



## Executive committee members

### President

Dr. Gurdip Aurora

T: +61 (3)9763 5005

M: +61 (4)1735 7715

[president@aisv.org.au](mailto:president@aisv.org.au)

### Vice President

Dr. Manjula O'Connor

T: +61 (4)1935 4482

[Manjula@aisv.org.au](mailto:Manjula@aisv.org.au)

### Secretary

Shivani Lamba

T:(04)1215 5424

[shivani@aisv.org.au](mailto:shivani@aisv.org.au)

### Treasurer

Uma Ganapathireddy

T:(04)1534 1627

[uma@aisv.org.au](mailto:uma@aisv.org.au)

## Committee members

Aanchal Sood

T:(04)3098 2330

[aanchal@aisv.org.au](mailto:aanchal@aisv.org.au)

Jasvinder Sidhu

T:(04) 3365 8273

[sidhu@aisv.org.au](mailto:sidhu@aisv.org.au)

Raj Kumar Dhamodra Swamy

T:(04) 3785 2450

[raj@aisv.org.au](mailto:raj@aisv.org.au)

## Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.

1401 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby  
VIC 3179, Australia

Email : [aisv@aisv.org.au](mailto:aisv@aisv.org.au)

<http://www.aisv.org.au>

<http://www.aisv.com.au>

## Australia India Society Of Victoria makes History

Australia India Society of Victoria (AISV) was bestowed the highest honour the 'Bharatiya Pravasi Samman Award' at the 11th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) held in Kochi, Kerala on 9<sup>th</sup> of this month. The President of India, Mr Pranab Mukherjee presented the award to the current president of AISV, Dr. Gurdip Aurora at a glittering ceremony in the Le Meridian hotel, attended by over 2000 delegates and media from all over the world. The Prime Minister, Mr Manmohan Singh inaugurated the event. Dr Aurora was specially flown to Kochi by the Government of India to receive the award.



HITESH HARISINGHANI/REDIFF.COM  
Dr Gurdip Aurora, President Australia India Society of Victoria receiving the Bharatiya Samman Award from the President of India, the Hon. Pranab Mukherjee.

AISV, which was founded in 1963 by the late Prof. Alexander

Boyce Gibson, has continued to serve the Indian community during the past 50 years. According to Dr Gurdip Aurora, "This is an award not only for AISV but for all the Indians in Victoria. It has been the culmination of the hard work and commitment of its past Presidents, its executive and ordinary committee members. It would not have been possible to last this long without the support given to it by the Indians in Victoria". Further he mentions AISV has sought to improve and strengthen the quality of relations between Australia and India through their interactions with the Government, the media and the people who are directly affected by these issues. AISV has been actively involved with Local, State and Federal Government agencies to ensure that issues affecting the migrants and Indian-Australians are not overlooked. The organisation has established a task-force to help the victims of domestic violence in Indian ethnic communities.

## Inside this newsletter

President's message on Plight of Women in India

Page 2

VMC Awards Of Excellence Citation, Vice-President's Message & Republic Day Function Information

Page 3,4

Annual Membership New/Renewal Application form

Page 5

## President's Message

The brutal rapes that have recently occurred in India have brought back vivid memories of a rape case I attended to four decades ago in a New Delhi Hospital. Nothing has changed in my motherland that I left 40 years ago. In fact, new reports indicate a rape in India occurs every 18 minutes, with Delhi being labelled the rape capital of India.

It was 1972 and my final year of MD in Internal medicine. I was in the out patients clinic one day when a 23 year old Australian girl came to see me. She told me she wanted to be checked for venereal disease as she had been raped a day earlier. On further questioning she told me that she had taken a taxi from Agra to New Delhi. She had started talking to the taxi driver about her experiences in India. The driver then requested her permission to detour to his village 'to see his mother'. There he picked up two more men and the three repeatedly gang raped her.



Dr. Gurdip Aurora

Appalled, I asked the girl if she had reported the attack to the police. 'She had not done so and was unwilling to change her mind, despite my attempts to convince her otherwise.

