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Message from the President:

New Zealand Indian Central Association (Inc.) was formed in 1926 with three branches Auckland, Country Section (Taumarunui) and Wellington, where there was a sizeable population of Indians residing.

The Indian community throughout New Zealand at that time in its history, felt the need for a single body to represent them in their fight against oppressive legislation and discriminatory immigration policy, and to promote harmony between Indians, the Maori people, and the dominant European population in New Zealand; and to respond to misleading propaganda concerning Indians living in New Zealand. The Central Association was also formed to advance the cause of all Indians, be it political, educational, health, welfare or cultural identity.

Today the three branches have grown into ten independent, self governing, incorporated branches throughout New Zealand, all affiliated to the New Zealand Indian Central Association (Inc.) and there are other affiliated branches representing regional Indian ethnic groups.

The Officers of the Association consist of: President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer. The affairs of the Association are managed and controlled by the Executive Committee plus a nominated member from each affiliated branch. The Executives meet quarterly or more if the need arises. The Officers and the Committee are elected at the Annual Conference attended by delegates from each branch.

NZICA accords very high importance to the 'Law and Order' problem which currently acts as the most destabilizing factor for the community. Violent attacks and robberies is a key concern to the Indian community, especially those with small businesses and the community feels that their basic human right of being safe is being denied. Community requires more support and protection from police, local body and government. Greater police presence as well as ways to keep young offenders off streets is required. In a series of discussions held within the community and with various political parties and government agencies; NZICA has compiled the following list for further perusal.

- Police is perceived as weak, slow to respond, lacking numbers and not visible enough.
- Ethnic diversity in the police force is important.
- Can there be a separate 0800 number installed for vulnerable businesses so that a fast response is ensured
- Police ratio to population needs to go up and an investigation into sale of stolen goods is urgently required
- There is a need for police to visit small businesses to advise owners on security issues and procedures. Small business owners should be trained by police on security issues

- Consider lowering the age of criminal responsibility, harsher penalties to avoid new gangs emerging.
- Opinion of the Indian community as a whole is that the justice system is too lenient.
- Need to focus on the long-term approaches. Quick fixes wouldn't work.
- Early intervention is required for high risk children.
- Alcohol and domestic violence are key variables in violent offending.
- Importance of liquor bill and easy access needs to be checked. At the same time Govt needs to ensure that the businesses are not affected
- Importance should be given to good schooling and volunteers in preventing crime. Change the education curriculum to promote multiculturalism.
- CCTV should be used more extensively. Can a subsidy from government be worked for more sophisticated security systems with remote alarm functions that will deter the offenders and prevent crime?
- Main victims are dairy owners, who are mostly Indians / Asians. They are soft targets because perpetrators know they will not fight back. Potential victims need to stop acting as soft targets and need to send a message to the perpetrators that you will not get anything; "you will not get away with it; you will pay dearly for your crime".
- There is no bystander support when an ethnic dairy owner shouts for help.
- Important to understand the profiles of both victims and the perpetrators of crime. For victims, we need to better understand what makes someone a soft target, how perpetrators view their victims.
- People on benefit should be made to work so that they can sustain themselves and to learn to be responsible. Government can introduce national service for youth, 18 years and above.
- Should Government outsource prison services so that the perpetrators think twice before they commit a crime?
- Media has the responsibility of portraying positive things about ethnic communities and NZICA wants to highlight that this is to be viewed as a national issue and we should not allow complicating the problem by calling it an ethnic issue as has been the practice.
- Community organizations need a total scrutiny of funds and activities
- Support is required for a family in distress
- Overall the community feels that the security situation in NZ is deteriorating

NZICA has now a separate committee to look into the Law and Order situation. Meetings with government still lack Implementation and a continuous and relentless work needs to be put in to achieve targets.

Yes you as a community member can help. Please join as a member at one of the NZICA branches and provide strength to this voice. We need fresh air and young blood and deliberating on fence would not help.

Please contribute to the change that you want by getting involved. You can get further details about NZICA and its branches at www.nzindians.org.nz

Ratilal Champaneri