



Council expresses concerns about racist material found in parts of Perth

The Ethnic Communities Council of WA (ECCWA) has expressed grave concerns about the finding of racist material in parts of Perth this week.

Council President Suresh Rajan said today “This takes us back to the days of that urban terrorist, Jack van Tongeren, when he ran a campaign of fear and hatred targeting the CaLD communities. The reality, even then, was that we knew the KKK was in existence here in WA and we expressed those views to police and authorities. As a result of considerable work on our part with former Premier Geoff Gallop we were able to effect changes to the Criminal Code to make the Racial Vilification provisions the toughest in Australia. It would appear that we are now seeing considerable emboldening of the racists again. Much of the blame for that emboldening has been as a result of the extraordinarily inappropriate language used by our members of Parliament and others in leadership positions.”

The story as run on the Perth Now website said the following:

“Racist signs including swastikas have been found in public parks across Belmont and Rivervale, just months after police requested information for similar disturbing material. Among the words scribbled over DVDS and pieces of cardboard were the captions “Kill em all” and “Hang all poxy scum”.

WA Police said it was unclear if there was any content on the DVDS that was race-related or if they were just used to share the racial messages.

Similar signs have been found in the suburbs since 2018.

The most recent haul was identified in September last year when cardboard sheets were found with letters of the American white supremacist hate group the Ku Klux Klan.”

Suresh Rajan added “It is interesting that these messages have arisen a few days before the start of Harmony week and the UN Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It certainly follows a pattern of behaviour we have seen in the past wherein these messages appear usually at a time when economic uncertainty rises and the likelihood of unemployment looms as a possibility. These feed into the fear that we could face job losses. This time we can also speculate that some of the racism fears that we have warned about have risen around the Coronavirus and related issues as well.

We are also very concerned about the continuation of the Anti-Semitic messages that are being perpetrated. This must stop.

As a council we have been warning about these possibilities for a few weeks now. We call on the Premier and Ministers to take strong positions on this and publicly condemn these actions.”

**For media enquiries please contact Suresh Rajan on 0403 276 960
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