



NEWS LETTER

Bringing Fiji Indian communities together

September

2009

Namaste, Greetings

WELCOME!

Hello Everyone!

So far this year - FIA successfully hosted and celebrated the two major events outlined in its strategic planning 2008/09; FIA dinner nite and Girmit Diwas. The Association thanks all those people who assisted in making the events successful. While the committee had moments of joy for the year 2008/09 the death of the Associations Executive committee member, Mr Vimal Verma brought loss and sadness amongst the FIA team. However, the willingness, support, and activities continue for FIA.

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

Greetings to you all and hope this issue of FIA news finds you and your families in the best of health. I would like to record my sincere thanks to you all for returning me, unopposed as President for the 2009/2010 term. Your Association has grown from strength to strength and is now recognised by many Government and non-Government organisations, who have sought feedback from us on matters relating to Fiji Indians. Advocacy for Fiji Indians and their interests has been and will continue to be a vital function of this Association and should any of you feel you have been denied your rights or not been given a fair hearing by any Government or non-Government organisation, do approach us.

The annual general meeting of your Association on August 02 saw robust and keen discussion on a number of issues including a directive to the incoming Committee to review the Association's Constitution. Any Constitution is an evolving document and needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure we are up-to-date with current law and financial regulations and also to enable our community to bring in changes to reflect our changing needs. The sub-committee that will review the FIA Constitution will be made up of both executive and non-executive members of the Association. Once the sub-committee is in place, I promise a process of thorough consultations and your feedback will be actively sought. Your Executive Committee will also formulate a strategic plan on our future needs for a bigger FIA Hall, based on the needs of the community, but I must stress that this will be a long-term goal as economic conditions will have to be improve before we can embark on a major project, but we must start planning for the future and to this end, it is very important to undertake a census of our community, to gauge our population in the capital and its environs. I take this opportunity on behalf of your Executive Committee to wish you the best and I find it gratifying to see that Fiji Indians are actively engaged in functions almost every weekend, and this reflects the vibrant nature of our people. May God bless you and your families!

Salim Ashwin Singh (President)

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Girmit Diwas 2009

Recollections of the Day

Cultural, musical and dance items featured prominently at a commemoration in Lower Hutt, Wellington on May 17, to mark the 130th anniversary of the arrival of Indians in Fiji. The Girmit Diwas programme, the second to be hosted by the Fiji Indian Association, Wellington, attracted a large crowd and in keeping with the theme of Girmitya triumph, the keynote speaker this year was Dr Rajen Prasad, the first Fiji Indian Member of the New Zealand Parliament.

Dr Prasad spoke eloquently in Fiji Hindi and English. Another Indian MP, National's Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi delivered the speech on behalf of the Chief Guest, the Minister of Ethnic Affairs, Ms Pansy Wong. Mr Bakshi spoke movingly in Hindi and English.

A member of the FIA's 2008/2009 Committee, Mr Vinod Kumar spoke eloquently in Hindi about Girmit. Before his speech, Mrs Aparna Prakash sang the Indian National anthem and this was very well received. Girmit Diwas 2009 opened with a combined Hindu, Muslim and Christian religious service and this was followed by an elaborate Bharat Natyam item by Anuksha Narayan, Ashlyn Singh and Rachna Pillay, demonstrating how well Fiji Indians have retained the culture of their ancestral homeland, India.

There were traditional Hindi songs by Subhas Muneshwar, who was accompanied on the tabla by Sanjay Dixit. The programme ended with a riveting Bhangra item by Namnita Kumar and a friend. Guests then mingled at a vegetarian dinner, prepared by Wellington Sangam. Beautiful pictures of the girmityas were assembled by Mrs Nirmala Balram and she has graciously donated those pictures to the FIA. Cultural songs and items brought painful yet beautiful thoughts of our forefathers. The FIA is committed to commemorating Girmit Diwas in Wellington each year.

FIA EXECUTIVES FOR 2009/10

The Following executives have been selected for the year 2009/2010.

President	Ashwin Salim Singh
Vice President	Jiten Pratap
Secretary	Naren Lal
Assistant Secretary	P. N. Verma
Treasurer	Paresh Hari
Assistant Treasurer	Kamleshwar Singh
Communications Advr	Meena Pratap
Committee Members	Jai Chand
	Krishna Gounder
	Prem Singh
	Sesh Ram

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held on 2 August at the FIA hall in Petone. The community members were encouraged to join in and have their say. Reasonable number of people came to the hall. Stimulating and encouraging discussions followed with the formation of the new Executive team. The new Executive is enthusiastic and full of innovative ideas. The Associations way forward is to engage as many members as possible to its community initiatives.

