

THE GLOBAL INDIAN®

FEB 2012

ISSUE 44

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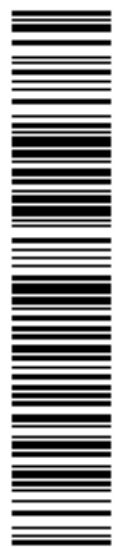
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ISSN 1172 6911

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Muslims keen for Eid holiday?

| VAIBHAV GANGAN |

A community organisation in New Zealand is suggesting that allowances should be considered for Muslims to be able to transfer the Christmas public holidays to their religious days.

Muslims have to take up to four days' annual leave to celebrate religious days like Eid-al-Fitr says Anwar Ghani, the president of the Federation of Islamic Associations. Dr Ghani wants to discuss religious holidays as part of the Government's constitutional review. The review, announced in December 2010 at the Maori Party's request, will take up to three years to be complete.

"It would be really a lot nicer if we had the provision to substitute one or two days of the other holidays so that we can, without sacrificing the annual leave, enjoy the festivities and feel that we have been included in the provisions of leave," Dr Ghani told Radio New Zealand. He also assured that the Muslim community does not want to complicate the system.

The changes would have to be "simple and workable" he told the Sunday Star-Times. "If there was recognition, particularly from a faith perspective, to substitute the holidays so they can enjoy the festivities without taking their annual leave, those are the kind of things which we were looking at," he told the weekend newspaper.

"It has to be something simple which is going to work – we do not want to create layers of complications that might make it difficult as a nation for us to progress together."

Nearly 200 ethnic groups call New Zealand home and the government set up the ministry of ethnic affairs in 1999 to represent the population "whose ethnic heritage distinguishes them from the majority in New Zealand, and from Māori and Pacific peoples," says the office of ethnic affairs.

The size of Asian population in New Zealand has increased from 3% in 1991 to 9% in 2006 and is projected to become 15% by 2026. Almost half the people affiliating with Hindu and Muslim religions arrived in New Zealand less than five years ago.

Between 2001 and 2006, the number of Muslims in New Zealand has grown from 23,631 to 36,072. Nearly 162,000 New Zealanders follow a religion other than Christianity (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Budhists), while a third of New Zealanders (35%) have no religion.

Making cultural and business provisions for such diverse communities is proving to be a challenge for policymakers. The department of ethnic affairs, which costs taxpayers \$6.143 million a year, has advised the

incoming minister of ethnic affairs, that ethnic communities are keen to discuss the development of a multicultural policy "to entrench the civil, political, social and language rights of ethnic people in New Zealand.

"The potential for multicultural policy, including legislation, is gaining voice within ethnic communities, and is likely to be raised with you."

In its briefing paper for the new minister, the office suggested that there was an opportunity for New Zealand to "maximise its share of the highly profitable global Halal tourism market.

The office has already started facilitating a discussion among industry leaders and "further work is proposed to progress this initiative in 2012."

"Halal tourism incorporates activities and services that are in keeping with Islamic law," says the briefing paper.

The office is also keen to develop the potential of ethnic small and medium size businesses (SME), and will publish a report on ethnic SMEs including a database that connects businesses across the Asia Pacific region, thereby increasing trade opportunities for New Zealand.



Of sex, alcohol and a shattered dream | VAIBHAV GANGAN |

A dentist from India who migrated to Australia for a better future could not have bargained for a worse nightmare that involved alcohol, sex and misjudgment – none of which was his fault.

In what started like a typical story of a qualified migrant driving a taxi in Australia, ended in a sad saga of a young man stripped of everything he had.

Prabhjit Gill came to Australia with the hope of practising medicine and fulfilling his dollar dream.

The 37-year old dentist realised that his Indian medical accreditation had to be accepted in Australia before he could practice. While he waited for his Indian qualification to be approved, he started driving a cab to pay for expenses.

However, what unfolded soon was a series of events which saw Gill's plans being watered down. He was arrested on charges of raping a drunk passenger. While the trial went on, his taxi license was cancelled by the Department of Transport.

After months of trial, he was acquitted by Perth District Court jury of raping a 25-year-old passenger.

Now he is a free man with no money, no registered qualification and no license to drive a cab. And there's social and cultural stigma that he will have to live with not just in Australia but also in his home country – India.

Apparently, it is common for female passengers to offer sexual favours as payment to cabbies. Gill says that he knew of up to 60 drivers who had been offered sex, and he was offered oral sex as payment for fares two or three times a month.

