



CARING

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Aotearoa

BHARTIYA SAMAJ CHARITABLE TRUST MAGAZINE



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What's *INSIDE*



***This is a special issue of the
Caring Aotearoa magazine.***

In celebration of 25 years of service, Caring Aotearoa spoke to 25 champions who lent their voice and influence to the growth of Bhartiya Samaj. This issue captures the stories of the success of Bhartiya Samaj, its culture of service, its initiatives that have left a legacy and influence that has made an impact.

There are countless others who have silently campaigned for Bhartiya Samaj's cause with a passion.

Bhartiya Samaj founders & trustees want to take a moment to thank them, the staff, volunteers, community of allies and well-wishers for their continued support.



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Funded by:

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Roopa Aur Aap Charitable Trust (RAACT) has been working for domestic violence victims since 2008. The organisation focuses on the development of South Asian Community experiencing inequality and violence. RAACT adopts non-judgemental, non-political, and non-religious approach. The confidentiality of the client is strictly followed by the team. The organisation has multi-lingual skilled, experienced, and knowledgeable staff. We work hand in hand with immigration advisors, lawyers, police officials to provide services to our clients. The team has been continuously conducting workshops to empower and educate the society about domestic violence in various forms. All our services are free of cost.

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- **Elder Abuse Awareness**
- **Networking**



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From the Founders' Desk

Jeet Suchdev

In 2020, we celebrated 25 years of Bhartiya Samaj. What started with a humble purpose of serving those in need, has now evolved into an organisation that resonates with every Indian in New Zealand. When we launched in 1995, my vision was simple - to assist people in their times of need. Since then, Bhartiya Samaj has pushed the boundaries of what we can offer, who we can help and how we can make a positive difference in our community.

Along the way, we were fortunate to be supported by several community leaders, organisations and government agencies.

This issue of the Caring Aotearoa magazine is dedicated to those champions. We have captured stories of some of these leaders who have lent their voices for our cause and influenced their networks and community to support Bhartiya Samaj. There are hundreds of others who have passionately worked with us, behind the scenes, never seeking the limelight but only the difference their work makes to the community - we want to dedicate this issue to them and bring you their stories.

We hope you enjoy this very special issue that celebrates our journey of 25 years.

Yours in service,
Jeet Suchdev



Roopa Suchdev

What started as just a seed that was sown 25 years ago, has now developed into a full-fledged tree. Our intention, all those years ago was just to create a place of belongingness and companionship for our people. We wanted them to feel connected to their culture while at the same time assimilate into the new New Zealand culture.

Never in our wildest dream would we have thought that this seed will grow into a tree that will have so many branches and provide shelter to anyone that comes under it. Over the years, Jeet-ji and our team along with the volunteers have worked very hard to create a refuge for our senior citizens, our children as well as families. We facilitated events for the senior citizens, organized Indian festivals for everyone, set up playgroups for the kids and built a women's and family support wing in Roopa Aur Aap.

Along the way, this small seed helped thousands of people find their feet in New Zealand. And, now it has become a garden. My vision for Bhartiya Samaj and Roopa Aur Aap is for us to be able to help as many people as possible. We already receive calls from different cities in New Zealand, and even countries like India and Fiji. I want Bhartiya Samaj to expand to other cities and countries around the world, so that this small umbrella that we have nurtured becomes a tent that shelters many more people.

Yours in service,
Roopa Suchdev



Amplifying the voices of migrant communities through its partners: *Bhartiya Samaj's secret formula to success*



BY PRITI GARUDE

Established in the winter of 1995, Bhartiya Samaj was born out of a need to amplify the voices of the migrant community in New Zealand. Now, celebrating its 25th year, the organization has cemented its position as the go-to for care, support and growth for all vulnerable citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Led by Jeet Suchdev and Roopa Suchdev, the founders work closely with their Patrons, Trustees, Board Executives, staff as well as a dedicated team of volunteers to build a cohesive and strong New Zealand.

Meet the stakeholders

It takes a village to raise a child, and it also takes a village to make an impact. The success of Bhartiya Samaj lies not only in its strong community of people, but also the strong relationships they have built over the years with their supporters and stakeholders.

Caring Aotearoa brings you 25 organisations that are the secret formula for success for Bhartiya Samaj. These organisations **along with many others** have been a pillar of support to the organisation Bhartiya Samaj over the years.

Indian High Commission

Bhartiya Samaj works with the Indian High Commission to help disseminate and simplify new and existing policy announcements to the Indian community in New Zealand. They also work with the High Commission to provide emergency relief in times of need.

Speaking about their relationship, Jeet Suchdev said, "We work very closely with the Indian High Commission. We get approached by people in distress or in any problems, or we get to know about them. We then reach out to the Indian High Commission, who are always very supportive of our efforts. We are very thankful for our strong relationship with them."

NZ Police

Bhartiya Samaj acts as an important link between the community and police which helps in making a safer and secure neighbourhood. Special workshops are conducted to educate and create awareness in the community. Talking about the organisation's involvement with the NZ Police, Jeet Suchdev said, "We have a very strong relationship with the Police. They attend our senior citizens group, our children group and youth camps where we work with them to help reduce the barriers between the police and the migrant Indian community. We want to convey a message to our people that talking to the Police is not a taboo. We conduct workshops to reinforce this belief and to take away people's fear factor. So, if we have any issue, we reach out to them and then if they can't help us out directly, they connect us to other departments of the Police as well."

Auckland Council, local boards like the Puketapapa, Whau and others

Appreciating the support of the local boards, Jeet Suchdev said, "We have a very strong working relationship with the local board including the Puketapapa, Whau and other local boards. They provide us with grants, which helps us run the organization."

Separately, we have worked with the current as well as previous Mayor for consultation as well as any other support. I used to sit on the Auckland Ethnic People's Advisory board as well as the Senior People's Advisory board which has helped us develop these strong relationships with the council."



Auckland Council libraries

Every year, Bharitya Samaj conducts workshops along with Auckland library for young children at their Annual Summer camp, providing them with opportunities to stimulate imagination, creativity and learning through play and engaging them in reading.

For older adults, Bhartiya Samaj conducts digital literacy sessions to support their digital skills development that helps them to become confident and independent using technology.

Roopa Aur Aap

Roopa Aur is the sister organisation of Bhartiya Samaj, launched by Roopa Suchdev. Bhartiya Samaj works in collaboration with Roopa Aur Aap to conduct workshops to educate the community about domestic abuse and provide counselling services to help victims of domestic abuse to rebuild their future.

Bupa

Bhartiya Samaj established the first ever culturally appropriate rest home for senior citizens of South Asian origin in the Aashirwad Wing at the David Lange Care Home in Auckland.

English Language Partners

Bhartiya Samaj organizes Kiwi English-speaking classes for senior adults where they learn English speaking skills so that they can lead independent lives and connect and integrate with people and not feel isolated.

Kelly Sports

The organization in association with Kelly Sports offers team building and skill development opportunities to the young children through Sports programmes conducted every year in the annual Summer Camp.

Drowning Prevention Auckland

Bhartiya Samaj works closely with Drowning Prevention Auckland to create awareness about water safety and reduce water related drownings amongst the migrant communities by conducting regular water safety sessions.

Volunteering Auckland

The organization provides a platform for volunteers to network, gain experience and learn new skills.

The Office of Ethnic Communities

Bhartiya Samaj has long worked with the Office of Ethnic Communities to provide support, safety and a sense of belongingness to the migrant community of New Zealand.

Commenting on the support given by the Office of Ethnic Communities, Jeet Suchdev said, "During COVID, the Office of Ethnic Communities came forward to help us provide food, help and shelter to all those people who were in distress."

Four Winds Foundation

They provide grants for the benefit to the community.

The Southern Trust

They support community initiatives that reach out to the vulnerable in the society.

Ministry for Social Development

The Ministry grants funds to the organization for supporting communities and providing essential community-led solutions that support local resilience and community wellbeing.

Outlining his work with the Ministry, Jeet Suchdev said, "From time to time, we help senior citizens manage things and represent them if needed. I call my role as a "hands on chairperson". While I am involved with Bharitya Samaj in a governance capacity, I am also involved in the operations of the organization, especially with the work that we do with the ministry."

Pub Charity

They provide grants for the benefit to the community.

Dragon Community Trust

They grant funds that benefit the young and elderly members of the Asian community.

Community Trust South

They provide funds that help create positive change in the Southern region.

Foundation North

They grant funds each year that focus on bringing about positive change in the community through supporting innovative projects and practices.

Ministry for Education

They support early childhood learning alongside their parents in an informal environment to build a strong foundation for the child's well-being.

Jeet Suchdev adds, "Bhartiya Samaj runs a playgroup, and the Ministry for Education provides us with support for it. We have a good relationship with them, and we want to continue to build on it as we are keen to start our own childcare center. The ministry is quite supportive of our initiatives and they do visit us quite regularly, send us information and provide a little bit of funding."

Lion Foundation

The Lion Foundation is one of New Zealand's oldest and most respected Charitable Trusts.

Grassroots Trust

They provide funds for the welfare of the community and early years and youth development.

Bluesky Community Trust

They are a non-profit organisation which operates gaming machines to raise funds for the community.

