

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ENJOYING THE CULTURE IN SWAN HILL AND LODDON MALLEE

People who live and work in Swan Hill, and the broader Loddon Mallee region are reaping the benefits of a growing number of culturally and linguistically diverse families make north western Victoria their home.

Visiting Swan Hill this week, Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) Chin Tan met with local business and tourism operators to discuss the bright cultural future of the region.

Mr Tan said the Loddon Mallee region was expanding local tourism options to attract new visitors from all over the world.

“The vast majority of Loddon Mallee’s residents were born in Australia but about four per cent of the population was born overseas and speaks a language other than English at home,” Mr Tan said.

“These multicultural families bring with them new business and investment opportunities, many of which attract tourists who spend their money with other local businesses and so the entire community benefits.

“An added bonus is that the new culturally diverse residents bring a wide variety of social activities with them which keeps local sports clubs thriving, as well as introducing new recreational options.

“Of course, multicultural communities also bring their delicious traditional food, which uses great locally grown produce, and there’s something to tempt the tastebuds of everyone.”

During the two day visit, Mr Tan will take a tour of the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement and a paddle steamer cruise along the Murray River to learn more about the history of Swan Hill and settlement in the region. They will also enjoy some of the best local produce at the Java Spice Thai restaurant, Niki Niko Japanese restaurant, a modern Australian dinner at Spoons Riverside and a visit to the new Halal shops serving the small but growing local Islamic community.

“As more culturally and linguistically diverse people discover the great lifestyle and business opportunities available in regional Victoria, our cities and towns will grow and give people a lot more social and economic opportunities – and Loddon Mallee is well-placed to reap the benefits,” he said.

Mr Tan thanked Mallee Family Care and the VMC Loddon Mallee Regional Advisory Committee for arranging the trip and making them so welcome in Swan Hill.

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