Gill says he never accepted such favours.

He was accused along with another cabbie, 32-year old Amrit Pal Singh, who was convicted of raping the woman in the taxi.

Singh, the court was told, sexually violated the woman who was heavily drunk from a night of drinking at a hen's party on 5 February 2011.

The same woman accused Gill of trying to have sex with her while she was in Singh's taxi.

Gill says that all he did was deliver drinks to Singh at the car park where the woman was raped.

Interestingly, Gill also throws light on another concerning fact. He says that the Taxi Council and Swan Taxis (his employer) knew of drivers accepting sex for payment.

However, in support of his employer, Gill says that, during training, new cabbies are warned about sex-for-fare passengers, and are trained to refuse such gestures.

It is illegal for drivers to have sex in a taxi, according to Taxi Council of WA chief executive Olwyn Williams.

Gill is so shaken by the experience that he says he no longer wants to drive a taxi for the fear of being accused again.

He has lost thousands of dollars in applications to have his accreditation accepted and his residency granted, because of the trial.

"I lost everything. If I want to become a dentist I have to start [from] the very first English test, it's going to take me two to three years [and] another \$20-30,000... where am I going to get it? I have no idea," he says.

He now drives a truck and is still committed to completing his training for pursue his career as a dentist.



SHATTERED PRABHJIT GILL
(PHOTO: CHANNEL TEN)

FBI must track hate crimes - Sikh group

| SUNAINA KOTIAN |

A US-based Sikh group is requesting the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to track hate-crimes against Sikhs, in the wake of the recent desecration of a Gurdwara (a Sikh place of worship) building by vandals in Michigan.

The under-construction Gurdwara was defaced with anti-Muslim graffiti on 5 February, with racial epithets, drawings of a cross and a gun, and references to the 9/11 attacks.

New York-based Sikh Coalition, a community group that claims to work towards fostering strong relations with local community, says it is disappointed that the

FBI refuses to track hate crimes against Sikhs.

It is calling the Sikh community in the US to sign a petition to the Justice Department demanding that hate crimes against Sikhs be accurately documented.

Currently, the FBI treats all bias crimes against Sikhs as anti-Muslim hate crimes, says the Coalition in a statement.

"In addition, the Sikh Coalition has learned that some agency personnel erroneously believe that Sikhs are members of a Hindu sect. For these reasons, the federal government has no means of tracking hate crimes against Sikhs.

Explaining the anomaly, a blog post by the Coalition states that the FBI documents hate crimes in the United States on Form 1-699, the Hate Crime Incident Report. The statistics collected by this form allow law enforcement officials to analyze hate crime trends and allocate resources accordingly.

In its online petition to the attorney general, Eric Holder, the community group says that the Sikh community is acutely susceptible to hate violence in the United States, (therefore) it is critically important for federal authorities to devise means of tracking hate violence against the Sikh community.

"Failing to do so is bad public policy, because it is impossible to diagnose and prevent a problem unless it is being measured."

"Unfortunately, the FBI assumes that all hate crimes against Sikhs are motivated by anti-Muslim bias. Our community remains officially invisible and irrelevant to the FBI, even though Sikhs are usually targeted because of their Sikh identity.

"We believe that the FBI has the capacity to document anti-Sikh hate crimes. For example, Form 1-699 does an extremely thorough and nuanced job documenting crimes motivated by anti-gay bias, going so far as to maintain distinct categories for anti-lesbian hate crimes and even anti-bisexual hate crimes.

"Given the willingness of the FBI to invest time and paperwork into monitoring these other categories, it should not be difficult for them to create a separate category for Sikhs. This is an effective way for the federal government to monitor and allocate resources toward preventing hate crimes against Sikhs.

"Indeed, how can you diagnose a problem if you don't even track it?" asks the Coalition.



Zindagi... gets most Filmfare awards

| LEO DESOUZA |

Farhan Akhtar's Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara swept seven Filmfare awards, including the best film at the 57th Annual Filmfare Awards in Mumbai.

However, the coveted best actor and best actress awards were not destined for the Zindagi team. Vidya Balan won Best Actress (Female) for The Dirty Picture and Ranbir Kapoor received the Best Actor (Male) award for Rockstar.

In addition to Best Film, Zindagi... also claimed Filmfare awards for best director, best dialogue, best supporting actor (male), best movie (critics), best cinematography and best choreography.