They raise funds for various activities for the benefit of the community such as raising funds for cultural and arts festivals, children's education etc.,

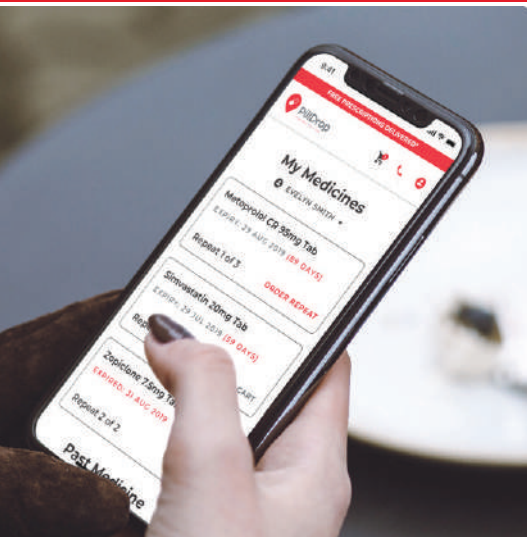
Community Organisations Grants Scheme

They provide funds for working towards community social services.

Lottery Grants Board

They aim to maximise community benefits that contribute towards building strong sustainable communities together.

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Power of people: 25 leaders who have championed their support to Bhartiya Samaj

BY PRITI GARUDE

Behind every success, there is an unseen hard work, sacrifice, and persistence. There is a massive amount of effort and dedication that goes behind each initiative. This is true in a business context however, it especially holds true for community organisations that rely on the power of people to make an impact.

In celebration of its 25th year, Bhartiya Samaj captured the stories of a few dedicated souls who have lent their voice and influence to the growth of Bhartiya Samaj. Having broadened its mission of making an impact to the wider community, since its launch, our writer, Priti Garude spoke to 25 leaders who have championed the cause of Bhartiya Samaj.

There are many others who have silently campaigned for Bhartiya Samaj's cause with passion. Bhartiya Samaj founders & trustees want to take a moment to thank the staff, volunteers, community, allies and well-wishers for their support.





Consulate of India

Auckland, New Zealand



**Bhav Dhillon,
Honorary
Consul of India,
Auckland**

Bhav Dhillon is a well-known community leader and an established business leader of repute. With a sound understanding of most bilateral trade and community issues, he is a strong advocate for the India NZ relationship and involved with the Indian Diaspora in NZ for nearly 15 years.

Following his passion for the India-NZ relationship, he is on the board and Treasurer of India NZ Business Council and has accompanied the Prime Minister twice on his trips to India. He is also significantly involved with all incoming senior-level ministerial visits from India to NZ.

He is the Managing Director of CEMIX, which is an iconic Kiwi brand that has been in NZ for over 30 years and is a market leader, manufacturing innovative construction products with a nationwide presence. He also is on the board of Foundation North, Australasia's largest philanthropic funding agency. Bhav is also the Chair of There's a Better Way Foundation which works alongside NZ Police, Auckland Council and other like-minded organisations for creating pathways for positive change among youth at risk of gang culture and drugs.

On the community front, he is the Chairman of the Kiwi Indian Hall of Fame and the Publisher of The Indian Weekender, NZ's only weekly newspaper for the Kiwi-Indians.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

Bhartiya Samaj is a very important diaspora organization, if not, maybe one of the most important diaspora organisations in New Zealand. Since my arrival in New Zealand, I have heard about Bhartiya Samaj. They have gone from strength to strength since the launch. It is a very well known, well respected, community organization focused on senior wellbeing. Off late, they've gone, from as Jeet-ji says zero to zero. They organise very good camps for youngsters which I have had the opportunity to attend.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

I'm quite impressed with the work they do around youth during school holidays. Also, at the same time the work they do with the senior citizens definitely impresses me. The biggest thing for senior citizens in this country is social isolation. Bhartiya Samaj events are aimed at reducing this, as this actually transcends to mental health issues and other things. So, I think whatever they do is worth its weight in gold.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

It is a go-to organisation in the community, for all community related issues. If anybody needs help,

whether it's a case where the seniors need some extra support, whether it's a family issue which can be resolved through proper dialogue, Bhartiya Samaj is always at the forefront of this - trying to keep the cultural fabric of our community intact.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

Not one but many. Whenever I go to any of their events, I see 200 - 300 senior citizens smiling and enjoying. That is a real a-ha moment for me because we see our own parents in each of those faces, eyes and smiles. And, that's my memory of Bhartiya Samaj. I have a particular love affair with the seniors because whenever I go, I interact with them personally, the warmth they exude when I meet them is awesome.

■ What is your vision for the future of Bhartiya Samaj?

An organisation which has been there for 25 years, definitely has a very good runway. They have a good cohort of people on their board and around them. It's amazing to see that some of the workshops and courses are conducted by the next generation. I think the organization is in good health and the future is looking bright.





NARENDRA BHANA

*Narendra Bhana has served as the **President of Auckland Indian Association** since 2018.*

Creating your safe space in your home away from home, is not an easy task. You miss your family, friends along with that sense of familiarity and belonging. Organisations like Bharitya Samaj and Auckland Indian Association (AIA) provide people with a place to call their own.

The Auckland Indian Association (AIA) recently marked its centenary celebrations. Founded in 1920 by Chhotubhai Patel with an aim to provide a place for Indians to come together and share in their experience and culture, AIA like Bharitya Samaj has worked tirelessly to provide a home away from home for Indians.

The key objective of the Auckland Indian Association is to protect and preserve Indian culture in New Zealand. Like Bharitya Samaj, the association celebrates all Indian cultural and religious events with the real Indian spirit.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

Auckland Indian Association Inc. and Bhartiya Samaj have a long-standing relationship. Both organisations have been working together for over 20 years, and the relationship has strengthened over the past three years. Auckland Indian Association Inc and Bhartiya Samaj have a common goal of selflessly serving the community.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

Auckland Indian Association Inc, Bhartiya Samaj and the Hon Consul of India in New Zealand Bhav Dhillon have been instrumental in forming the Auckland Indian Diaspora Group, which has provided a platform for the Indian community organisations to remain united and take part in each other's celebrations. Auckland Indian Association, Bhartiya Samaj and Auckland Indian Diaspora organisations have celebrated various events together such as International Yoga Day and India Independence Day. All events have been highly successful.

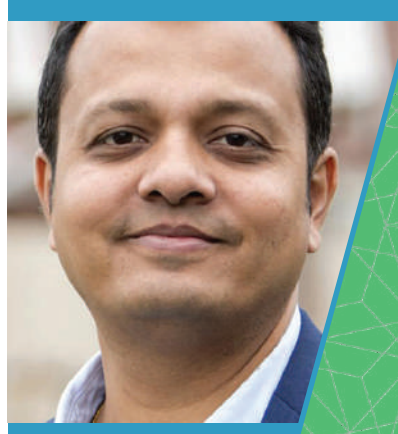
■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

Bhartiya Samaj has provided outstanding support to our seniors, children, youth, families, and made a positive change in the lives of our diverse community in New Zealand.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

It has been a privilege to be part of Bhartiya Samaj family over the past three years. I enjoyed attending all their functions and wish them all the best for their future endeavours to make our community even stronger. – All the best.





Rahul Dosshi,
Executive Board
member, Bhartiya
Samaj Charitable
Trust and Managing
Director & Founder
of The Rainbow
Corner

Rahul Dosshi is an Executive Board member at Bhartiya Samaj. He brings more than 26 years of international management experience to the table. Much of his career has been spent in Maritime industry, both at sea and ashore where he served in a variety of leadership roles including Ship's Captain, Harbour Master, Marine Officer, Health and Safety Coordinator for a port, airport and log industry and most recently, Head of Faculty for a premium Educational Institute in Auckland, New Zealand.

Having graduated in Business Management from Massey University, Auckland, Rahul is a forward thinker, true visionary and driver of change.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

As part of our community work, we support initiatives that align with our and the Bhartiya Samaj's values and morals. The Rainbow Corner is predominantly in early childhood but we stretch ourselves wherever we can and come together to help the community. For example, I recently spoke with Jeet-ji to do a yoga seminar for our senior citizens.

I'm on the board of the Trust as well which further strengthens my association and relationship with the organisation.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

We have worked together at one of the summer camps held last year. We did that in New Lynn and we had some pretty good support from Jeet-ji for that.

■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

The very fact that the name is out there and people in the community look up to it. People reach out to Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji during times of need, that itself is a great testament to the work they do in the community. They are the pallbearers, and we support them in their initiatives, wherever we can.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

For the upcoming 25th anniversary celebrations, Jeet-ji told me that the entire kitchen is my responsibility. He was not going to get involved, neither would he question me about it. He said to me that whatever happens on the day of the event would be my responsibility. I think it says a lot about a man when he puts that level of trust in you.

BOTANY

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AUCKLAND TAMIL ASSOCIATION



*Vai Ravindran,
President,
Auckland Tamil
Association*

Vai Ravindran is the President of the Auckland Tamil Association, a NZ qualified Education agent and operates a Subway franchise. Vai has been producing radio programs since 1997 and has provided service to temple and spiritual organisations over his years in Auckland. Born in Madras, Vai is the father of one son. He studies Vedanta, works in the IT industry and is well known among Tamils for his community activities.

■ Can you give us a history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

I have known Jeet-ji for nearly 20 years ago. He invited me to an event, where we spoke about community work in New Zealand. We were all new at that time and his idea that community work is so important here stuck with me. He works to uplift the immigrants who come into the country and I appreciate him for his community work. He is always able to get people together, help them in whatever area they need. After that, we called him for all our functions, mostly our Tamil ones, Pongal and Deepawali. Without any hesitation, he would come, sit with us. And that is how we have been associated for such a long time.

