

Didi Nirmala's visit to Australia 19-29 August 2022

Melbourne

Didi's homecoming to Australia on August 19 for Raksha Bandhan brought back lots of happy memories and a hive of activity in Baxter (Peninsula Retreat Centre) began a few days before her arrival with making of desserts and tolis, and the festivities kept flowing while Didi was here.

She arrived in Melbourne with Pravina Bahen from Mulund centre, Mumbai, and went directly to the Peninsula Retreat Centre where she was greeted by Brother Charlie, centre residents and other students who arrived early to receive her. The festivities started with late dinner and a chat chit in the lounge.



Arrival dinner with Didi.

Three major programs were organised over the following two days, while some students who could not come for the official programs arrived on Monday and Tuesday to meet Didi and tie Rakhi.

The main program on Sunday was run with simultaneous sessions; one for children with Pravina Bahen and adults were in the Experience Room for their Rakhi.

This created a smooth flow for the guests as well as maintaining the silence and serenity of the occasion.



Rakhi with Didi, Sister Jacquie and Sister Christine.

Each session started with the offering of bhog and ended with special full meals, sweets and catching up amongst families. It is estimated that more than 380 souls enjoyed Rakhi and each other's company in the five days that Didi was at the retreat centre.

Pravina Bahen, Parveen Bahen, Vaibhavi Bahen and Arti Bahen having Rakhi with children.



On Tuesday Didi visited the Yarra Valley Retreat Centre briefly and tied Rakhi to 30 plus contact souls and Brahmins.
On Wednesday 24 August, Didi and Br Charlie went to the airport via with a quick stopover to see the new Centre at Fairfield and also visited the sisters at Fitzroy.



Catching up with Didi – Sister Pamela and Sister Kalvinder

Christine Bahen, Charlie Bhai and Didi visited the new site.

Pravina Bahen stayed an extra day and toured the local animal sanctuary, the chocolate factory and the Penguin Parade on Philip Island. She left on Thursday morning for Canberra before heading to Sydney.



Receiving toli and blessings from Didi before the 'Go Soon Come Soon' see-off.

Sydney

Arriving in Sydney, Didi was welcomed at Five Dock centre with a dance and BKs with Shiv Baba flags.

Didi read Murli from Thursday to Monday and gave a short class on the weekend days. Thursday 25 August was Dadiji's day and Didi shared a few stories about the sweetness and other qualities of Dadiji.



During Didi's visit in Sydney there were four rakhi ceremonies with a full hall each time. Over 400 souls had rakhi tied in Sydney. Didi gave drishti and applied a tilak while other sisters tied rakhi and gave toli and special hand-made blessings.



The first session on Thursday night was for contact souls and BKs. On Saturday there were rakhi ceremonies in the morning and evening. The morning rakhi was built into a half day retreat coinciding with the Global Bhatti

including Sr Jayanti's class online and time for yoga and lunch. The Saturday evening group enjoyed dinner after having their rakhi tied. The final final rakhi session was on Sunday morning after breakfast. Before each session Didi reminded everyone about the significance of rakhi being to tie the thread of making a promise to finish the weaknesses within.

As Didi was not travelling to other centres, it was quite a confluence at Five Dock centre with waves of BKs coming in turn. Apart from around Sydney, a group came by car from Canberra (approx. 3hrs), others from the two retreat centres near Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and a few from regional areas.



Didi with the Five Dock centre team.

Sr Pravina had travelled from Melbourne to Sydney via Canberra. During her trip – a few days longer than Didi's - she also had the chance to visit the retreat centres in Sydney and the Gold Coast centre. She very sweetly read Murli in English for the first time on her last day at Five Dock. With Br Charlie and a small group she visited a new place that has been rented for service.



Didi bade farewell on Monday morning 29 August. It was a beautiful gift in drama to have her presence in Australia and the BK family enjoyed very much getting together to see her. Om shanti.