Membership

It was encouraging to see some devoted members coming forward and renewing their membership. Last years membership expired on the AGM. As usual members are encouraged to renew their membership for the coming year. At the same time the Association would extends its invitation to those who are not the current members to become members. By becoming a member of the Association one benefits in many ways, in particular the chance of networking with others within the community, and being informed about the upcoming events within our community.

The annual membership cost is only \$10.00 per person. Please contact Naren Lal on:

Phone: 04 938 9012

Mobile: 029 1200592

Email: narenl@paradise.net.nz

Or any of the Executive members or simply visit our website – www.fia.org.nz for further details

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.

Note: in events of death, the Association will provide the hall at **NO Cost** to its members.

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

Phone: 04 938 9012

Mobile: 029 1200592

Email: narenl@paradise.net.nz

The FIA hall will be open every second Sunday starting from 30 August from 2 pm – 7 pm for social networking. Please come along and chat with our community people.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SPORTS

In community sports news, the Fiji Football Association of Wellington had its AGM recently and more than 50 young people turned out at the meeting. The FFAW has already organised Inter-District and Battle of the Giants soccer tournament based along Fiji district lines and the Association currently hosts ten teams from Wellington and two outside teams ---- Christchurch and Palmerston North.

Planning is already underway for the IDC tournament over the Labour weekend in October and Association Vice-President, Ranjit Singh is Chairman of the IDC Planning Committee and is promising a "carnival" atmosphere at this year's Wellington IDC. Salim Singh has been returned as FFAW President, Ranjit Singh, Vice-President, Venkat Reddy is Secretary, Krishna Pillay is Assistant Secretary, Niraj Mishra is Treasurer, Mohammed Shahmeem Buksh is Assistant Treasurer and Atish Suresh is Technical Adviser and his assistant is Poasa Tubuna.

The FFAW will for the second year field a Fiji side at the Mini World Cup in Upper Hutt, which has become an annual event and this team was chosen from the ten representative sides in Wellington, Tailevu, Rakiraki, Tavua, Ba, Nadi, Nadroga, Navua, Suva, Nasinu and Rewa.

In Fiji sports news, Ba has retained the Battle of the Giants trophy, after defeating Lautoka, 1-0 and we congratulate Ba on its success.

Wellington Sangam Association

From the President's diary

The following executive members were elected in 2009/2010

President	Krishna Gounder	kmgounder@xtra.co.nz 021-02464752
Vice President	1.Manoj Gounder 2.Latchman Sami	
Secretary	Sam Narendra Sami	saminar1@hotmail.com 027-3655105
Assistant Secretary	Nilesh Naidu	
Treasurer	Satish Naidu	satish.naidu@gen-l.co.nz 027-4392280
Committees	1.Channiya Naidu 2.Sami Nandan 3.Manogran Sologar 4.Anand Kupsami Gounder	
Working Committees	1.Ratan Sami Gounder 2.Kumar Sami 3.Satya Nand Naidu	
Legal advisor	Karun Latshman	
Sport Coordinator	Manoj Gounder	

Note: The Sangam Association will be selling authentic South Indian cuisine at the Diwali festival in Wellington on 18 October.

- Annual Sangam Function- April 2010(date to be decided).
- Programme includes cultural items, music, dinner, and dance

For further information, please contact one of the executive members.

Community Festivals

Festivals Celebrated

- The Hare Krishna Temple in Newlands celebrated Shri Krishan Janam Asthami on Friday 14 August at 105 Newlands Rd, Newlands. The devotees created a soothing ambience and everyone enjoyed the evening's programme and the varieties of prashadam (sweets, savouries, and many more) prepared by the devotees during the week.
- Rattan and Aparna Prakash have organised Shri Krishan Janam Asthami in Upper Hutt. The program was held over seven days starting on Friday 7th August through to 13th August. The final day program ended on Thursday 13 August at midnight. The sthapna pooja was conducted by Pandit Mukeshwar Sharma and recitals of katha by various mandali representatives from Wellington, including Naren Sahay Cultural group, James Singh of Central Ramayan mandali.
- Various other mandalis and groups celebrated Shri Krishan Janam Asthami in Wellington with families and friends.

Upcoming Festivals

August

- **The Islamic month of fasting started on 22nd August**

Muslims throughout New Zealand have started observing the Holy month of fasting, Ramzan or Ramadhan as it is known in some countries. The month of fasting celebrates the revelation of the Holy Quran, the Jewish Holy Book, Torah, David's Book of Psalms, Zuboor and the Bible.

Muslims who are in good health and able to fast, are required to observe fasting. Special night prayers will also be held at Mosques and Islamic Centres to mark the Holy Month. The month-long fasting will be followed by the Festival of Eid-ul-Fitr. The Fiji Indian Association of Wellington wishes everyone Ramzan Mubarak and we wish you all a Happy Eid in advance.