Recently, in the Auckland Tamil Association, when we celebrated Deepawali, he sang a full song and even danced at the event.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

As the Auckland Tamil Association, we are always there whenever Bhartiya Samaj does any event. We worked

very closely with them last year during COVID, when Bhartiya Samaj distributed relief packages to everyone. Auckland Tamil Association also helped distribute those food parcels to those in need.

■ What according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

They are one of the pioneers when it comes to doing anything for the community. What they do for the older people, our senior citizens is amazing.

■ Any one memory of Bhartiya Samaj you can share with us

Their service to those in need during COVID was amazing. They really stood up for our people and they cared for our people, which was great to see.

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Ranjay Sikka
Director

“There are a lot of very successful organizations that I have been involved with over the years, but I find Bhartiya Samaj at the top of my list.”



**Dr. Ashraf Choudhary,
Patron,
Bhartiya Samaj**

Dr. Ashraf Choudhary QSO is a former member of the Parliament in New Zealand and a Patron of Bhartiya Samaj. He was New Zealand's first MP from South Asia and Pakistan and has been involved with the work of Bhartiya Samaj for over 20 years.

■ **Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

It started when I became an MP and Bhartiya Samaj invited me to one of their functions. Thereafter, I was asked to serve as the Patron of the organisation along with Bruce Hucker. I have been involved with the organization for many years, and have been very impressed with the work they've done.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

I have supported Bhartiya Samaj and participated in all the activities they have organised till now. Especially their initiatives with the senior citizens, children and the many festivals and events they've organised, particularly Diwali, and a number of Indian annual events. And generally speaking, wherever they needed my guidance, I have been able to be there for them. Because they are involved in promoting the welfare of senior citizens and of course, women and children, I have been happy to be part of what they want to do, to help and guide and act on it for them. If I am able to help make connections for the Bhartiya Samaj with the wider leadership in New Zealand, I am happy to support work with them.

■ **What according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the Indian community?**

Bhartiya Samaj provides a lot of different services, particularly looking after the Indian diaspora who have

made NZ their home. The organisation has ensured those who are here, particularly the seniors have a positive aging. They enjoy being part of the New Zealand way of life and then live fulfilling lives.

For example, I recall many people who attend their events really look forward to these weekly events and catchups. Hundreds of people attend those events - singles and couples and their families. They come and enjoy themselves and each other's company, but also find an occasion to connect with the culture. It's very important to create a place where people can connect with the language, and are there for each other.

In particular, Bhartiya Samaj provides cultural training and well-being to children who gather at their annual summer camps.

Bhartiya Samaj has not just succeeded in promoting the welfare of all those who have been in NZ for a long time but also reached new migrants helping them whenever they are in need.

For example, in more recent times, travelers from India were stuck in NZ, during COVID-19, and Bhartiya Samaj provided a lot of support to all those people.

So, there are a lot of very successful organizations that I have been involved with over the years, but I find Bhartiya Samaj at the top of my list.

“Bhartiya Samaj has created a name for itself in helping people who are vulnerable and need help settling down in the community, and that I think brings tremendous value to the community.”



Prithipal Singh Basra, MNZM, Community Leader

Prithipal Singh Basra came to New Zealand in 1968 and played a vital role in opening the first Gurudwara at Te Rapa-Hamilton (1977) where he was its first President. He was also instrumental in establishing the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Sikh Society (1979) and opening the first Gurudwara in Auckland at Princes Street, Otahuhu (1986). Prithipal Singh made contributions in religious, political and economic sectors of the community for which he received a New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) in 1998.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

I was the first one to receive Jeet Suchdev into the country. He came here in the 80 and we attended a temple on Elliot Street, Papakura together – that’s where we first met.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

The biggest way that I helped the organisation was to provide any help and support they need to achieve their objectives. I have visited their events on a regular basis and spoke at various event and put forward various visions, for example, they were thinking of setting up a retirement village for old people, which we were able to do a few years ago, and now hope to take it to the next stage.

■ **What, according to you is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

I think the community has grown tremendously. The Punjabi community itself has grown from 500 people to 50,000, and if we are looking at other communities then from 30,000 to 300,000. That’s how much the growth has been in this country.

This has put a tremendous pressure on our social services. Bhartiya Samaj has created a name for itself in helping people who are vulnerable and need help settling down in the community, and that I think brings tremendous value to the community.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

I think the biggest memories I can share are based on my personal contact and relationship with Jeet. Over and above that, I remember when Bhartiya Samaj used to organise the India Independence Day or Republic Day functions in the city. They were tremendous success and Jeet was able to get a lot of the associations and various political parties together to attend those events.

Separately, during COVID, I was approached by Jeet Suchdev who was keen to find a place for the Indians who were stranded in New Zealand. I was able to offer my motel in Papatoetoe to people from my homeland. We were more than happy to look after them and to provide them with whatever they needed. It’s great to serve people. I have been doing that for the last 53 years here in New Zealand and that is what I continued to offer to those that were stranded here as well.





**Dinesh Khadka,
President,
New Zealand Nepal
Society Inc.**

Dinesh Khadka is a key and well-established member of the New Zealand Nepal Society Inc., and he is currently the President. Dinesh has been involved in helping the Nepalese Community of New Zealand grow and establishing a platform for Nepali families and students moving to New Zealand. He has been in constant collaboration with multiple community leaders to showcase the strong cultural ties that we have in the community.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

When I became the President of New Zealand Nepal Society in 2016, I was keen to reach out to people outside the Nepalese community. Jeet Suchdev was the first person I interacted with at the Bhartiya Samaj Holi event. I introduced myself to him – and since then we have been involved with all of Bhartiya Samaj activities. To show my support and get to know more about Bhartiya Samaj and the work that they do, I attend all Bhartiya Samaj events and also take several Nepali community leaders to the events with me.

At home, I have three elderly citizens, my mother-in-law and my parents. We don't have such a facility for senior citizens in our Nepalese community, hence I really appreciate and am impressed with the way Bhartiya Samaj takes care of its senior citizens.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

We did a couple of events together. We had the Pan Asian New Year in the Parliament, where the Nepali community supported the event. There was a big presence of the Nepalese community at the event.

On several occasions, we have attended Bhartiya Samaja events, and I am always there to support Jeet-ji.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

When people are young, they don't necessarily need help. They can support themselves. There are lots of organisations that support students. Because of our language barrier, the government agencies are unable to reach out to the vulnerable communities in New Zealand like Indian senior citizens. Bhartiya Samaj reached out to these communities, which is a tremendous achievement.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

There was an event at the Mount Roskill War Memorial Hall where there were a lot of senior citizens and I was invited as a guest. At this event, Jeet-ji was recognising his team members and giving awards to his team who have been working hard and supporting him. I was very proud to see that, as I believe your organisation is as good as your team, and he not only supports and respects his team but all other community leaders as well.



Jagjit Singh Kathuria Community Hero



Jagjit Singh Kathuria is an inspiration to everyone at the Bhartiya Samaj.

A perfect embodiment of age as just a number, Jagit Singh Kathuria participated in the Masters Games in February 2019 at the ripe age of 84. Inspired by 104 year old Veteran world famous athlete Smt. Maan Kaur, Kathuria has since attended five national and international athletic meets at Whanganui, Dunedin, Mackey (Australia) & twice participated in the Taranaki Masters Games where he won 21 Gold & seven Silver medals.

He was also declared Senior Citizen of the year 2012 at Asian/ Indian Community Sport award. A perfect example to the younger generation to follow their passion and lead a healthy lifestyle.





Murali Kumar, a former teacher from Singapore, has extensive experience working with diverse communities through his community engagement roles with Families Commission and Wellington Council. He worked as a Relationship Manager with the Ministry of Social Development and most recently as a Place Manager with Auckland Council. Murali is currently the Centre Manager for English Language Partners. He is also the founder of CATNZ.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj and what work did you do with them?**

I have known of Bhartiya Samaj since 2010 – 2011 through my work with the Ministry of Social Development. I knew that they were catering to a lot of activities for the ethnic communities and were looking after the older people, making sure that they are engaged, and a lot of positive work was coming out of that. And though I was in Wellington at the time, Jeet and I stayed in touch and I was updated on the work he and the Samaj did.

And then, subsequently, after 2014 I moved to Auckland and started working for Auckland Council. Again through my community networks and community work, Jeet and I met several times, and worked on initiatives together. We wanted to see how we can provide better support to the elders, so Jeet and I were constantly in communication.

And then, since I joined English Language Partners, which was in 2019, we were looking at and we're still in the conversation on this, but we're looking at how we can support the senior communities with conversational English – so we are working through this with Bhartiya Samaj now. There is very potential strong collaboration in progress.

In 2019, Jeet and I came up with the opportunity to do the Pan India New Year event, which we successfully delivered in Parliament. We brought the wider Indian communities together to celebrate this New Year in April. This year, we got together again, and were keen to bring the wider South-East Asian communities together to celebrate a Pan Asian New Year, which we delivered in the Parliament in April.

So, it's a relationship that spans from 2010 right through to 2021.

■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

I think the impact is twofold. One - positive engagement with the senior citizens of our Indian community. The organisation has had a positive impact in terms of engagement, support and entertainment.

The other impact, I would say, is the awareness of the need for the younger generation to be involved with the senior community. So, it's the intergenerational work, that awareness is developing as we speak and that is very important awareness that we must have.