However, the Rockstar team stole the limelight with five Filmfare awards- best actor, best actor (critics), best music, best lyrics and best playback (male).

Here are the most popular Filmfare awards:

Best Actor: Ranbir Kapoor for Rockstar

Best Actress: Vidya Balan for The Dirty Picture

Best Film: Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Director: Zoya Akhtar for Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Dialogue: Farhan Akhtar for Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Screenplay: Akshat Verma for Delhi Belly

Best Story: Sanjay Chauhan for I Am Kalam

Best Actor (Critics) Award: Ranbir Kapoor for Rockstar

Best Actress (Critics) Award: Priyanka Chopra for 7 Khoon Maaf

Best Film (Critics) Award: Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Supporting Actor (Male) Award: Farhan Akhtar for Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Supporting Actress (Female) Award: Rani Mukerji for 'No One Killed Jessica'

Best Music Director Award: AR Rahman for Rockstar

Best Lyrics Award: Irshad Kamil for 'Nadaan Parindey' of Rockstar

Best Playback (Male) Award: Mohit Chauhan for 'Jo Bhi Mein' from Rockstar

Best Playback (Female) Award: Rekha Bhardwaj and Usha Uthup for 'Darling' of 7 Khoon Maaf

Best Choreography: Bosco-Cesar for 'Senorita', Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara

Best Debut Director Award: Abhinay Deo for Delhi Belly

Best Debut (Male) Award: Vidyut Jamwal



Ayesha Takia angry with Kingfisher

| SULOCHANA SOOD |

Ayesha Takia has alleged that a Kingfisher Airline staff mistreated her sister and even tore her boarding pass.

The Bollywood actor says that her sister, Natasha Takia, was mistreated by the Vijay Mallya-owned airline at Delhi airport

"The worst airline, Kingfisher!" Ayesha tweeted. "Shockingly bad airport staff behaviour at Delhi airport with my sister."

"Natasha was booked in KF from Kathmandu to Mumbai. KF cancelled their flight and gave a booking in AI. Not her fault AI was delayed.

"This disgustingly behaved Kingfisher staff called Vinay podwal just tore my sister's boarding pass and misbehaved with her!"

Takia tweeted that her sister is unwell and tired "and hurt from being mistreated and threatened. I'm shocked!"

"Vinay podwal just threatened and yelled at my sister saying he can throw anyone out and tore her boarding pass!"

"Is this how a girl alone at an airport gets treated by the staff of the airline she is flying?"

"She is unwell and has a horrible backache, can't believe this happened to her"

"My heart is beating so fast with anger that a girl at an airport gets treated this way by airport staff!"

Appealing to her Twitter followers, Takia says: "How dare this Vinay Podwal misbehave with a passenger and tare (sic) her boarding pass; it cud b any one of you. Think about it!"

The actor was further perturbed by a personal comment made reportedly by the airline owner's son, Sidhartha Mallya, on

Twitter. The comment was not found the Junior Mallya's Twitter account later.

Says Takia "Everybody has the right to freedom of speech and remember the customer is always right."

"I just can't imagine the kind of attitude he (Junior Mallya) is showing. At least he should check what happened and then comment. Disgusting!"

"My sister is a normal Indian girl travelling economy. So of course you won't give a shit!"

Takia was flooded with support on Twitter, with one user describing the airline as 'king of bad times' while another suggesting that the Takia sisters must "submit a complain to the officials; it is an serious offence by kingfisher airline.



KOLAVERI MAKER RELEASES SACHIN SONG

South Indian actor-turned-singer Dhanush has released his latest song - The Sachin Song, in a tribute to India's most adored cricket superstar - Sachin Tendulkar.

Announcing the release of the song on Twitter, the Kolaveri-fame singer said: "THE SACHIN song officially out 4am today. let's sing along-u. A humble attempt from a simple fan."

Dhanush's earlier song, Why This Kolaveri Di, became an overnight sensation worldwide, when it was launched on YouTube last month. The soundtrack of the yet-to-be-released Tamil film 3 was written and sung by Dhanush. The 29-year old actor is son-in-law of South Indian superstar Rajnikanth. The latest anthem for the iconic cricketer was shot in Hyderabad and features actress Anushka. The actor has not yet met Sachin Tendulkar.