September - December

- **Pitarpak from 4th – 18th September**
- **Ed-ul-Fitr – late September**
- **Navratam starts on 19th September and finishes on 27th September**
- **Dhanteras – 16th October**
- **Diwali – 17th October**
- **Christmas – 25th December**
- **Eid-ul-Adah (Bakra Eid) – end of December**

SOCIAL EVENTS

- Hindu Heritage Association had its annual bollywood show cum dinner function at Bharat Bhavan on 25 July. The show had awesome turnout and was a huge success. From the ambience to food, all were highly praised and appreciated by the guests.
- "Friends of Krishna" team members had organised a musically sensational cum dinner evening. The evening was enjoyed by hundreds of people who had bought the tickets to support the temple fund raising project.
- Ghazal enthusiasts were treated to a special performance at a "Yeh Sham Mastani" night, hosted by the Fiji Indian Association at its Hall in Petone on Saturday, August 22. The singers Jai Chand, Kuppsami Gounder and Aparna Prakash entertained more than 50 people with a wide variety of songs. Their robust performance was highly appreciated. The musical team was backed up by Manoj Dass and his nephew, Raveen Dass.

Upcoming Events

- October - Kirtan Samellan – organised by The Fiji Indian Association
- 28 November - Fund-raising dinner night-organised by the FIA, to be held at the Horticultural Hall in Lower Hutt.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

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.
- Switch cupboard heaters off during the day.
- Walk to nearby shops if you can.

HEALTH

Health is your wealth. To keep fit this winter, 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.

Recipe for the Season

Bread & Cheese Pakora

Ingredients: 10 slices of white bread
1 cup grated cheese
1 tbsp. chopped Coriander leaves
2 fresh green chilies
1tsp. ginger
4-5 cloves garlic cloves
Salt according to taste
Water
Oil for frying

Method

1. Grind the green chilies, ginger and garlic to a fine paste.
2. Dip the bread slices in water for 30 secs and immediately squeeze the water out.
3. Mix the ground paste paste, bread slices, salt and coriander leaves till everything is nicely mixed together.
4. Divide the mixture into small portions. Flatten each portion and place some cheese in the center and roll into a ball again.
5. Deep fry in hot oil till the balls are golden brown.
6. Serve with chutney or yogurt

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- A Porirua youth, Sachil Naidu has become the first recipient of the FIA President's trophy for outstanding young person of the year. The award has been instituted by the President, Salim Singh and will be awarded annually. Sachil is a Tawa College student and Association Vice-President, Jiten Pratap says Sachil was chosen because of the work he has been doing at Association dinner nights and functions. Mr Pratap says Sachil has worked tirelessly at all dinner night functions for the last three years and the award is well-deserved. Sachil is the eldest son of Santa and Chinnaiya Naidu, who have been unflinching supporters of the Association. Congratulations, Sachil and we wish you a great future.
- Johnny Lal of Maungaraki has always contributed his time and energy to support FIA in various ways. The Association appreciates his efforts and would like to thank him for his continuous support.
- The Association would like to thank Mrs Rina Lal for decorating the hall for the Association's recent function (Gazal evening)

CELEBRATIONS

- Congratulations are in order for Mr and Mrs Vishal Chand, of Leighton Avenue, Lower Hutt, who recently celebrated their 43rd wedding anniversary. The milestone was celebrated by family members at a function at their home and the Fiji Indian Association offers its heartiest congratulations to Mr and Mrs Vishal Chand, who have been very strong supporters of the FIA since its inception. May Bhagwan Bless the couple

TRANSITIONS

Deaths

- We express our sincere condolences to Mrs Sashi Jokhan ,Sobha & Shirley Singh, and Mr Ajendra Johkan for the loss of their father and father-in-law who passed away on Thursday 13th August in Wellington.
- It is our sad duty to report the death of Mr Vimal Verma, a valued Committee member of the Fiji Indian Association. Mr Verma was laid to rest on 27 June at Karori Crematorium. We wish to express our deep sorrow to his family and trust God will grant them strength and patience.
- The death occurred in July of a well-known Stokes Valley man, RAJESH SINGH. Rajesh is survived by his wife, Ajeshni, two children, his mother and two sisters. Before the cremation ceremony, a funeral service and prayers were held at the Fiji Indian Association Hall at Halford Place, Petone. We offer our deepest sympathy to the family.
- Sister –in- law of Jonny Lal of Maungaraki Wellington passed away in Fiji. FIA sends its condolences to the grieving family in Fiji and overseas.