



NEWS LETTER

Bringing Fiji Indian
communities together

Spring Edition

2011

Namaste, Greetings

WELCOME!

Namaste, Namaskaram, Assalam Alaikum, Sastri Akal, Masih Ki Jai, Bula and Kiora.

The President and Executive of the Fiji Indian Association send you their warmest greetings and we look forward to your continued support, encouragement and blessings. There have been some significant events since our last newsletter and it is our pleasure to bring these to you. Our website, www.fia.org.nz is updated regularly with current items and community news and please stay tuned with news about the Fiji Indian community in Wellington through our site. Your feedback is welcome and send any comments or news items to info@fia.org.nz

From the President's Desk

PRESIDENT, VINOD KUMAR'S MESSAGE

Namaskaar, Namaskaram, As Salaam Alaikum, Jai Ho Greetings from the President's Desk

I write this message in our first quarterly Newsletter after our Annual General Meeting on 7 August, 2011, with mixed emotion. While on one hand, it was pleasing to see the number of members who took time out to attend the AGM and take part in discussions on matters of importance and financial stability and progress of our Association; it was extremely disappointing that no one put their names forward to serve on the Executive Committee.

However, at the end of the day, with assistance from two past Presidents, Ashwin and Prabodh with assistance from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr Lal Singh, we managed to steer the ship to safety. I have pleasure in advising our members that the line-up of the new Executive includes a mixture of young and some not so young, as well as ladies, who are committed to achieving the aims of our Association as set out in our Annual Business Plan. We have identified key strategies and a time-frame in which these objectives are to be achieved. These include the formation of groups to identify and target in an effort to renew and get more members in the Association. Children's and Senior Citizen's functions, Kirtan and Qawali/Gazal nights have also been planned. Our Annual Dinner Night, Giritmit Family Fun Day and Giritmit Diwas celebrations have also been planned. A special effort will be made to bring the Senior Citizens together more often, and plan their activities so that they do not feel isolated and neglected. Mum and Dad will also be encouraged to involve their children in Social and Cultural activities during the year.

For a start, we have organised a Kirtan Sammelan. This was to have been held on October 29, but has been postponed. We shall keep you posted on the new date and look forward to your support. Other events, as mentioned above, will be organised during the year, and Newsletters and Community Messages on our website will be continuously up-dated to keep the members advised of up-coming events. Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you all had a wonderful Eid. and on behalf of my Executive Committee, I would like to wish each and every one of you A Happy Diwali. We hope you enjoyed your dancing (Dandiya) during Nav Ratri.

Vinod Kumar
President

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Our 2011/12 Strategic Priorities

1. Upgrading of our hall
2. A fund raising dinner night.
3. Girmat Diwas to commemorate anniversary of the arrival of our forefathers in Fiji and their triumph against adversity.
4. Increase awareness and raise profile of the FIA
5. Continue increasing our membership numbers

The Following executives have been selected for the year 2011/12

President	Vinod Kumar
Vice President	K.D.Mishra
Secretary	Sesh Ram
Treasurer	Stephane Giborees
Communications Adv	Salim A Singh
Committee Members	Mrs Prabha Mishra Mrs Jai Kemp Dev Chand Rizwaan Hussein Shri Ramlu Sidal Mohammed Shafique Arvind Gounder

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Association would like to acknowledge the following for the outstanding role they have played in the affairs of the FIA.

Mr Naren Lal, founding Secretary.

Mr P N Verma former Vice-President and Treasurer

Mr Kamleshwar Singh- former Communications Adviser

Mr Paresh Hari, former Treasurer.

Mr Krishna Gounder, former Committee member.

And... we also record our appreciation to all those members who have stood by us loyally over the years and we look forward to your continued feedback and support.

MEMBERSHIP

The Association is actively seeking new members and those of you who have not renewed your membership, please do so. The annual membership fee is \$10.00 and please do join your Association. A membership drive is currently underway and you will be approached by officials. The Association was formed to be a voice for Fiji Indians in Wellington and to articulate your concerns and aspirations. Please email us at info@fia.org.nz for any membership issues.

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 is ideal for small functions, like birthdays, pooja, etc.

For further enquiries, please contact **Arvind Gounder** on:

Phone: 04-5869640

Mobile: 0212278621

Email: info@fia.org.nz

Hall Hire documents are also available on our website, www.fia.org.nz

The FIA is committed to keeping the community informed of news and happenings in our society.