Leander: the only Indian standing tall in Australia

| VAIBHAV GANGAN |

What were the odds that the Bryan brothers' 23-match winning streak will be interrupted by a pair that was defeated by the American twins in a tuning event earlier in the month, that the Bryans will be defeated in two straight sets by a pair that was teaming up only for the fourth time?

The 38-year old tennis player's victory is a stark contrast to the Indian cricket team's embarrassing 0-4 test series defeat to the Australians, despite its ace players in the squad.

Paes ended his seven-year wait for the career grand slam with the Australian Open men's doubles title.

Paes partnered with 33-year old Czech Radek Stepanek to defeat the defending champions Bob and Mike Bryan 7-6 (7-1), 6-2 and win his seventh grand slam title. The winning pair is now richer by \$454,500.

Paes ruined the 33-year old Bryan brothers' chances of emulating the 11 major titles'

record of the Australian duo - Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge, also known as the Woodies.

It was only last year that the Bryan brothers had defeated Paes, and his partner Mahesh Bhupathi, in the Australian Open final.

Paes has won won three French Opens, two US Opens and a Wimbledon Open in men's doubles, and six grand slams in mixed doubles.



42000 AUCKLANDERS TO RUN FOR A CAUSE

On the morning of Sunday 18 March over 42,000 runners will line up at Auckland's Quay Street, ready to run 8.4km distance to St Heliers Bay, as part of the Ports of Auckland Round The Bays Race.

Entries are flooding in, says says the event spokesperson Sandra King. "We expect to surpass the 70,000 participant record this year."

In its 40th year, Ports of Auckland Round the Bays will donate over \$100,000 to children's charities with proceeds from this year's event.

Projects will include a new play area for Kidz First Children's Hospital, 500 electric thermometers for the Child Cancer Foundation, plus donations to Make a Wish Foundation, Garden to Table Trust and Fairfax First Books.

In the past 10 years alone, entrants in Ports of Auckland Round the Bays, which is owned by Fairfax Media and sponsored by Sunday Star-Times, have contributed over \$1.2 million to charities.

Corporates are again making Round the Bays one of their biggest staff events of the year, with companies such as ASB, Mainfreight, Barfoot & Thompson and Fletcher Construction entering big teams.

ASB Executive General Manager Culture and Community, Linley Wood, says Ports of Auckland Round the Bays is an important date on the bank's calendar. "We'll be fielding a team of over 1200 again this year."

Entry fee is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children (16 and under). [The Race website.](#)

NZ school uses Sanskrit to teach English

| VAIBHAV GANGAN |

A mainstream school in New Zealand is teaching India's ancient language, Sanskrit, to its pupils to build their foundation for the English language.

Auckland-based Ficino School is New Zealand's only mainstream school to not only teach the Indian language but also to be strongly influenced by Indian cultural and philosophical thinking.

"It is my view, that through the teaching of Sanskrit, the source language of: Latin, Greek, German, French and of course English, we give our children access to the very essence of language: An insider's guide to the workings of language," says the school principal, Peter Crompton.

Sanskrit with its "almost perfect grammatical system" provides children with a roadmap for understanding English, says Crompton. "We can all agree that English is definitely not the easiest of languages to get to grips with. To learn English grammar is extremely useful. It helps pupils write and read with increased precision and clarity. Certainly, this is something of use to students when they progress to secondary and tertiary study.

"Sanskrit not only gives young learners a clear understanding of the structure of language, it also heightens their awareness of the process of speech, creating a greater understanding of and ability to, enunciate words clearly.

Taking things 'back to basics', is not a new approach for Ficino, "and it works" says the principal. It is a practice we've followed since the school was founded in 1997, and is based on the curriculum developed by our sister school, the St James School in London.

"I am very proud of the success we've had with our own reading scheme. We've seen first hand the value of teaching Sanskrit, coupled with the use of the St James Reading Scheme in their first 2-3 years has had on accelerating a child's reading ability. By age 8, many of our students are reading between 2-4 years above their chronological age, demonstrating significant added value."

However, it's not just the language that makes this school different. Here, the teachers move up year by year with their class. "This helps support the child with a good balance of love and discipline. The long term relationship forms a close and

caring bond between teacher and pupil which is beneficial to learning," says the school website.

"As time goes by, families tend to find that the teacher becomes a steady professional friend of the family. It is also more efficient as teachers do not need to spend the first few months of the year familiarising themselves with the children's abilities and needs."

Embracing the Indian cultural values, the school also offers meditation opportunities to students.

