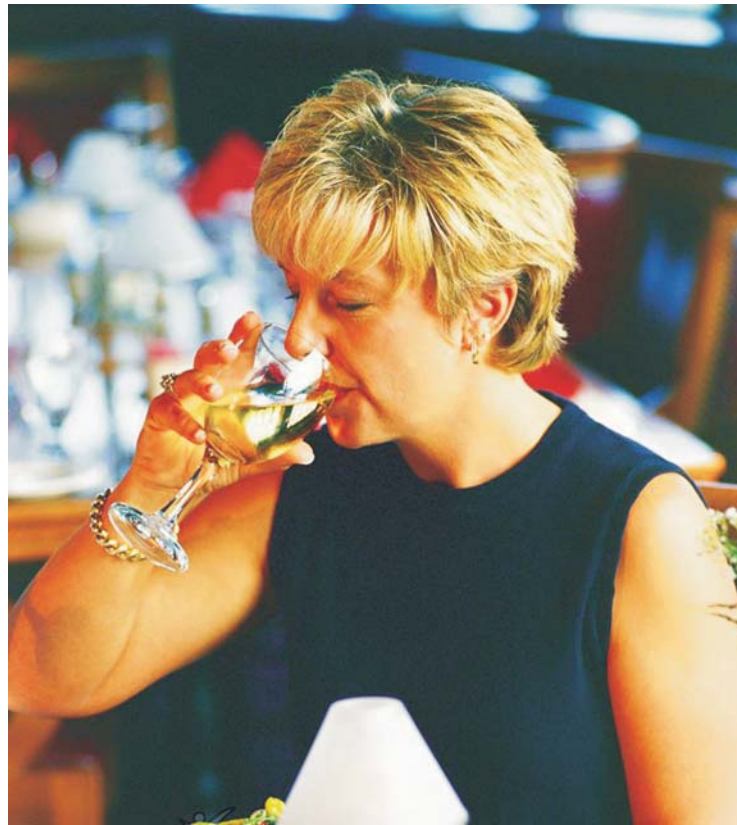
**This list is to show that there are many other health benefits from consuming wine in moderation besides those relating to the circulatory system.**

1. Reduction of Vascular Disease (due to greatly improved blood flow) resulting in:

- Reduced Coronary Heart Disease
- Reduced Ischaemic Stroke
- Reduced Deep Vein Thrombosis
- Reduced Osteoporosis
- Increased Intellect in the Elderly
- Reduced Macular Degeneration

## Reduced Renal Failure

2. Tonic wine contains many substances including most vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates and trace elements
3. Fat and cholesterol free source of carbohydrate
4. Reduced cancer
5. Reduced BP
6. Antiseptic due to alcohol and more importantly polyphenols
7. Increases morale and appetite nursing home and hospital patients



8. Wine contains Quercetin, Resveratrol and Epicatechin which are potent anti-oxidants and also act as anticarcinogens
9. Reduction in colds
10. Diabetes dry wine alcoholic drink that is allowed with diabetes as all the sugar has been converted to alcohol and reduced insulin resistance.
11. Reduced gallstones
12. Reduced kidney stones
13. Reduced Alzheimer's disease
14. Reduced Parkinson's disease
15. Improved digestion
16. Reduced H. Pylori infection of the stomach and duodenum leading to reduced ulcer
17. Improved physical condition of the elderly
18. Reduced Hepatitis A
19. Reduced Stress and depression.





## “Enjoy your wine and have fun.”

**Georgey Parampil George**

**“I have been to India twice before for business. This is the third visit with the delegation and it makes a big difference. You are acknowledged more as you are seen with the Minister and he is happy to be with you. I have had a lot of help from people in India and Australia. I am very happy & grateful for that,” says Director, Parampil Wines, Australia, Georgey P. George, during his last visit to India with the New South Wales Ministerial delegation.**

**An excerpt of his interview with Rojita Padhy.**

**We are looking for a good wine industry base in India...**

Australia has probably the largest amount of export products in the Pacific area. With an Indian origin and Australian background, we are here to do better like Indian Americans and Indians in Middle East or from any other European countries. And I believe this is a great way to come back to our own home country. So, whatever I have taken from here, I'd love to give something back. We are looking forward to tapping into the emerging wine industry in India.

It is not just selling and buying of wine. The wine industry here should and (I believe) will sustain and develop. There is a large wine production base in Australia. And what I believe is, one should learn to distinguish between a white wine and red wine or even between a Shiraz, Semillon or Verdelho. What is important at the moment is to educate the people about wine, bring an awareness, which in turn will help them to appreciate and value it.

This is my third visit to India and I am enjoying it. No business happens overnight and it takes awhile for things to fall in place. I will be ready to tap the Indian market very soon. It is a huge market with vast opportunity not only for wine selling but also for associated fields like Viticulture, machinery, and education.

**Wine is gradually becoming a social drink in India...**

Wine business in India has three levels. First is the hospitality industry for hotel business. Second is business with embassies, consulates & shipping industry. Third is the retail business. Retail business in India is very small at this stage. Educating people about wine might take a couple of years but it is definitely happening at a faster pace than expected. One of the positive signs is that the younger generation is appreciating wines and is seen as a social drink these days.

**Parampil name is inherited from my family...**

The name of my company is Parampil that has also been my family name as well as in my wife's paternal side too. That is why I decided to brand the wine as Parampil. With God's grace, if everything goes fine we will be toasting our success in introducing wine to India.

**I am happy to see the response to my proposal...**

I had meetings with people in Delhi, Chennai and Bangalore. At the moment, the response is quite welcoming. This is the message I would like to give, “enjoy your wine and have fun.”



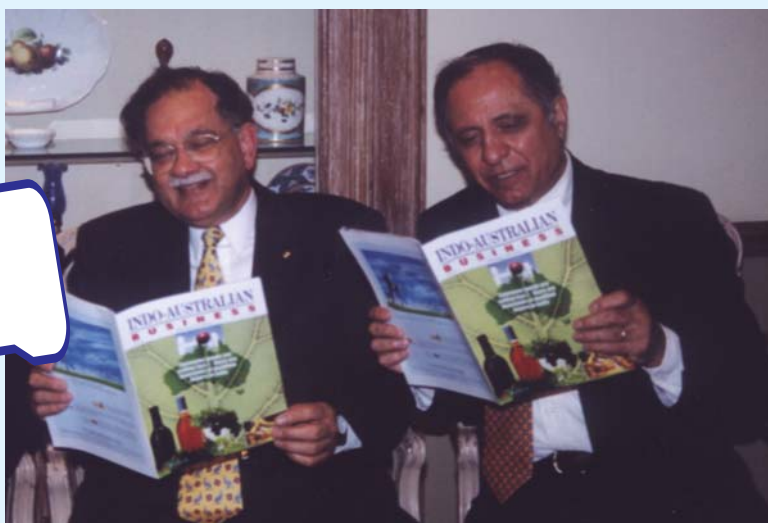
## DAVID CAMPBELL during his reception at Taj Mahal Hotel, Mumbai

