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New Shirdi Saibaba Temple To Open

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: The weeklong festivities of the Sri Shirdi Saibaba vighraha pratishtapana Kumbhabhishekam began on March 9th. The newly constructed temple will be thrown open to the public on Sunday, March 15, 2009.

Kumbhabhishekam began on Monday with Anugna, Abhishekam, Sai Sahasranamarchana and Vishnu Sahasranama Parayanam. Different rituals like abhishekam, homa, dhanyadhivasam, jaladhivasam, pushpadhivasam, kalasa stapana, sikhara yantra stapana, Sri Shirdi Sainatha yantra stapana will be held on all days prior to the kumbhabhishekam on the 15th. The day's program on 15th will commence early in the morning at 5 a.m and kumbhabhishekam will be held on the auspicious muhurta at 9.49 a.m.

Since its formation in April, 2001, North American Shirdi Sai temple of Atlanta and devotees of Shirdi Saibaba have been nurturing a dream of building a temple for Shirdi Saibaba.

Full report on Pg 5.....

Gandhi Treasure To Return Home

New York/Atlanta: A national treasure is set to return home with Indian tycoon Vijay Mallya buying Mahatma Gandhi's personal possessions, including his trademark round-rimmed spectacles, for \$1.8 million at an action-packed auction here.

Mallya won the bid after a day of high drama as New York's Antiquorum Auctioneers went ahead with the auction despite protests in India and the US, including a letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh from the Atlanta based Gandhi Foundation of USA, and an injunction from Delhi High Court seeking to halt the sale and the collector James Otis himself trying to pull out at the last minute.

However, the US justice department had asked the auction house to hold the lot which also includes, a 1910 silver Zenith pocket watch, worn sandals, a bowl, a "thali" (plate) and letters of authenticity for two weeks pending a resolution between the new owner, and the US and Indian governments.

Tony Bedi, who placed the winning bid on behalf of Mallya, former MP and head of the UB Group including Kingfisher Airlines and United Breweries, later announced that the belongings would be returned to India for public display.

"I am sure all Indians will be pleased that these Gandhi items will be coming home," Bedi told reporters.

Los Angeles-based Otis, who had offered to pull out of the auction provided India increased

its spending on healthcare for the poor or sponsored an international traveling exhibition of Gandhi memorabilia, said earlier that the items had been withdrawn.

But as the auction house still went ahead, a lawyer for the peace activist said the sale was illegal.

"The issue here was not to put Mahatma Gandhi's legacy on the auction block," lawyer Ravi Batra said.

"I never intended for my actions to cause such controversy," Otis told reporters before the sale. "I pray the outcome is positive and one that Gandhi would approve of."

He said he would have donated the items to India if the government had agreed to increase spending on the poor.

The bidders included a dozen people in the room, 30 people on the phone, and about two dozen people who submitted written bids. The second highest bid was a \$1.75 million bid submitted online from Britain, said the auction house.

As soon as Lot No.364, the Gandhi items, came up for sale shortly after 3 p.m., a hush settled across the room and a slide show of Gandhi was displayed, with a recording of piano music, media reports said.

While the bidding increments were originally set to \$10,000, within a matter of seconds the price, fuelled by Internet and phone offers, escalated up to \$200,000 and then started jumping by \$50,000 and \$100,000 increments. Within two minutes the bidding hit \$1 million.

At that point, the contest became a bidding war between Bedi, representing Mallya, and Arlan Ettinger, the president of Guernsey's Auction House, representing former Indian cricketer Dilip Doshi, who now works for a company that distributes Montblanc pens and other luxury items.

After a phone bidder declined to push Bedi's bid at \$1.8 million, Bedi was declared the winner. The room burst into applause. Ettinger said afterwards that Doshi was trying to buy the items on behalf of the Indian government.

However, a spokesperson of the Indian consulate in New York said the Indian government itself did not participate in the auction as that would have been a violation of the Delhi High Court order.

The spokesperson also denied media reports that it continued discussions with Otis who had sent a three-page proposal after a meeting with the Indian consul general in New York, Prabhu Dayal.



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Peace Rally Urges US To Stop Tamil Genocide In Sri Lanka

Atlanta: Georgia Tamils and their friends held a peace rally in front of the CNN Center on Saturday February 7th to protest the genocide of Tamils by the Sri Lanka government, and to draw the attention of public and press. Nearly 200 Tamil Americans, GATS (Greater Atlanta Tamil Sangam) and PEARL (People for Equality and Relief in Lanka) members gathered in front of CNN, rallying and holding placards, flags, and pictures, highlighting the scope of the ongoing genocide and demanding US action. Several banners were there read, "Yes, we can Stop War in Sri Lanka", "Allow international media and monitoring missions to report freely about the humanitarian crisis in the conflict zones", and "Allow international and local NGOs to the war affected areas to provide emergency assistance to internally displaced innocent civilians".

The rally was held between 11 am and 1pm; rally representatives have collected signatures to send petition to congressmen and senators. The silence of the international community galvanized the Tamil Diaspora across the world to organize protests.

Since the Sri Lankan government withdrew from the Ceasefire Agreement this past January, there has been a sharp escalation in the conflict. The government launched a military offensive against area controlled by the rebels, using indiscriminate aerial bombings and artillery shelling against the entire civilian population. In September, the government ordered the evacuation of all international NGOs in the region, and proceeded with an intensive military campaign against Tamil areas in the north. According to Amnesty International, over 415,000 Tamil refugees have been forced to flee the military onslaught.

These 415,000 refugees are now experiencing a devastating humanitarian crisis, since the Sri Lankan government refuses to allow aid into the region. No food convoys have been allowed into



the region since January 16, and the WFP (World Food Programme) reports that the entire region is experiencing a food crisis. The Sri Lankan government established 85-sq mile "safe zones" and distributed pamphlets asking Tamil civilians to seek shelter in this area, but then proceeded to bomb and shell this area continuously over the past few weeks. Attacks against these "Safe zones" were confirmed by ICRC and UN officials. Hundreds are dying daily. Local medical workers have reported people "bleeding to death in the streets" because there are insufficient blood and medical supplies to treat all those wounded in

the government shelling. Since February 2nd, the one main hospital left in the region was shelled ten times, and was completely destroyed on February 7th, killing 61 patients inside.

Since foreign journalists are also forbidden from entering the region, international attention to the conditions of refugees caught in the conflict is minimal. The government publicly threatened to "chase out" the BBC and other international media if they reported too much on civilian casualties. The BBC World Service has stopped providing radio news to Sri Lanka's state broadcaster because of what it calls "deliberate interference". The government expelled UN agencies and the International Red Cross, barred journalists, and conducts genocide on Tamil civilians without witnesses.

Unfortunately, the conditions for Tamil refugees who flee the conflict into government control areas are no better. A Member of Parliament relayed reports that refugees were separated by gender, with female refugees being systematically sexually assaulted and male refugees being beaten and tortured. Sri Lankan government is forcing refugees into what it calls "welfare camps" but which others call concentration camps. The British Guardian newspaper reports that Sri Lankan armed forces and associated paramilitary groups forcibly conscript young men and women from among the refugees. "Young men in the refugee camps can be taken at any time – not only by the army but by other groups too, paramilitary groups. They come at night and take them." (Guardian Weekly, 02/04/09 at: <http://www.guardianweekly.co.uk/?page=editorial&id=918&catID=6>)

Georgia Tamils requesting readers to write to their representatives and senators to:

Urge US government to publicly condemn the atrocities perpetrated by the Sri Lanka government on Tamil civilians.

Ask US Gov. to bring sanctions and economic pressure to effect an immediate cease-fire.

Request US Gov. to demand to allow unfettered access for international humanitarian aid agencies, journalists and monitors into the conflict zone.

Once a ceasefire is in place, the US and the international community should help to find a political solution where the Tamil people living in Sri Lanka and exiled in other countries democratically determine the terms of coexistence with the Sinhalese state based on the universally accepted principle of self-determination.

For information please visit www.TamilsAgainstGenocide.org and www.pearlaction.org

Charity For Children: Shishukunj USA Launched in Atlanta

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: Shishukunj (a Sanskrit word meaning Garden of flowers) with an apt logo (Let all the buds bloom), was established in a global setting. Its roots were established in India in 1940 and in East Africa in 1955 and with a stronger establishment in London, U.K. in 1976. Just like the budding flower, all three locations are still flourishing today. Shishukunj has now arrived to USA. It is a registered charity, primarily an institution dedicated to the welfare and cultural development of children, run entirely by volunteers for the benefit of children. It provides a healthy environment rich in positive values which will allow the hidden potential within each child to flourish. Shishukunj lineate in three focused areas: Shikshan (Education), Sewa (Charity), and Baal Pravuti (Child Welfare).