"Short periods of quiet time are offered daily in which youngsters over the age of 10 may meditate, contemplate, pray or quietly reflect accordingly."

However, the school is not affiliated to a specific religion, though it "enjoys the support of the local community parish and hold services at St Barnabas Church."

"The Christian religion is given particular prominence because Christianity is recognised as the basis of the culture of the nation we find ourselves in," says the school.



PRINCIPAL PETER CROMPTON

Beware of bad credit traps for migrants

| TGI NEWS SERVICE |

Australia Day is the time when thousands of new Australians are welcomed into the country's dynamic multi-cultural society, but a national credit repairer says the road to financial success in Australia can be a harsh one for new migrants.

Busy with starting a new life in the new country, many migrants fail to understand how their credit history can have a severe impact on their resettlement.

MyCRA's CEO, Graham Doessel says he deals first-hand with many new migrants who have struggled to come to terms with a credit system which is far different to the one they are used to, and ultimately their Australian credit rating can suffer.

He says new Australians don't get enough help to make the most of their finances, and to ensure they are never blacklisted once they become credit-active.

"I am seeing more new Australians caught out with the system here, being banned from new credit - can't get a home or car loan and often from fairly small amounts in arrears on their credit accounts," Mr Doessel says.

Australia's credit reporting system is fairly unique in the fact that it is currently a negative reporting system. There is no way of balancing out a bad credit report with good repayments, and any negative listing

remains on a person's credit file for 5-7 years.

Once an individual is 18 and is credit-active, they have a credit file issued in their name. It is even at this early stage where some new migrants come unstuck. Sometimes in those early stages the credit file can be issued under the wrong name.

"Creditors have been known to mix up names or put someone's last name as their first name. This could potentially open up a can of worms in terms of correct listing," he says.

Creditors can also place a default on the wrong person's file.

"We have a case at the moment where a lady had a default listing placed on her file which was for a male with a similar name. It wasn't until our client applied for a loan that she found out about the default placed on her file from someone else's account," he says.

It is suggested that new Australians make a point of ensuring continuity with their name on any credit they take out and requesting changes to any bills or documentation which come back incorrect.

They should also check their credit file to make sure everything reads correctly.

"It's actually not just new Aussies who are kept in the dark. Many Australian-born Aussies are unaware they should be

checking their credit file regularly and that they can obtain a credit report for free every 12 months," Doessel says.

Many people are unaware that once an account goes past 60 days in arrears, it will be listed as a default on the person's credit file for the next five years.

A common reason people can have defaults go unnoticed is after they move house or when they go overseas for extended holidays. They fail to divert their mail, and do not receive the written notification of either the late account, or the creditor's intention to list the late payment as a default on the person's credit file.

Identity theft can also occur, with current statistics showing 1 in 6 Australians are currently affected.

"Identity theft is a major problem in this country, and many new migrants are not aware of the frequency of attacks, or the need to safeguard their personal information. They end up with their identities stolen, and credit taken out in their name," Mr Doessel says.

Sometimes migrants can become victims of identity theft before they even get on the plane. In December 2010, Immigration Minister Chris Bowen warned new migrants of online scams that often leave them without a visa and at a loss for the money they have spent.



NZ to treble exports to India by '15

| TGI NEWS SERVICE |

New Zealand plans to treble merchandise exports to India to NZ\$2 billion by 2015 and is working on a strategy that envisages that India will be a core trade, economic and political partner for New Zealand by that year.

As part of the strategy, New Zealand also wants to attract and retain skilled migrants from India who are able to make an effective contribution to the economy.

The New Zealand Government has endorsed the strategy for New Zealand's engagement with India. This is the first in the series of such strategies being developed, and its implementation is underway, says India New Zealand Business Council (INZBC) in a statement on its website.

New Zealand's strategy to make India a core partner would be achieved through inter-agency action plans in five major goal areas: merchandise trade, services, investment,

skilled migrants, and regional and global issues.

The strategy has been prepared with input from the INZBC.

"The INZBC is very pleased to see this joined-up approach from the New Zealand Government," says the statement.