So, whenever I've been to any of their functions, I've seen younger people involved and supporting the senior community. I think that's a real positive development and we need to expand on that work.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

Let's take the Pan Indian/ Asian New Year events. That's something that we really worked together on, and I think that has had far reaching effects because we are positively and actively engaged with the different communities. Engagement is two types, active and passive. The active engagement of bringing diverse communities together - that's something we spent a lot of time working on together.

The other thing from the Bhartiya Samaj perspective is when the wider Indian organisations come together and celebrate the Indian Republic Day and Independence Day. I worked quite closely with the Bhartiya Samaj on those and it was a very positive experience of working and watching the senior community perform and entertain the wider community.



Ghouse Majeed,
Event Manager,
Urdu And Hindi
Cultural Association
Of NZ

Ghouse Majeed has been a part of the Urdu Hindi Cultural Association of New Zealand for the past 10 years. He is their event coordinator. He is also the General Secretary, Mana Andhra Telugu Association of NZ and a member of South Asian Leadership NZ.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

It started 13 years ago when, like all other Indians, we were looking for any event where we could participate and get that connection. It was then that I participated in the Indian Independence Day event organised by the Bhartiya Samaj. I was so fascinated by the event and quite liked the way it was presented and organised. The way they created the culture of India and tried to create a home away from the home. It resonated with me a lot. I had the opportunity to meet Jeet-ji at one of the events. He then sometimes invited me to their events, sometimes I'd go as a volunteer – and that's how we have known each other for over 20 years.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

Bhartiya Samaj is an integral part of Urdu Hindi Cultural Association. Jeet-bhai is a kind of guide, philosopher for us, helping us conduct our events.

We were keen to do an Indian cultural event in New Zealand and the inspiration to do one actually came from Jeet bhai.

He always supports us and plays a major role in conducting those events.

■ **What according to you is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

It's very obvious that every Indian living in New Zealand knows about Bhartiya Samaj.

It has made a clear difference to the lives of many Indians in New Zealand, compared to any other organization in NZ. If there is any need, any issues, one of the first organisations to come to mind is Bhartiya Samaj. They have been doing significant work in New Zealand for the last 25 years and Jeet bhai has played a pivotal role in creating a powerful image of Bhartiya Samaj in NZ. And of course, Jeet bhai is not only doing community and social work, but he's also doing a lot of social work for all communities. It is not restricted to one community or ethnicity; he has been a part of all social work for every community.

So that makes a big difference. The way they used to conduct the India Independence Day and Republic Day events. You could see all of India in those events, and not just one culture or state. In doing this, they created a kind of a unity in diversity of Indians in New Zealand.

For example, I am from Andhra Pradesh, I am part of Urdu Hindi Cultural Association. Yet I am still a part of the Bhartiya Samaj. Even though we do our own cultural events of our state, we are still a part of Bhartiya Samaj. In that way, he succeeded in clubbing and maintaining the harmony among all the groups of Indian associations in NZ.



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ENGLISH
LANGUAGE PARTNERS
NEW ZEALAND
Working with Migrants and Refugees





Jessica Phuang,
Ethnic Responsiveness
Manager,
New Zealand Police

A familiar face at any event, Jessica has a long history and association with Bharitya Samaj. Born in Singapore and raised in Malaysia. Jessica moved to New Zealand more than 30 years ago. She has worked with NZ Police for 17 years and was recently promoted as the Ethnic Responsiveness Manager.

Jessica received the Queen's Service Medal, for services to the community, on 16 April 2008, often works to build links into the Asian community through her work in the Police. Jessica is instrumental in bringing a lot of awareness about senior abuse as well helping our tamaki learn about safety.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bharitya Samaj?

I think it was at least a few years ago that I was invited to visit the Bhartiya Samaj. It was just an ordinary event that they hold every fortnight for the senior citizens. So, when I went there for the first time, I was truly inspired by what I saw. I saw that the senior citizens were really warm towards Jeet-ji so much that they were hugging and holding him. Of course, they had been interacting with him for so many years. But for someone who regularly meets each other, to still make an effort to go up to him and give him a big hug - I remember thinking to myself this man must have done something really good for this community, that he's got the respect and love from them. Since then, I made an effort to go as many times as I could to the Bhartiya Samaj events.

I invited the Police District commander to come along with me because I was so inspired by them, and I wanted my District Commander to also experience. District Commander Superintendent Karyn Malthus too was very impressed with what she saw. People were just so happy, with so much joy. She enjoyed doing the exercises with them and even danced with them at the festival.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

We conducted a lot of seminars for the members of Bhartiya Samaj. I shared a lot about elder abuse with the senior citizens. Over the years, I have spoken about the importance of reporting family harm, what is family harm and also talked about the values that we should all have when we live in New Zealand. No one has the right to abuse another person, and we have to take responsibility for our own actions as well.

After a few years, Jeet-ji told me about the summer youth camp. We had Senior Sergeant Peter Pedersen attend that first camp. He is the officer in charge of the Dog

section. I invited him and he brought the dog with him and there were about 100 young children there and they all crowded around him and were so happy to see the dog. He explained about safety to these children. And since that year, every year we've been sending different Youth officers to participate in the youth camp. Just last year, we had some officers participate in the activities in the summer camp as well.

So the NZ Police relationship with Bhartiya Samaj expanded. Rather than just focusing on the senior elder abuse, we also began working on the youth camp, where this year, they had about 120 children.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bharitya Samaj has made to the community?

I believe that it's the way Jeet-ji has been caring and looking after these senior citizens together with Roopa-ji and the volunteers. I must give a special mention to the volunteers. People like Mita, Sadguna, Suman, Rani, Roshni - these people have no expectation of reward, they just want everything to run smoothly.

And I must say something about Mita. This lady really touched my heart. She's in the kitchen, she's serving people. She's playing the drums and for the birthday song. For me, if people want to put heart and soul into an organization, I mean look realistically, it is just another organization. But it's the people who are going to demonstrate what kind of organization that is. And the people there actually showed me that the leader is really taking care of them and they are really putting their heart and soul for the people and therefore the return is - everybody enjoys. To me, that is so heartwarming.

■ Can you share one memory of your interaction with Bharitya Samaj

I want to talk about Mita. She is one special woman that I've met in my life who is very, very humble, modest, well-mannered, respectful and polite. In spite of running around doing a lot of things, she still puts on a smile and her kindness shines through from within. Mita to me is a shining star in Bhartiya Samaj.

Now, you may ask, why is she giving her heart and soul? And I am sure it has a lot to do with the leadership. If Jeet-ji is giving out so much love to everybody, people will automatically give out love to everybody. It's a cycle. I don't even understand Hindi. But whenever I go to their events, the seniors sing songs, dance and I don't feel

bored. I feel such a strong connection to them because every time I go there, these seniors will come and shake my hands, hug me, and kiss me, touch my face. I felt so welcomed by all these seniors. And I know in the Indian culture when they use both hands to touch your face, it means a lot. These are all people much more senior than me. You know some of them are 80 – 90 years old and they walk slowly towards me and just touch my face. I felt so honoured and privileged - it's like a guru giving me their blessings.



HARISH LODHIA

*Harish Lodhia,
Honorary
Consul for Fiji*

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj and what work did you do with them?**

My involvement with Bhartiya Samaj started when I was asked to sit on the board about two years ago. Since then, I have attended several events and have supported their initiatives like the summer camp, workshops for senior citizens and more.

I want to take this moment to congratulate Bhartiya Samaj on successfully serving the community for 25 years. I am proud to be associated with this organization.

■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

Bhartiya Samaj has had a tremendous impact on the Indian diaspora in New Zealand. The work and support provided by the organization in times of need to any member of the community is to be lauded. Jeet-ji along with his staff, as well as the team of volunteers is setting up a good platform for our future generations.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

Just being at one of the events, surrounded by all senior citizens, who are happy and enjoying themselves – it's truly a marvelous sight. Their blessings and wishes are enough for us to keep doing the good work.



Daljit Singh,
President,
Supreme Sikh Society,
New Zealand

Daljit Singh is the spokesperson and President of the Supreme Sikh Society of New Zealand. The Society recently opened a Sports Complex at Sir Kalgidhar Sahib Gurdwara in Takanini, Auckland which was inaugurated by Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern in the presence of her Cabinet colleagues, Members of Parliament, and community leaders.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

I have known Jeet Suchdev for about 20 years now. In 2005, when we opened the Takanini Gurudwara with Helen Clark, Jeet-ji and I worked quite closely with each other. At that time, we realized we have quite a few things in common – I found Jeet-ji's behaviour polite and respectful as well.

And because we had similar agendas and thoughts, we started to help each other out - me through the Otahuhu Gurudwara and Jeet-ji through Bhartiya Samaj.

So, whenever Bhartiya Samaj takes its senior citizens out for picnic or an event, they always reach out to us to help with food or catering. Because we are doing good work, helping the community - we are always keen to help them out, whether that is in Hamilton, Tauranga or Hastings. And it's the same the other way around, whenever we need him, Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji are always there for us.

■ What work did you do with them?

Because we are not in competition, Bhartiya Samaj mostly looks after the senior citizens or the elders. So, if anyone approaches us about help or a case for senior citizens, we always refer them to Bhartiya Samaj.

If they feel that there are any issues in the community, that they cannot look after, they always refer it to me.

So, we help each other out. Both our organizations don't have a political agenda, we work for the community. Our main motto is to serve the community, we do not bring a self-vested interest into this or even promote any political party. We are not biased against any community or race or religion.