Objective of Shishukunj, is to provide a platform for children to "bud" in safe and enriched environment run by the children for the children. Parents play an important role of vitality by ensuring an active role in their child(ren)'s participation. Of course this includes driving children to/from their center of activity. Under Baal Pravuti, children come together to learn cultural languages, play traditional Indian games, physical exercise drills, listen to spiritual discourses and recite prayers. They also celebrate festivals like Christmas, Diwali, Navratri, holi; learn fine arts like playing musical instruments, Indian classical and folk dancing, skit

plays, singing and painting. Under Sewa, Children are exposed to humanitarian needs of the world. They participate in special projects and field trips to places where there might be a need to perform sewa work. The primary goal is to "think globally, act locally". Under Shikshan, the child's knowledge is expanded by participating in organized debates, listening to invited guest speakers, and thus prepare them for the community/society at large. Shishukunj has an international wing formed in 1991 which carries out innovative outreach programs to relieve poverty, distress and illiteracy in community at large. It initiates projects like marathons, stages plays, musical concerts, organizes walk-a-thons, Sports competitions, etc. to raise funds to carry out humanitarian projects. It helps children affected by natural disasters like earthquakes, and helps blind, deaf, mute, disabled and poor children, adivasi (tribal) children, and children in orphanages with food, clothing, accommodation, and tuition. It sends medical equipment, wheel chairs, walking frames and sticks, hospital beds, audio-visual aids, school furniture, computers, at various locations in India, Africa and now in USA too.

Shishukunj has proven as a timeless entity where all the above helps a child to be confident, compassionate, self-reliant and broad minded who respects people of other races and faiths. It nurtures the child to be ready for the Society at large.

On Sunday February 1, Shishukunj USA, Inc.

which has been incorporated in the State of Georgia, on January 23, 2009, was officially launched. The three office-bearers, Harshadbhai Shah (President), Bharatbhai Kerai (Treasurer) and Gopalbhai Ghadhada (Secretary) in-acted the birth of Shishukunj USA. All three has wealth of experience in organizing Children' activities. Harshadbhai has previously organized numerous children functions including for Gujarati



Samaj Youth and IACA Youth in Atlanta. He, with his family support ran a Baal Pravuti center at Hare Rama Hare Krishna Temple. Also, he has encouraged children's sporting activities by creating an organization called "Asian Sports Foundation" where they could participate in tournaments in Golf, Tennis, Bowling, Chess, Caram and other sports. All three office-holders are selfless, dedicated, committed and enthusiastic volunteers who have immense love and welfare of children at heart.

On February 1, in front of an idol of Lord Ganesha, Bharatbhai Kerai welcomed all guests. Shreya Shah (on behalf of all children) lighted the diyas and recited invocation prayers to Lord Ganesha. The attendees then joined in singing Shishukunj main prayer song, 'he Prabhu anand data' followed by slokas and bhajans to the accompaniment of harmonium, tablas and manjira. A minute's silence was observed to respect the memory of pioneers and icons of global Shishukunj Organization - Indubhai Dave, Prafulbhai Shah; Vallabbhai Patel, and Devchandbhai Shah; Gopalbhai then briefly narrated the aims and objectives of Shishukunj USA, Inc. Harshadbhai commented, "Shishukunj has now officially been established in the USA. We will initially operate a Sewa center and organize a number of planned charity activities, and projects in due course. Also a bigger challenge in promoting the organization in the USA will be met with a marketing and fund-raising activities. In the meantime, Gopalbhai will begin the paperwork to apply for Federal non-profit exemption status. "In short, we would aim to create an environment conducive for the holistic development of the child-an environment rich in positive core values, such as loyalty, honesty, justice, love, faith and respect. Holistic development encompasses mental, physical, spiritual, social and emotional development".

For more information about Shishukunj, please visit the website www.Shishukunj.net

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Grand Festivities Begin At Atlanta Shirdi Saibaba Temple

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: The weeklong festivities of the Sri Shirdi Saibaba vigraha pratishtapana Kumbhabhishekam began on March 9th. The newly constructed temple will

be thrown open to the public on Sunday, March 15, 2009. The vigraha pratishtapana Kumbhabhishekam began on Monday with Anugna, Abhishekam, Sai Sahasranamarchana and Vishnu Sahasranama Parayanam. Different rituals like abhishekam, homa, dhanyadhisvasam, jaladhisvasam, pushpadhisvasam, kalasa stapana, sikhara yantra stapana, Sri Shirdi Sainatha yantra stapana will be held on all days prior to the kumbhabhishekam on the 15th. The day's program on 15th will commence early in the morning at 5AM and kumbhabhishekam will be held on the auspicious muhurta at 9.49AM.

square foot facility at a cost of \$4 million in Suwanee, a suburb of Atlanta, Georgia. Preparations are in full swing to inaugurate the temple and to celebrate shirdi Saibaba vigraha pratishtapana kumbhabhishekam during March 9-15.



be thrown open to the public on Sunday, March 15, 2009. The vigraha pratishtapana Kumbhabhishekam began on Monday with Anugna, Abhishekam, Sai Sahasranamarchana and Vishnu Sahasranama Parayanam. Different rituals like abhishekam, homa, dhanyadhisvasam, jaladhisvasam, pushpadhisvasam, kalasa stapana, sikhara yantra stapana, Sri Shirdi Sainatha yantra stapana will be held on all days prior to the kumbhabhishekam on the 15th. The day's program on 15th will commence early in the morning at 5AM and kumbhabhishekam will be held on the auspicious muhurta at 9.49AM.

Madhavi Gandavarapu, president of North America Shirdi Sai temple of Atlanta told this reporter: "We are planning the consecration ceremony from March 9th to 15th. For vigraha pratishtapana we have sevendays puja and main function will be held on 14th and 15th. Spiritual discourses on Shirdi Saibaba, Bhagavad Gita, bhajans and cultural programs are also planned, besides religious rituals during the weeklong festivities". She also informed that they have different levels of sponsorship for opening of the temple. Once the temple begins operating, food will be served in the kitchen down stairs. The temple will also have a library. There will have ample space for people to enjoy either in the old prayer hall or in the new temple. There will be social activities also. Temple would like to work with Atlanta food bank and others." We are planning to form groups to help home- less by visiting shelters. Presently the temple is having 110 trustees managed by a board of trustees and executive committee." She added.

Since its formation in April, 2001, North American Shirdi Sai temple of Atlanta and devotees of Shirdi Saibaba have been nurturing a dream of building a temple for Shirdi Saibaba to continue with their devotion to Saibaba as they are thousands of miles away from Shirdi.

The generosity of many philanthropists and dedicated hard work of many volunteers helped NASSTA realize its dream of building a temple of about 15,000

Many Sai devotees are excited about the opening of a new temple dedicated to shirdi Saibaba and are eager to have an opportunity of their life time to witness

shirdi Sai vigraha pratishtapana kumbhabhishekam of the new temple.

NAASSTA bought about 14 acres of land in Suwanee to build a temple aimed at spreading the message of Shirdi Saibaba. Since 2002, NAASSTA is operating its activities from a renovated structure that converted into a temporary prayer hall. The temple community made remarkable progress with ever growing devotees. The temple serves hundreds of devotees spending countless hours of services. Saibaba devotees believe in the unity of religions, peace and non violence.

Event Highlights

Saturday, March 14, 2009: Homam, Shikara Yantra Sthapana, Kalasa Sthapana, Ratnanyasam, Pushpadhisvasam, Sri Shirdi Sainatha Yantra Sthapana
Sainatha Nama Ekham (24 Hours) - Saturday 9.00AM to Sunday 9.00AM (till Vignrahaprathista)

Saturday, March 14, 2009: Sainatha, Rama, Rudra, Pranaprathishtanga Homam, Mahapurnahuti - 5:00AM
Mahakumbhabhishekam - 9:49AM
Sri Sitarama & Umamaheswara Kalyanam - 11:00AM

Palki Seva - 7:00PM

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Gujarati Comedy Play Regales Atlanta Community

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: Atlanta's well known B4U entrepreneur Nadir Jiwani organized a scintillating super-hit Gujarati Comedy play, 'Masti ma marriage, marriage ma masti' by Mumbai-based Balivala Theaters at the Berkmar High school auditorium, on Saturday, February 7. Nadirbhai firmly believes in offering top notch quality shows to the community. Only recently he has staged highly popular and entertaining 'Bapushahi Dairo' and first-ever world renowned Ustad Rahat Fateh Ali Khan's live -in concert.

