

INDIAN RESTAURANTS AND KINGFISHER BEER



Kingfisher Beer is a very pleasant lager, served cold in the Australian manner, and the recommended tippable for Indian Restaurants in Paris, of which there are a large number around the Gare du Nord. It is also in these restaurants over dinner and beer that some of the progress of COP21 seems to be made. As in so many other fields of endeavour, including the church, it is the informal meeting and socialising over a meal that actually breaks through logjams. Also, you meet friends of friends whom you would not normally meet of a daytime. Today once again there was proof that the most likely venue for progress on climate change is not a conference hall but an Indian restaurant.

One of the problems vexing both Nigel and I is that of preserving his people's culture. Sadly it is likely that most of them will need to leave the atoll in the next few years. But the actual recording of their stories and dances and arts is not something that Nigel can do casually in his limited spare time. The new technologies we have mean that professionals can do this in a way that cannot be done by a people struggling to cope with deteriorating circumstances. And this was the topic over dinner, when one of our dining companions (who is here at a local government conference on climate change) tells us that he was speaking to some lovely people from UNESCO today who are precisely in

the business of doing what Nigel and his people need and he would be delighted to put Nigel in contact with them tomorrow. Exchange of business cards and e-mail addresses, then back to the Kingfisher. In a sense, this is why we travelled 20,000 kilometres to be here. The personal contacts, the chance interactions over dinner or a conversation over coffee, can never be replicated by Skype meetings and e-mail exchanges. We are ultimately in the people business, and that means meeting people.

*Fr Keith Joseph
Dean of Darwin*

PS – the Cellist this Sunday morning at St George's Anglican Church Paris, grew up in Hornsby – not more than 2 km from where I lived as a child. And a lovely woman at the side event comes from a Darwin suburb called Parap – about 1 km from where I live in Stuart Park. It does seem like a long way to go to meet people for the first time who live just around the corner from you.