

29 May 2020

Media release

Un-Australian vandalism of Tasmanian Buddhist Temple

On Monday 25 May 2020 police were alerted to an incident of racist vandalism, with what appears to be egg with white paste having been thrown against a sign at the Jin-Gang-Dhyana Buddhist Temple in Campania (photos attached).

The Temple is operated by the Tasmanian Chinese Buddhist Academy of Australia. The sign marks the site of a proposed Tasmanian Chinese Cultural Park of Australia. Residents living at the address discovered the vandalism on Monday 25 May, after having seen a white ute backed up to their front fence on the afternoon of Sunday 24 May.

“The perpetrators of this vandalism might not mind being accused of racism,” said Mr Waqas Durrani, Chair of the Multicultural Council of Tasmania. “But the perpetrators should also know that their behaviour is un-Australian. Our Prime Minister, Premier and other political leaders have made it clear that Chinese Australians are to be treated with the same respect due to all Australians. It is the Australian way to be polite, to give to people a go, and to respect private property, particularly the site of a peaceful temple.

“Each level of government should be running anti-racist campaigns to dispel myths feeding coronavirus-based racism.

“Chinese Tasmanians are no more responsible for coronavirus than Tasmanians with an Anglo-Celtic background. Those individuals who unwittingly brought coronavirus to Tasmania include Tasmanians with an Anglo-Celtic background. It would be nonsense to blame all Tasmanians with an Anglo-Celtic background for coronavirus because of the travel of these individuals. Similarly, it is nonsensical to blame Chinese Tasmanians.

“Any assumption that all or even most Chinese Tasmanians support the actions of the Government of the People’s Republic of China is incorrect, lazy and stupid.”

On 6 May 2020 the Multicultural Council of Tasmania wrote to the Prime Minister and the ambassador for the People’s Republic of China supporting the Australian Government’s call for an independent inquiry into the emergence of COVID-19.

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