

A World of Colours - The EOC Stages Community Event to Promote Diversity and Equality

On 15 July 2012, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) staged “A World of Colours: An Equal Opportunities Roadshow” to enhance the community’s understanding on the concept of equality and the work of the EOC. The event was held at Henry G. Leong Yaumatei Community Centre and attracted over 130 participants.

The event was opened by Mr. LAM Woon-kwong, the EOC Chairperson, and featured a participants’ dialogue with Mr. Lam; sharing by two inspiring guest mentors, the standup comedian, Mr. Vivek Mahbubani, and Mr. Freddy Law, the founder of InterCultural Education; cultural performances; informative game booths; and cricket demonstrations.

“The EOC believes that, in an inclusive society, everyone should have the equal opportunity to build a better future for themselves and their families,” said Mr. Lam in his welcome remarks. “We are here today to listen and learn, and to try our best to help.”

During the dialogue with the participants, Mr. Lam shared with the audience some details of the meeting between the EOC Board Members, the new Chief Executive, Mr. CY Leung, and himself on 5 June 2012, during which the issue of education equality for ethnic minorities was the topic. During the meeting, the EOC reiterated the Commission’s deep concern on the issue of education for ethnic minority (EM) students and called upon the new government to provide these underprivileged students with fair education opportunities. Mr. Leung was receptive to the EOC’s views and pledged to make the issue a priority area of his administration.

Mr. Lam also discussed recent initiatives by the EOC to tackle the difficulties faced by ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, particularly in the areas of employment and education. These include the Commission’s appeals to the Education Bureau to provide more support for ethnic minority students in learning Chinese, and to other relevant government departments such as the Civil Service Bureau to equitably consider more ethnic minority candidates with relevant skills into government jobs. Mr.

Lam further urged members of the ethnic minority community, particularly the youths, to persevere in learning Chinese, and to come forward and lodge a complaint with the EOC if they face discrimination.

The guest mentors, Mr. Freddy LAW and Mr. Vivek MAHBUBANI, shared their experience of being treated as an “outsider” and how those encounters shaped their worldview. Both urged the audience to proactively reach out to other people and break stereotypes.

The afternoon also saw delightful cultural performances from a variety of groups, including HKWMA Chu Shek Lun Secondary School, the Far East Overseas Nepalese Association (FEONA), Majelis Taklim (an Indonesian religious organization), the Pakistani Students Association – Hong Kong, Po Kok Primary School, and the Sikh Temple.