In a brief interview, soft spoken, and modest but seasoned thespian Firoz Bhagat informed this writer that he has been active on stage for over 32 years. This is the Group's third visit to Atlanta. In 2003, it staged the play 'Adhura madhura'; in 2008 another play 'Kem chho, majama?' and now Masti ma marriage, marriage ma masti'. The Group has traveled to Dubai, parts of Africa, and England and a few other spots. This year, they arrived in the U.S. on January 16 and will be performing about 41 shows. The Group will be in the U.S. till May 15. They have already been to Los Angeles, New York, Chicago etc. "In the past, we have staged many successful plays because we firmly believe in pushing the boundaries and don't like to be pigeonholed into plays with predictable plots. Our plays are not only entertaining but also deal with pertinent social issues. They also offer glimpses into rich Gujarati culture and traditions." Commenting about Masti ma marriage, marriage ma masti he said, "We are very fortunate to have famed Aparna Mehta in the lead role. She is an acclaimed actor who has performed in highly popular TV serials for the past ten years. Her daughter, 22 year old Khushali Jariwala, who is debuting in the play, conceptualized the story, later written by Pravin Solanki. We have another riveting play 'Tu ane hoon-pachhi joiye shoo'. We might offer this play next year or re-perform

'adhura madhura' due to public demand. The audience here is very engaging, receptive and warm hearted, so we always enjoy performing our plays here. So please sit back and enjoy the show."



The innovative and commendable feature of the show were brief slide-shows at the beginning and during interval, on a stage-screen, recognizing and conveying thanks to all the sponsors, supporters, volunteers and media representatives.

The bubbly, breezy, laugh-a-minute play began with Aneri (Khushali Jariwala) who has returned from abroad and met with a boy-friend Umang (Devashish Savani) at a party returns home and announces her decision to marry Umang. Her possessive father Rahul Zaveri (Firoz Bhagat) and mother Mini (Aparna Mehta) try to dissuade her as they feel that she is too young to take the plunge and shoulder all the responsibilities of a

married woman. But Aneri is adamant and introduces Umang to her parents. Soon Umang's parents also visit Aneri's parents. Umang's mother Radha (Vaishali Trivedi) is snobbish and prim trying

Umang's parents that marriage will be doomed. But the greedy astrologer does the opposite. But just when marriage preparations are being discussed between the two families, there is a twist in the plot. Umang and his parents suspect that Zaveri and Mini are not married and just living together. Radha insists that Aneri's biological father give away the bride at the wedding. The play becomes poignant and heart tugging at this stage. Zaveri, Mini and Aneri talk about parents love, sanctity of marriage, moral values etc. The time-tested institution of marriage is scared. It is not merely a contract on a piece of paper but an eternal bond calling for mutual sacrifice, love and trust. The play ends on a happy note.

Firoz thanked Nadirbhai and Mustafabhai, and introduced the cast to thunderous applause.

Nadirbhai thanked national promoter Bhavna Modi, Firoz Bhagat and Aparna Mehta for their immense help in staging the play in Atlanta and went on to thank all the sponsors, family and friends, well wishers and volunteers Sharad Patel, Sanjay Patel, Upendra Bhatt, Vishnu Trivedi, Darshan Shah (photography), Mubarak, members of the audience and the media.

Mustafabhai who over the years has played an immense role in bringing choice Gujarati plays for the Atlanta community thanked Firoz and troupe for presenting a highly entertaining play and making it a memorable event. He wished them all the best and safe trip on remaining itinerary.

Aparna Mehta concluded the show by recognizing Firoz who is producer, director and actor in this rib-tickling comedy as well as emotive social drama powerfully delivered. Stage lighting and mood enhancing sound by Mehul Joshi are also commendable.

This highly entertaining play is a 'must see' play. So please go for it and also recommend it to other theatre fans. It is a very rare treat!

Nrupatunga Kannada Koota Celebrates Sankranti At HTA

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

Atlanta: Nrupatunga Kannada Koota celebrated Sankranti festival on February 21, 2009 at the Hindu Temple of Atlanta, Riverdale. The event attended by nearly 400 people featured cultural programs, dramas and a fitting tribute to the heroes who lost their lives fighting against terror during the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai. "Ellubella" (Sesame seeds and jaggery) symbolic of the harvest season and the Sankranti festival was distributed to everyone at the entrance.

Kids ranging all ages actively participated in the programs choreographed by talented individuals in Atlanta. The kids were awarded a trophy at the end of their presentation and a 2-year old warmed hearts as she bent over adorably again and again in an Olympic acceptance kind of way each time the name of kids were read out. The kids at Kannada Koota paid homage to the brave 26/11 personalities who were killed in the Mumbai attack.

The New President of Nrupatunga Kannada Koota, Dr. Jayanthi Srinivasiah was introduced to the crowd by the outgoing President Dr. Ramaswamy. Other office bearers



Incoming president of Nrupatunga Kannada Koota, Dr. Jayanthi Srinivasiah.



for the year are: Mrs. Prathima Kumar (Secretary), Mr. Anand Rajeurs (treasurer), Mrs. Jayashree Singh and Mr. Nagendra Veedaluri (members at large) were installed. Also Mr. Raya Gonchikar, Mr. Balaji Kithaganahalli, Mr. Anatha Sree Rama, Dr. H.N. Ramaswamy, Mrs. Janaki Patil and Mrs. Veena Kalale were chosen as board of directors.

Dr. Jayanthi Srinivasiah in her acceptance speech thanked everyone and added that Dr. Ramaswamy and Mrs. Indira Ramaswamy will always be their guiding force.

The activities ended with a video of the Indian national anthem sung by veteran artists of India inducing patriotic fervor and as always concluded with delicious food and drinks for everyone.

Event Reports
Email press releases to
editor@NRIPulse.com

Georgia Retailers Association Holds Valentine's Party

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: Georgia Retailers Association (GRA) organized its first Membership Drive with a glitzy Valentines Party at the Ashiana Banquet Hall Global Mall on Friday, February 13. The gala event was attended by the community's leading wholesale and retail business owners and service professionals and

and voluntary work, I feel any of us can do great things and be part of it. We need a goal. In GRA Associates, I have seen passion and enthusiasm to achieve their goal. They have faced many challenges but they have persevered and succeeded in forming GRA and I am proud to be a part of GRA."

GRA Vice President Monty Hudda has been an Atlanta resident for over 20 years. Hudda has



VP. Monty Hudda introducing President Shaukat Sunny Sayani. Photo by Vinod Devlia.

was graced by the presence of Chief Guest, Mr. Ron Thompson, (Thompson & Singer, P.A).

While the guests were intermingling among each other and enjoying the tasty snacks, Atlanta's well known musician, Tanweer Mian (Maroon Curtain Entertainment) entertained them with popular Bollywood sizzlers like Haule Haule; jabse tere naina; Chand Sifarish, to name a few.

Composed and cheery, Sanah Sayani, in a sparkling light green dress, greeted all and invited Alyzza Ukani, a Parkview High School student on stage, who sang the National Anthem in a crisp and resounding voice.

Introducing the President of GRA, Shaukat Sunny Sayani, Sanah described him as a seasoned entrepreneur with a wealth of business experience accumulated over the years through his wide travels and meetings with many business representatives. Recently, he even launched the popular desi radio station Bollywood Beats 1040 AM in Georgia, she said.

Sayani said that he was very happy to see the banquet hall filled with a lively gathering. "Majority among you have been our loyal and long-time customers so now the Associates representing the 'Wholesalers' have decided to give back to you." He introduced the GRA Associates as they came on the stage amidst thunderous applause: Vice President Monty Hudda ; Executive Officer Mihir Desai; Executive Officer/Hon. Secretary Zul Issani; Treasurer Hiren Desai; Directors:- Anand Acharya ;Shabir Isani;Mamud Dhanani;Ashish Patel;Balbir Singh; Salim Panjwani;Kanaiyalal Patel ;Rafiq Khoja and Mohamed Sohani.

Finally, Monty Hudda formally introduced The President of GRA, Shaukat Sunny Sayani.

Chief Guest, Ron Thompson from Henderson, N. Carolina, in his brief keynote speech said, "It is great to be here and celebrate with you all tonight. I have often wondered what constitutes great things. Van Gogh said, 'Greatness is putting small things together.' Mother Teresa said, 'It is taking small things and doing it with love' Hegel, the philosopher said, 'Anything you do with enthusiasm is a great thing' And Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'Anything you do with passion'. Well, after 30 years of business

been running a wholesale business for 15 years. He has also played a big role in the entertainment industry running a cinema and inviting Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan to perform in Atlanta. In his speech, Hudda gave a brief history of GRA, saying, "We thought of repaying the retailers for their gratitude and sincerity over the years. As a token of our appreciation we formed GRA. Our mission is to maximize sales and profitability by negotiating group contracts with manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and professional service providers. Any retailer in Georgia can join irrespective of race, religion, color or ethnic origin and reap the benefits of unity under the GRA umbrella. The directors are committed to bring excellent deals. We request members to sign for the deal and comply with vendor requirements for the deal. Though not mandatory, the more deals you participate in, the better rewards you will get. You will be informed of new deals through a copy of GRA News which will be mailed with your welcome package. At present we have over a thousand members. The membership fee is \$95 per year and first year membership is free. There is no obligation to renew your membership," he said. He then went on to read the List of Vendors and potential Vendors which was simultaneously relayed on two giant screens adjoining the stage.

