

The Governor-General of New Zealand Te Kawana o Tianara o Aotearoa

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Biography of The Right Honourable Sir Anand Satyanand



Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand GNZM, QSO

The Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand was sworn in as New Zealand's 19th Governor-General for a five-year term in August 2006. He is New Zealand's first Governor-General of Indian and Pacific ancestry and has had a lengthy career as a lawyer, judge and ombudsman as well as contributing to many community, professional and sporting groups.

He was born and raised in Auckland, attending Richmond Road School in Ponsonby, and Sacred Heart College in Glen Innes. His parents were born in Fiji and migrated to New Zealand whilst his grandparents were born in India and had migrated to Fiji.

His career began when he graduated with a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Auckland in 1970. Following admission to the Bar later that year, he worked at the Crown Solicitor's Office in Auckland (Meredith Connell). He then spent six years as a partner in the Auckland law firm, Shieff Angland, principally practising in criminal law, revenue law and judicial review cases. During this time he served as a member of the Government Criminal Law Reform Committee and the District Court Rules Committee.

In 1982, he was appointed a Judge in the District Court with a warrant for civil and criminal cases, specialising in criminal jury trials. Between 1982 and 1994 he worked firstly in Palmerston North and then in a number of courts in the Auckland area. During this time he was involved in the development of judicial orientation and professional education programmes, and served as a Prison Board chairman and on the National Parole Board.

In 1995 he was appointed a Parliamentary Ombudsman, serving two five-year terms. In New Zealand, Ombudsmen have jurisdiction to consider complaints by citizens of maladministration by central and local government agencies and to determine complaints about the availability of official information.

He has also contributed to the community in a number of fields, for example, as an elected member of the Auckland District Law Society Council and as a member of the Freeman's Bay Community Committee. He was also involved with the administration of rugby league as a member of the Council of New Zealand Rugby League and Secretary of its Rules and Interpretations Board.

Another area of interest has been in international affairs. On the governance boards of the Asia New Zealand Foundation and the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs and Transparency International, he has been able to reflect both his interests and family backgrounds with the Pacific and with India.

He and wife Susan were married in 1970 and they have three adult children. They have pursued a number of interests together both in New Zealand and in travelling overseas

He was awarded a the New Zealand 1990 Commemoration Medal and made a Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for public services in 2005. On being appointed as Governor-General he was made a Principal Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2006 and a Companion of the Queen's Service Order in 2007. With the changes to the New Zealand Royal Honours system in 2009, he was redesignated as a Knight Grand Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. In 2006, his alma mater, the University of Auckland, awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.



In January 2011, he received the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award from the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil (pictured), at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, a major conference in Delhi recognising the contribution of the Indian Diaspora. Sir Anand was the Chief Guest at the conference and gave a keynote speech.

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