L to R: Rojita Padhy, Don Cairns, David Campbell and Satya Swaroop



L to R: Shreeram Iyer, David Campbell, Satya Swaroop & Veerendra Bhargava

Neville J. Roach & Bahman Marzbani reading Indo-Australian Business





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**Anupam Sharma**  
Actor & Director

# Australia Offers Rich & Varied Locales for Filming INDIAN MOVIES

**Film-makers across the world have regularly shot in Australia as the country offers world-class crews and state of the art facilities for filming. No wonder then, the Indian film industry, the largest in the world in terms of the number of movies made, is exploring Australia for something new and exciting. ANUPAM SHARMA, SYDNEY-BASED ACTOR AND DIRECTOR, who runs his own production company 'The Film and Casting Temple, speaks to ARCHANA SINHA, about the advantages of shooting films in Australia.**

**Tell us about your company and its activities?**

Ours is the biggest Australian production company working with India and I have been coming here since last few years. This time I came with a specific purpose of forging a co-production between the Indian and Australian film makers and it seems our efforts will see results with the first co-production coming up. I am here to do some initial contacts and hope by January February we will be able to start something.

We are also coming with a big delegation in Frames 2004 for session on "Doing Business with Australia". Due to the exponential growth of business in film trade between India and Australia, FICCI have very kindly included this session as a part of FRAMES 2004

**What kind of collaborations do you enter into with Indian film industry?**

Any and every kind of collaboration. Cinema is becoming global now, so we are working on genuine narrative and genuine feature films and documentary, which have good Australian and Indian angle to it. In addition, we are

looking for all kinds of collaboration whether it is Indian financial partners, distribution channels or any international collaboration. The collaborations are varied. There is a plethora of permutations and combinations around which the two countries can work together.

**There must be a lot of cultural exchange. Please elaborate.**

Yes, there will be a lot of cultural exchanges between the two countries. In fact, what started with a couple of films exploring the various aspects of shooting in Australia two years back has now grown up into a full blown industry worth almost about five to six million dollars a year. There have been about 80 projects between the two countries in the last five years, out of which at least we have handled 70. This has resulted in more Australian companies coming up to look for business from the Indian film industry. Now it is not just about handling the shoot in Australia. We are now providing Australian crews to come to India to work on Indian films. "Koi Mil Gaya" which is a hugely successful film was designed by Australian set designers and managed by Australian costume makers and operators. Recently we had about five Australian stunt people working in Laddakh on a Hindi film called "Lakshaya". Yash Raj Films have just signed up two of our leading stunt performers and Abhishek Kapoor has signed up Chris Anderson, our head of Stunts and Safety, to choreograph some scenes in his debut film. I think this vibrant exchange of cultural ideas and technique is the crux of the whole development.

**How different is the infrastructure of the two countries?**

Yes, the infrastructure is different and that is why we are at

work. For certain things they require Indians to come there and for certain others, the Australians come here. Whether it is the wire-work or the postproduction, the infrastructure is different at all levels and that is why there is a greater need for coming together and exchange.

### **What are the specific areas of filmmaking in which you provide assistance?**

Being a production company with our head office in New South Wales at the Fox studios, we specialize in providing our clients with all they may need for completing their projects whether it is location reconnaissance, shoot requirements, post production, stunts, special effects, sound, staying and catering arrangement, or even getting the paper work done for some permissions from the government, or whatever the case may be. We have been hired by all the blue chip companies from India like Feroze Khan, Mehul Kumar, Yash Johar, Yash Raj Films, Ashok Thakeria, Rakesh Roshan, Vikram Bhatt, Ad film makers include Percept, Cutting Edge Pictures, Kunal Kapoor, UTV and Kunal Shivdasani. And we work as consultants, which means we are in charge of any and every aspect that concerns filmmaking.

### **India has a variety of locations from mountains to plains and from cities to country-side. So what do you think made Indian filmmakers explore foreign grounds?**

Well it is quite simple. India has a variety of locations and culture but if you extend the boundaries to the world, there are more locations offering more variety as backdrops with more cultures. For example, India has the Taj Mahal but not the Opera House. So it is basically all about pooling in the resources to enrich the tapestry of the film.

### **So, do Australian film-makers come here too?**

Oh yes. We have had Holy Smoke shot in India then we had Moulin Rouge which used a lot of silk from India. We are currently working on a couple of other films and researching on the location and other aspects of filming in India. The other examples of international films shot in India are City of Joy, The Octopussy to name a few.

### **What locations do you recommend for shooting?**

That really depends on scripts. I mean I cannot obviously recommend Opera House if the script is all about a village in Bihar. What we do is that we promote the logistics of shooting in Australia and the country which is more than four times the size of India and offers shooting facilities throughout the year, with locations which vary from the meadows to desert to red earth to sea beaches of Cairns and more, besides of course, the advantage of making the film rich by using different locations. In this way we encourage them to write scripts, which may include such locations either in song sequence, thrillers, car race, high speed driving or travel etc. We have a base all over Australia and we provide every possible help.

### **How economically viable is shooting in Australia than it is in the US or in the Europe?**

Well you get every thing in Australia, which you may get in Europe or in the US at almost at half the price of America simply because of the Dollar exchange ratio. In fact, even filmmakers from America and Britain come to shoot in Australia. Star Wars, Matrix ... I mean you

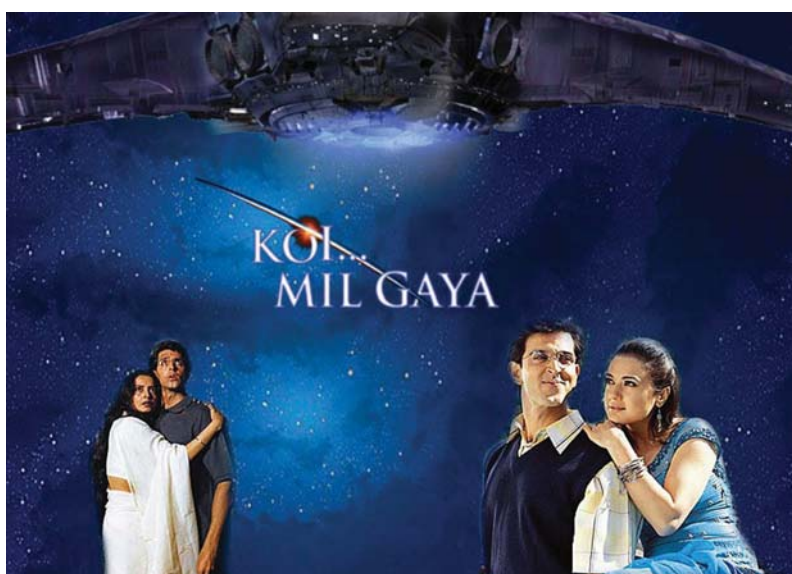
name it.... they have been shot in Australia.

