



NEWS LETTER

*Bringing Fiji Indian
communities together*

Summer Edition

2008

Namaste, Greetings

WELCOME!

Hello Everyone!

Lots have happened since our last newsletter- In this issue, we have some interesting topics – see below for these. The Association sends you warm greetings and hopes that your outstanding support and well wishes will continue to be with us.

From the President's Desk

In this edition, you will read that the first Fiji Indian has now joined Parliament, as a Labour List MP and this is a momentous event for all Fiji Indians, irrespective of your personal political affiliations. We now have a voice in Parliament and Dr Rajendra Prasad has made it clear that he will be accessible to people, at all times.

Dr Prasad is a former Race Relations conciliator and Families Commissioner and has always been a powerful advocate for those at the lower spectrum of society and those who have faced discrimination on ground of their skin colour or ethnicity.

Fiji people are playing an increasingly major role in New Zealand society and with this role, comes a grave responsibility to abide by the laws of this country and to ensure that our people make themselves part of the New Zealand backdrop, without losing their identity, culture or language.

To this end, the authorities in New Zealand have always encouraged ethnic diversity and our community appreciates such tolerance and fair play. We must respect the laws of this country and follow proper procedures to make our views known if we do not agree with any issue.

Your Association is here for you and will make representations on your behalf, on issues that may be affecting you.

I take this opportunity, on behalf of my Committee and Executive to wish you all, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

May God bless you and your families.

Salim Ashwin Singh

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** FIA Executives for 2008/09
- 2** Our 2008/09 Plans
- 3** Celebrations
- 4** Community News

Appointment of FIA Board of Trustees

In line with amendments to the FIA constitution, at the last annual general meeting, we now have appointed the Board of Trustees. The three who were appointed were: Master Lal Singh (Chairman), Mr Surinder Singh and the late Mr Shan Ali. Mr Surinder Singh has stepped down for personal reasons and a replacement will be named soon. The FIA thanks Mr Singh for his continued support. On Mr Ali's demise, Mr Prakash Narayan has now been appointed to the Board of Trustees. While the Executive Committee will have full responsibility for the running of the Association and will be responsible for decision-making, the Board of Trustees will play a key role in ensuring that decisions are made in line with procedures laid down in the Constitution. The Constitution of the FIA directs the President to appoint the Board of Trustees, with the agreement of the Executive Committee. The board of trustees has a proven record of public service and has always shown full commitment to the FIA and its aims and objectives and we congratulate them on their selection. The Board will serve a three-year term.

Our 2008/09 Strategic Priorities

1. Upgrading of our hall
2. A fund raising dinner night – to be held on 28 February 2009
3. Girmrit Diwas to commemorate 130th anniversary of our forefathers arrival in Fiji
4. Increase awareness of the FIA
5. Continue increasing our membership numbers

Our Planning Day

- The Association had its planning day on 18 September. The team participation was excellent. Many innovative and creative ideas came forward for enhancing the Association's initiatives, particularly building relationships within the community groups.

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 Advr	Meena Pratap
Committee Members	Alphonsus Giborees
	Jai Chand
	Krishna Gounder
	Meena Chandra
	Paresh Hari
	Prem Chand
	Prem Singh
	Vimal Verma



Front Sitting 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

Absent: Jai Chand, Vimal Verma

MEMBERSHIP

The Association's membership drive has been excellent so far. Many former members got their membership renewed and at the same time Association brought some new members in. By becoming a member of the Association one benefits in many ways, in particular the chance of networking with others within the community increases.

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

If you are not a member and would like to become one, please contact our **Communications Advisor Meena Pratap on 04 938 6004** or any one of our executive members. You can become a member at any time.

FIA HALL HIREAGE

You can hire the FIA hall at a very low cost. The fees are:

\$ 13.50 per hour for members

\$15.00 per hour for non-members

The hall has the capacity of holding small functions, birthdays, pooja, etc.

