

[For immediate release]

Zubin's Family Centre opens First facility catering to special needs of ethnic minority children in Hong Kong

Hong Kong, 17 January – The Zubin Foundation, a registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of Hong Kong's marginalised ethnic minorities, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony today to mark the opening of Zubin Family Centre. Located in the Austin MTR Station, the centre is the first facility in Hong Kong to provide ethnic minority children with special education needs with counselling services in Nepali, Hindi, Urdu and English.

The ceremony was officiated by Chris Sun, Secretary for Labour and Welfare; Shalini Mahtani, Founder and CEO of The Zubin Foundation; Michael Kwok, East Asia Region Chair of Arup; Tim Threlkeld, Managing Director of TCG Construction; David Wallis, Managing Director, Institutional Equity Division and Chair of the Hong Kong Philanthropy Committee of Morgan Stanley; Jeny Yeung, Hong Kong Transport Services Director of MTR; Purviz Shroff, Founder of Rusy and Purviz Shroff Charitable Foundation; Rob Wall, Managing Director of JEB Group; and Ravi Gidumal, Co-founder and Board Chair of The Zubin Foundation.

In Hong Kong, one-third of all ethnic minority children live in poverty. They are mostly Indians, Pakistanis and Nepalis who live in Hong Kong, most born and raised locally. In the 2020/21 school year, the number of diagnosed non-Chinese speaking students with special educational needs in public schools (including aided special schools and ordinary primary and secondary schools) was 1,260. The centre has been established to help change this reality.

"Hong Kong has a vibrant ethnic minority community. With the rising numbers of children diagnosed with special education needs and mental health problems, the Zubin's Family Centre comes at an important time to support."

– Chris Sun, Secretary for Labour and Welfare

The centre, located near the Yau Tsim Mong district where most of the local ethnic minority resides, provides a convenient location for children and families in the neighbourhood as well as those living in the north New Territories.

"Zubin's Family Centre is a result of NGO-private partnership and we are incredibly grateful to Arup for using their skills for social inclusion. The Centre is in the Yau Tsim Mong district which houses 9% of Hong Kong's ethnic minority community. We are grateful for MTR to offer Zubin's Family Centre at nominal rent in this great location. It will provide free counselling to ethnic minority children and therapies for children with ADHD and Autism in the community. It will also provide a safe space for ethnic minority women to learn skills and network."

– Shalini Mahtani, Founder and CEO of The Zubin Foundation

The centre was designed as a pro-bono project by global sustainable development consultant Arup, who contributed its expertise in architecture design, construction project management, MEP, fire and acoustic engineering, as well as bringing in TCG Construction and JEB Group to construct the centre and provide materials and office supplies for free.

The centre features a bright shop front in yellow with portraits of smiley faces, offering a warm welcome to visitors. The layout design has put the limited space to the best use, catering for multiple functions such as children's activities, group meetings and individual counselling. As the centre is

part of the station, all the design and material use need to fulfil MTR’s technical requirements on fire engineering and safety.

“We’re pleased to be able to contribute our expertise to the Zubin’s Family Centre, demonstrating our commitment to ‘social usefulness’ and helping the community in need.”

– Karma Barfungpa, East Asia Architecture Director of Arup

-ENDS-

Photo caption



(From left) Rob Wall, Managing Director of JEB Group; Tim Threlkeld, Managing Director of TCG Group; Jeny Yeung, Hong Kong Transport Services Director of MTR; Shalini Mahtani, Founder and CEO of The Zubin Foundation; Chris Sun, Secretary for Labour and Welfare; Michael Kwok, East Asia Region Chair of Arup; David Wallis, Managing Director, Institutional Equity Division and Chair of the Hong Kong Philanthropy Committee of Morgan Stanley; Purviz Shroff, MH, Founder of Rusy and Purviz Shroff Charitable Foundation; and Ravi Gidumal, Co-founder and Board Chair of The Zubin Foundation officiated the opening ceremony.



Shalini Mahtani, Founder and CEO of The Zubin Foundation, gave a speech at the opening ceremony.



Religious leaders participated in the opening ceremony.



Karma Barfungpa, East Asia Architecture Director of Arup introduced the design of the Zubin’s family Centre. The layout has put the limited space to the best use, catering for multiple functions. All the design and material use need to fulfil MTR’s technical requirements on fire engineering and safety.

[Link to download photos](#)

For further information please contact

Ms Jerman Cheung, Arup (Tel: 9378 3507 / Email: jerman.cheung@arup.com)
Ms Sandy Chan, The Zubin Foundation (Tel: 6421 2677 / Email: sandy@zubinfoundation.org)

About Zubin Foundation

The Zubin Foundation is a think tank and registered charity in Hong Kong (IR 91/12344), named after Zubin Mahtani Gidumal. We aim at improving the lives of Hong Kong's marginalised ethnic minorities by providing opportunities and reducing suffering. We do this by conducting research, implementing projects, and influencing public policy.

The Zubin Foundation relies on donations from individuals, corporations and foundations to fund its work.

www.zubinfoundation.org

About Arup

Dedicated to sustainable development, Arup is a collective of 16,000 designers, advisors and experts working across 140 countries. Founded to be both humane and excellent, we collaborate with our clients and partners using imagination, technology and rigour to shape a better world.

www.arup.com