### **How different or similar are Australian locations from say that of Europe?**

Well, this is the best thing about Australia. You can have a piece of France, a piece of South America, a piece of England, gothic culture... every thing is available in this one country, because Australia is an amalgamation of cultures from different parts of the world. It is young and vibrant and can provide identical locations from any where around the world, and even India for example, the deserts. Being vast, the topography varies vastly offering great variety.

### **How conducive is the attitude of the average Australian for the Indians?**

In terms of attitude, the Australians are extremely friendly, warm and flexible with a laid-back nature, which is very much akin to the Indian attitude. They want every thing to go right but will not let you face problems unnecessarily. So, that is a big plus.





# In Victoria... It's LIGHTS, CAMERA & ACTION

*A Paradise on Earth and the most favourable destination for shooting movies and TV Commercials. No wonder, it is the beautiful locations, high-class infrastructure and facilities provided by the Melbourne Film Office that make Victoria a hot spot. **Christina Hyde**, Commercial Development Manager of Melbourne Film Office talks to **Rojita Padhy** about the reasons why film producers prefer Victoria and the functions of Melbourne Film Office in facilitating film activities in the region.*

**Victoria state province has a huge potential for film shooting. Please throw some light on it?**

The Australian State of Victoria is the birth place of the Australian film and television industry and its capital city,

Melbourne, has a proud tradition of filmmaking that stretches back to the early 1900s.

Victoria offers filmmakers a sophisticated and mature film and television industry with state-of the-art studios and post-production facilities, talented film crews, and a diverse range of accessible locations.



The city of Melbourne has full accreditation from the World Health Organisation as a safe city with low air pollution levels and lower annual rainfall than other Australian filming centres. A well-designed cosmopolitan city of over three million people, filmmakers love the civilised and relaxed nature of working in Melbourne. Crews can often be seen in the city, taking advantage of the wide streets, great facilities and wealth of locations and filmmakers often remark about how easy it is to get around, and how much they can cover in one day.



More than 15 film productions from India have taken advantage of Victoria's diverse and distinctive locations and featured them in their projects, including *Soldier*, *Janasheen* and *Prem Aggan*. The successful Appollo Tyres television commercial recently highlighted Victoria's famous Great Ocean Road. Victoria invites Indian film makers to explore the location and film infrastructure options available for their next project.

**What are the infrastructure facilities available for movie shoots and post production activities?**

The facilities, crews and technicians in Victoria are acknowledged as amongst the friendliest and best in the world.



Equipment suppliers, insurers, production services companies, post production facilities, casting agencies, locations specialists and extensive air, road and rail links, all combine to make Victoria the obvious choice for any project.

A range of film and television studios is available in Melbourne. Most studios also include support services such as catering, make-up rooms, security, commissary, production offices and excellent vehicle access. Opening in March 2004, the new Central City Studios complex at Docklands, adjacent to Melbourne's commercial centre, will cater to both, domestic and international film and television production. This purpose-built facility houses five sound stages of varying sizes, with integrated production support areas.

Processing for 16mm, Super 16 and 35mm is available from Melbourne's laboratory, Cinevex (part of the Atlab group). In Melbourne you will also find an extensive range of digital, analogue, on-line and off-line editing facilities. Quality services for rushes, prints, optical effects, telecine and titles, negative cutting and matching and digital scanning for film provide a total Film to Data to Film solution, with customised Standard Definition (SD) and High Definition (HD) services available to suit your specific needs. Footage can be delivered digitally to anywhere in the world using satellite or Internet technology.

### **What are the functions of the Melbourne Film Office at Film Victoria?**

Film Victoria is the State Government agency of Victoria, providing strategic leadership and assistance for film, television and digital media production.

Film Victoria's Melbourne Film Office is the government film commission for the Australian State of Victoria. Melbourne Film Office is active in attracting overseas and interstate producers to work in Victoria. It promotes Victoria as a production destination in the USA, Asia, Japan, Hong Kong and China.

Melbourne Film Office assists filmmakers with information on locations, permits, immigration, customs, taxation, unions, facilities and other services in Victoria.



All information is available free online at [www.film.vic.gov.au](http://www.film.vic.gov.au)

The experienced locations team at Melbourne Film Office provide locations advice and liaison assistance to identify the most suitable locations for each project. They also provide expert help to gain access to government-owned locations.

The Government of Victoria, through Film Victoria's Melbourne Film Office, offers two incentive funds to encourage filmmakers from India to bring their film and television projects to Victoria.

- The Production Investment Attraction Fund (PIAF) is a simple grant system, provided in the form of a rebate at the end of production. To be eligible, your project must be footloose (ie. it is not already locked into production in Victoria, and you are exploring alternative locations overseas or elsewhere in Australia).
- The Regional Victoria Film Location Assistance Fund (RVLAF) is used to promote filming in Victoria outside the Melbourne metropolitan area.

### **Which particular region in Victoria is conducive for film shooting and always in demand? What are the hurdles**





### encountered while shooting in a geographically hostile region?

Victoria is approximately the same size as Great Britain, and half the size of California. It is home to more magnificent locations and dramatic scenery than you will find anywhere else in Australia. Because of its small geographical size it is easier for film makers to shoot in regional areas outside the city which are all within a few hours of the city of Melbourne.

From imposing coastlines along the Great Ocean Road, to the snow-covered peaks of Mt Buller and Falls Creek, the rolling green hills of the Gippsland, and the historic goldmining towns of Ballarat and Bendigo, to the desert sands to the north-west, Victoria has a wealth of locations available for filming with little difficulty.

Melbourne is a city of modern buildings, towering over marvellous examples of grand nineteenth century architecture, and surrounded by leafy green parks. Filming permits for shooting in the city of Melbourne are free. The city is often used to double for many great cities around the world. Look down one street and you'll find you are in Chinatown. Down another and you'll find gothic stone architecture, reminiscent of Europe.

Melbourne also doubles often for locations in the USA and UK. The US television miniseries, *Blonde The Marilyn Monroe Story* was filmed in suburban Toorak and bayside St Kilda. For the US telemovie *Salem's Lot*, the regional town of Creswick was transformed into a town in New England, and for the feature film *Queen of the Damned*, Melbourne doubles for London, LA and New Orleans.

### How is the animation and visual effects industry doing in Australia and how is the demand for these techniques among Indian filmmakers?