Well-known nephrologist, Dr Narendra Gupta, citing interesting example of a rose and thorn, stressed the need for living in harmony and unity. "Please remember the adage 'united we stand divided we fall'" he said and continued, "This is a very big moment for GRA. The economy is in a recession and this is an opportune moment to come together as it will be a win-win situation for all," he exhorted.

Anand Acharya informed the gathering about the (i) Membership process; (ii) Rebate process and (iii) Vendor Compliance process.

Mihir Desai thanked all for attending and wished them a happy Valentine Day. He also thanked Chief Guest Ron Thompson for his insightful speech; he further thanked Dr.Narendra Gupta for his laudatory remarks and support to GRA.

For more information, please refer to www.georgiaretailersassociation.com

Global Mall Hosts Culture Fest



Atlanta: Culturefest 2009, a family friendly cultural festival was held at the Global Mall in Norcross recently. The one-day event was co-organized by Nancy Trujillo from Vision Gwinnett and Vandana Aggarwal of Global Mall.

"The objective of the event was to bring the entire Gwinnett community together to celebrate

the various cultures that reside in the county. It also served to bring awareness about the various activities and opportunities available in Gwinnett County," said Vandana Aggarwal, in an email interview with NRI Pulse.

"Vision Gwinnett is set up to bring the entire Gwinnett Community together. It is a great organization and we are honored to have them host the event at the Global Mall," she added.

Several Gwinnett County vendors set up booths at the mall. Vendors included the new Gwinnett Braves Stadium and Team, Brenau University, Georgia Family Development Center, Annadale Village, New Horizons Family Clinic, American Diabetes Association,



Top: Shiv Aggarwal, with volunteers, mayor Johnson (2nd from right) and Subash Razdan (extreme right). Bottom: With daughter Vandana Aggarwal.

Partnership Gwinnett, The Mission Society, The Gwinnett Coalition, Virtual Properties, Latin American Society, Ekal Vidayala etc.

The culture fest showcased talents and cultures from around the world. The Mayor of Norcross, Bucky Johnson and Commissioner Keith Shewbert attended the event. Shiv Aggarwal, owner of Global Mall recognized the volunteers of Vision

Gwinnett and the efforts of his daughter Vandana in organizing the event. He called upon prominent community member Subash Razdan to felicitate mayor Johnson.

Aggarwal's involvement in the culture fest is part of his work as chairman of the Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District (CID). The CID is a special benefit district supported by commercial area property owners. It provides vision and leadership that has become a catalyst of change for southern Gwinnett County. The CID currently generates over \$2 million in annual revenue to increase property values, promote economic development, and improve the quality of life in the county.

-Veena Rao






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Otis Wants To Donate More Gandhi Items To India

Washington: (IANS) US collector James Otis has offered to donate a few more of Mahatma Gandhi's belongings to India provided New Delhi agrees to his proposal to substantially increase its spending on healthcare for the poor.

"I have other Gandhi belongings. I would like to donate more items to the people of India to raise money for the poor," said the Los Angeles based activist whose collection of five Gandhi items was bought by Indian liquor baron Vijay Mallya in a New York auction for \$1.8 Million.

"I had put up the items for auction for the cause of the poor," Otis told IANS in a telephone interview from New York. "I will be getting \$1 million from the auction. I will be donating every single penny of it for the cause of the underprivileged including those in India."

He says he is happy that some items from his collection of Gandhi memorabilia are going back to India, but feels the priceless treasure should have fetched at least \$10 million for the cause of the underprivileged.

"I am very happy that the items will be going back to India," he told IANS. "But I am also a little sad that it fetched so little. Gandhi's items are priceless. It should have fetched seven eight million, ten million for the promotion of non-violent causes."

The other Gandhi items in his possession include a 1934 letter written in green crayon and signed Bapu, and the Mahatma's last pathological blood report signed by Dr. B. L. Taneja of the Irwin Hospital dated "21/1/48", nine days before his assassination.



The letter reads: "My dear Dorothy, Thank god the fast went off as well as it did. I am slowly but steadily gaining strength. Love. Bapu. 1934."

Otis said he also has a 1924 telegram addressed to Gandhi by one Enayatullah, managing agent Tai company, Karachi with the Mahatma's scribbled response.

The telegram reads: "Please stay with me when you come to Karachi. It will be good for noble cause." To which Gandhi responds: "Thanks but before I come... I must know the cause..."

According to Otis, Gandhi used to scribble his responses on telegrams. The telegraph people would translate it and send back the original telegram for his records.

His colleague Lester Kurtz, a professor at George Mason University who also has a collection of Gandhi memorabilia, would also like to donate a unique sample of Gandhi's blood from the site of his assassination mixed with ashes from his cremation.

Otis said they had not yet approached the Indian government with a fresh proposal that essentially remains the same that he had mooted to withdraw the Gandhi items from the New York auction.

He had also suggested that India sponsor a 78-country travelling exhibition of Gandhi memorabilia.

"I have more items of other great people associated with non-violence," he said. These include a letter from Dr. Martin Luther King asking for support for the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, a United Farm Workers flag signed by Cesar Chavez, Jane Addam's comb and brush from Hull House.

From UN To Lok Sabha - Tharoor Ready For Politics

New Delhi: (IANS) Author, columnist, former UN undersecretary general and now MP from his native state Kerala? That seems to be the way forward for the versatile Shashi Tharoor who has already informed the Congress party about his "willingness to serve the country as a member of parliament" and is just waiting for an answer.

"In conversations with state and national level Congress leaders, I have expressed my willingness to serve the country as a member of parliament, if the voters so decide," Tharoor, who was India's official candidate for the post of UN secretary general after Kofi Annan in 2006, told IANS from New York.

"Where I contest from is not up to me to decide. Wherever I am given the chance - wherever the party leadership decides that I can make a contribution - I will put in my best efforts to convince the voters that I am a worthy representative," Tharoor, 56, said in an email interview.

The issue will come up before the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) election committee at its meeting Friday. State Congress leaders, who did not want to be named, said Tharoor was the first contender for the Palakkad constituency.

Tharoor, who has authored five non-fiction books as well as works like the "The Great Indian Novel", said he wished to help the country overcome the challenges that it faces.

"I am conscious that we face a number of challenges, and I wish to do my best to help overcome them," Tharoor said.

"My life has been devoted to public service on the international level; I would welcome the opportunity to bring my experience, energy and talents to the service of the people of my state and my country."

The London-born Tharoor said he wanted to make a difference through politics, though he was not a politician.

"I am not a politician, but I see politics as a means to an end - the end being to influence the policies that determine the well-being of our people. I want

to make a difference, and I believe I can."

He also said he would be a strong advocate for the defence of India's pluralist and secular democracy and also be an advocate of poorest in the society.

Tharoor, who began his career in 1978, when he joined the staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva, added that he wanted to be an advocate of a "robust, realistic and independent foreign policy".

"In addition to creative and constructive approaches to the specific problems of my constituency and state, I hope to be a strong advocate for the defence of our pluralist and secular democracy; an economic policy of growth that is focused on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable; and a robust, realistic and independent foreign policy."



Vivek Kundra Is Obama's Infotech Czar

Washington: (IANS) US President Barack Obama has appointed Vivek Kundra, a 34-year-old Indian American, as federal chief information officer to

help the government leverage communication technology. Kundra, was chief technology officer for Washington district.

The job did not exist in previous administrations but Obama, who used text messages, internet social networks and other tech tools on his campaign trail, promised to create a 'technology czar' to help the government operate more efficiently.

New Delhi-born Kundra is expected to oversee how government agencies purchase and use IT and will be in charge of all federal technology spending. He will also be responsible for making sure agencies' networks and systems work together and share information while maintaining security and privacy standards, the report said. Kundra moved to Tanzania at the age of one and shifted to the US when he was 11.



'Slumdog' Puts Focus On All Things Indian: USA Today

Washington: (IANS) The success of India-based Oscar winner "Slumdog Millionaire" has magnified India's profile and accelerated the mingling of American and South Asian cultures, a leading US daily says.

"Who knows? Just as salsa came to rival ketchup as America's top-selling relish with the diffusion of Latino culture, maybe 'Slumdog' is a sign more Americans will be consuming even spicier fare," says Maria Puente in an article in USA Today.

"Now you can find Indian food even in mainstream grocery stores," jokes Vin Bhat, the American-born co-founder of Saavn, a New York-based company that, as the largest digital distributor of Bollywood movies, music, videos and ringtones, is benefiting from the success of "Slumdog".

"We're seeing a tremendous impact," Bhat was quoted as saying. "We're already seeing record downloads on iTunes and other major carriers; we're seeing a lot of people purchasing tracks and albums by ('Slumdog' composer/musician) A.R. Rahman."