After a thorough medical examination, necessary tests and administration of appropriate antibiotics, I took her to the office of my professor of medicine, hoping that the lady professor may be able to convince the young girl to report the rape to the police. The Professor heard the girl's story from her again and told me that there was no point in reporting this case to the police. She told me that the girl had already gone through a severely traumatic experience, that the police were not trained to deal with rape and assault cases and that the girl would likely be humiliated further by repeated interrogation.

The professor went on to inform me that, should the girl report the incident to police, it was highly likely her passport would be confiscated and she would be prevented from leaving the country. She told me that the court case would likely not be heard for years, during which time the girl would be put through 'hell'. She advised me to ensure the girl's test results were clear and then send her back to Australia.

Even in this day and age female Infanticide and female foeticide is very prevalent in rural India. According to Gulshun Rehman, health program development adviser at Save the Children UK "In India, women and girls continue to be sold as chattels, married off as young as 10, burned alive as a result of dowry-related disputes and young girls exploited and abused as domestic slave labour".

"This is despite a ground breaking progressive Domestic Violence Act enacted in 2005 outlawing all forms of violence against women and girls. "A global poll has concluded that Infanticide, child marriage and slavery ranks India the worst G20 country for a woman".

Little has changed in India in relation to rape and attitudes towards women in the past 40 years and, I do not believe much will change after the present incident. The reason for my pessimism is the rampant corruption that has taken hold of India. Over sixty percent of the MP's in the Federal and State parliaments have criminal records or indictments against them. There are seventeen known MP's in Federal parliament who have court cases pending against them for serious sexual assault and rape. Corruption and bribery has affected the police, the armed forces and the judiciary. The only way the situation can be rectified is through an amendment to the constitution of India, which would require a majority vote by the members of each house of parliament. With over sixty per cent of MPs corrupt, this is impossible.

How can any individual get justice in the prevailing environment? Has democracy failed India? I think so.

## VMC Awards of Excellence CITATION 18 December 2012

Strengthening cultural Diversity by Service Delivery in the area of Women's Health

Apart from her distinguished professional career in the medical field Dr Manjula O'Connor's extensive volunteerism with the Indian and broader community is also to be commended. In 2009 Dr O'Connor was instrumental in forming the Taskforce Against Domestic Violence in Indian and Ethnic Communities. The taskforce was formed in response to increasing reports of domestic violence and other communities. The Taskforce works to raise awareness about domestic violence, what constitutes domestic violence, when and where to go for help as well as researching social causes of domestic violence.



Dr. Manjula O'Connor with Premier Ted Baillieu

## Vice-President's Message

### LOSS OF SEXUAL SELF-CONTROL GOES UN-PENALISED ;NEEDS HONEST SELF-EXAMINATION BY ALL

Gang Rape of a 23 year old woman in a bus in India at 10 pm one night a couple of weeks ago and there were onlookers who did nothing! She died of cerebral oedema and internal injuries.

When bad things happen how we as society manage them? Things *have to be swept under the carpet. The family honour is more important. Everything has to be (kept) within. No one from outside should know. We are a society of Double standards.* Writes a blogger in Times of India today.

When things are unpalatable we use Denial, Avoidance and Suppression as psychological dense mechanisms. 1 in 10 rapes in India are reported. An example of denial of the problem.

Are the children in the Indian home taught how to handle sexual urges? OR is it that Denial, Avoidance and Suppression get in the way of Indian home.

The girls --yes they are taught; we tell them 'your behaviour ( sexual behaviour) will determine the honour of this family'. SO - do not go out with boys; do not even look at them, no boyfriends, and definitely no sex before marriage. Those behaviours will bring dishonour to the family, people in our kinship will gossip, i.e. in temples and Gurdwara women will whisper and men will make lurid sexual remarks about the girl's loose character!.

Now what about the boy – what is he taught as a young lad regarding his sexual behaviour? Is he taught that he has a weapon of rape and that as a decent man he must exercise self-control when it comes to sexual impulses? Is he taught that boys and men's bodies, and brain have powerful sexual urges which need to be controlled by mental will power and self control. Will power and self-control is a discipline that is taught by mothers and fathers. Do we teach our young males that self control is an essential quality and one that will make them dignified adults and their behaviour will shows respect for our culture? That lack of self control will make their behaviour indistinguishable from animals? Do we teach them with examples like- 'do not stare at girls; do not sexually attack girls; *sex must only occur in an adult loving and consensual situation* where the two adults have equal power. That older men never should sexually abuse young girls - be they daughters, nieces, friends, or strangers. That this type of behaviour is damaging to our entire culture and society. It degrades all of us and defiles our girls and women.