Victoria is home to a highly sophisticated animation and visual effects industry and over half of Australia's computer game industry. Using sophisticated state-of-the-art technology, Victorian visual effects facilities create complex CGI effects and animation sequences, such as morphing, 3D animation, compositing, colour grading, displacement mapping, and warping.

The international-standard training school in Melbourne has produced animators who have won awards in Australia and overseas. The local industry works in all forms of 2D and 3D animation, including cell animation, stop motion and computer generated animation.





# The fast growing film exhibition trade & BLACK CAT'S initiations

*"We are really a unique company who do both production and distribution for Indian films," says Mitu Lange, Executive Producer, Black Cat productions, Australia. An excerpt of her interview with Rojita Padhy.*

**How old is BLACK CAT productions? Being the Executive Producer for India, what do you feel about your company's increasing Bollywood connections?**

BCP is one of the leading production houses in Australia. Managing Director, Marcus Georgiades is a film maker himself.

We also provide local production support to International TVCs and films shot here. When I relocated here from Mumbai two years ago, I joined with the aim to attract work from India.

At IIFA 2002, we met Yash Chopra, who encouraged us to venture into distribution and that is how MG Distribution, which is a sister company of Black Cat, was born.

So, we are really a unique company who do both production and distribution as far as Indian films are concerned.

**You have just recently started the distribution of Indian movies in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Could you talk about the distribution market for Indian movies in Australia?**

When we first met Yashji, he told us about the "grocery store pirates" who ruled Australia. It made little sense to us

research

that all the being bought by a who screened them at halls and China towns. Hence, NO visibility, no mainstream presence and no BO records. In December 2002, for the first time Kaante and Saathiya were screened at mainstream multiplexes. Since then, there has been no turning back. I feel very proud to say that in less than a year we have successfully integrated Indian films with all the mainstream Hollywood blockbusters being screened at the multiplexes.

**BLACK CAT also helps the Indian producers to shoot in Australia. Could you name a few of the Indian Producers who have shot their movies in Australia and what are the facilities you have provided to them?**

We have had many encouraging recces and we have shot successful TV Commercials and a few songs for South Indian films. And we are presently talking about the first Indian film to be completely set and shot in Australia.

**You had recently organized the first Indian Film Festival in Australia. How has it been beneficial to the Australian**

t h e n . O n hing, we found

Indian films were few Grocery stores local Community

there was absolutely



## film Industry in general and to your company in particular?

The Film festival was an extremely rewarding experience. Ninety percent of our patrons were mainstream non Asian Australians and it was overwhelming to see them clap, cheer and cry just like we do. We had to tell them not to go home during the intermission since most of them did not expect it, but over all it was a wonderful experience. We received amazing media and general attention, which made the festival a bigger success. This will be an annual event now. Our Indian actors were being compared to their Hollywood counterparts, and I think we managed to create a whole new loyal audience with the festival.

## How far do you think movies can play a role in bringing India and Australia closer?

Judging by the response to our festival, I think films, especially our wonderfully escapist colourful films, play a big role in creating a lot of interest and excitement about India among Australians. The traditional family values appeal to the Greeks and Italians, the exuberance and colour appeals to the gay demographic and the music, songs attract the younger crowd. So there is something for everyone. Indian films are very hip and universal right now.

## What role do you envisage for yourself in boosting Australian tourism vis-à-vis India?

Well 60 per cent of the patrons at the festival just wanted to go to India right away, learn how to wear the sari and dance! I think Indian films are so visually rich, so romantic that they generate a lot of interest among its viewers to visit India and experience it firsthand. So in a small way, we feel we are helping by bringing some of the best films to the Australian film lovers.

## While co-coordinating with your Indian counterparts, do you face any problem and how do you propose to tackle it?

Since I have been working in India before relocating here, I am aware of our working culture, which is very different from the way things are done here. Its really two extremes and funnily enough both the extremes work. So far, I have been able to balance it out well. Hope it remains that way.

## What are your expectations from the FRAMES 2004, scheduled to be held in March?

I hope it will attract more production work in Australia and we can educate the Indian film-makers about all that Australia has to offer. And we can use this wonderful platform to let the Indian producers know about the changes happening in the Australian market, which is rapidly growing as far as Indian films exhibition is concerned.



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# "I like each and every location in Australia"

**Prahlad Kakkar**

AD Film Director, Genesis Film Production Pvt Ltd.



Recognised by his long hair and beard, easy talk and ready wit, and surrounded by pretty models, Ad filmmaker *Prahlad Kakkar*, has developed a new genre of Ads using subtle humour to drive their message home effectively. This Ad guru has a close affinity with Australia where he shot many a campaign, mesmerized by the beauty of its locales. In an exclusive meeting, *Rojita Padhy* captures some of the thoughts of this Ad genius about Australia.

## **This was during working on the TVS Victor Ad...**

We did not shoot the ad in Australia but we had hired Australian technicians, who are also used in Hollywood, and Australia also has it. The process is called time lapse. This is what the Matrix movie does. You freeze the image in the middle. By setting a number of cameras they shot the image in all angles and with different angles, they showed the image. Therefore, the movement around the object is recorded. They use two things; first by freezing the image and the other by keeping it in movement. In case of non-digital camera, it is very difficult. It was not perfect in terms of rechecking if one or two cameras have not fired during shooting on one scene and what has been recorded. So, we shot this ad film for TVS Victor and then, went back to Australia for editing, using computer graphics and for post-production. We could give a relatively smooth effect to the ad. Now through the digital camera you can actually check frame wise immediately after shooting the shot.

We had shot with 16 beta cameras and five shots in one day. It was quite hectic.

**The infrastructural facilities available in Australia, attract the Indian producers and directors...**

First, you have to see the expenses. The second factor is



the reasonably suitability towards Hollywood. And the third is the country, which has amazing locations. It has rivers, deserts, beaches, mountains, reef, crocodiles. Depends on what you want to shoot.

**While conceptualizing an advertisement, sometimes we keep the location in mind...**

If the ad requires and the clients could afford it then we definitely look for locations.

**I like each and every location in Australia...**

The whole country is beautiful.

**Experience of working in Australia...**

They are very professional in their work. Even the advertising industry has a strong professional work culture. Travel and accommodation part is taken care of by the client and this works quite smoothly.

**Exchange of techniques, shooting movies and TV Commercials, can help in strengthening the bilateral relationship between two**



**Genesis films was started in 1977. The journey so far has been wild...**

We have been known for PEPSI Commercials and that is one of my favourite ads. We have been working with PEPSI for so many years. I live the brand. My personal viewpoint and attitude towards Pepsi is exactly what Pepsi wants of its consumers. I reflect the consumer much more than even the consumer himself, in terms of humour.