Please e-mail us on info@fia.org.nz or asinghfi@hotmail.com if you have any news of interest to our community.

CELEBRATIONS

Krishna Janamastami Celebration in Wellington

Sri Krishna Janamastami was celebrated with vigour and dedication by the various Hindu mandalis and groups in many suburbs of Wellington. Bhajans and kirtans formed the highlights and decorations to depict the birth of Lord Krishna brought great joy to people and it was wonderful to see the huge role played by children in the celebrations.

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 November, 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 will be celebrated by the many Indians from various countries, living in Wellington tomorrow. Fiji Indians - families, mandalis, and community groups celebrate Diwali with great pride. A huge crowd turned out at the Diwali mela in Wellington on October 16. The Wainuiomata community held their Diwali celebration in Lower Hutt Town Hall, with stalls, music, items, and cultural items from various ethnic groups. Diwali celebrates the triumph of good over evil and as the Festival of lights; it serves to illuminate the lives of people and to fill them with joy. The Fiji Indian Association wishes you all a very happy Diwali and we send our special greetings to the sick and those who recently lost loved ones. May Bhagwan Bless you all.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SPORTS

FIJI INTERDISTRICT TOURNAMENT

The people of Vanua Levu were ecstatic after Labasa won the FIJI IDC cup after a break of 17 years. Labasa defeated the men in black, Ba 1-0 to clinch the trophy in a nail-biter and many Wellingtonians who hail from Labasa had their own celebrations. Congratulations to the boys from Labasa for a well-deserved victory.

In Wellington soccer news The capital city's annual IDC tournament this year will be staged on November 12 and 13 at the artificial pitch on Adelaide Road and more than ten teams will participate. The tournament organized by the Fiji Football Association of Wellington has become an annual feature of the capital's Fiji sporting calendar and attracts a huge crowd. FFAW President, Mohammed Shafique has promised a high level of soccer and has called for full support from members of the Fiji community. The players from the various teams must be from Fiji and is open to Fiji people of all races.

And the Wellington Sangam soccer team is travelling to Sydney for the Sangam World Cup tournament to be held from November 23-27. Wellington Sangam Vice-President and Sports Coordinator, Manoj Gounder says an 18-member squad will take part. The Sangam team has some of the most talented players in Wellington in the team and we wish them the best.

The Fiji Rugby team was welcomed by members of the Fiji community in Wellington at a function organized by the community at the Taranaki St Methodist Church. A large cross-section of the Fiji community in Wellington of all races attended the welcome ceremony and people enjoyed the moving ceremony. Fiji rugby legend, Pio Bosco Tikoisuva, who managed the team, expressed his delight at the large number of Fiji Indians who turned out at the ceremony. A former President of the FIA, Prabodh Mishra responded on behalf of the Fiji Indian community and said it should be appreciated the World Cup was not all about rugby and that it provided an ideal opportunity to showcase the very best that our home country, Fiji has to offer and to this end, the Fiji communities had organized a number of exhibitions and performances at the Te Papa Tongarewa, the Museum of New Zealand. While the Fiji team did not enjoy great success at the World Cup, they were excellent ambassadors for Fiji and one newspaper report hailed them as the friendliest players. And..... it was wonderful to see that New Zealand has won the World Cup after a break of 24 years. Our heartiest congratulations to the All Blacks.

TRANSITIONS

The community has lost a number of very well-loved people in the last few months and we record our deepest condolences to their families and loved ones and pray for their eternal salvation.

The death has occurred of MRS USHA MISHRA, of Wainuiomata, wife of Mr Shiu Datt Mishra. Mrs Mishra passed away at the weekend and funeral arrangements had not been announced at the time of publication. Mrs Mishra and her family were deeply involved in religious work. Our deepest condolences to the family.

Haji Rahmat Ali, one of the first persons to join the Fiji Indian Association at its inception passed away peacefully recently at the Johnsonvale Rest Home and a large group of mourners attended the Islamic burial service at Makara Cemetery in Karori. Haji Rahmat was well known in the community for his culinary talents and was sought after to cook palau for weddings and other celebrations.

