

Initiatives to address chef shortage through skills training

Promoting innovation, enterprise and science and giving everyone the skills and opportunities to succeed underpin a dynamic and competitive UK economy. In this context, a pilot project has been undertaken in London's Chinatown, which is looking to embed qualifications and apprenticeships in the workplace. The Asian and Oriental Industry Advisory Panel aims to identify the skills and qualifications needed for Asian and Oriental chefs and an Ethnic Chefs Project Manager will be recruited to deliver the long term strategy.

Meanwhile, the second Chefs Summit was held on 27th January 2010 at the House of Commons.

Kevin Brennan, Skills Minister chaired and Margaret Hodge, Tourism Minister co-chaired. Among others present were Enam Ali, Founder British Curry Awards and Guild of Bangladeshi restaurateurs, Ranjit Mathrani, Masala World and Cyrus Todiwala, Café Spice Namaste.

The Migration Advisory Committee's (MAC) latest review of shortage occupations has been accepted in full by the government which recommended chefs remain on the list for now, but advised it is minded to remove the



R-L Margáret Hodge, Tourism Minister; Kevin Brennan, Skills Minister; Cyrus Todiwala, Café Spice Namaste; Ranjit Mathrani, Masala World and panel member at the second Ethnic Chef Summit at the House of Commons.

occupation from the list in a year's time unless there is evidence of a coherent strategy to train chefs from the UK in place by then. Furthermore, the Prime Minister has asked for realistic timescales to be put forward this year as to when substantial numbers of chefs will be trained in the UK and when the occupation could be taken off the list.

Cyrus Todiwala says, "It is therefore essential to build rapidly on the joint government and industry work, which has already started, and to demonstrate significant progress and

commitment to the long term strategy to the MAC."

MAC has indicated that it is minded to remove skilled chefs from the shortage list in autumn 2010. It has been concluded that skilled chefs should remain on the shortage occupation list for the time being with the skill pay threshold of £8.45 per hour, and with the new requirement for three years' relevant experience.

Hypnotised to love curry

Hypnotist Paul McKenna has admitted using mind control to persuade a former girlfriend to go for a curry. He said, "I once dated a girl who didn't like curry. I used to wait until she was really hungry, and I would say, "Yeah, I'm feeling really hungry, too." Then I would say, "I quite like curry," and I would touch her on the shoulder at that time and create an associational link." He did this over three or four weeks until eventually when he said, "Are you hungry?" and touched her on the

shoulder in the exact same place, she agreed to go for a curry. Mr McKenna claimed that in the end the girlfriend grew to like curry and that he had done her a favour by widening her culinary choices.