Not speaking about sex openly has led to a situation where *1 in 2 girls are reporting sexual abuse from their family members in India according to Satyamave Jayate TV program.* Rape has become commonly reported occurrence in India.

Sex education has been banned in schools of India- why is that? Why is the issue of sex being swept under the carpet? Are Indians non-sexual? How do they reproduce children?



Why are the rapists not brought to book? Because those in power are men. In a male dominated society, rules are made for the men, by the men and for the men- be it the home or organisations, or the governments. The laws of equality in India are just on paper for women; they are not real as far as women are concerned and are surely not enacted. The police are the guardians of the laws of any country. When the police themselves are capable of bad sexual attitudes where can the women turn?

### **Rape is a crime that goes un-penalised in India.**

Some comments on Face book- *Why was she out late at night? she was with her boyfriend!*, And implied in it is a question – was there sexual activity between the two? Why is this question even arising? THE QUESTION should be - why is there an obsession with the young woman's sexual behaviour? Why IS THERE NO obsession with the bad behaviour of men who acted like animals and criminals? They are the ones who have the weapon of rape!! And they have the ability to engage in a criminal activity. Why do such men feel so confident of behaving like crazed animals in public? Why do they feel so confident that the law will never catch up with them and punish them? People in positions of power have to be brave enough to answer these questions.

It seems the society says to the family –you teach your sons how to behave properly ;that appears to be happening in some families only. The laws of the country do not act when the behaviours of men go bad. In the mean time the badly behaved men are getting away with blue murder literally.

Decent men need to stand up and start a campaign against bad men who are sexual criminals; against men who defile and rape the women in their families, in their marriage , in the streets, in buses and in dark alleys; to look for ways of enforcing good laws within homes and outside.

In a recent survey on the quality of life for women in G-20 nations, the results concluded the best country in the world for women was Canada , Australia was number 4 , USA was number 7 and guess where was India - the very last at 20<sup>TH</sup>. Even Saudi Arabian women occupying 19<sup>th</sup> place are fairing better than us Indian women. There needs to be a deep soul searching .Why is this happening to Indian women, why must we suffer in silence and dare not speak up. You may ask is this happening in Australia. Our research has confirmed that it is happening here in Melbourne. Women are raped within their marriage; girls are sexually abused by fathers and uncles.

Thank God there are decent men here in Melbourne who are standing up against this heinous of all crimes. I have just received a message that a prayer vigil will be held in Melbourne and in Sydney in honour of the raped girl who is now dead. May there be many more such men who openly speak against and condemn sexual abuse, rape, incest and Domestic Violence. And encourage self control in young and old men alike.

## **Republic day Celebration**

Australia India Society of Victoria is celebrating 64th Indian Republic Day/Australia Day along with Celebration of AISV having received the Bhartiya Parvasi Samman Awards, highest honour conferred by the Indian Government to an Indian Association or person outside India on Saturday 23rd February at 7.00PM at

**[The Metropol Receptions, Level 1, 370 Clayton Road, Clayton -3168.](#)**

The format of the evening is a cultural program and a three course dinner (BYO Alcohol). Soft drinks will be provided

Tickets \$40 for Members, \$45 for Non-members and \$35 for Pensioners

For bookings contact the committee members

**Annual Membership - New/Renewal Application Form**



New Application .....Renewal.....

Title/s .....

First Name.....Surname.....

Partner/Spouse's First Name.....Surname.....

Children's names

1.....

2.....

3.....

Address

.....

City .....Post Code .....

Tel (B/H) .....Tel: (A/H) .....

Mobile: .....

Email:

.....

Other Details: (Hobbies, Interests)

.....

Would you be interested to join the committee of AISV Yes ..... No.....

Membership Category (Circle one) Life: \$500, Family: \$80, Concession: \$50, Single: \$50

Do you want a receipt Yes/ No

I hereby apply/renew membership of AISV in the above category. I am aware of the rules and regulations of the society.

Signature / Date

Membership Application may be sent to:

1401 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby, VIC-3179