In fact, the soundtrack is top album on iTunes and vaulted 26 spots to No. 22 on the Billboard chart in the days after the Oscars.

"People are buying 'Slumdog' - it's an access point for people to explore other movie and musical content from India," which is easier



to do nowadays, thanks to the Internet, Bhat said.

The India-is-cool trend has waxed and waned for decades. "It goes back to The Beatles, Ravi

Shankar, the Maharishi - look at how yoga is mainstream now," USA Today cited frequent visitor Dan Storper, founder and CEO of Putamayo World Music.

His company expects its first, just-released all-Indian music CD, "India", and coffee-table book, "India: A Cultural Journey", to be bestsellers in part thanks to "Slumdog".

"There has been a curiosity about the region for a long time, but it always takes one big thing to take it to another level," Storper says. "The stage is now set."

Hollywood might be more willing to gamble on Indian-themed movies and other East-West collaborations now that "Slumdog" has established audience interest, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, the Indian-born American novelist and author of "The Mistress of Spices" and just-published "The Palace of Illusions", was quoted as saying.

"We're kind of on the cusp, and 'Slumdog' might tip us over," she says. "Fiction touches the imagination, and the impact lives on long after the facts of non-fiction have faded."

The Great Indian Election Tour

London: (IANS) A British public relations firm is offering to fly out Britons to India for an experience of the world's largest - and most colorful - electoral exercise.

Saffron Chase, a London-based agency, has had queries from some 40 people - keen to experience the sights and sounds of an Indian general election - since making an impromptu offer during a pre-poll briefing last week.

"We have had businessmen, think-tanks, MPs, politicians and journalists asking us to take them for an election trip," Vikas Pota, managing director of Saffron Chase, told IANS. The agency held a briefing by Indian pollster Yashwant Deshmukh and Labour economist Lord Meghnad Desai at the British parliament Feb 25.

After the briefing, Pota wrote on his blog, "We're organising a visit, for those interested, to India at election time to soak up some of the atmosphere by attending mammoth rallies (100,000 people minimum), and to see for ourselves the key issues that candidates face in their constituencies.

"Elections in any country are interesting to watch. In India, you're assured a fantastic contest in which a billion people make their way to the polling booths to cast their votes electronically over a six-week period. India's faith in democracy, itself, is worthy of celebration."

It will be a first for Pota as well, who has seen several assembly elections but never a general

election in India, arguably the greatest - and noisiest - electoral exercise in the world.

Pota said he got the idea from the high-profile campaigns of the recently US general election, when British MPs went over to the US for a first-hand taste.

"There is a natural interest in looking at close to 700 million people vote. The implications are huge... the demographics of India, the economics.



Pota said he hoped to take the "delegation" around to rallies, where members will be able to acquaint themselves with the issues at stake. The experience could prove to be a bit overwhelming for the visitors: India's 714 million voters make it the world's largest democracy. Britain has only around 44 million

voters.

"Over here we struggle to fill a room with 50 people. Out there in India rallies of 100,000 are commonplace," said Pota.

"But people will find it incredibly vibrant. You immediately get a sense of what the key issues are. There are no scripted election speeches. These speeches are made on the stump and can last up to an hour. I enjoy that side of it."

India will pick a new government over five phases between April 16 and May 13, and the result will be declared May 16.

Six million civil officials as well as police and paramilitary personnel will oversee the conduct of the election, the 15th to the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament.

'Irretrievable Breakdown' No Ground For Divorce: Apex Court

New Delhi: (IANS) Irretrievable breakdown of marriage is no ground for divorce for those married under the Hindu Marriage Act because the law does not recognise it, the Supreme Court has ruled.

Dismissing a Hindu husband's plea for divorce, a bench of Justices Markandey Katju and V.S. Sirpurkar stated that the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, did not recognise "irretrievable breakdown" as ground for the dissolution of marriage.

The bench said no court, including the apex court, was empowered to issue a decree for divorce on the ground of "irretrievable breakdown" of marriage as it would amount to amending the Hindu Marriage Act by judicial verdict and adding "irretrievable breakdown" of marriage as a new ground for divorce.

A law can be amended only by legislature and not by judicial verdict, the bench said in its ruling that was pronounced Feb 27.

"Section 13 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 provides for several grounds for granting divorce e.g. cruelty, adultery, desertion etc. but no such ground of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage has been mentioned for granting divorce," the bench noted.

"On a bare reading of Section 13 of the Act, it is crystal clear that no such ground of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage is

provided by the legislature for granting a decree of divorce," the bench said.

If the apex court had in the past issued a decree for divorce on the ground of "irretrievable breakdown", it might have done so wrongly, the bench said.

The bench made this observation as the counsel for the husband pleaded for divorce to his client, saying that the apex court had in several cases issued the decree of divorce on the ground of "irretrievable breakdown".

It rejected the contention saying: "In our opinion, those cases have not taken into consideration the legal position which we have mentioned above, and hence they are not precedents. A mere direction of the court without considering the legal position is not a precedent."

The court was adjudicating an appeal by a Delhi resident, who had first gone to the lower court for a divorce on the grounds of his wife's alleged cruel behaviour towards him.

As the lower court and later the Delhi High Court dismissed his plea, finding that it was he who had been subjecting his wife to cruelty, he moved the apex court pleading irretrievable breakdown of his marriage and saying that his wife had not spent more than 25 days with him.

Help Sought For Indians In Gulf Hit By Global Meltdown



Dubai: (IANS) A Gulf-based Indian charitable body has appealed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to dispense financial assistance to Indian workers in that region returning home after the global economic meltdown. The Pravasi Bharatiya Welfare Trust, a United Arab Emirates (UAE)-based charitable organisation working for the welfare of expatriate Indians, in its letter, appealed to the Prime Minister to ensure that an immediate assistance of Rs.100,000 each is provided to deserving workers who had to return after losing their jobs in the Gulf and admission granted to the children of such workers in Indian schools.

"The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is expecting an exodus of 500,000 Indian workers from various countries as a result of world economic recession," K.V. Shamsudheen, the trust chairman, wrote in his letter.

"Based on this, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs proposed a package of Rs.114 crore (Rs.1.4 billion) to (the) Finance Ministry which was rejected by the Finance Ministry. On behalf (of) non-resident Indians we strongly condemn the decision of the Finance Ministry."

A large number of Indians are among the thousands of expatriate workers in the Gulf who are reportedly leaving the region in the wake of the global economic meltdown, which cost them their jobs.

According to media reports and surveys, the once-booming construction sector in the Gulf is among those affected by the global crisis. A vast majority of expatriate Indians work in the construction sector in the region as contract labor.

In his letter, the trust chairman called upon the Indian government as well as state governments, to provide the following as rehabilitation package to those affected: an immediate assistance of Rs.100,000 to deserving Gulf returnees; prepare a data bank of Indian workers returning from abroad; order private and public sector companies to recruit from this data bank people who are found to be experienced, exposed to moderns technology and with special work culture; approach various counties which are not affected by the financial crisis and reach an agreement to recruit the Indian workers from the data bank of foreign experienced hands; and instruct schools in India to admit the children of the returnees.

The letter, citing World Bank figures released in March last year, pointed out that Indian workers abroad sent home \$27 billion in 2007 to make India the top receiver of migrant remittances.

"Thanks to Indian rupee exchange advantage in 2008 it went up to \$32 billion. (The) Main source of this remittance is the lower and middle-income Indian workers in the Middle East with its estimated five million NRI workers," it stated. "The NRI remittances are over three times the foreign direct investment (FDI) to India. We believe the Indian government must look after NRIs more than foreign investors," it added.

IIM Students Face Heat Of Slowdown

Ahmedabad: (IANS) In yet another example of the shrinking job market, 50 final year post-graduate students at the Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIM-A) are yet to get any job offers even seven days after this year's placement session started on the campus.

Unlike previous years, this time there is no rush to recruit students from India's premier business school even as entry-level salaries have come down sharply, IIM-A officials said.

In most cases, the students are grudgingly accepting offers from companies which had been their second-rung choices till last year, they added. Consulting groups like McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group and Booz and Co. have picked up IIM-A students, a senior faculty, who did not want to be identified, told IANS.

Other major recruiters are: Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, ICICI Foundation, UAE Exchange, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Standard Chartered Bank and the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI). Some lesser-known domestic manufacturing firms are also present on the campus to recruit students.

Last year, when the global economy was booming, all students in the final year PG batch got campus placement with high salaries. Last year's average domestic salary was Rs.1.78 million per annum and about 25 big companies had come to the campus, compared to 10 this time.

According to sources, Gujarat-based small and medium enterprises (SME) have shown interest to hire students in the salary package of Rs.700,000-1.2 million per annum, they added.