The strategy has many elements and revolves around five key goals:

Goal 1: Treble merchandise exports to India to NZ\$2 billion by 2015

Goal 2: Grow services trade with India (education, tourism and professional services) by an average of 20% per year

Goal 3: Improve bilateral investment framework and facilitate growth in investment relationship

Goal 4: Attract and retain skilled migrants from India who are able to make an effective

contribution to New Zealand's economic base

Goal 5: Engage more deeply with India on regional and global issues that will impact on New Zealand's future prosperity and security

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has led the development of the strategy and there are three implementation strands of the strategy being led by three agencies:

Merchandise: New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

Services: Ministry of Education

Political engagement: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Furthering the progress, the Ministry of Education has recently joined as a member of the INZBC.



Man admits setting wife on fire

| TGI NEWS SERVICE |

An Indo-Fijian origin man has pleaded guilty in a New Zealand court to a charge of murdering his wife last year.

Diwesh Kumar Sharma was arrested from Fiji by New Zealand Police, on charges of murdering his wife, 28-year old Ranjeeta Sharrma, by setting her on fire in an attack. She died on the side of a Huntly road in January last year. She was cremated in her hometown of Nadi in Fiji.

Just a day after Ranjeeta's body was found, the 29-year old Sharma fled the country with his four-year old son.

Soon after being detained by Fiji police and brought back to New Zealand, he was sent to a mental health facility for a psychiatric check up, and his lawyer told reporters that Diwesh was fit to plead in the court.

Ranjeeta had come to New Zealand only five years ago and was working as a nurse at Auckland's Middlemore Hospital.

As many as 39% of New Zealand women suffer physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime, according to a study by Janet Fanslow and Elizabeth Robinson.

Police estimate only 18% of domestic violence incidents are reported.



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NEW ZEALAND FACTS: FAMILY VIOLENCE
84% of those arrested for domestic violence are men; 16% are women.

The economic cost of domestic violence was estimated at \$1.2 billion to \$5.8 billion per year by

economist Suzanne Snively in 1996. In today's figures, that would be up to \$8 billion.

In the 2009/10 year there were 3,867 domestic violence cases in the Family Court which each involved at least one child.
(Source: Women's Refuge)

Facebook helps new migrant settle in | TGI NEWS SERVICE |

A new migrant to New Zealand found Facebook very useful in the process of settling in a new country.

Iris Pabayo, who recently migrated to New Zealand from Philippines, found contacts through Facebook.



"The highlight of our settlement journey to New Zealand is Facebook," says Pabayo, who has been in New Zealand for a month now. "Through Facebook we got referred by a family member, to someone they knew in Auckland, who could help us with accommodation upon our arrival."

New migrant Iris Pabayo enjoying Kiwi summer with her daughter

Pabayo also found a support network group, Settlement Support Auckland, on Facebook. More than 2000 newcomers contacted Auckland's four Settlement Support New Zealand (SSNZ) initiatives for assistance in the last six months, resulting in 3,739 referrals to other service providers. Over 505 activities and workshops were provided to newcomers, to help them settle, make connections with their local communities, find employment and learn English.

Pabayo says making connection with a local church was very important for her family.

"We consider ourselves religious and being in a new country, especially around New Year's time can get very lonely.

"We were referred to a church by someone we knew and it was great luck for us! We met so many Filipinos at the church; the pastor even helped us with schooling information for my girl," Pabayo says.

"When I went into SSNZ Auckland profile, I saw other Filipinos in the friends list and made instant connection with them.

"Through the church connections, we met so many people as well. While my husband and I are looking for work, knowing that there are people and organisations that we can go to, or talk to, helps a lot."

Connecting socially with others is a sure way of finding useful support, becoming better informed, and feeling more at home in a new city, says Dr Mary Dawson, Chief Executive of Auckland Regional Migrant Services (ARMS).

Settlement Support NZ Coordinators have been providing information particularly to newcomers from India, China, Philippines, Japan and Fiji. These include work permit

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holders, family members of skilled migrants, visitor visa holders and international students.

Nearly 300 service providers belong to the regional and local Settlement Support networks which hold forums for newcomers and service providers twice a year.

Visit Settlement Support New Zealand website

NEW MIGRANT IRIS PABAYO ENJOYING KIWISUMMER WITH HER DAUGHTER

Chance to shine for Indian heroes

| SULOCHANA SOOD |

A sport charity is inviting nominations from those actively involved in sport and community work in the Indian community.

SPROUT, an Auckland-based charity, has launched the Indian Sports & Community Awards to be held on 26 May 2012 at the Sudima Hotel near Auckland International Airport.

The inaugural awards aim to promote community development and sports in the New Zealand Indian community, says Aditee Naik, the project manager for the awards. "The awards will not only acknowledge individual talents but also honour organisations that have supported the society.