**I also like the works of Prasoon Pandey, Black magic and couple of more.**

**Your message to the young advertisers...**

Ninety per cent of the best advertising is done by the 10 per cent of the total population of advertising. Because there is only place on top and no place for the bottom. Twelve percent of the work is shared by the 90 per cent people involved in the profession of advertising. And 90 per cent of the work goes to top 10 per cent of people. Therefore, a new comer needs to identify its right place, as initial days are not free from struggle.

**My hobby is my work...**

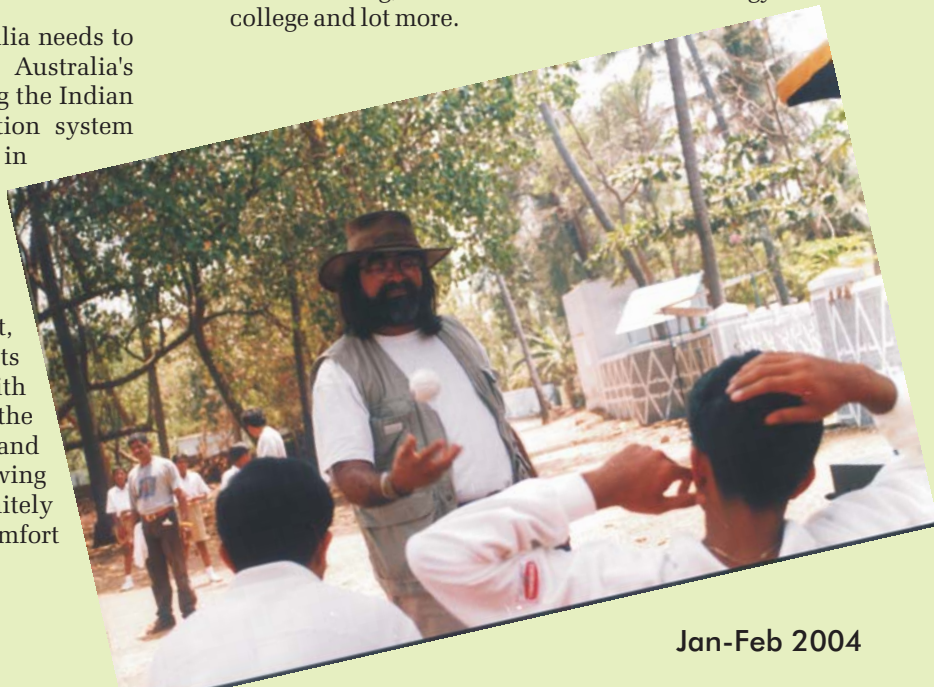
Watching movies, Horse riding, photography, I also plan to launch a cigar brand of my own. And I love cooking. I have many plans for the future but hope all of them materialize. I want to breed horses, I want to buy an island and start a resort there. I would have scuba diving, I want to start a marine biology college and lot more.

**countries...**

However, it will take some time. But Australia needs to market its education system to India. Australia's universities need to create awareness among the Indian students. So, if they market their education system against UK or US that will help not only in student exchange programmes, immigration facilities but also will help in strengthening the ties.

**Future plans...**

We have couple of more projects. Hemant, Cine Oz, is helping us in getting those projects done. I was very comfortable working with him. Being an Indian, he had understood the requirements of ours. We were having a cut and dried budget to work in outdoor and knowing someone from your own country was definitely something encouraging and raises the comfort level to shoot in Australia.



# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## A haven for film-makers world-over

South Australia has gradually grown to become a favourite of many a filmmaker from around the world especially from the subcontinent of India. As a result of this, the South Australian Film Corporation (SAFC) was established in 1972 to help hundreds of feature films, television dramas and documentaries that are shot there, to foster a truly internationally recognized industry in South Australia.

The SAFC is a government agency providing investment, development programs and training support for film, television and first-time media productions. It offers services covering, on location services, assistance to producers, as well as a whole host of facilities ranging from production offices, sound stages and audio post production. The SAFC is member to AusFILM and the Association of Film Commissioners International.

It has for three decades been bringing South Australian locations to cinemas and television screens around the world, first as a film producer and now as an investor and film commission.

### Popular Shootings

South Australia is home to a wide variety of locations, and possesses a reservoir of technical support talent in all areas. Some of the popular site include:

- The moon-like landscapes around Coober Pedy, for example, have been used for movies such as *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*, international sci-fi thrillers *Pitch Black* and *Red Planet* and the Australian cult movie *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*.

- *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *The Tracker* and *Holy Smoke* are among those filmed against the stunning geological backdrop of the Flinders Ranges; *Breaker Morant* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock* were filmed in the Clare Valley; Adelaide has starred in the likes of *Black and White*,

*Australian Rules*, *Innocence*, *Shine* and *Bad Boy Bobby* and various Adelaide Hills locations were used for the recently released *The Honourable Wally Norman*.

- In addition to Feature Film, TV Series such as *McLeod's Daughters* shows the world just what South Australia has to offer.

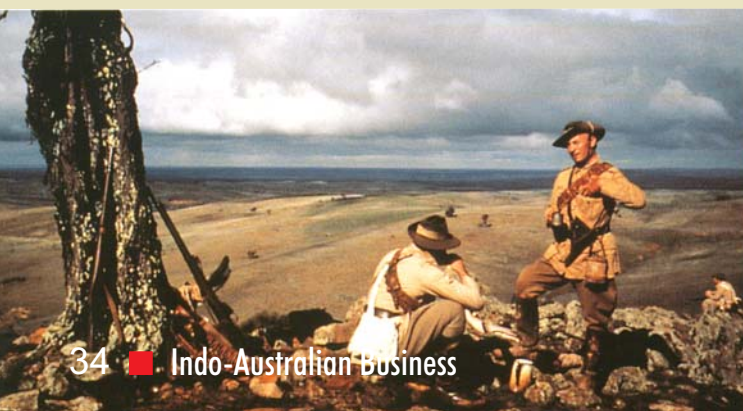
### Production Facilities

The South Australian Film Corporation is considered unique within the Australian film industry as it operates as the only non-privatized film production and sound post-production facility in Australia. The facilities include two sound stages (19 x 35.8 x 6.3 yards and 28.7 x 19 x 6.3 yards) with production offices and work areas for make-up, wardrobe and art department. Post-production facilities include a Dolby Digital mixing theatre - complete with a Harrison Series Twelve mixing consoles, Pro-Tools HD and Fairlight workstations - a post-sync foley and ADR recording studio, SFX library and editing rooms. Full orchestral recordings can also be accommodated.

SAFC is a one-stop shop well-equipped with competitively priced in-house facilities for independent productions.