The sources said all students from agri business management got good offers. IIM-A director Samir Barua could not be reached for comments.

Gujarat Aims To Make Ahmedabad Slum-Free



Ahmedabad: (IANS) Gujarat has launched a massive urban development program aimed at upgrading infrastructure and building houses for the poor in cities for which funds from a centrally-sponsored scheme will be utilized, officials said.

In the first phase, the government will spend Rs.17.5 billion (Rs.1,750 crore) from the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) to construct Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) in Ahmedabad and houses for slum dwellers. "We are constructing BRTS for an investment Rs.500 crore (Rs.5 billion) stretching 58 km. This is only the first phase," R.P. Mahida, city engineer (BRTS)

of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, told reporters. The first phase will be completed by September 2009 and tenders for the second phase, 12.9 km, will be floated soon, he added.

Apart from the modern BRTS, the city corporation is busy constructing subsidized housing for the urban poor. Around Rs.12.5 billion (Rs.1,250 crore) will be invested to make Ahmedabad a slum-free city by 2012. "A total of 18,000 housing of casting concrete will be provided to the poor families," Anand B. Patel, additional city engineer (housing) of the municipal corporation said.

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BY VEENA RAO

Located in a little strip within a stone’s throw from the massive AT&T offices off the Windward Parkway exit in Alpharetta, Amma Kitchen is fast gaining popularity for its fresh, wholesome home-style dishes.

Run by Seshavatharam Puranam, a former priest at the Hindu Temple of Atlanta (HTA) Riverdale and his wife Madhuri Devi, Amma Kitchen has a large number of regulars from AT&T, where over a 1000 Indian employees are said to be working. There is also a growing clientele from Alpharetta and the rest of Atlanta.

The \$4.99 lunch buffet is excellent value for money. “We were the first in all of Georgia to offer a wholesome meal at such a low price,” says Puranam. The buffet includes rice, special rice, roti/naan, two curries, chutneys, pickles, ghee, rasam, sambhar, papad, yogurt, a snack and a dessert.

The menu includes a whole range of dosas beginning at \$3.99. From the ever-popular masala dosa to the crispy rava dosa to cheese dosas, paneer dosas and the mumbai dosa, there is something new to try during each visit.

The soft, delectable idlis (served with sambhar and chutney) are a steal at \$2.99. The menu also includes a whole range of utappams, pesarattus, and rice specials like lemon rice, tomato rice, coconut rice, bisibele bhath and yogurt rice. House specials, available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays include puri bhaji or chole bhaji at \$3.99, chole bhatura, chapathi kurma or paratha kurma.

The ubiquitous chat corner makes its presence felt here too. Beginning at \$1.99, there is pani puri, sev puri, bhel puri, dahi puri, samosa chat, tikki chat and pav bhaji to choose from.

For those with the sweet tooth, Amma Kitchen offers puran polis (bobbattu) throughout the year. There is also gulab jamun and rasmalai to choose from.

Beverages include Indian specialties like sweet or salt lassi, mango lassi, badam kheer and butter milk.

The Puranam family moved to Atlanta from Andhra Pradesh in 2000. While Seshavatharam served as a priest at HTA, Madhuri, who has always been a great cook, catered from home to an ever-growing clientele. In 2007, the couple decided to move out of HTA, and open a full fledged restaurant. While Madhuri took charge of the kitchen, Seshavatharam has been managing the restaurant. Daughter Gayatri helps over the weekend. Son Sriman Narayanan who is a priest at Raleigh keeps the ancestral Vedic profession alive.

The Puranams have employed a couple of Bhutanese refugees who help out in the kitchen. They also help the Bhutanese cause indirectly by selling chapathis made by the refugees.

The Amma Kitchen success story has been swift. “When Amma Kitchen first opened, we had seating capacity for 30 people,” says Puranam. It was not long before each day, they had over a 100 customers around lunchtime, prompting the couple to expand to the location next door.

Today, the restaurant’s clientele includes the veritable who’s who of Atlanta. Visiting celebrities like music legend S.P Balasubramanium are taken to Amma Kitchen to partake of the fresh meals.

Puranam delights in talking about over 50 Muslim families who make it a point to come to Amma Kitchen to savor the fresh, meatless cuisine.

Unlike most Indian restaurants, Amma Kitchen opens early (at 9 am Monday to Saturday and 10 am on Sunday) and offers a delectable breakfast menu.

A definite must visit!

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Accidental Deletion: Software For Data Recovery

Dusseldorf (Germany: DPA) The loss of accidentally deleted computer files can be a catastrophe. Yet "deleted" files are not always really gone from your computer. In many cases they can still be recovered, even if no backup was ever created.

An attempt at using special data recovery software to fix the problem is usually a good, first step.

A study by the data recovery company Kroll Ontrack shows that defective hardware is responsible for more than half the cases involving data loss.

"One in four is attributable to user error, though," explains Stephanie Hennig from Kroll Ontrack. That includes the accidental deletion of files.

Still, not all hope is lost when it comes to retrieving deleted files. During a standard deletion, the OS simply frees up the files for overwriting.

"It's like a book where the table of contents has been partially removed. It's harder to find the pages, but it's possible," explains Markus Mizgalski from Dusseldorf-based PC Pr@xis magazine.

Data recovery programmes rummage through this table of contents for the file system or they attempt to recreate the complete files through the snippets left over on the hard drive. Some programmes work better than others for this task. A recent test by PC Pr@xis showed that cost-free software is only partially helpful. The freeware titles tested by the magazine quickly reached their limits, or were difficult to use.

The best grades went to R-Studio Datenrettung 4, available for around \$80. Just behind it in the rankings was O&O DiskRecovery

4, also costing around \$80. Both programmes recognise hundreds of file formats, provide a quick search version as well as an advanced version for tricky cases, and can be used as a boot disk for recovery attempts where the OS refuses to load up again.

While complex, R-Studio offers occasional users several bonus features: It works with several operating systems and can create an exact copy of the affected storage media - in the event that the failed rescue attempt only deepens the damage.

The freeware alternatives PC Inspector File Recovery and Recuva are significantly less powerful for recovering files accidentally deleted from the Windows recycling bin. Users of

Windows tuning programmes like TuneUp Utilities or Vista may not need to buy anything else at all. Data recovery tools are often integrated into those packages.

It's a good idea to test the commercial programmes before buying them. In general software publishers offer demo versions for precisely this purpose. "Try to recover ZIP archive data or very large email databases in pst format and you'll quickly separate the wheat from the chaff," says Robert Globisch from computeruniverse.net, an online mail-order catalog

There are a few tips to improve the chances of successful recovery. The key one is to immediately stop working on the affected hard drive or storage card once you realise that a file has been lost. That also means no installation of recovery tools not already on the drive as you risk overwriting the very data you want to save.



Indian-American Scientist Creates Top Web Technology

Washington: (IANS) HashCache, the technological brainchild of a team of Princeton computer science researchers led by an Indian American scientist, has drawn recognition as a revolutionary way to expand internet access around the world.

Created by a team of researchers headed by computer science professor Vivek Pai, the new efficient data storage system was featured as one of the top 10 emerging technologies of the year in Technology Review, a scientific magazine published by Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

HashCache, features a new data-caching system that stores information more efficiently than current methods. By making internet access more affordable, HashCache has the potential to expand web use in developing regions around the world.

"The whole point of HashCache is that it can be deployed in a very low-cost box," Pai explained.

The development team includes PhD student and IIT-Madras graduate Anirudh Badam, computer science department chair Larry Peterson, computer science researcher Marc

Fiuczynski and University of Pittsburgh professor Kyoung Soo Park.

Because of its affordability, HashCache presents new opportunities for poorer regions to gain internet access. Instead of relying heavily on RAM, HashCache stores information from frequently visited web sites on a local hard drive so the data can be accessed directly.

This system significantly increases the efficiency of internet data transfer, which can reduce the cost of maintaining a one-terabyte hard drive tenfold, Pai said.

HashCache is "flexible," Badam noted. "We can implement it in cell phones, laptops or nearly any other hardware."

Commercialisation is a consideration for the group, Pai noted, but the main goal is to release HashCache for practical and widespread use.

Some plans even involve making the system free for nonprofit organizations and schools in developing countries that already have technology support.

"I'm happy about the reception [of HashCache]," Pai said, adding that the acclaim the team has garnered provides evidence that the rift between high-end science and low-cost engineering is not as wide as it seems.

Human Mouth Houses Over 600 Kinds Of Microbes



Washington: (IANS) A human mouth houses a flourishing community of over 600 different kinds of bugs or microbiome. But like fingerprints, no two microbiomes are alike, say scientists.

In the first global study of salivary microbes, scientists found that the oral microbiome of your neighbour is just as different from yours as someone across the globe.

The human body harbours 10 times more bacterial cells than human cells - a stunning figure that suggests a likely dynamic between ourselves and the bacteria humans carry, both in state of health and disease.