■ What, according to you is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

It's difficult for people to leave their communities and come here. So, when they go to Bhartiya Samaj events, they are always happy. I wonder how difficult it would be for the senior citizens here to be a part of the society if it wasn't for Bhartiya Samaj. That is the main thing that is always encouraging me to go along with Bhartiya Samaj.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

Once Bhartiya Samaj had taken all their senior citizens to Hamilton, Rotorua and Tauranga, and they had asked us to provide them with snacks. When they arrived at the Takanini Gurudwara, I saw that some people help eating. And at this time, I saw that one of the volunteers was feeding someone – I was very moved when I saw this. No matter what, they are always together and make sure that they help each other out, and that is the work done by Bhartiya Samaj.



NZ Sikh Sport Complex- Takanini inaugurated by PM Jacinda Ardern



Takanini Gurudwara's multimillion-dollar sports complex in South Auckland, which was ready since last year, has been officially inaugurated by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on March 21, 2021.

Named as 'NZ Sikh Sports Complex- Takanini,' the sporting facility will be available to everyone in New Zealand regardless of ethnicity.

- The sports complex comprises a total of seven different sports' turf including soccer, hockey, athletics track, volleyball, basketball, cricket and kabaddi, which are further vetted by the highest professional regulatory bodies of each sport in the country.
- The soccer pitch is fully approved by FIFA
- The entire complex has been fitted with seven floodlights, with in-built PA systems, to facilitate sporting fixtures at the night.



FOR MORE DETAILS, CONTACT:

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“Significantly, in its mentoring role, Bhartiya Samaj encourages volunteers and our youth to undertake leadership roles, including facilitating social, cultural and well-being programmes for our children, youth and Seniors.”



Dr Ajit Swaran Singh is a District Court Judge at the Auckland District Court: Criminal and Mental Health Jurisdictions. A strong figure of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand, Judge Ajit Singh and his wife **Subhag** have been strong supporters of the work of Bhartiya Samaj.

Dr Ajit Swaran Singh is a District Court Judge at the Auckland District Court: Criminal and Mental Health Jurisdictions. A strong figure of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand, Judge Ajit Singh and his wife Subhag have been strong supporters of the work of Bhartiya Samaj.

Judge Singh is a Foundation Visiting Professor of Law @ The University of Fiji, who facilitates pro bono lectures during annual & sabbatical Leave. As a part of his other community work, he served as elected Council Member of the Auckland & New Zealand Law Societies. He was a convenor of the ADLS Criminal Law & Fitness to Practice Law Committees.

Prior to being appointed as a Judge, he served as Board member of Auckland University's Law Faculty, as a representative of the Auckland District Law Society.

Todate, he is a White Ribbon Ambassador and a regular presenter at various community education programmes on family violence and related issues.

He is a regular speaker at the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Ethnic Community Education panels on social issues, including: Family Violence, Elder Abuse, Child Abuse, Immigrant & Refugee issues & Racially Motivated Crimes.

He is also the recipient of national & international awards, the most significant of which include, Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award, presented by the President of India, Srimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil, in 2008. In 2014, he was inducted to the Kiwi Indian Hall of Fame: Indian Weekender Award: Presented by the then Prime Minister of New Zealand: Rt Hon John Key (Sir John Key) and in 2020, he was the recipient of UoF Award: "For Philanthropic Services to The University of Fiji".

Mrs. Subhag Singh, is a school teacher, who has dedicated almost 45 years to the teaching profession. Judge Singh and Mrs. Singh shared their thoughts on the 25th year milestone of Bhartiya Samaj.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

My wife, Subhag, and I have been very blessed in being associated with Bhartiya Samaj for the past 25 years, since it was founded in 1995. Since then, we have regularly attended all major celebrations hosted by Bhartiya Samaj.

We acknowledge and pay special tribute to its founders, Roopa Didi & Jeet Bhai. With gratitude & appreciation, we also acknowledge the enormous contribution made by the Bhartiya Samaj officials, volunteers and our Seniors. Significantly, in its mentoring role, Bhartiya Samaj encourages volunteers and our youth to undertake leadership roles, including facilitating social, cultural and well-being programmes for our children, youth and Seniors.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

Subhag and I have endeavoured to socialise with our Senior Citizens with a view to expressing our appreciation for the sacrifices they have made so that the posterity has

good education and live-skills with which to prosper. We also acknowledge their contributions to our motherland as well as our adopted home, New Zealand. The pearls of wisdom with which they have nurtured their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren is a priceless jewel: "anmol rattan". Appreciation and acknowledgement of their contributions uplift our Seniors' spirits, which in turn empowers them and makes them feel that they are very worthy members of our society. We will continue to engage with our Seniors with a view to making them feel proud of their achievements and contributions.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

Spectacular joy and smile on the faces of our Seniors is most memorable, especially when they perform on the dance floor or when celebrating milestones in their lives: such as birthdays or wedding anniversaries. Our Best Wishes & Congratulations to the officials, volunteers and members on Bhartiya Samaj on its milestone Silver Jubilee.





Abhishek Sharma,
EKTA NZ

Abhishek volunteer's at Ekta NZ to contribute back to the community. Ekta NZ is a Wellington based NGO and their objective is to contribute to building a more inclusive New Zealand by undertaking activities that establish unity in the diversity amongst the Indian diaspora through; empowering with knowledge; building capacity and confidence; and facilitating interactions with the larger community.

Abhishek is a founder of WOWROX. He is a creative entrepreneur, visionary and great team player. He shares a vision of launching a unique global game changer platform for matching demand and supply in the Real Estate industry through WOWROX Ai technology.

He has designed and deployed complex systems for several years for various organisations (including DATACOM); where he also engaged with technical and business users from all levels within organisation.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

Last year, the first interaction I had with Jeet-ji was when we were helping out stranded Indians in New Zealand. The High Commission of India recommended for us to reach out to Bhartiya Samaj who were also helping out people in Auckland. I redirected the people I knew in Auckland who needed help to Bhartiya Samaj. That's when I had my first discussion with Jeet-ji. And then we realized, we had the same way of thinking, within the charitable world. He shared his experiences and that was the start of our relationship.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

Most recently, we worked together on the Pan Asian New Year celebration in the Parliament where a team of Bhangra artists performed for the crowd. We set up a Vaishakhi decoration at the venue and also helped out with the food.

Before that, we worked together with Bhartiya Samaj for blanket distribution. There is a charity organization called City Mission. Couple of years ago, we provided blankets to City Mission. Last year, we involved Bhartiya Samaj from Auckland and Ramesh Bhana from the

Christchurch Indian Association to distribute not just blankets but toiletries, T-shirts etc on a wider national level.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

Bhartiya Samaj is a very credible organization, especially when it comes to Indian diaspora. And they just go above and beyond in helping out people, whether it's in the middle of the night, someone needs food, shelter. They just go above and beyond in helping out the Indian community and the people in the Indian diaspora that are struggling.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

Jeet-ji - he is a man of honor and I don't have enough words to describe his personality. He's just one man, who goes according to what the Geeta teaches us about seva. He doesn't look for any mutual benefit for him or his organization. He just goes and helps out. In the last year or so, the interaction, dealing and relationship I have had - even if you called, in the middle of the night, he'll be there. He doesn't cut any corners in anything and always puts his heart and soul into every single project.



Rohit Mulki,
Regional Manager
Personal,
ANZ

Community organisations often need the guidance and support of seasoned business professionals who bring their expertise and acumen to their day to day operations.

Rohit Mulki, Regional Manager Personal is one such individual who brings his expertise to the table and helps Bharitya Samaj put together applications for funding.

Rohit Mulki grew up in Pune, Maharashtra and graduated with a degree in BCom from Pune University. He came to New Zealand in 2001 and joined National Bank of New Zealand, where he held a number of leadership roles since then. He is currently the Regional Manager with ANZ Bank and looks after the South & East branches in Auckland. He is a passionate banker, enjoys people interaction/ knowledge sharing and contributes to the success of his Staff and Customers. Caring Aotearoa spoke to Rohit about his contribution to this organisation.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bharitya Samaj – how did it start?

I came to New Zealand in 2001. Obviously we had heard about the work that both Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji do for the community. We would hear them on the radio, and see what they're doing for the migrant community. If you talk to people who came here like 20 – 25 years ago, there wasn't much of a support for them. Now, when you come into the country, especially into Auckland, it's probably much easier to find guidance, how to settle into foreign country - there wasn't a lot of that then.

So I'd heard about them on TV programs and I was genuinely moved by the kind of work they were doing. In 2008, I went to India and when I came back, I met Jeet-ji where he sort of started telling me a bit more about the work they were doing around senior citizens, youth and basically helping senior citizens assimilate into society. I was very interested in that. As a part of ANZ, I do obviously have a budget where I can sort of sponsor or help a charitable organization of my choice. I started helping Bharitya Samaj purely because of the work they do. I also visited them a couple of times - and that where my association with both Jeet-ji and Bharitya Samaj. I was sort of quite lucky to have visited them, and seen them in action. Some of the work they've been doing has made my decision easier as to which organization I should be supporting and should continue to support as well.

Just to elaborate on that I'm a member of the ANZ Staff Foundation. The way it works, for every dollar a staff

contributes and ANZ contributes \$2 NZD. The idea is to help or support charitable organizations similar to Bharitya Samaj.

So I obviously was aware in terms of what happens with the Foundations contribution. I got in touch with Ruchika who is the Business Administration Manager and worked with her to apply for funding.