"The awards will recognise the Indian sportspeople at the grassroots level in pursuit of excellence and to honor the outstanding contributions by Indians in the community.

"The awards are an extension of what we are already doing." SPROUT, which stands for 'Sports,

Recreation and Outdoors Trust', recently won an award in the 'Sports and Leisure' category at the Infratil Community Awards 2011 in West Auckland, for its work in promoting active lifestyle. SPROUT runs physical exercise and sports classes, community garden projects, organises community runs and publishes a health magazine.

Nominations are open to people of Indian descent who are involved in community work, volunteering or have represented their chosen sport(s) at a regional, national or international level.

The qualifying period for the nominations is the year ending 31 March 2012. The closing date for the award nominations is 22 April 2012.

The Global Indian magazine is a media partner. More details.

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THE AWARD CATEGORIES

Sportsperson of the year (male and female each) - Open to any adult who has excelled as an individual or in a team in one or more sports

Junior sportsperson of the year (male and female each) - Open to any person aged 21 and below, who has excelled as an individual or in a team in one or more sports
Community volunteer of the year - Open to any volunteer who is working passionately for the betterment of community.

Community organisation of the year - Open to any organisation that has provided substantial benefit to the Indian community
International student of the year - Open to any International student that has made a difference in the NZ community

Senior citizen of the year - Open to any person aged 60 and over who have made a positive contribution to New Zealand

Sports Supreme Award - Selected from the winners of the four sports categories

Sudima Community Supreme Award - Selected from the winners of the four community categories

NZ women link looks with success

| TGI NEWS SERVICE |

Actress and environmentalist Robyn Malcolm has stripped for a nude photoshoot as part of the Next magazine's celebration of the Kiwi female form. In a special feature for the March issue, she is also joined by actress Amanda Billing, and television presenter Sonia Gray in the feature that attempts to address the stereotypes of body image.

New Zealand women think about their weight several times a day – just as often as they think about their partner, sex, food and sleep. What's worse, they believe good looking people tend to get more opportunities. Two out of three women believe that good-looking people are more likely to succeed.

According to the latest study by the Next magazine, Kiwi women don't like their appearance, are obsessed with weight – and believe good looks and success are intrinsically linked.

The magazine spoke with more than 1500 women across age groups and backgrounds, and discovered that three out of four women are unhappy with their weight, with 43% keen to lose at least five kilos.

And it's clearly a topic which is at the forefront of their minds, as 86% think about their weight daily.

Good looks lead to success

The survey found 89% of women believe the way they look and present themselves is very important to succeeding in life, and 79% are of the opinion good looking people tend to get more opportunities. Two out of three women believe that good-looking people are more likely to succeed.

Next editor Sarah Henry has been surprised at the findings: "We always knew appearance was important to women, but we underestimated just how much impact body image has.

If women are happy with what they see in the mirror they generally have a positive outlook. However, when they dislike their

reflection, this feeling can manifest itself in all aspects of their life."

According to Next's research, size 10-12 is no longer the norm – as of those surveyed 49% are size 14 or bigger. Less than a third are a size 10 or smaller (28%).

Breasts are best

The part of their bodies Kiwi women most dislike is their tummies – with 65% saying this is what they like the least in their build. The part they like the most is their breasts – 37% said they are one of their best features.

Open to plastic surgery

While 63% of those Next surveyed would consider plastic surgery, it seems Kiwi women are not dieting. Speaking anonymously, 54% told Next they don't diet but instead set themselves rules about what they eat – and 17% said they never diet.

"It's great to see we've ditched the dieting in favour of making healthier eating choices, but the high link to the idea of plastic surgery suggests we have a long way to go before we're in control of our body image," says Sarah.



ENVIRONMENTALIST ROBYN MALCOLM GOES NUDE FOR THE NEXT MAGAZINE

THE GLOBAL INDIAN MAGAZINE®

The online magazine is published by Angan Publications Ltd, Auckland. **Registered office:** 707B Richardson Road, Hillsborough, Auckland 1042 NEW ZEALAND. Phone: +64-21-251-4924 Email: editor@theglobalindian.co.nz web: www.theglobalindian.co.nz Editorial comment and advice are non-specific and readers are advised to seek professional advice. Views expressed are of writers and not necessarily of publishers. This magazine is copyright © All Rights Reserved. ISSN - 1172-6911