The human mouth, a major entry point for bacteria into the body, also contains a diverse array of microbial species. Yet, microbiome diversity between individuals and how this relates to diet, environment, health and disease remains unexplored.

The researchers, led by Mark Stoneking of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, have sequenced and analysed variation in the bacterial gene encoding 16S rRNA, a component of the ribosome, in the salivary "metagenome" of 120 healthy subjects from six geographic areas. The group observed that there was considerable diversity of bacterial life in the saliva microbiome, both within and between individuals. However, "the saliva microbiome does not vary substantially around the world", said Stoneking.

Inactivity Leads To Quick Muscle Loss



Toronto: (IANS) Lack of use of muscles leads to their quick loss, says new Canadian research. Researchers at Toronto's York University say muscles shrink quickly when they are not used.

A week of total muscular inactivity can cause 24 percent muscle loss.

"It really is a case of 'use it or lose it'," he said in a university statement here.

"We are seeing more and more evidence of how easy it is to lose muscle, compared to how difficult it is to regain it," said O'Leary.

During chronic muscle inactivity, he said, a process called autophagy - or type 2 cell death - joins with apoptosis - or type 1 cell death - in attacking cells and causing muscles to shrink. Muscle inactivity leads to big increases in the proteins LC3 and Beclin 1 in the body, O'Leary said.

He said these proteins are activated by a decrease in oxygen consumption (by the mitochondria, which supply power to our cells) during muscle inactivity. This leads to an increase in tiny molecules called reactive muscle oxygen species which are blamed for causing conditions ranging from cancer to wrinkles. In high doses, these molecules wreak havoc on body cells by activating the production of these proteins, O'Leary said.

Running More Helpful For Bone Building



Washington: (IANS) Researchers have found that high-impact activities, such as running, have a greater positive effect in osteoporosis that affects more than 200 million people worldwide. Resistance training is often recommended to increase and prevent loss of bone mineral density (BMD) although previous studies that examined the effects of resistance training in men produced varied results.

"The results of the study confirm that both resistance training and high-impact endurance activities increase bone mineral density. However, high-impact sports, like running, appear to have a greater beneficial effect," said Pam Hinton, associate professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at the Missouri

University (MU) College of Human Environmental Sciences.

According to the researchers, the true effects of weight-bearing or resistance exercise are only apparent when controlling for differences in body weight or composition. People who primarily perform non weight-bearing activities will benefit from resistance training that increases lean body mass, Hinton said.

People who engage in activities such as cycling, swimming, or rowing should add bone-strengthening activities, such as resistance training or running, to their exercise regimens.

How To Avoid Computer-Induced Arm Pain

Cologne (Germany), March 4 (DPA) Repetitive strain is a creeping threat for any 21st century computer user. Steady mouse clicking may seem innocent, but many computer users find that pain starts in their arm and eventually spreads to their wrist and shoulder.

"The first signs usually range from pricking sensations to loss of feeling and numbness in the affected body parts," says Orthopaedist Dierk. "Otherwise, it involves various pains that develop between the wrist and shoulder." Initial symptoms usually break out after long periods working at a PC, but will disappear overnight. In chronic forms of the disease, pain breaks out during everyday activities like ironing or shifting gears in a car.

"In therapy, stretching and strength-building exercises and exercise are used." Warmth can also be used to relax muscles while cold compacts can be used to relieve the pain.

"The best thing to do is to change your work area," advised Dierk.

That could mean using ergonomic keyboards, hand rests and computer mice that are designed like joysticks and force the user's hand into a different position.

"You should also have a chair that doesn't force you to sit up too straight or hunch over and a monitor that can be adjusted according to viewing angle and the way a person sits."

US Sees Hurdles In Trade With India Despite N-Deal

Washington: (IANS) While the India-US civil nuclear deal has opened "the door even wider" for US exports, Washington says India's tariff and tax regime, intellectual property rights policies, investment climate and regulatory hurdles still pose a problem.

With US and India engaged in an active dialogue on trade policy in 2008, their bilateral trade agenda continued to expand to support the significant opportunities for bilateral trade and investment that US and Indian companies are pursuing, a new US report says.

"The Civil Nuclear Agreement signed on October 10, 2008, opens the door even wider for US exports to help India meet its tremendous energy needs," said the US Trade Representative's (USTR) 2009 Trade Policy Agenda and 2008 Annual Report.

"That said, many challenges to trade and investment in India persist, and USTR continued to work with the Indian government to address such concerns as India's tariff and tax regime, intellectual property rights policies, investment climate and regulatory hurdles," it said.

"India continues to limit market access in various sectors through non-tariff barriers such as high border taxes and tariffs, foreign direct investment caps, non-transparent procedures, and discriminatory treatment of imports," the report suggested.

Despite these barriers, trade expanded rap-

idly. In 2008, bilateral goods trade totalled \$45 billion. Bilateral services trade totalled \$19 billion in 2007, it noted.

Noteworthy developments in 2008 included the agreement to launch negotiations on a bilateral investment treaty and India's withdrawal of certain import restrictions on fresh fruit.

Another development in the 2008 bilateral US-India trade dialogue was the Private Sector Advisory Group's (PSAG) identification of key policy issues on which it would provide strategic recommendations and insights to the US-India Trade Policy Forum (TPF).

The PSAG identified completion of a bilateral investment treaty as its top recommendation.

The report said there has been some progress in India's protection of intellectual property rights. These included the introduction of the proposed Drugs and Cosmetics (Amendment) Bill 2008 that will increase penalties for spurious and adulterated pharmaceuticals, and create a customs recordation system.

However, India still needs to improve its copyright regime to address issues related to protection of digital works on the Internet, strengthen its patent regime, USTR said.

This should include clarifying the scope of patentable subject matter, provide effective data protection for pharmaceutical and agricultural chemicals, and increase enforcement against piracy and counterfeiting.

Satyam Among Four Indian IT Firms Who Top H-1B Visa Users

Washington: (IANS) Four Indian IT outsourcingers - Infosys Technologies, Wipro Technologies, Satyam Computer Services and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) - dominate the list of companies winning H-1B visas in 2008.

The four together used more than 10,000 of the visas for skilled professional limited to 65,000 foreign-educated workers per year, according to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Microsoft was the only US company with more than 1,000 H-1B visas, while Cognizant Technology Solutions and Cisco

Systems made the top 10 list of H-1B visa users. Other US companies grabbing H-1B visas in 2008 were Google, Oracle, Yahoo, Motorola, IBM and Apple.

Leading the list of 2008 H-1B visas was Infosys Technologies with 4,559 visas. It was followed by Wipro Technologies with 2,678 H-1B visas, Satyam Computer Services with 1,917 H-1B visas and TCS with 1,539 H-1B visas.

Microsoft clocked in with 1,307 H-1B visas in 2008. Cognizant Technology Solutions (467 visas) and Cisco Systems (422) were the only other US companies making the top 10 list of H-1B users.

Other notable US technology firms using H-1B visas in 2008 included Google (207), Oracle

(168), Yahoo (139), Motorola (112), IBM (104) and Apple (70).

A favorite of American technology companies, the H-1B program is a temporary work visa program allowing American companies and universities to employ foreign guest workers who have the equivalent of a US bachelor's degree in a job category that is considered by the USCIS to be a "specialty occupation."

The H-1B program has been dogged by controversy over the last decade as Silicon Valley companies have repeatedly urged Congress to raise the cap on the number of visas allowed, currently set at 65,000 visas per fiscal year. Lawmakers have resisted, citing concerns over fraud in the H-1B program.

In October 2008, a USCIS report found that the H-1B programme has a more than 20 percent violation rate. The fraud identified in the report included jobs not being located where employers claimed, H-1B visa holders not being paid the prevailing wage, forged documents, fraudulent degrees and "shell businesses."

Even before the report was issued, three senators, Chuck Grassley of Iowa, Dick Durbin of Illinois and Bernie Sanders of Vermont were seeking reform of the H-1B visa program.



Corporates Can Survive Bad Times Without Downsizing

BY SHIV DHAWAN

News of downsizing is bad news for any employee. Though downsizing is a common strategy adopted by organizations to cut costs and keep performance standards high, during the current recession it appears to have become a survival imperative.

Top management often forgets to recognize the trauma employees undergo when they or their co-workers are laid off. Downsizing in the immediate run might contain operational costs. But it tends to adversely impact the morale of the remaining workforce - which suffers from 'survivor's guilt syndrome'.

This is a collective feeling of melancholy, fear and worry that their jobs might go in the next



instalment of layoffs. They are simultaneously relieved, and feel guilty that they still have that job. The surviving workforce suffers from the loss of co-workers and, despite being downsizing survivors, feels just a bit like a victim, too.

The survivors are probably also experiencing an increase in the level of stress relating to both the increased workload and their distrust of management. Anxiety and a lack of motivation also accompany the loss of co-workers in a layoff.