For further enquiries, please contact **Naren Lal on:**

Phone: 04 938 9012

Mobile: 029 1200592

Email: narenl@paradise.net.nz

Upcoming Festivals

November

- Birthday of Guru Nanak Ji – **13 November**
- Sai *Baba's* 83rd Birthday – **23rd November 2008**
-

December

- Christmas – **25 December**
- Eid-ul-Adah (Bakra Eid) – **8 December**

CELEBRATIONS

Krishna Janamastami Celebration in Wellington

Sri Krishna Janamastami was celebrated in most delightful ways by the various Hindu mandalis and groups in many suburbs of Wellington. The bhajans and kirtans were also live broadcasted on Hindi FM by Mr Rattan Prakash, who also hosted the Janamastami programme for the full 8 days at his residence in Upper Hutt where the Pooja was officiated by Pt Mukeshwar Sharmaji. Different mandalis participated in the programme held in Upper Hutt at Mr Rattan and Aparma Prakash's residence.

EID Celebrations in Wellington

Hundreds of Muslims, from various countries converged on Mosques and halls in Wellington for the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. Eid ul Fitr is celebrated after 30 days of fasting. People visited the homes of family and friends to celebrate the festival. The large Fiji Muslim community was well represented in the various celebrations and prayer gatherings on Eid. In December, Muslims will celebrate their second most important religious festival, Eid-ul-Adha (Bakra Eid) and our best wishes to the Islamic community.

Diwali Celebrations in Wellington

This year Diwali was celebrated by the many Indians from various countries, living in Wellington. Fiji Indians - families, mandalis, and community groups celebrated Diwali with great pride and in a much greater scale in some aspects compared to previous years. The Wainuiomata community held their Diwali celebration in Lower Hutt Horticultural Hall as a day event, with stalls, music, items, and many more! On 25 October Diwali was celebrated by thousands of Wellingtonians at the TSB Arena. Many people had to wait for hours to enter the Arena due to the volume of people turning up to the Diwali celebration this year.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SPORTS

RAKIRAKI WIN FIRST INTER-DISTRICT TOURNAMENT IN WELLINGTON

Soccer fans in Wellington were treated to a dazzling display of skills and stamina at the first-ever Inter-district soccer tournament in Wellington. The tournament, organised by the Fiji Football Association, of Wellington featured eight teams: Suva, Ba, Navua, Rakiraki, Lautoka, Nadroga, Nadi and Tailevu. The inaugural IDC trophy, donated by former FIA President, Prabodh Mishra, in memory of his parents was won by Rakiraki, after a scintillating display of football against Tailevu. Rakiraki won after a penalty shoot-out. Tailevu, won the runner-up trophy, donated by the Suva team, in memory of their stalwart supporter, the late Mr Afzal Ali of Johnsonville. Suva was judged the best-disciplined side. The Lautoka team, fielded by Palmerston North were judged the best-dressed team by Prabodh Mishra and won the trophy for that category, donated by Nadroga team leader, Sanjesh Lallu in memory of his grandparents, Aja and Aji. FFAW Chairman, Salim Singh said a bigger tournament is planned for next year and expressed joy at the discipline and clean play that was a feature of the first-ever IDC tournament in Wellington. FFAW Secretary, Dev Singh and Technical Adviser, Atish Suresh Sukhu received strong praise for their role in organising the tournament

GRADUATION

Sonia Kumar and Anuksha Narayan will be celebrating their **Arangteram** ceremony with their families and friends on 21 December. Both girls are graduating in Bharata Natyam from the NZ Academy of Bharata Natyam where they have been students of Shri Vivek Kinra for the last 10 years.

Arangetram is the first public performance which takes place in the presence of critics, fellow artists, family and friends. It happens only after a student has achieved a high standard of performance in a standard repertoire. After graduation, they can continue to learn under their guru who continually teaches, advises and perfects them. It is a proud moment for the Kumars and Narayans
.....Congratulations Sonia & Anuksha!

