

Indian culture showcased at annual Utsav celebration

Hundreds of people turned out for the event, which featured traditional Indian food and dances

By Jared Paben
Senior News Reporter

Nearly 500 people celebrated with the Students of the Indian Subcontinent on Friday night in the group's fifth-annual Utsav celebration.

As many as 100 people came from the Portland area alone to participate in Utsav, which means "festival" in Sanskrit, SIS co-Director Edwin Prasad said. Prasad added that Friday's celebration does not coincide with any Indian holiday.

Dancer and SIS member Gibran AzamAli said the event was simply an opportunity to promote Indian culture locally.

Utsav is the second-largest cultural celebration at the University, trailing only behind International Night festivities, said Prasad, who organized the event.

The celebration started at 5:30 p.m. with a traditional Indian dinner, followed by a skit, some traditional and not-so-traditional dances and a fashion show in the EMU Ballroom.

Prasad said there are many reasons

why crowds of people throng to the celebration every year. First, he said Indians in Eugene find it a good opportunity to congregate, meet and reconnect with others in their culture. Second, there seems to be a widespread fascination with Indian culture, he said.

"The show and the glitter of Indian culture appeals to a lot (of people)," he said.

AzamAli, who has participated in the event for the past four years, said people come because the taste of Indian culture showcased by the event is completely different from anything else in Eugene. He also said the skit segment offers insight into the way Indians view the world.

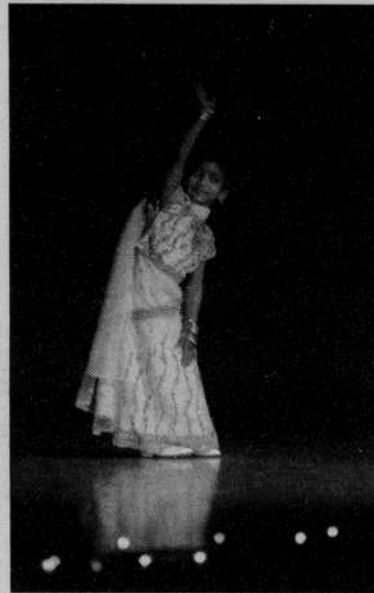
He offered a third explanation for the hearty turnout: the food.

"I think the first thing is the food," he said. "I've seen people just stay for the food and leave for the show."

Some of the dishes served were a curry cheese dish called Shahi Paneer, a lentil soup called Daal Makhni, Chicken Korma and Naan bread.

One of the stars of Friday night's show was 4-year-old Priyanka Manda, who danced the Dayya Dayya and drew cheers and a roaring applause from the crowd.

Manda, who taught herself the dance in four days, said she wanted to



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Four-year-old Priyanka Manda performs the Dayya Dayya dance during Friday night's Utsav celebration in the EMU ballroom.

dance "(because) I'm a small kid and everybody will be impressed at me."

She added that her favorite part of dancing is running around and spinning.

Throwing some spontaneity into this year's celebration, event organizers and volunteers celebrated event

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Annual China Night focuses on old, new Taiwanese culture

Organized by the Chinese Student Association, the event included hip-hop dancing, food and a play

By Reese Lee
Freelance Reporter

Students and community members were greeted by young ladies dressed in glossy silk cheongsams as they entered the EMU Ballroom on Sunday evening. The occasion was China Night 2004, an annual event organized by the Chinese Student Association. CSA organizes China Night to present centuries of Chinese culture, and this year's theme was Taiwan.

After the food, which was prepared by CSA, was served, the program began with Chinese New Year songs sung by a group of students from the Eugene Chinese School. The night continued with a play titled "Oh, Formosa" that lasted the entire duration



Danielle Hickey Photo Editor

(Left to right) Freshman Tina Chen, senior Joanna Cheng and freshman Kimberly Chan present Chinese goods to graduate student Hani Attia at China Night in the EMU Ballroom Sunday night.

of the event.

The play showcased different aspects of traditional and contemporary Taiwan, including a Tai-Chi display by the Chinese Kung Fu Tai Chi Academy, hip-hop dance, rope-skipping, Taiwanese "A-mei" tribal dance and a

performance on the yang qin, a traditional Chinese musical instrument.

Senior Vickie Liang, who has been involved with China Night for the past two years, said this year's event

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CORRECTION

In "Groups lose funds due to no-shows" (ODE, Jan. 26), the story stated that House of Film was de-funded because members of the group failed to show up to an ASUO Programs Finance Committee meeting. However, members of House of Film made the decision to switch from PFC funding to fund-raising several months prior to the hearing. The group is still active, although not supported with incidental fees, and director and president Bryan J. Buck said in an e-mail that members are currently working on a feature-length film. The Emerald regrets the error.

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