

THE VOICE of ethnic communities

ETHNIC PEOPLES ADVISORY PANEL (EPAP)



Issue 2 April 2012

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Aucklanders, a warm welcome to our second newsletter.

It has been a year since the Panel was established. Members have continued to work with ethnic communities to bring their interests and concerns to the attention of the Mayor and Auckland Council. We continued our tireless involvement as community members to improve the well-being of your communities. Many goals and activities set out in the Work Programme were achieved.

A significant milestone for the ethnic communities, the panel, the council and Auckland was the signing of the Terms of Reference and Relationship Agreement, which took place at the Town Hall in December. The documents were signed between Doug McKay, Chief Executive Officer and myself on behalf of the panel. It acknowledged the expectations of and support for the working relationship between Council and the Panel. As required, an internal review is underway to focus on the support systems and processes that impact on the operational ability of EPAP. An independent evaluation will occur later in the year.

We also made submissions on the *Green Paper for Vulnerable Children*, Auckland Council's *Long Term Plan* and to the *Economic Development Strategy*. As we work our way towards 2012 and the Panel's second year, we will continue to revise the Work Programme so that its key activities remain relevant and are of benefit to Auckland's ethnic communities. We thank Mayor Len Brown, Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse and Cr Richard Northey for their continued advocacy and support of the Panel.

We welcome the perspectives and opinions of the ethnic communities and we urge you to continue to contact, meet and engage with us so that we work together for the greatest well-being of our communities and of Auckland.

CAMILLE NAKHID



**Ethnic Panel with Mayor Len Brown
and CEO Doug McKay**

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The Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel was established by Auckland Council as a requirement of the Local Government (Auckland Transitional Provisions) Act 2010 (section 86).

The panel identifies and communicates the interests and preferences of ethnic peoples in Auckland to the Council, in relation to:
the content of the strategies, policies, plans and bylaws of the Council;

any matter that the panel considers to be of particular interest or concern to ethnic peoples of Auckland; and
advising the Mayor, Governing Body and local boards of ways to engage with ethnic peoples and communities in Auckland.

Quiz:

In the last issue, we've asked "Who said this?"

'Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking, or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity; to me, the female sex is not the weaker sex.'

The answer is: C. Mahatma Gandhi, Indian independence movement leader.

Winner Gautam Raj Singh. 2 Hoyts Movie tickets will be sent to you!

LEN'S WORDS

The year 2012 is an exciting and important year. New Zealand celebrates the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relationships with Japan, 50th anniversary with Republic of Korea, and 40th anniversary with China. Senior government officials from Hong Kong, including the Chief Executive, and delegations from the Taichung Government, one of our sister cities, will be visiting Auckland early this year.

I am leading a delegation in April to further strengthen the relationships between China and Auckland. China is the New Zealand's second largest trading partner, and with discussions on trading agreements between India, ASEAN and Taiwan underway, I see the ethnic communities in Auckland playing a very significant role.

The Asian community is the second largest population group in Auckland, with one in four Aucklanders being Asian. We are committed to long-term engagement with ethnic communities as highlighted in the Auckland Plan.

It is a year since the Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel has been established and has provided much value to myself and the council. In my view, our advisory panels should remain part of the council structure, and the reviews later this year on both the Ethnic and Pacific Panels will allow the incoming council in 2013 to make such decisions

With all the planning in 2011, 2012 and 2013 are the years of action. I look forward to working with the panel on delivering my vision to make Auckland the most liveable city in the world.

LEN BROWN

AUCKLAND THROWS A LIFELINE

The Ethnic Peoples Advisory Panel was represented at the Regional Hui on Family and Sexual Violence, held on 2nd March at Orakei Marae. The purpose of the hui was to discuss what Auckland Council could do to prevent family (whānau) and sexual violence.

Ann Pala, Team Leader of the Social and Community Well-being Subcommittee, led a stakeholder consultation forum in January this year. Concerns and comments were presented at the Hui by the Ethnic caucus, which included members from Shakti, the Asian Network Inc, Asian Council on Reducing Crime Trust and EthNix Links & Advocacy Network.

The caucus recommended that the Council should have inclusive policies that are attentive to the diverse needs in the community, and forge sustainable key partnerships with ethnic organisations. The Council should also adopt the role as "facilitator and "enabler".

Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse thanked the 200 plus strong diverse communities coming together on the day, and acknowledged that "[the] contributions from the Hui will define relevance to the work of many people in the industry and affect good process in the prevention of violence." The Ethnic caucus was also very well received.

I believe suffering continues, women are struggling, children are being denied justice and often inequity continued to deny many vulnerabilities of diverse communities. Although challenges lay ahead and greater demand for services and resources remain, visions become clearer! No time like the present to look deeper into the issue of Family Violence and Sexual Violence. Ethnic communities join hands and to say "No to Silence!"

Please visit the Family Violence Clearinghouse www.nzfvc.org.nz for copies of all presentations. The Auckland Region Hui was co-hosted by Auckland Council and the Ministry of Social Development.

ANN PALA



Mayor Len Brown with government officials and performers from Hong Kong at the Lantern Festival 2012



Members of the Ethnic Caucus. Vishal Rishi from the Asian Network Inc, Rosa Chan from Asian Council on Reducing Crime Trust, Ann Pala from EthNix Links & Advocacy Network, and Sasha Ali from Shakti. Photo courtesy of Cr Cathy Casey.

SOUTH EAST ASIANS CELEBRATE NEW YEAR IN APRIL

Several countries in the world celebrate their New Year in April. Assyrians celebrate on the first day of April and many other countries in South and South East Asia on the 13th and 14th of April. Several parts of India (Punjabi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya from Orissa, Malayali from Kerala, Maharashtra communities), Sri Lanka, Nepal, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and the Dai community of the Yunnan province of China are some of the communities who celebrate the dawn of a new year in mid April. The exact date is set according to astrological calculations.