IMMIGRATION

Under the new Immigration Act 2003, former Fiji Citizens are NOT entitled but they may enter and reside in Fiji as provided for under Section 16 of the Constitution. As such they are “**exempted**” from having to obtain a permit to do so but the issue of exemption is subject to certain requirements and essentially those are:

1. A letter of request from applicants
2. Documentary evidence of Fiji Passport previously issued
3. Documentary evidence of Fiji Citizenship either **registration** or **naturalisation** certificate
4. Certified copy of applicant's current national passport
5. Police report from either country of citizenship or country of residence where the applicant has lived for twelve [12] months or more
6. Medical Report conducted within three months or less from the date of application
7. Fiji Birth Certificate

As for # 7 above, all those that were born in Fiji up to 6th October 1987 became Fiji Citizens on birth but for those that were born in Fiji after 6th October 1987; they must show proof that their parents were Fiji Citizens at the time of birth. Under the new Act, those born in Fiji and now holding foreign passports must show proof that their parents were Fiji Citizens on their birth.

Also, under the new Immigration Act those that were born in Fiji no longer enjoy the privilege that was provided for under the previous Act. **The Fiji Government has just announced that it will allow dual citizenship for former Fiji citizens. Details can be obtained from the Fiji High Commission and we will try to post the details on our website in the near future.**

ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to Navneet Nivaash Lal, son of Mr Naren and Mrs Reena Lal of Lower Hutt.

Navneet received Honours Awards for:

First in Level 3 Biology
First in Level 3 Chemistry
First in Level 3 Physics
Merit in Level 3 English
Merit in Level 3 Mathematics with Calculus

Navneet represented Lower Hutt & Naenae College in the Rotary National Science & Technology Forum Industrial Research and received Alan MacDiarmid Prize for Chemistry 2008 (Top Performing Year 13 Chemistry Student)
Brenda Wallis Cup and Parents' Association Prize Proxime Accessit 2008 (2nd Dux Naenae College)
Well done Navneet!

OUR PEOPLE IN ACTION



SOCIAL EVENTS

The Hare Rama Hare Krishna team had its annual dinner function at the Lower Hutt Town Hall on 19 October. The dinner night was a huge success. From the ambience to food, all were highly praised and appreciated by the guests, particularly by the chief guest of the evening, Wellington's Deputy Mayor – Ian McKinnon.

Upcoming Social Events

- Hindu Heritage Association is having its social dinner night on 29 November in Newtown. Tickets are \$15.00 for all over 12 yrs old. For ticket enquiries, contact Meena Pratap on 938 6004.
- Wellington Christian community is having a Christian Musical Night – Zindagi Forever, on 14 December at 7pm in Thorndon Quay. The artists are from India – Anil & Reena Kant. Tickets are \$5 per seat. For all ticket enquiries, please contact: Ps Atish Suresh on 027 3466 052 or 04 478 3706

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability is a concern across the globe and as a community we can do our bit. There are many ways in which we can contribute towards Environmental Sustainability – so why not start now!

Here are some tips for you!

- Start recycling wastes.
- Save electricity – e.g. take stairs at work if you can, turn your home pc's off at night etc.
- With the warm weather coming up try walking to short distances instead of taking your cars.
- Conserve water
- Don't tip garden chemicals, paint, thinners, and waste oils down the water drain, they can safely be recycled at your local authority facilities

Things that cost nothing and save cash

- Turn off lights when leaving a room.
- Use cold water for laundry and wash only full loads.
- Use the sun and wind to dry your laundry.
- Repair leaky taps.
- Block off open fireplaces when not in use.
- Switch off TVs, DVD players, stereos, etc at the wall when not in use. Appliances on standby waste energy.
- Run heated towel rails for a few hours only in summer.
- Switch cupboard heaters off during the day.
- Reduce your hot water cylinder temperature, but not less than 60°C if you can

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

FIA would like to wish everyone a safe and joyous holiday season.

Some tips & suggestions for you.

