

# Cross Cultural Newsletter

## “Working with Asian Communities in New Zealand; An Overview of Crime, Victimization & Engagement”

**Presenter: Inspector Rakesh Naidoo**

**22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2015**

As per speaker request, this is going to be only a brief report on our meeting held in September. For reasons indicated in our flyer, DVD copies are not available. The topic involved sensitive material and I would not be able to render an accurate picture of the presentation. Hence, this letter would only highlight the framework of the presentation and discussions.

The topic was on **Working with Asian communities in New Zealand an overview of crime, victimisation and engagement**. The speaker was Inspector Rakesh Naidoo, the National Strategic Ethnic Advisor for New Zealand Police. As usual, over 60 of our members attended. Inspector Naidoo is such an enlightening speaker that he commanded great interest and captured maximum attention from the audience throughout the 1 ½ hours of presentation.



**Diversity in NZ Police**

The framework of his talk surrounded two main themes: (1) the size and nature of the problems and (2) Police’s ethnic response to the rapidly changing ethnic mix in the population.

Inspector Naidoo emphasized the recent changes to the ethnic population. They now include rising Middle Eastern and African populations. With the change, religious commitments also changes, Catholicism now ranks the highest religious faith among others.



**Beautiful sky lanterns made of colourful cloth for sale for the Diwali festival in India.  
Diwali – November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Having painted a changing ethnic mix of the population, Inspector Naidoo also presented figures to demystify some of the misconceptions: Asian populations have a low offending rate. This is even lower when the ethnic specific populations are taken into consideration. Interestingly, the types of offences also vary between different ethnic groups: e.g. illicit drug offending tops among Asian offenders; family violence is more dominant among South Asians and etc. Of note and high significance

are that Asians only account for 10% of traffic accidents, thus counteracting the common negative image of “Asian drivers”.

Inspector Naidoo then discussed some of the issues encountered. Of these, under reporting of victimization and other offences are noticeable. He attributed these to education, and more importantly, to cultural embedded and pre-migratory attitudes towards the police in their home of origin.

Lastly, Inspector Naidoo described the current police response to engaging ethnic population by the recruitment and training of ethnic and cultural relevant staff. He also showed many highly convincing and fascinating slides depicting and illustrating the Police activities to outreach various groups.

There was much discussion afterwards. The interest was such that it was decided that we organize another session inviting Inspector Naidoo and his colleagues to come early next year to talk on the subject about the relationship of police work and mental health services.

I must confess that the above is only my perception and there is much of Inspector Naidoo's presentation that I have omitted.

Once again, I apologise that no DVD or power point slides are available.

**Highlight of next 3 sessions:**

**On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November**, I have invited **Dr Sanu Pal** to talk to us about the Mental Health Perspective of the Refugee Population.

**Early next year**, pending on confirmation, plans are to invite **Inspector Naidoo** and his colleague to present the topic on Police Work and Mental Health.

**In March 2016**, likely to be on 22<sup>nd</sup>, I have invited **Dr Vicki Macfarlane of CADS** to talk to us about the Issues of BZ over-use and management issues among Asian patients. This is a highly important area and I hope that the subject would be of interest to most of our members.

Once again, thank you for supporting us. A flyer would soon be circulated about our November meeting.

On behalf of the Group, I look forward to seeing you all.

Yours sincerely

Sai Wong

On behalf of the Cross Cultural Interest group.



**Fragrant Hill Red Leaf Festival**

Fragrant Hill Temple was first built in the Tang dynasty. A festival to enjoy the beauty of the autumnal leaves.

***October 12<sup>th</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>***