So in the last couple of years what I've done is work with Ruchika and helped her put that application. So, you know when people in the committee actually pick the Bhartiya Samaj application, they know exactly what we are sort of supporting and it's easy for them to understand the project that needs support.

I must admit I'm not overly active, but this is what I can do, and in my own way, I try to see how we and ANZ can support the Trust as well.

■ What, according to you would you say is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community

There are multiple, but the ones I appreciate the most is the work they do with the senior citizens. They regularly hold meetings for them, help them with basic stuff which further helps them integrate into the society in a foreign land.

If you look at most of the senior citizens, they come here with their children, and so the choice is obviously made by the children, not their parents. So when they come here, it's not easy to settle down in a foreign country. I've

seen the training programs that Bhartiya Samaj conducts and I think that has a massive impact on people.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

During COVID, there were a lot of stranded families and the amount of work that Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji did to help these families support them and get back to India was tremendous.. When these people ran out of funds and the amount of work they've done to support them was just incredible. I think those are the things that stand out for me.

And obviously they do much more in terms of migrant support and other bits and pieces. This is something I've

seen and I'm sort of quite proud to be associated with it as well.

this person coming from ANZ, who saw the actual training first hand, it really helped us in terms of putting the application together for sponsorship and for help from the foundation. And also that particular year, in 2018, we got funding from the ANZ staff foundation which was really appreciated by Jeet-ji and of course of the people in the trust.

So the work I tend to primarily to with the team, is I tend to work with Ruchika, see how we can put an application together which will catch the eye of the people making the decision at the end. That's probably my expertise and where I contribute.



JASPREET S KANDHARI

“The organization runs very professionally, and that in itself is an example that he has been leading the same organization for the last 20-25 years. This shows his caliber and management caliber as well.”



Jaspreet Singh Kandhari is the Secretary of the NZ Indian Business Association.

Jaspreet Kandhari is an entrepreneur, businessman who arrived in New Zealand almost 17 years ago. With experience working in the automobile and telecom industry in India and New Zealand, Jaspreet Kandhari has since then successfully led retail and hospitality businesses in New Zealand.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj and what work did you do with them?**

I have known Jeet ji since last few years when we shared some information about our activities.

I am the Secretary of the New Zealand Indian Business Association, where at one stage, Jeet-ji was a part of our Association as an advisory. I have been to a few functions of Bhartiya Samaj as well, and as far as I know and have seen, they have been doing a really good job of helping the elderly.

The way the two organisations work together – we share activities and help each other wherever possible.

Bhartiya Samaj has also organised many functions at our restaurants.

■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

I have seen many other organisations that have a political agenda. But Jeet-ji has really taken the organization to a level where I can see that there is no such thing as a political agenda of sorts. So, the organization runs very

professionally, and that in itself is an example that he has been leading the same organization for the last 20-25 years. This shows his caliber and management caliber as well.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

I know a few members of Bhartiya Samaj and whenever I meet them, I find that they are all very appreciative of the activities which are organized by the Management Committee. The participants or the members feel very happy when they join these events organized, not only in Auckland but also in South Island in Queenstown, where they recently organized a Holi function.

The only point of difference is people really relate to Bhartiya Samaj and they have a high regard and find it very joyful to participate in the functions, which I should say is normally missing in other organizations where you call someone for a meeting or something and you hardly have people turn up.

But with Bhartiya Samaj, the participants look forward to participating in the functions. I have seen that the attendance is very high.



Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi is an Indian-born New Zealand politician and a member of the National Party.

He was a Member of Parliament as a list MP from the 2008 election to the 2020 election.

Kanwaljit Singh Bakshi is an Indian-born New Zealand politician and a member of the National Party. He was a Member of Parliament as a list MP from the 2008 election to the 2020 election. Bakshi was both New Zealand's first Indian and first Sikh Member of Parliament. Kanwaljit accompanied New Zealand's Prime Minister John Key on his visit to India in June 2011. He has been recognised for fostering ties between New Zealand and India. Bakshi has also assisted the New Zealand Government in publishing their policies in Indian languages such as Hindi, Gujarati and Punjabi for the benefit of the Indian community. He also received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award at a ceremony in India in January 2015 for building a positive profile of people of Indian Origin in New Zealand and South Pacific.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

Ever since I arrived in New Zealand, I have attended the Independence Day and Republic day events organized by Bhartiya Samaj. These events were celebrated on a grand scale and everyone used to come to the Aotearoa center to be a part of this occasion. That's where my association with Bhartiya Samaj began. And the reason these events were special is because it brings out the patriotism in people. Being away from your motherland, you feel like you are missing something, but these events used to give you a connection to India.

I always enjoyed those events and then I started attending other events organised by Bhartiya Samaj. Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji have both been great contributors to the Indian community with their selfless service. I don't have the words to describe how much I appreciate what they do for people who are in need.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

I have always supported Bhartiya Samaj, wherever required. In my role as a Member of Parliament as well as a member of this community, I used to attend their events and support them wherever I could.

I am highly impressed by their work - it's one of those organizations that we need to recognize for their service to our senior citizens and community.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

As I said before, both Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji and their entire family is dedicated to helping people. Whether it is cooking or event management or if anybody is in need, they're always there to support them, with no hidden agenda. Their selfless service to the community has made a lot of difference.

And that's where I feel that it's great to have people like them in our society who are ready to help anytime at any juncture, anybody who needs any help. They are always available.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

There are so many such incidents. I remember somebody who came from India and had issues with their in-laws. Bhartiya Samaj was able to support that person, provided them with resources. I remember very well the way Roopa-ji was talking about this case, it was as if somebody from her own family had been affected.

I can't forget that incident in my office, and I was shocked to see that somebody who doesn't know someone personally, can get so emotionally attached so quickly. After that incident, I'll always know that these people are very genuine and are very concerned about people and their well being. They are selfless and don't have any intention that there will be an outcome for them. They remain low profile and are ready to help anyone.

Dr. Prakash Grover will be a recognizable face for many senior citizens who are a part of the Bhartiya Samaj membership. Over the past few years, he has conducted several mental health workshops and sessions with the members.



**Dr. Grover,
Psychologist**

■ Can you give me a little bit of a history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

I am a psychologist and I have been practicing over 35 years, helping people find their way in life and deal with mental health issues as well as try to engage them with society in a purposeful and effective way. That is my basic paradigm under which I operate in life. So, my work is my passion, and my passion is my work.

In that context, in 2003, I found out about Bharitya Samaj. I had a client with mental health issues. The person was 70 years old, and we were looking for an organization where we can engage her. So, I enquired to a few people as to where this person can be engaged, a place where they are welcomed and find some kind of leisure or entertainment or some kind of platform where they feel valued and meet other people of their age.

I was told that there's such an organization like this, and I got in touch with Bhartiya Samaj. After my client went to their events, he felt much better and happy to be a part of a community.

Post that, after a year or two, they called me to give a lecture to their senior citizens about mental health. This lecture was well appreciated by the 200 people who are attending, so much so that they started inviting me practically every year.

So far, I have given three lectures to that group. And since then I have developed a respect for the institution. I wanted to be always ready to help the institution in some way because it's for a good cause.

If somebody is able to keep our parents happily engaged, in a country like New Zealand where isolation and loneliness can creep in anytime – that just increased my respect for the institution.

I had a chance to informally socialize with Roopa-ji and Jeet-ji on various platforms and I got to know what they do, how they do it and how passionate they are about doing this work. This increased the intensity of my association with them. I will call Bharitya Samaj a very noble cause run with all the possible comfort for our parents and our seniors.

■ What according to you is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

A human being is challenged in a very big way in their old age and that challenge usually causes a lack of belonging and purpose. 40 years ago, the person was the leader

of the house, was the breadwinner, and 40 years down the line he's not earning. His children look after him, he doesn't have to go anywhere in the morning. He doesn't have any purpose to get dressed, comb his hair and go somewhere.

So what Bharitya Samaj has offered them is positive belonging and ability to meet people of similar age where they are able to connect with them.

So, my first answer would be belonging, the second answer is purpose. They have given them purpose in life. Third is leisure, a place where they can see movies, go for picnics. They can ring up one of their friends, where they can make friends.

Fourth, they feel valued. That's the biggest problem, people don't feel valued in old age. Nobody talks to them; nobody has time to listen to their traditional jokes and since they are not good in technology they can't even connect to people through technology.

But going on the weekend to some place where they can see and speak with 30 or 200 people of their age, gives them a sense of friendship - that is what Bharitya Samaj has offered them.

I think this is a social deconstruct. In the language of sociology, institutions like this are helping in social deconstruction and providing the underprivileged people to be valued and engaged because of which society is by and large happy.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

I can share one information with you which impressed me the most. There was a lockdown last year, and there were some people of the senior community who didn't have the ability to go to the supermarket or get food or didn't have a lot of support. I came to know about this through a friend of mine that Jeet-ji and his team cooked food and delivered it to their house during lockdown. At a time when the world was apprehensive of stepping out of their homes, here was Jeet-ji delivering food to their doorstep.

They acted like responsible citizens who took ownership to help people who can't help themselves in this situation. So that actually added very positive feelings about this institution in my eyes.

“You can actually feel the senior citizens unwind at these meetings. It gives them a sense of identity, being a part of this community.”



