



# NEWS LETTER

*Bringing Fiji Indian communities together*

Winter Edition

August 2008

Namaste, Greetings

## WELCOME!

The Fiji Indian Association has the pleasure of presenting to you our first edition of the newsletter after its 2008 AGM. The Association sends you warm greetings and hopes that your outstanding support and well wishes will continue to be with us.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association held its third annual general meeting on 27th July 2008 at its Hall in Petone. The meeting was well attended and your presence was highly appreciated by the Association. Thank you for your support and contributions to the activities undertaken by the Association for the year 2008. The Association is fortunate to have such an enthusiastic and dedicated team. The members have worked tirelessly to achieve a number of key objectives as detailed in the Business Plan.

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## President's Message

Greetings from the 2008/2009 Executive of the Fiji Indian Association of Wellington.

First and foremost, as President, I would like to thank you all for the support you have given to your Association over the last few years and I am confident we will continue to benefit from your encouragement and advice.

Your Association has moved very quickly to acquire a property for you and it is a matter of pride that this asset is debt-free, but the Fiji Indian community will need to continue working as a team to upgrade and maintain this facility and your Committee is confident we will not find you lacking in this area. Please continue to use the hall for functions and religious gatherings, as this is your Hall.

Your Committee has agreed to launch a major membership drive and your officials will be approaching you to become members or to renew your membership, as we should not lose sight of the fact that there's strength in numbers. We will do our best to get in touch with as many of our people as possible, but if you have not been approached, please feel free to contact us and you will find your Executive very easy to approach.

It is very important for everyone to understand that your Committee is here to help you and we look forward to hearing from you.

I take this opportunity, to wish you and your families all the best.

**Salim Ashwin Singh**

## FIA EXECUTIVES FOR 2008/09

The Following executives have been selected for the year 2008/2009.

President	Ashwin Salim Singh
Vice President	Jiten Pratap
Secretary	Naren Lal
Assistant Secretary	Vijendra Mishra
Treasurer	P.N. Verma
Assistant Treasurer	Vinod Kumar
Communications Advisor	Meena Pratap
Committee Members	Alphonsus Giborees Jai Chand Krishna Gounder Meena Chandra Paresh Hari Prem Chand Prem Singh Vimal Verma



### Seated from left:

Meena Pratap, Ashwin Salim Singh, Meena Chandra

### Standing from left

Vijendra Mishra, Jiten Pratap, Paresh Hari, Prem Chand, Prem Singh, P.N. Verma, Vinod Kumar, Alphonsus Giborees, Naren Lal, Krishna Gounder

**Absentia:** Jai Chand and Vinod Verma

## Our achievement for 2007 includes:

- The purchase of our **Hall** in Petone
- A successful fund raising annual dinner night
- The success of 'Girmit Diwas'
- Redevelopment of FIA website – check it out!!  
[www.fia.org.nz](http://www.fia.org.nz)
- Increased memberships
- Increased sponsorships

## FIA Activities for the coming year

The executives met on 7 August 2008 for their second team meeting.

The committee discussed and recommended the following for this year's program.

- FIA's Annual Fundraising dinner night
- Enhancement to our website
- Promote our senior citizens and youth programme
- Membership drive
- Increase our communication to the wider Fiji Indian community
- Organise Alumni evenings
- A planning day – to be held on 11 September

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Association would like to acknowledge the past executive members for their outstanding efforts and commitment to the Association.

Mr Vasu Maharaj – First President

Mr Prabodh Mishra - Former President

Mr Kamleshwar Singh- Former Assistant Secretary

Mr Rattan Prakash – Former Communications Advisor

## Membership

The Association's membership has been increasing steadily and the intention is to keep increasing our members and bring the awareness of our initiatives to our people. There are many benefits we bring to our people, in particular the chance of networking with others within the community.

**The annual membership cost is only \$10.00 per person.**

If you are not a member yet, please contact one of our executive members.

## Upcoming Festivals

### August

- Janamastami – **24 August**

### October

- Id-ul-Fitr – **1 October** (depends on moon sighting)
- Diwali – Wellington City Council **Sunday 26 October**
- Diwali – **28 October 2008**

### November

- Birthday of Guru Nanak Ji – **13 November**

## Community News

### Engagement

- Friends and family gathered at the Goodworld Restaurant in Lower Hutt to August 08, to celebrate the engagement of Rachna Chand to Shalvin Prasad. Rachna is the daughter of Suresh and Usha Chand, of Moera and Shalvin is the son of the late Mr Latchmi Prasad and Mrs Parveena Prasad. Shalvin is originally from Lautoka, but now lives in Taupo. FIA News wishes the newly engaged couple the best in life and the marriage ceremony will be in January, 2009.

### Births

- In Newlands, Sachin and Farisha Ram recently welcomed their new bundle of joy, their second child, a boy. Congratulations to the Ram family.

### Deaths

- It is our sad duty to inform you of the death of Mr Dharam Sahay Prasad, of Titahi Bay. Mr Prasad, formerly of Lautoka was an accountant and insurance agent and spent several years in Canada before migrating to New Zealand. His eldest son, Naren Sahay is a highly accomplished singer, and many of you will recall his musical contributions to the first Girmitt Diwas held in Wellington in May this year. Mr Prasad was cremated at the Whenua Tapu Crematorium on August 02 and we pray for the eternal peace of his soul and wish to express our heartfelt condolences to his widow, children and grandchildren.

We would also like to record our sorrow at the death of Mrs Maria Grace Sharma, wife of a well-known Stokes Valley identity and pujari, Mr Ashok Sharma. Our sincere condolences to the Sharma and Grace Families and May God grant Maria eternal peace.

### Appointments

" His Excellency, Mr Cama Tuiloma has been appointed the Fiji High Commissioner to New Zealand, Mr Tuiloma, his wife, Mrs Sereima Tuiloma and daughter, Abigail arrived in Wellington on July 20 and we extend a warm welcome to the High Commissioner and his family. Mr Tuiloma was the Permanent Secretary for Local Government before his New Zealand posting. Mr Ponsami Chetty, who was acting High Commissioner. is First Secretary.

## **RESERVE BANK OF FIJI ANNOUNCES POLICY CHANGES**

Over the years, former Fiji residents have contributed enormously to the economy by way of remittances and investment. In light of this, Government recently introduced ways to encourage and facilitate further participation of former Fiji residents in the development of the economy.

The Reserve Bank, in line with Government's introduction of a category for permanent resident status for former Fiji residents, their descendents and current spouses, have amended its definition of a Fiji resident to accommodate this change.

Under the revised definition, former Fiji residents issued with permanent resident visas are now considered Fiji residents under the Exchange Control Act. Accordingly, exchange control policy guidelines applicable to residents will apply.

Details of the exchange control guidelines are available from the Reserve Bank. The Reserve Bank believes that this move will enhance Government's intention of encouraging former Fiji residents to return and contribute to the economy and at the same time, minimise the brain drain of its citizens.

RESERVE BANK OF FIJI

See [www.fia.org.nz](http://www.fia.org.nz) for more details

## **GIRMIT CELEBRATION**

Fiji Girmit Diwas was celebrated for the first time in Wellington.

