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## Cairns Indian community welcomes all to free family-friendly festival

The Cairns Indian Community welcomes everyone to attend the 10th annual Durga Puja festival on Sunday which includes delicious food, wonderful music and dance. Read what's on offer.

Alison Paterson

less than 2 min read September 30, 2022 - 5:00AM The Cairns Post

0 comments



The Edge Hill State School will feature a rainbow of saris, fragrant foods and Bollywood dance moves on Sunday as the Cairns Indian community gathers to celebrate the 10th annual Durga Puja Festival.

According to one of the organisers, Jaydip Sengupta, this [free family-friendly event](#) is marvellous opportunity to bring your friends and enjoy a fun event.



Last week Mr Sengupta and other organisers gathered at the Esplanade in their beautifully designed traditional festival attire to promote the event.

As many visitors stopped to admire the kaleidoscope of colour in the women's saris and the men's dohtis, Mr Sengupta explained the festival's origins.

"The festival starts at 9am, and commemorates the victory of the goddess Durga over a demon," he said with a smile.

"It is one of India's grandest annual festivals and is also one of the most inclusive, being participated by everyone across all communities and we look forward to seeing lots of locals and visitors."



The Cairns Indian community including (L-R) Donna Sengupta, Ivy Roy, Priyanka Biswas, Kripa Roy, Mridula Kayal, warmly welcome one and all to the 10th annual Durga Puja Festival at Edge Hill State School on October 2. Picture: Nuno Avendano

“This festival has been celebrated in Cairns for the past 10 years,” Mr Sengupta said.

“The celebrations include not only the Indian diaspora in Cairns and neighbouring regions, but being an open invitation to everyone across all communities.”



The Cairns Indian community welcomes one and all to the family-friendly 10th annual Durga Puja Festival on October 2. Here (Front L-R) Riana Roy, Ayushman Biswas, Iona Nandi and (Back L-R) Eshana Saikia, Kiara Roy, Kritika Biswas, Imon Nandi, show off their dance moves. Photo: Nuno Avendano

Mr Sengupta said while Durga Puja was celebrated in Australia’s capital cities, for the festival to have an ongoing presence in regional communities was very special.

“Currently multiple celebrations happen in the large metropolitans like Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth,” he said.

“It’s not very common in regional towns like Cairns, so this is quite unique.”

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## Cairns Indian community celebrates 10th Durga Puja festival at Edge Hill State School

The annual Durga Puja festival offered a colourful window into the diversity of the food, music and culture of the Cairns Indian community. Read about the festival, see the photos here.

Alison Paterson

 less than 2 min read [October 3, 2022 - 4:00PM](#) [The Cairns Post](#)

Families and friends enjoyed the colourful, cultural fun – and the delicious Bengali menu – as the Cairns Indian community celebrated its [10th annual Durga Puja Festival](#) on Sunday.

Jaydip Sengupta, one of the festival organisers, said the event held at Edge Hill State School attracted roughly 200 guests.

He said the group were “very pleased” with the response.



Ivy Roy, Mridula Kayal and Donna Sengupta perform a traditional West Bengalese folk dance with other Indian women at the Durga Puja Indian Festival, held at Edge Hill State School on Sunday. Picture: Brendan Radke

“We were very happy with how it all went with so many people turning up and supporting the festival,” he said.

“I think the folk cultural event which included children dancing was well received too.”

“I think the folk cultural event which included children dancing was well received too.”



Ivy Roy, Mridula Kayal, Donna Sengupta, Sayantane Saika and Biyanka Biswas perform a traditional West Bengalese folk dance at the Durga Puja Indian Festival, held at Edge Hill State School on Sunday. Picture: Brendan Radke

Mr Sengupta said the complimentary lunch was very popular with guests.

“We served Bengali cuisine and as this is a festival it was vegetarian food,” he said.

“The menu included spiced rice, dal, a mixed vegetable curry and cottage cheese.”



Donna Sengupta, (centre) leads a traditional West Bengalese folk dance at the Durga Puja Indian Festival, held at Edge Hill State School on Sunday. Picture: Brendan Radke

The diversity of guests from different backgrounds and communities across the Cairns region added to the festival, Mr Sengupta said.



A traditional West Bengalese folk dance is performed at the Durga Puja Indian Festival, held at Edge Hill State School on Sunday. Picture: Brendan Radke

“It was a really good community turnout, lots of inclusiveness and support and appreciation we received was lovely.

“We certainly want to continue with this annual festival into the future.”

Cairns Regional Council Cr Cathy Zeiger said the city’s diverse groups were woven into the multicultural fabric of the community.

“It’s colourful, vibrant and friendly and I love how they love to share with our community.”



Members of the Indian community watch a traditional West Bengalese folk dance performance at the Durga Puja Indian Festival, held at Edge Hill State School on Sunday. Picture: Brendan Radke