Captain Sukh Minocha and Lalita Minocha

Captain Sukh Minocha and Lalita Minocha arrived in Auckland in April 2002, from Mumbai, India. Since then the family has been involved in community work with Bhartiya Samaj. Lalita Minocha has worked with ANZ, Fisher & Paykel and currently runs her own online business where she sells fresh avocados and fruits on FB marketplace. Captain Sukh Minocha works as a Senior Port Captain in the log industry.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj and what work did you do with them?**

I came to know Jeet Suchdev in April 2002, when I came to New Zealand. I worked as a volunteer for up to five years with Bhartiya Samaj. During that time, I was quite active in transporting senior citizens from Buckland's beach to Mount Albert where there used to be a Senior Citizens Hall. It was very nice to be a part of the community as I was quite new to the country myself at that time.

Sometimes, I was asked for support when, for example, someone needed help with their CV or, someone needed guidance over a job. I used to be involved quite actively as a volunteer, but since then family commitments and a full-time role hasn't allowed me a lot of time to be involved.

■ **What, according to you is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

When you are in a country where you have no friends, you suddenly meet and develop new friendships and relationships with different communities – Bhartiya Samaj provides a very healthy platform for people when they come here.

Working with Jeet Suchdev was just so beautiful, because I could see how the seniors transformed when they were in the community or at the meetings of Bhartiya Samaj. You can actually feel them unwind at these meetings. It gives them a sense of identity, being a part of this community.

And not just that, but Bhartiya Samaj also provides them with a platform to share their experiences. Some good, some not so good – however all these expectations and experiences are managed very well by the team.

All in all, it is such a beautiful platform, where people have found something. They are new to the country, but they have someone who can actually go to, they can knock on that door or call that number, if they feel like they need some kind of advice or any guidance.

You know when you come to a new country, people just need a foot in the door. So, whatever contribution I could do towards that, I tried my best to help out. As I said, Bhartiya Samaj has been working with less resources and achieving so much more.

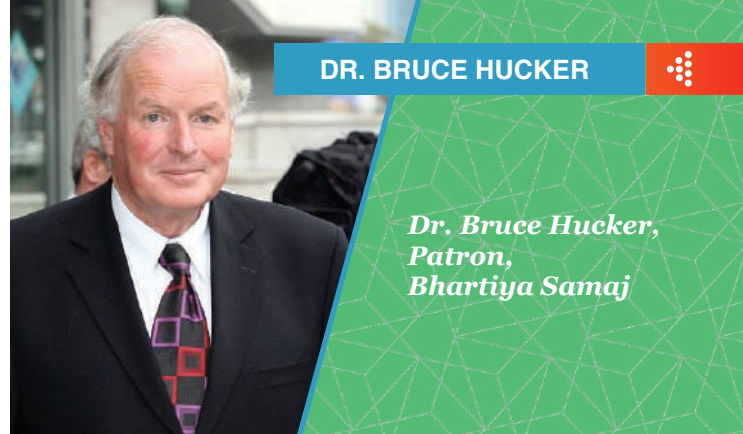
■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

If I can talk on a personal level, it felt really nice during my daughter's 1st birthday, when everyone from Bhartiya Samaj came along and celebrated with us. Mita brought us a cake - she didn't even know us and yet made such an effort to make us feel welcome. It's just that that feeling of belongingness that makes a difference.

And then there's another instance where we had to call an ambulance for a patient with Alzheimer, and if not for Jeet's help, we would not have been able to identify the person.

And I feel, that's the thing about Bhartiya Samaj, where at your smallest need, they will drop everything and be the first people to come to your help.

“Bhartiya Samaj has done a lot to reduce the isolation of Indian senior citizens who often come to New Zealand and have been given baby-sitting duties by their family but who often don’t have any social connections to live really fulfilling lives.”



Bruce Hucker is the former Deputy Mayor of Auckland and a patron of Bhartiya Samaj.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

It started in 1990, with my connections with Jeet Suchdev and his sister Roopa. We enjoyed a warm relationship then and have continued to have one since. I have immense respect for the work those two have done in Indian communities, the South Asian communities and the wider Auckland area. The reach of Bhartiya Samaj has been extended to other centers of New Zealand, including Queenstown and in Australia and also back in India, in New Delhi.

I take a great deal of pleasure to see how Bhartiya Samaj has grown, established legitimacy among Indian and South Asian communities and has really made a major contribution to the new New Zealand that we have and for that reason, Bhartiya Samaj in the Auckland region is the strongest grassroots Indian organization.

I am quietly proud to have witnessed that and participated in it and wish Bhartiya Samaj continues to extend the ranges of the services offered, support that it has obtained for the younger people as well as senior citizens, the whole range of cultural celebration, preschool education, of summer holiday programs, have made such a real difference to Indian communities.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

As an Auckland city councillor, I had two terms as deputy mayor. During my time, I was able to help gain access to funding for Bhartiya Samaj, to help ensure accommodation for its meetings and programmes. I was also a Senior Lecturer at the University of Auckland in what became the School of architecture and Planning. Through those connections, I was able to assist with students to help with research projects that were undertaken by the Samaj.

One of the things that I remember most was the desire that Bhartiya Samaj had to improve the quality of culturally appropriate rest home care for our senior citizens. And one of the areas that I was able to assist in was developing a memorandum of understanding between Bhartiya Samaj and Bupa New Zealand Limited which led to the use of a floor in their Mangere rest home, with the aim of opening up more access to culturally appropriate rest home care - to look after the food, cultural needs, in terms of different workers needs. So

that memorandum of understanding with Bupa was beneficial to both which was in its background not the same as a profit making company, but one that reinvested its surpluses back into the development of its services. And of course, Bhartiya Samaj benefits because we were able to establish opportunities for Indian and South Asian senior citizens, but also had an organic link with what was happening there and that’s continued over the years.

■ What difference has Bhartiya Samaj made to the community?

I think the importance of Bhartiya Samaj has been its resilience over the time and the way it has maintained the loyalty of senior citizens and other sections of the Indian community.

That is in fact a very difficult thing to do for 25 years. Because Jeet and Roopa are really charismatic leaders, but also servant leaders. One of the things, anybody who attends Bhartiya Samaj can see how much those two are loved and respected by participants. That is one of the keys - that love and respect which often dies with a charismatic leader as they are here today and gone tomorrow. Jeet and Roopa have been persistent and innovative and exercised real care for people, both in an individual sense, but also in a collective sense.

As a result, Bhartiya Samaj has done a lot to reduce the isolation of Indian senior citizens who often come to New Zealand and have been given baby-sitting duties by their family but who often don’t have any social connections to live really fulfilling lives. So that, I suppose, the social connections provided and also the identification of issues and the position of advocacy has been very important for participants in Bhartiya Samaj.

And Bhartiya Samaj as an organization, is now widely respected by local government and also in central government in New Zealand. The number of MP’s for example or counselors or local board members who attend the senior citizen meetings is a sign of the importance they place on the contribution of Bhartiya Samaj to recognizing the cultural background, but also the recognition of Indian migrants becoming not only part of the Indian diaspora but also as new New Zealanders who are no longer new New Zealanders, but are very much a part of the wider New Zealand community.



Harry Doig,
Board Member,
Puketāpapa Local
Board

Harry Doig is a board member on the Puketāpapa Local Board - a pivotal figure of influence in the local community, Mr. Doig is a civil engineer, conservationist and a community campaigner who has supported the work of Bhartiya Samaj for over 5 years.

■ **Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?**

First off, I would like to congratulate Bhartiya Samaj on 25 years of service to the community, and in particular Jeet-ji and his team for the service that they have put in. When I was first elected to the Puketāpapa Local Board and in my capacity as Deputy Chair and Chair, I had a lot to do with Bhartiya Samaj and getting to know the people involved and getting to know the work they did. And can I just say that it was one of the many delights of joining the local board and getting to know more about Bhartiya Samaj.

■ **How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?**

I'm aware of the range of services that Bhartiya Samaj provides, from early childhood through to seniors, but my involvement has been more with the seniors where I've been honored to be invited to many of the seniors' gatherings that Bhartiya Samaj has put on and participated in those events. It has been a delight seeing the enthusiasm that people have when they come to these meetings and the enjoyment they have attending those meetings. Particularly, I think when I've been invited to the Christmas events, which have been very loud and joyful occasions with lots of dignitaries and lots of people. And as I said it's been a delight, particularly getting involved in those senior events.

■ **What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?**

I think they're providing a vital service, particularly for seniors, making them feel valued, providing an opportunity for them to get together to socialize and feel as a part of the community. So many seniors, unfortunately, are put into situations where they feel isolated and Bhartiya Samaj has been extremely good at bringing people together in the communal way where they can enjoy each other's company and enjoy the entertainment.

■ **Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj**

One of the events that surprised me but also delighted me was when the Puketāpapa Local Board organised the Anzac Day parades in 2018, and Bhartiya Samaj provided a large contingent of people who joined the parade to the War Memorial Hall on May Road. I wasn't expecting it, but we all really appreciated it. Commemorating the World Wars is an important thing for the Indian diaspora as well and that was often a community that was overlooked at those types of ceremonies. So, it was a real delight to see the contingent and we were really pleased to be able to honor and welcome their presence at that parade.



NAVEED HAMID

**Naveed Hamid,
President,
Pakistan Association
of New Zealand**

Naveed Hameed is an entrepreneur with extensive experience in management. He serves as the President of Pakistan Association of New Zealand with the belief that emerging new dynamics and expectation of our diverse community demand dynamic leadership.