### Global Competitiveness

There are several elements that have made South Australia an attractive film location. It has an abundance of spectacular and unspoiled locations. On the production front there have been incentives that have been offered. A payroll tax exemption on feature films produced wholly or substantially are worth six per cent of crew wages. Besides,





there are low location fees, free police and fire services. South Australia can provide professional feature and television drama crews, credited post production and vfx houses, production equipment suppliers, experienced cast, good access to locations and cooperative local governments.

The state capital Adelaide also has lots to offer in terms of a film-friendly production base in a compact city, a wide range of accommodation at affordable rates, high quality lifestyle, a temperate Mediterranean climate and of course an international airport.

The quantity and calibre of film production is a testament to South Australia's unique and spectacular locations, talented crew base, world-class post production facilities and the consistent work of the SAFC in marketing SA as a competitive base for film production.

#### **A changing face of Bollywood**

Australian film industry is going to be hearing a lot more about Bollywood. Hundreds of Australians are now being employed on Indian films in Australia and India. Leading Australian DOPs, stunt directors, designers and post production companies are working in India on Indian films and contributing considerably and creatively to Indian cinema and have been winning awards for their work.

Australians have been involved in the Indian film industry since the 1960s when leading Australian cinematographer Tom Gowan shot in South India.

Indian production in Australia has grown rapidly in recent years, a trend that seems set to continue as the industry at home becomes more outward looking. With the current market value sitting around \$3 billion and set to grow at 70 per cent in the next five years, there are significant opportunities and incentives for Australia/India production. In response, the SAFC will continue to target Indian as part of its marketing strategy.

*Nadine Hewson*

*Promotions & Media Liaison Officer*

*South Australian Film Corporation [www.safilm.com.au](http://www.safilm.com.au)*

# FAME Council To Forge Stronger Indo-Australian Ties



Any move that brings two lands of diversity together has always been a matter of interest as it holds a lot of promise for the future. It is therefore not wrong to expect similar outcome from the formation of the Australia-India FAME Council, the first of its kind official organisation. The main objective of this is to develop stronger ties between India and Australia in the Film, Arts, Media, and Entertainment (FAME) industries.

To be headed by Sydney based Film Maker, Anupam Sharma, the organisation has espoused a lot of hope at the AIBC Seminar held in Melbourne for accelerating trade and business ties between India and Australia. Chairman of the Australia India Business council (AIBC) Mr Neville Roach (AO), who announced the setting-up of the FAME Council, highlighted the huge opportunity for mutually beneficial collaboration in film and media, industries in which both countries have achieved global success. Speaking at the seminar, Mr. Anupam Sharma highlighted the exponential growth in India-Australia film links and said that "he was honoured to head the first organization to tap into the potential of Australia-India film trade".

Ms. Caroline Pitcher is the General Manager Film Victoria and Mr. Shabbir Wahid, heads the Victorian Chapter of FAME. The council will have reciprocal links with a similar body in India under the auspices of AIBC's counterpart in India, the India Australia Joint Business Council, which is a member of The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI).

**Trisha Rothkrans, CEO, AusFILM, elaborated upon the aims and objectives of the body. They largely include:**

- A platform providing cohesion to various Australian government and private initiatives that taps the business potential of the Indian film industry for Australians and vice versa.
- Promotion of a two-way film and media trade between India and Australia.
- Contact point for various Australian and Indian private and official organization looking for information and possibility of business between the two film industries.
- Actively lobbying for the establishment of an MOU between India and Australia as the prelude to a co-production treaty between the two countries.
- Consultation and liaison with various departments such

as DIMIA, MEAA, ASDA, and SPAA to facilitate growth of Indian off shore productions in Australia.

- Consultation and liaison with various state film bodies and AUSFILM to further promote the Australian film industry in India, and Indian film opportunities for Australian film professionals.
- An Australian delegation of film professionals to visit India as a part of 'Frames 2004' Conference in Mumbai in March of next year. The delegation has already received support from Indian Tourist Office. This will also involve numerous high-level industry meetings and a selective location and facilities survey in India. The trip will expose the Australian film industry to the potential and benefits of working in conjunction with the Indian film industry.
- A similar delegation of Indian producers to visit Australia in 2004.
- An annual Indian film festival in Australia, and vice versa. As well as relevant themed film seminars in both countries.
- Exchange of film professionals through various programs.
- Inception of awards and festivals to promote the talented and creatively hungry multicultural film fraternity in Australia.

AIBC encourages and welcomes participation by various Australian film organizations, companies, and professionals. The first and only platform of its kind for professionals interested in the exponentially growing Indian film industry and the Indo Australian film links; it is considered to be mutually beneficial, especially for those participating in it in the earliest.



Film production has always been one of the most enterprising segments of industry in Australia. Cine Oz Pty Ltd is amongst one of its leading film production houses motivated by a well-defined philosophy. *Hemant Watsa, Director, Cine Oz, throws light upon some of the most intricate facts that govern its operations in a question and answer session with Rojita Padhy.*

# Exploring Indian Cinema through Cine Oz's Camera

## Tell us something about CineOz and its works?

CineOZ was founded in early 2002, and really, we almost seemed blessed. By early 2003, we had managed to work with a number of well known names, if not market leaders, including: Ram Gopal Varma on "Road", Balaji Telefilms on "Kyunki ...", A TVC with Genesis, and a song for Shanker's "Boys". We also did "Nala Damayanthi" a Tamil film for Raajkamal International, where almost 80% of the film was shot in Melbourne.

Our philosophy is very simple: give the customer the best possible service, and make them feel right at home in Australia. Of course, we are very aware of Australian do's and don'ts' and ensure that the crews do things in the correct way.

We also like challenges, and have taken Indian film crews to places where no Indian crew has been before, including Tasmania, and Kangaroo Island, a World Heritage listed nature reserve off the coast of Adelaide.

## How was your experience working with Ram Gopal Varma and his team while shooting for "Road"?

As you would expect, Ramu has one and only one great passion in his life, films.

Ramu is a complete professional: demanding and unwilling to compromise, but quick to compliment and praise. The entire Australian crew enjoyed the challenge of keeping up to his high standards, and were particularly thrilled that he always acknowledged when things had gone well.

## How far do you think movies can play a role in bringing India and Australia closer?

I think film is only one element of the relationship between India and Australia. And I'm only half joking when I say that films, and everything

else, will always lag far behind cricket! Most people in Australia would recognize an Indian cricketer, more so after the current Test series. I am willing to hazard the opinion that very few would recognize a film star.

That said, film shoots have proven a boon to inbound tourism in countries like Switzerland and New Zealand. With a growing discretionary income, Indians are now much more inclined to travel abroad. Similarly, films like Monsoon Wedding have created much more interest in India than previously. This can only benefit the relationship between the two countries.

