

## Diwali becomes an important festival of Australia

By : Surinder Jain.

After Australia abolished its whites only immigration policy in the 60s, Indians started migrating to Australia for education and work. Today there are over 450,000 Hindus in Australia who call Australia home.



Marriage Procession through the streets of Parramatta

For many decades Diwali celebrations were a private affair among family or temples. All that

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changed in 1998 when Hindu Council of Australia started celebrating Diwali at a grand scale in Paramatta Park in western Sydney. Twenty years later, the twentieth year of Diwali in Australia has been a turning point in the history of Indians in Australia.



Multicultural Australia has accepted Hindus and Indians and have accepted Diwali as a significant Australian celebration, significant enough for the Prime Minister and the Premier to visit and celebrate Diwali festivities. Members of Parliament from all shades of politics joined them. Most MPs were dressed in either Sarees, Salwar Kameez or Indian Kurta.

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Diwali 2018 Parramatta

Their presence at the festival adorning Indian clothes is a manifestation of Australians having accepted Indians and Hindus as their own.

This Diwali also marks another significant change in Australia. Main stream and very popular radio show hosts like ABC Sydney Radio Breakfast show hosted by Robbie and Wendy and listened to by thousands driving to their work in the morning, welcomed Diwali in their program.

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Robbie Buck and Wendy Harmer.  
Credit: ABC Radio Sydney Breakfast

Such inclusion of Diwali in opinion setting Radio shows and presence of political powerful in festivities is something we Hindus feel proud of. We benefit from the success of and feel proud to have called Australia home. Let's return the favour and make Australia proud of us.

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