He identifies and accepts an evolutionary change process within the community and understands the innovative approach in civic organizations.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

My first introduction with Bhartiya Samaj was during the India Independence celebration in conjunction with a lot of other associations. I found out that Bhartiya Samaj is organizing an India Independence event and they want different communities to come under one umbrella and represent their cultures on a stage - that was my first interaction with Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji.

I knew Roopa-ji from my radio days at Radio Tarana as I worked with her and it was Roopa-ji who introduced me to Mr. Jeet. I later found out about Bhartiya Samaj, the work they do to bring all communities under one umbrella.

As you know, India Pakistan relations have their ups and downs in our own countries as well as here in New Zealand. So, our work is to normalize whatever happens back in our countries, we don't get affected by that here because politicians change all the time, some days they are all happy, some days they are doing different things. This affects our community's mental health here in New Zealand and the relations between the communities here get soured sometimes.

So, me and Jeet will try to normalize this type of relationship and let us not get affected here.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

We started to showcase our cultural performances at each other's functions. Bhartiya Samaj always participates one or two items from Indian perspective or Indian dance or culture group in Pakistan Independence programs or any other programs. By seeing this type of cultural performance, people can then see that the language and culture is the same, so the barrier can break down. Similarly, when Bhartiya Samaj organised the India Independence Day event, we prepared our kids and our cultural items and weaved them into their event, so it

feels like we are celebrating India Independence together. We want to give a message to the world that celebrating Independence Day together is not an unusual thing.

■ What according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

Bhartiya Samaj has grown very fast and is trusted by the different communities. We are now working on maintaining community harmony and relationship wherein Bhartiya Samaj plays a very vital role to projecting that image on how we can live in New Zealand without any of the "hey, you are not Indian" or "you are not Pakistani", so "you do not belong here" kind of issues. Bhartiya Samaj is putting an example out there that everyone is welcome.

For example, they are doing programs for elderly so there is no restriction that only Indians can go there or only people from a certain part of the world can attend. They welcome everyone.

And similarly, when they opened the culturally appropriate rest home, they also sent a strong message to the community that there is no race restriction, and that anyone can go there.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

When we were lobbying for the culturally appropriate rest home, we hit roadblocks many times. But the vision and dedication we saw in Jeet-ji and Roopa-ji was amazing. They didn't get disheartened by anything. Jeet-ji always smiled, and told us to not get tired, or disheartened or feel bad. He used to say that we would achieve what we have set out to do because it is for the people. He continued to inspire us by saying that even if we get tired, people need this rest home and they don't have a voice, so we have to make this happen for them. I used to always feel boosted by his attitude and his smiling face.

“It’s the culture of silence that is harmful to our ethnic communities because we tend to hide behind it - because of status, because of stigma. We have failed to acknowledge that what we see as traditional culture is nothing more than just status quo and reputation.”



Dr. Camille Nakhid, MNZM for services to ethnic communities and education

Associate Professor Camille Nakhid is from Trinidad and Tobago. She has a BSc in Chemistry from New York, and completed a Diploma in Secondary Teaching in Chemistry and Mathematics, a Masters in Education Administration (Hons), and a Doctor of Education (EdD) in New Zealand. She is in the School of Social Sciences, AUT University, and is also chair of the Pacific Media Centre Advisory Board. In 2018, Dr Nakhid was recognised for services to ethnic communities and education in the New Years Honours List, becoming a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit.

■ Can you give us a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

My relationship with Bhartiya Samaj began through my contact with Jeet as we were both selected to the inaugural Ethnic Leaders Advisory Board Panel. I learnt more about Jeet through Bhartiya Samaj as he was there representing the Indian community through his work with the organisation.

■ What according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

I know a lot of people who are not within the Indian community but they do know about Bhartiya Samaj. The good friends that they have made are the people who don’t know Bhartiya Samaj but who know that there is an organization that is working for migrants, helping them with resettlement, preparation of the CV, getting into employment, helping youth to understand the cultural needs etc.

The difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made is to get people talking about issues and not hiding behind it. It’s the culture of silence that is harmful to our ethnic communities because we tend to hide behind it - because of status, because of stigma. We have failed to acknowledge that what we see as traditional culture is nothing more than just status quo and reputation. I think Bhartiya Samaj brings these issues out into the open, and makes people aware that even though the South Asian community is well educated, ambitious, we have problems because of that pressure to achieve.

■ Any one memory of Bhartiya Samaj you can share with us

I remember when Jeet was working towards starting a culturally appropriate rest home for the elderly. I know his concerns were very much with senior citizens and ethnic communities, particularly South Asian communities. He worked very hard to ensure an appropriate rest home for them as the needs of the seniors within the ethnic community were not met. And I could understand his frustration behind it - because back home in my country, all the elderly people’s needs are paramount. They have food, the networks and their community and mokopuna around them. And when they are here, away from family or in a rest home, which is supposed to be a safe space for our seniors, finding an appropriate place to practice their religion, have appropriate food, a place to feel familiarity and safest – and that was missing in a lot of our rest homes then. Jeet and the Bhartiya Samaj worked really hard to establish Auckland’s first culturally appropriate rest home for the Asian community.

I remember that was such an important aspect of being aware of not just the elderly, but the importance and significance of elderly lives within the ethnic communities as well as acknowledging that ethnic elderly do have needs that differ - and that should be accommodated.



*Manhar Patel,
President,
Vaishnav Parivar*

Manhar Patel is the President of the Auckland branch of Vaishnav Parivar. Vaishnav Parivar pioneered the celebration of makar sankranti or uttaran in New Zealand. Since 2006 the organisation has hosted "Indian Kite Festival" each year in Auckland as a community event and a fundraiser.

Manhar Patel works in the construction industry and has studied at IIT Powai in India.

■ Can you give a brief history of your relationship with Bhartiya Samaj?

Vaishnav Parivar is a religious charitable organisation that has been working with the community for about 15-16 years. One of the many good things about our relationship with Bhartiya Samaj is that our membership overlaps. Our kids attend the Bhartiya Samaj summer holiday camps – so there is quite a bit of overlap in our work and people. Jeet-ji has personally supported Vaishnav Parivar in the past and I'm sure that he will continue to do so in the future.

■ How have you supported Bhartiya Samaj in these past 25 years?

We receive Bhartiya Samaj's support for the Kite festival, which is the biggest outdoor kite festival in New Zealand. They have supported us for many years through volunteers who help us prepare for this festival. Jeet-ji also offered us the use of his premises for any of our kite festival events.

■ What, according to you, is the difference that Bhartiya Samaj has made to the community?

Firstly, Bhartiya Samaj Charitable trust is a social organization. I am always amazed when I see through various news platforms or social media posts, how much

the senior citizens seem to enjoy themselves at various Bhartiya Samaj events.

I also appreciate the difference that Bhartiya Samaj made last year during COVID. I saw that they did a lot of charity work - like providing food, clothes to those who were affected. In the past, Bhartiya Samaj has also organised food, clothes for people affected by the natural calamities in Fiji and other countries, so that is great work done by Bhartiya Samaj.

■ Any one memory or instance you can share with us from your work with Bhartiya Samaj

Whenever I call Jeet Suchdev regarding any help for the Kite festival, he has told me that you do not need to ask, you need to tell me.

For the last 10 years, he's witnessed the kite festival record draw as a JP and whenever I give him a call, he's made himself available for his services. He's always smiling and appreciative of the activities of Vaishnav Parivar. I would also like to talk about the Bhartiya Samaj Rest Home in Mangere. I have been there, and I was amazed at the facilities that were provided for the senior citizens. It was an amazing initiative by the team at Bhartiya Samaj.





In case of emergency, *reach out*

Senior Citizens:

Bhartiya Samaj Charitable Trust
0212221020 / 096200579

Age Concern New Zealand
0800652105

NZ aged care association
044733159

Elder Abuse
08003266865

Retirement villages association of NZ
044997090

Emergency:

Police, Fire and Ambulance- 111
Police Non Emergency contact- 105

Health:

Healthline (Ministry of Health)
0800611116

Mental Health foundation of NZ
08006885463

Suicide crisis helpline
0508828865

Anxiety Phone line
08002694389

Health and disability Commissioner
0800112233

Family Violence and Distress Support:

Roopa Aur Aap Charitable Trust
021665609/ 09-620 4606

Bhartiya Samaj Distress Support
0212221020

Victim Support
0800842846 (Volunteer-
0800865868)

Are You Ok (Family Violence
Helpline)
0800456450

National Network of Stopping
Violence
0276941051

Children:

Bhartiya Samaj Multicultural
Playgroup
096200579 / 02108881461

Plunket Line
0800933922

Parent Helpline
0800568856

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
0800472637

General:

Youthline- 0800376633

Alcohol Drug Helpline- 0800787797

Arthritis New Zealand- 0800663463

Banking Ombudsman (Fixing bank
problems)
0800805950

Births, Deaths and Marriages
0800225252

Citizens Advice Bureau- 0800367222

Housing New Zealand- 0800801601

Inland Revenue- 0800775247

Insurance and Financial services
0800888202

Lifeline (24/7 support by qualified
counsellors and volunteers)
0800543354

Motor vehicle licensing and
registration 0800108809

Bond enquiries
0800737666

Mediation
0800836262

St John's Hindi Carer Calling Service
0800780780

Auckland Justice of Peace
Association
099169276



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- Microwave
- Iron and ironing board
- Tea/coffee-making facilities
- Hairdryer

Motel Facilities

- Free WiFi
- Laundry and drying services
- Communal kitchen facilities
- Shared lounge area
- Free parking



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