Another thing that the CineOZ experience has made quite clear is how much local communities appreciate the presence of Indian productions, for the economic benefit it brings to them.

I believe that it is inevitable that India and Australia will grow closer economically, and films is an important part of that mix

## What are the similarities and differences found in the Australian and Indian film industries?

One major difference is the influence that the star system has on the film industry in India, a situation that is perhaps unique in the world.

Film shoots in Australian productions are very structured, with every little detail pre planned, and almost every shot carefully scheduled. Indian shoots seem to have a more fluid structure, but at the end of it all, the Indian industry is many times bigger than the Australian.

One of the things we emphasize to our Indian customers is the importance of pre planning. It can help improve efficiency, which in turn helps save money. I suppose it is like anything else. The more you plan in advance, the more efficient and streamlined



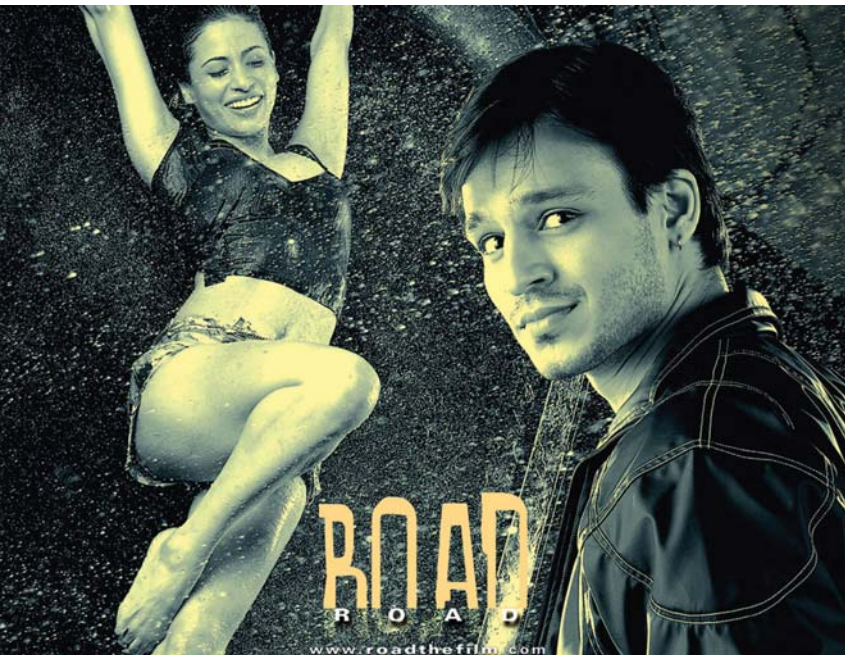
the whole process becomes.

I think there are facets of each that could be adopted by the other, to very good effect.

**What are your expectations from the FRAMES 2004, scheduled to be held in March?**

FRAMES is a good networking opportunity, and a chance to build awareness both of our unique Continent, and the service offered by CineOZ. This in turn helps with lead generating for future projects

**Tell us something about your experience of shooting with**



**Indian AD Gurus for TV Commercials?**

We have done a production with Prahlad Kakar of Genesis Films, and have worked very closely with Nirvana Films from Bangalore, considered one of the emerging hotshops. Of course, in my previous years when I worked in advertising in India, I had the opportunity to work with a number of other directors.

Indian TV commercial production values are like anywhere else in the world, they range from brilliant to mediocre. What's clear though is that as the TV audience is growing in India, so is the standard of production improving. The TVC market in India is becoming more and more competitive, and this is resulting in an overall improvement in the standard.

I believe there is also a generational change taking place in the Indian TVC market, with new young talent that appears to be more willing to take risks.

Of late, the Indian advertising industry seems to have struggled to get large enough budgets for what they would like to see produced, but anecdotal feedback is that this is changing. Hopefully this will mean more productions looking to shoot in our part of the world.

**What are the differences between Indian and Australian**

**Commercials?**

I think it all boils down to production values, and the gap is closing rapidly. We often see scripts sent to us for quoting, which are world class. Similarly, there are commercials I have seen in India that are world class. Like I said before, the quality gap is closing rapidly and Indian clients and ad agencies are becoming more demanding and less likely to take the 'chalta hai' attitude.

**What are the prospects for the joint ventures between Indian and Australian production houses and do you have any plans for entering into one?**

Personally, I am not sure why an Indian production house would look for a foreign tie up, unless they were looking to make crossover films. If they were, Australia is a great place to look at, as the costs are lower than in the US or UK. Additionally, we have a huge pool of very talented people, which is why we are seeing an increasing number of American productions working here.

**What kind of changes do you see in movie making and use of techniques?**

Cinematic heavy-weights including Wim Wenders and George Lucas are making the shift from film to digital. Digital formats, including high-definition, are growing in popularity. Already used in big budget films such as "Star Wars", this is likely to become a more and more popular way of the future.

The benefits of digital film making are numerous, and promise nothing less than to revolutionize the film business by driving down costs and in the process freeing up creative story telling from the traditional financing, production, and distribution practices of the industry.

In effect, a small crew with some high-tech cameras and computers can make movies faster, better, and cheaper. The resulting digital projects can then be distributed not only through traditional theaters, but also through emerging new channels such as the Internet, micro-cinemas in bars and homes, and on other media such as DVDs.

In another few years, as more and more movie theaters become equipped with digital projection systems, most of the film makers will turn digital.

**Apart from shooting, do Bollywood film-makers also take help for postproduction activities?**

CineOZ does not just see the benefits of working with Bollywood. We are also very focused on developing relationships with the industry in South India.

From time to time, we are asked to do post production. For example, the entire postproduction for the Australian song in Shekhar's "Boys" was done in Sydney. This included processing, all the compositions for the time slice sequences, the grade, etc. Similarly, we have done post for TVC producers here.





## More Multiplexes Mean Rising Stakes For ENTERTAINMENT

**Shravan Shroff**

**Profile:** Shravan Shroff, 32, an alumnus of Melbourne Business School, started Shringar Cinemas and with it marked the Company's foray into the film exhibition business in October 1999. He is an active member of the Multiplex Association of India under the aegis of FICCI, and the Co-Chairman of the Entertainment Division of CII. Shravan is a member of the Young Entrepreneurs Organization and is a speaker at numerous industry forums.

**Novelty has always been the hallmark of the Indian Entertainment industry. The first multiplex in Mumbai, Fame Adlabs takes further this trend. And if you want to find out how, do not miss this interview of SHRAVAN SHROFF, with ROJITA PADHY. This young and vibrant mind behind the success of Shringar Cinemas, elaborates the present scenario and future prospects this trend holds.**

**We have introduced a new concept in the entertainment industry, which is 'Unique Movie Viewing Experience'...**

We want to make the Indian film Industry a part of the service sector. In an environment where content is accessible to all, one must look at other platforms as the differentiator. For us, benchmarking customer service and maintaining consistency at all times is the key. We want to provide our guests with more than just good movies - good ambiance, convenience in ticketing, fun filled environment- a real treat each time they visit us. We want them to feel special each time they visit us.