In 2012 it will be celebrated on the 13th of April.

In Sri Lanka it is called the Sinhala and Tamil New Year, in Cambodia it is Chaul Chnam Thmey (Enter Year new) and it is Songkran in Thailand and Sonkranthi in Bengal, India.

Cambodians celebrate this festival for three days. In Sri Lanka it is celebrated from the 12th of April for a week and the country stands still while the two largest ethnic groups celebrate the festival which is based on auspicious times. There is an auspicious time to watch the new moon, to light the hearth and to cook food as well as to eat the first food of the New Year.

It is interesting to note that cleansing with water plays a prominent role across these countries during festivities. Cambodians wash their faces with holy water in the morning, chests during the day and wash feet in the evening. Sri Lankans have a day to bathe before the New Year dawns and there is an anointing of hair day when they apply medicinal oil in hair and bathe. Cambodians also bathe Buddha statues and their elders with perfumed water which they believe will bring good luck, prosperity and long life to them.

Religious ceremonies play a role in the celebrations. Some of the communities which celebrate New Year are Theravada Buddhists such as Sri Lankan Sinhalese, Cambodians, Burmese and Thai while some of the Indians and Sri Lankan Tamils are Hindus. Cambodians, Laotians, Thai and Sri Lankan Buddhists visit temples and pay homage to the Buddha and obtain blessings for the New Year. They contribute to charity or to the poor, servants and needy. In Sri Lanka, families exchange gifts of new clothes, and special food with relatives, monks, friends, neighbours and people who work for them.

Special food made in these countries are all based on the new harvest which is collected before April. The Cambodian Kralan is made out of rice, beans or peas, coconut and coconut milk. Sri Lankans make oil cakes or Kevun using rice flour, treacle and oil and eat milk rice which is rice cooked in coconut milk. Laotians eat Larb, a salad of fine herbs and chicken and Indians have an array of sweets made out of rice and various bean flours.

Many of these communities living in Auckland will be celebrating their New Year in April and the Ethnic People Panel, wishes them all a Very Happy New Year.

ASOKA BASNAYKE

AUCKLAND TRANSPORT CELEBRATES THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON WITH NEW BUS DESIGN

To celebrate the Year of the Dragon, two 'dragon buses' for use on the city LINK bus route in central Auckland have been unveiled by Auckland Transport Board Member and Auckland Council Cr. Mike Lee. The dragon branded buses painted in traditional red and gold colours are a joint initiative by Auckland Transport and NZ Bus. Chinese dragons are legendary creatures in Chinese mythology and considered a symbol of power, strength and good luck.

To encourage more of the Chinese community to use public transport and to make travel planning easier the LINK brochure has been translated into Chinese. It can be downloaded from www.maxx.co.nz. The Chinese community is the largest of the Asian communities in Auckland with 97,500 living in the greater Auckland area. Nearly 54,000 Auckland Chinese were born in China and are accustomed to using public transport. The two 'dragon buses' on the city LINK route will run right through 2012.



FUNDING YOUR PASSION

I have worked with many ethnic voluntary organisations and community groups in the last decade, for a lot of those community groups the most difficult task is securing enough funding to support their projects. Many groups put lots of effort into this task every year without success, due to lack of information and expertise. I hope this article will provide you some useful information on key funding resources and where to find more information in the future.

Funding from the Auckland Council

Council provides a range of funds to assist communities with projects and events such as:

- arts and culture;
- environmental and heritage;
- community group funding;
- events and
- local board discretionary community grants

You can find more details on

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/Services/CommunityFacilitiesSupport/grantsfunding/Pages/home.aspx>

Other funding sources include:

Department of Internal Affairs – <http://www.communitymatters.govt.nz>

Family and Community Services, Ministry of Social Development –

<http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/working-with-us/funding-and-contracting/funding-at-facs/>

There are also many other private funding sources as well.

Community groups also need to consider own fundraising options. These normally require good ideas, being innovative, involving good team effort and having plenty of fun. Social enterprise is also a hot topic which definitely deserves more exploration.

SUSAN ZHU



ANNUAL RACE RELATIONS REPORT

The Human Rights Commission launched their annual Race Relations Report on the 8th March at the Council Chamber.

The race relations review showed that Asians were named by 75 per cent of the respondents as the most discriminated against group in New Zealand. This figure has remained relatively unchanged in the past five years.

Asians are now the second largest population group in Auckland. It is estimated that 27% of Auckland's population will be Asian by 2021.

Race Relations Commissioner Joris de Bres highlighted at a meeting recently that there are not enough Asian local councillors or community board members, and Asian migrants continue to face discrimination in applying for jobs.

The Panel has and will continue to challenge the Council on addressing this issue, for Asians and all ethnic communities. For further information please visit <http://www.hrc.co.nz/race-relations>.

BEVAN CHUANG



What's On

APRIL



Auckland International Cultural Festival
1st April Sunday 10am – 5pm
War Memorial Park, 13 May Road, Mt Roskill



Easter Tournament – New Zealand Chinese Association
6th April – 9th April
Trust Stadium, Waitakere, Auckland
<http://easter.nzchinese.org>



World Tai Chi & Qigong Day at Franklin: The Centre
28th April Saturday 10am – Noon
Franklin: The Centre, 12 Massey Avenue, Pukekohe

MAY



2012 Korean Day
28th April Saturday
North Shore Events Centre, Argus Place



Buddha's Birthday
28th May Thursday
Observed globally, Check with local temples

JUNE



Matariki Festival – Maori New Year
21 June – 21 July
<http://www.matarikifestival.org.nz/>

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