

Indian festival of lights



Diwali delights: More than 400 people turned out at Queen Elizabeth College on Saturday night, as the city joined its Indian population in celebrating the Diwali festival of lights. Central Districts Indian Association president Paul Patel said the hall was at full capacity for the event, which saw performances of Bollywood, Bhangra, and traditional dancing. Hem Choksi and Kriti Saja, pictured, perform popular traditional Indian song *Chori Chori Makhan*. Joining in the festivities were New Zealand Indian Central Association president Ratilal Champaneri, alongside Palmerston North Mayor Jono Naylor. Next year organisers want to go even bigger and hold the 2010 Diwali festival in The Square, Mr Patel said. "Everyone is very positive and we know that we will have the support of the Mayor. It is in its early stages – however with Diwali next year falling on Guy Fawkes day, Friday, November 5, it lends itself to a more traditional Indian New Year celebration where alongside lamps, the letting off of fire crackers is also a big part." Diwali is a growing celebration, and is now celebrated in most major New Zealand cities.

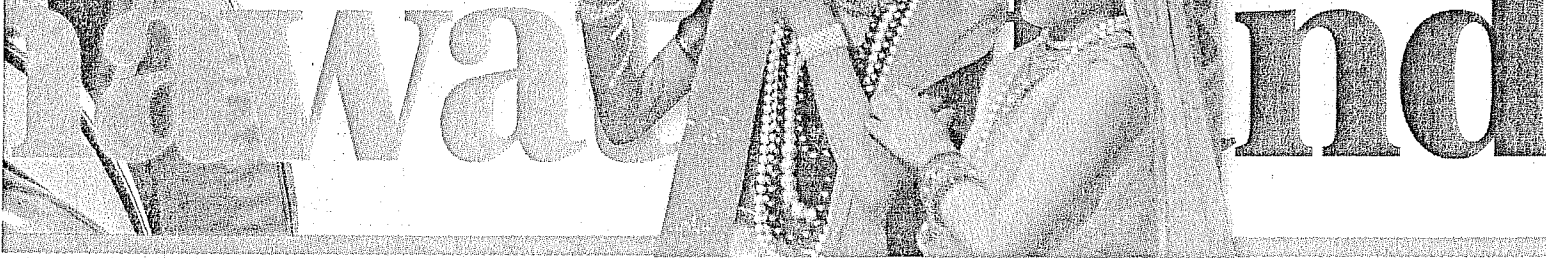
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