**From Fame Adlabs, the first multiplex in Mumbai to the launch of five more multiplexes across India the acceptance for multiplexes among the Indian movie buffers is rising day by day...**

It is a nascent market, which is growing rapidly. Thus, movie viewers are still at the discovery phase. There always existed a gap visa-vie customer expectation and the real experience when it came to service. For the viewers it is a welcome change.

**There is a tremendous prospect for the multiplex business in India...**

As I have said earlier, it is a growing business at its early stages of evolution. India is a under screen country and more so when it comes to quality movie viewing options. We foresee a rapid growth in this segment with more corporates venturing into Multiplexing.

**Shringar Films have always been one step ahead. Now from distribution and exhibition we are moving towards the Digital Cinema concept...**

Digital films are the future of filmmaking. Digital technology makes film making cost effective. A full-length film with digital technology can be made in less than one crore. In the exhibition, side digital projection will make single day release of film across the nation a reality. It will also attempt to address the concern of piracy. In short, digitalization will revolutionize the face of Indian cinema. Soon we will be announcing our venture into this

segment.

**As a member of the Multiplex Association of India & Chairman of the Entertainment Division of CII at a very young age...**

I am happy and proud to be part of these committees, I have never considered age to be a factor that would determine one's involvement in any committee. If one can contribute to the growth of the same, then age is not a deterrent at all.

**To name the foreign movies whose distribution is done by Shringar Films in India...**

We have distributed films such as Life is Beautiful (English), Baran (an Iranian Film).

**The major differences between Australian and Indian movie techniques...**

I am not sure of the same because I was not involved in the production side of movies there. However, Australia is like the West as far as the distribution and the exhibition markets go. Further, I must add that in recent days, India has caught up with the systems and processes that we use in the distribution and exhibition sector.

**The opportunities for the foreign film directors and producers who want to venture into Bollywood are immense...**

Its still an untapped market and only recently producers like Gurinder Chadda have come forward and the response of Bollywood to her film *Bend it like Beckham* has been commendable. Exchange of talent always results in higher quality output.

**Our future plans...**

**Exhibition:** We plan to take the brand Fame outside Mumbai. A nation wide expansion is what we are aiming at. We already have nine projects in hand starting with two additional properties in Mumbai, two in Kolkatta, one in Bangalore, one in Nasik, one in Surat and one in Pune.

With the launch of Fame Inorbit, our property in Malad, Mumbai, we will also launch Mumbai's first business class theater.

We are in the threshold of launching our digital venture, which is a logical extension as we are the market leaders in the distribution segment and are also a leading player in film exhibition.

**Distribution:** Our focus presently is to acquire niche movies and strategically promote them within Indian territories.

## Indian and Australian scholars promote study of Australia

**T**he second International Conference of the Indian Association for the Study of Australia (IASA), organized by the Australian High Commission and the Jawaharlal Nehru University, in partnership with the Australia India Council, was held in Delhi from January 15 to 17.

The conference, under the theme 'Australia - Identity, Representation and Belonging', brought together over 100 academics from various disciplines, including 32 from Australia.

"The conference is being organized at a time when Indian interest in Australia, including in the key area of education, is growing strongly. Australia is capturing the Indian imagination," said

Before the start of the conference, the Australian High Commissioner to India, Ms Penny Wensley AO said that it would animate new appreciations of each other's societies. "It will be an important contribution to the development of closer relations, not only between our academic communities and scholars, but also between our two countries," she added.

More than 100 papers were presented at the conference, addressing a wide range of subjects, including defence and regional security, science and technology and the globalization of trade as well as traditionally popular areas such as Australia's highly-regarded modern literature.

"The variety of topics being discussed shows an obvious expansion of interest in Australia among Indian scholars and students. The increased attention to contemporary subjects and issues reflects the way the bilateral relationship is evolving, towards a more mature, modern relationship," Ms Wensley added.

The conference was sponsored by the Australia-India Council (AIC), established by the Australian Government to promote people to people links between the two countries. Professor Karan Singh, Chancellor of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, inaugurated the conference.

The conference was the first major education event organized by the Australian High Commission following the visit to India in October 2003 of the Australian Minister of Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson MP. During Dr Nelson's visit a formal agreement was signed establishing an Education Exchange Program between the Australian and Indian governments

AIC Chairman, Mr Michael Abbott QC said he would expect the conference to be a catalyst for a much broader interest in Australian studies in India and, as one outcome, should lead to an increase in the number of courses offered by Indian Universities in modern Australian literature, including the work of indigenous authors.

The AIC announced in November 2003 that six fellowships for the study of Australia would be offered in 2004 as part of its Australian studies program. The 2004 fellowships, applications for which close in late January 2004, will build further links between Australian and Indian universities with a view to increasing teaching and research on Australia.

## Australian visa regulation changes to benefit Indian students

**T**he Australian Government has announced a number of changes to its student visa regulations that will expand the opportunities for Indian students to study in Australia.

These changes, which came into effect on 1 December 2003, have reduced by at least 33 per cent the financial requirements for an undergraduate student visa application and for the first time recognize bank loans as a valid means of financing vocational education studies in Australia.

Welcoming the changes, the Australian High Commissioner to India, Ms Penelope Wensley AO commented, "The reduction of financial requirements for undergraduate students will make an undergraduate degree in Australia a more attractive proposition for those Indian students considering studying overseas."

"Australia is already a highly-favoured destination for Indian post-graduate students, but we are keen to encourage larger numbers of undergraduate students to make Australia their first choice."

"Stronger educational links in all sectors and areas of study will strengthen our relations and bring significant and lasting benefit to both countries."

"The change to the financial requirements for vocational education studies will also expand access for Indian students to Australia's world-class vocational education and training institutions," the High Commissioner added. "The practical, vocationally oriented study that Australia offers is particularly well-suited to the needs of India's rapidly developing modern economy."

Over the past year, there has been a substantial increase in the number of student visas being issued by the Australian Visa Office in New Delhi and this strong growth trend is expected to continue, especially with the latest changes implemented on 1 December 2003.

Currently, over 90 per cent of the 12,000 Indian students studying in Australia are undertaking post-graduate studies in Information Technology, Engineering, Management, Accounting, Applied Science and Hospitality. However, new fields of study such as Biotechnology, Communication Studies, and Art and Design are also becoming popular with Indian students. This shows increasing recognition in India of the across-the-board quality and diversity of opportunities offered by Australian education institutions.



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