- During Summer/school holidays for young ones to have fun you can make ice blocks in a variety of sizes, colours and shapes. Make some for eating - using juice, milk, jelly or water - and some for playing. You could freeze things inside the non-edible ones and your 'ice age' explorers can try to release the frozen fossil.
- To avoid skin cancer do not forget to use sunscreen when you and your family go out to enjoy sunshine. **Children have sensitive skin, so they require extra protection from the sun.** Children often spend more time outside than adults do. And childhood over-exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation in sunlight is known to increase the risk of basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers in later life. This is why you need to take special care to keep children protected from the sun. Please wear suitable clothing; hats and sunscreen are for keeping families safe
- For some families, Christmas can be a difficult time of year, financially. People who are far less fortunate than most go without some of the most basic things such as a nice meal on Christmas Day. Either you can give a donation of tinned foods to Wellington City Mission (04 477 5966) or Help them in preparation at City mission. If you like to volunteer, please ring City Mission and find out how you can.

HEALTH

Health is your wealth. To keep fit this summer, here are some simple techniques you can apply to ensure your health is in shape.

- Do regular stretches / exercises.
- Eat lots of greens.
- Incorporate some form of exercise in to your life style.

TRANSITIONS

Births

- Yashwant Veer Singh & Farzeen Singh of Wainuiomata had their bundle of joy – the arrival of baby Zayan Yashreev Singh. Zayan is the grandson of Dharam & Zohra Singh of Wainuiomata.
- In Wainuiomata, Ishwar and Ashika Chand have been blessed with their second child, Preesha, who was born a day before Diwali. You will recall that Ishwar is a former Committee member of the Association and worked very hard at the formative stages of the FIA. We offer our hearty congratulations to Ishwar, Ashika and Preesha's Aja and Aji. May Bhagwan bless the child with good health.

Deaths

- We express our sincere condolences to Mr Rattan Prakash and Aparana Prakash for the loss of their father and father in Law who passed away on Thursday 13th November in Pune India. We express our deepest condolences to the family
- It is our sad duty to report the death of Al-Haj Shan Ali, a leading member of the Fiji Indian community in Wellington. Mr Ali, a highly respected person was laid to rest at the Islamic berm at the Whenua Tapu Cemetery. Members of the community, of all faiths congregated at Whenua Tapu, to bid farewell to Mr Shan Ali. Mr Ali was a very powerful advocate of the Fiji Indian Association and was recently appointed a member of the FIA's three-person Board of Trustees. Originally, from Wailailai in Ba, Mr Ali worked with various Government Departments and was seconded from the Education Ministry as Organizing Commissioner for the Fiji Scouts Movement. He was a former President of the International Muslim Association of New Zealand and at the time of his death, was still active in community work as Secretary of the Porirua Islamic Centre. He is survived by his wife, Al-Hajin Rahimun Ali, three sons, a daughter and several grandchildren. We wish to express our deep sorrow to his family and trust God will grant them strength and patience.
- It is also our sad duty to report the passing away of Mrs Sumintra Sahay Prasad, of Titahi Bay, mother of Naren Sahay and mother in law of Mrs Meena Sahay. Mrs Prasad hailed from Nadari, Ba and had a keen interest in music, a trait, which has been inherited by her eldest son, Naren, who contributed so richly to the musical side of the first-ever Girit commemoration in Wellington, which was organised in May this year by the Fiji Indian Association. She was cremated at the Whenua Tapu Crematorium. Mrs Prasad is very fondly remembered by her family and friends, who spoke very highly of her generosity, sense of humour and commitment to her family. You will all recall that earlier this year, Naren also lost his father, Mr Dharam Prasad Sahay. We pray for the family, in their time of grief.
- And..... in another loss, family and friends gathered at the Whenua Tapu Cemetery recently for the funeral of the late Mr Anwar Ali, a well-known Nausori identity, who had moved to Wellington, a few years ago. Mr Ali worked at the then Morris Hedstrom supermarket at Nausori for many years and died at home in Whitby. Mr Ali was the elder brother of well-known Cannons Creek businessman, Mahmood Ali and was a close relative of the Saiyad Ali family in Nausori, who ran a taxi business from Nausori Airport. The FIA expresses its deepest condolences to the family of the late Anwar Ali.