Our condolences are also extended to the family of the late Mr Ram Sami Pillay. The late Mr Pillay was a senior member of the Fiji Police Force and was cited for his abilities as an officer during his period of service. He retired to Wellington and we ask God to grant patience to his family to withstand their loss. In another tragic loss, a former Executive member of the Fiji Indian Association, Mumtaz Ali passed away and was buried at Makara Cemetery in Karori. The late Mr Ali was a very active member of the community and played a leading role in community activities after his arrival in Wellington in 1987. He is sadly missed by his large circle of friends and family members.

Lower Hutt man, Abdul, who died after a long illness was also buried at Makara Cemetery. Mr Abdul was originally from Lami, near Suva and worked for the Suva City Council for a number of years. We offer our condolences to his family.

And... Family members, friends and school colleagues turned out to farewell 14-year old Sunny Singh, who recently departed this world. Young Sunny won people's hearts with his tenacity despite a debilitating illness and was always cheerful despite his health problems. A keen Wellington Phoenix supporter, he was dressed in the Phoenix colours for his funeral. FIA President, Vinod Kumar spoke at the funeral and expressed the community's profound sense of loss at young Sunny's death. His parents, Rajeshwar and Lata Singh have now moved to Australia and our prayers are with them. May God Bless the family.

OTHER NEWS

An open invitation has been issued by the Mayor of Wellington, Celia Wade-Brown and the Council Chief Executive, Gary Poole for the November 2011 Ethnic Forum to be held at Te Papa on November 1. The theme of the Forum is Wellington---- the next 10 years. To register email: forums@wcc.govt.nz or phone 04 806-4723.

New Zealand's first Governor-General of Fiji Indian origin, Sir Anand Sattyanand finished his five-year in August. His elevation to the highest office in the land was a matter of immense pride to all Fiji people and he impressed people with his dignity, humility and legal acumen. Sir Anand is a former Judge of the High Courts of New Zealand and a former Ombudsman. When Sir Anand was appointed Governor-General by the Labour Government of Helen Clark, he was welcomed at a ceremony organized by the Fiji community. At this function, he was presented with a tabua or whale's tooth by the community, the highest accolade that can be presented in a traditional Fijian ceremony. Sir Anand and Lady Susan returned the tabua at a function at Government House before his retirement to leaders of the Fijian Association in Wellington. This gesture was highly appreciated because of the traditional value of the tabua to indigenous Fijians. Sir Anand and Lady Susan pictured with members of the Fiji community in Wellington.

Sir Anand's successor in the Vice-regal position is the Right Honourable Sir Jerry Mateparae. Sir Jerry is the second Governor-General, of Maori descent. He has held senior public service and military positions. Sir Jerry and Lady Janine have two daughters and three sons. The Fiji Indian Association congratulates Sir Jerry on his elevation and wishes him and Lady Janine the greatest success in their vice-regal role. The Governor-General is the representative of the Queen.



A Kirtan Sammelan organised by the FIA for this Saturday, October 29, has been postponed and details will be posted on our website and Mandalis informed once a new date has been fixed.

A workshop will be held in Wellington on October 29 and 30 and will focus on UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUALITY. It has been organized by the Vedanta Study Group of Wellington and SWAMI TADANANDA will lead the workshop. The group has described Swami Tadananda as a dynamic speaker, stimulating presenter and Karma Yogi. He is involved in multiple projects in Fiji and has undertaken many projects. His work recently resulted in an EU grant for upcoming projects. For further information, please contact Mrs Kamil Lakshman on 021-159-8803

Untold stories, an exhibition celebrating the achievements of our people was held at the Michael Fowler Centre, between 18-21 October by the Wellington Hindi School. The aim of the exhibition was to provide an opportunity to show visitors some key aspects of Indian culture.

In other community news, congratulations are in order for Sanjay and Renuka Sami, of Wainuiomata on the birth of their second child, a boy. Aja and Aji, Mr and Mrs Rattan Sami and Nana and Nani, Mr and Mrs Manu Sologar are elated. May God give good health to the new addition to the Sami family.

And.... A Wainuiomata group has been formed to promote the traditional South Indian street theatre, Teerukuthu. The group, Capital Pasifika Teerukuthu Club is headed by Mr Manu Sologar and trains every Friday at the FIA Hall in Halford Place and a public performance is planned for later this year. For further details, please contact 04-5647773.