Some of the key players may decide that they don't want to stay and polish up their resumes waiting for the next bad news, in an environment of mistrust. All this is bad news for any company that is in any case caught in the talons of a recession.

India Warns Developed Countries Against Protectionism

New Delhi: (IANS) India recently warned against the dangers of protectionism and asked developed countries not to stop the flow of funds to developing countries due to the global economic downturn.

"Developed countries should not resort to protectionism to resolve the crisis," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, who is also acting finance minister, told reporters here when asked about the impact of global financial meltdown on developing countries.

"This is the time that developed countries should ensure there is no hindrance to the flow of funds from developed to developing countries," he said in a veiled attack at the new US plan to abolish tax benefits for American companies, which outsource jobs to other countries.

"This sort of protectionism is going to complicate the situation," he stressed at a joint

In any profitable corporate set-up, human resources never forms the largest chunk of operational cost. A large portion of cost is attributable to monolithic glass and steel offices in swanky commercial business districts of metropolises along with their attendant costs on energy and other services. In any workforce there are always teams that don't need to be in physical proximity of one another and can function equally well in a virtual mode.

An innovative approach to containing operational costs is to review the deployment of such workforce.

What is being suggested is a "hotelling" concept. This is a work practice where a category of workers do not have permanent desks or cubicles and call the office to reserve space when they need to be there, check in at the given time, and then check out with another employee checking in after them - just like a hotel. IT, insurance and consulting firms encountering severe cost pressures in the New York region are containing expenses by spinning out their employees as high-tech work from home professionals.

For instance, IBM has started an entirely office-free sales force in New Jersey. A lot of Fortune 500 companies have hot desks and touch-down areas where staff can plug in laptops and have face to face meetings as and when required. The original idea evolved from the cyber cafes that were set up so that people could surf the web.

However, it cannot be applied indiscriminately across an organization. This is where HR needs to assume a strategic role and assess which work teams whose job profiles do not require them to work inside an office could shift to a virtual work from home mode.

The organization could save valuable capital through releasing expensive real estate that hitherto housed these work teams.

This 'hotelling' model could be viable even when happier times return and would enable the companies to turn in larger margins having seen them through the hard times of recession without traumatizing workforce.

press conference with Bulgaria's Deputy Prime Minister Ivailo Kalfin.

"We support the G20 mechanism to address global financial crisis," he said while alluding to the G20 conference of the world's leading economies London will host in April to address issues relating to global financial crisis.

Mukherjee held talks with the Bulgarian deputy prime minister on a range of bilateral and global issues, including terrorism and global financial crisis. India and Bulgaria signed two agreements on easing the visa regime and promoting scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

In a speech last month, US President Barack Obama had said companies outsourcing jobs to overseas destinations may lose tax benefits. The plan has the potential to affect about 1,000 US companies.

Piecing Together Nuggets On Beloved Bangalore

**Book: "Multiple City: Writings on Bangalore"; Editor: Anita De;
Publisher: Penguin India**

From Mahatma Gandhi to Winston Churchill, everyone was bowled over by its weather. Today it is called India's tech hub. But Bangalore is not just one city - it is a multiple city, say old timers, travellers, poets, cartoonists and IT professionals writing on why they love the place.

The city's bookshops are favourite hunting grounds for historian Ramachandra Guha. On the other hand, poet Pratibha Nandakumar feels the angst of old, single-storey houses making way for multi-storeyed residential and shopping complexes.

Swedish author Zac O' Yeah rues that Bangalore has too many potholes, but adds that it also has generous people to help the people who fall into them and rush them to hospital!

Economist Thomas L. Friedman considers the smart engineers working on their flat screens to be among the flatteners of the world. He is the man who wrote "The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Globalised World in the 21st Century".

While the city is a babel of Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu and Hindi with Bengali, Oriya and Punjabi added in the last few years, writer Sahana Udupa finds a new syndrome MTI - Mother Tongue Irritation - afflicting the many making a living from the call centres.

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The 51 write-ups on Bangalore have been edited and brought out as a book by writer and journalist Aditi De. Published by Penguin India, the 316-page book "Multiple City: Writings on Bangalore" was released in Bangalore recently.

"It (Bangalore) seems to engage with its past with insouciance, within a continuum where the past, the present and the future collide every millimoment. Its street voice, their cosmopolitan culture and urban angst as much as in Kannada as in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam or English," De says in her introduction to the book.

"Bangalore does not offer outsiders a pageant of archaeological monuments; instead, in the words of a wag, it has just 'two rambling gardens and a crumbling palace'. It is as much at ease with the masala dosas of Vidyarthi Bhavan (a hotel well-known for dosas) as with the stiff upper lip colonial traditions of the Bangalore Club, or the shin-

ing new towers and gated communities of IT-based international commerce," she continues.

Jnanpith award winner U.R. Ananthamurthy laments that the salubrious weather helped make Bangalore a brand but increasingly that weather is missing.

"Bangalore became a 'brand' because of its great weather. But because it is a 'brand', the weather went bad. Now we have so many people, so many cars, and so much dust and smoke that we can hardly breathe," he wryly remarks in his write-up.

In his book "My Early Life", published in 1930,

Churchill notes: "The climate of Bangalore, at more than 3,000 feet above sea level, is excellent. Although the sun strikes with torrid power, the nights except in the hottest months are cool and fresh... Snipe (and snakes) abound in the marshes; brilliant butterflies dance in the sunshine, and nautch girls by the light of the moon."

Mahatma Gandhi, who wrote with ease on almost all subjects, had difficulty in finding words to describe Bangalore's weather!

"I have not got the poetic language to describe the weather here, but it is really fine at this time of the year in Bangalore," the Mahatma wrote to Raihana Tyabji, daughter of the Gujarat jurist Abbas Tyabji, in July 1927.

Gandhi stayed in Bangalore and nearby Nandi Hills for about four months that year, recovering from an illness.

Ananthamurthy has written about Bangalore's Kannada identity in his engaging piece titled "Ooru (town) and the World", novelist and Sahitya Akademi award winner Shashi Deshpande revisited the city through the places she has lived in since she was a young girl in "Mapping Bangalore". Rajmohan Gandhi has written about the trysts of his grandfather, Mahatma Gandhi, with the city in a piece titled "Through the Mahatma's Eyes".

Ramachandra Guha, historian and scholar, has described his close relationship with a popular bookshop called Premier on Church Street in the heart of the city.

Poet Pratibha Nandakumar in her poem "Directions" has humorously dealt with the sudden growth of the city and how its entire landscape has changed in the process.

The book has a photographic essay by Clare Arni, a British architectural and travel photographer, who has lived most of his life in India, cartoons by political cartoonist Maya Kamath and drawings by illustrator and cartoonist Paul Fernandes.

Author Pankaj Mishra in his "Mall Miscalculations" fears that Bangalore may "go the way other Indian cities had gone before it — into another Indian urban nightmare" as "in recent years, a lot of imported notions had come to stand for Bangalore: India's Silicon Valley, India's electronics capital..."



Anita De

Luck By Chance Story Of Tears And Joys

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

Bollywood or "Hindi Film Industry" as stressed by Neena Walia played by Dimple Kapadia in the movie is the Promised Land to many cinema aspirants where destinies are defined and defied at the box office every Friday. The glitz and glamour reckons young and old alike and never lets them go once drawn into its web. Zoya Akhtar, the debutant director fabulously weaves the story through layers of emotions developing her lead characters gradually as she also takes us behind the camera entertaining us with scenes such as an actress in her angel gown complete with wings walking into a toilet, it is priceless. Zoya, the daughter of the talented Javed

this world because of her. Luck, by chance smiles upon Vikram when the superstar Zaffar Khan (Hrithik Roshan) decides to opt out of famous Producer and his Godfather Rommy Rolly's (Rishi Kapoor) film to be part of a Karan Johar production and Neena has the power to decide the lead role for the movie opposite her daughter and she chooses Vikram.

Being the main lead changes Vikram's priorities and ironically the industry that drew Sona and him close together tears them apart. Niki sneaks into Vikram's room when her mother is not watching and the news spreads like wild fire. A friend of Sona who works for a tabloid paints Vikram as self serving manipulator who used Sona and ditched her for greener pastures in his article paradoxically using his knowledge of his "friend" Sona against her.

Zoya has so many characters whose lives have been intertwined by the industry ranging from make up artists, to actors, directors, financiers, producers and the news hungry tabloids both new and the old, the underdogs and the popular affected by fame and fortune and always afraid of failure. No one has it easy, Zoya tells you in her story and you believe it when you find yourself empathizing with even with the famous Producer like Rommy Rolly as he is reduced to tears because his protégé walks out on his movie while admitting he is like a father figure to him as much as you do with Sona the struggling actress who deals with failure over and over again. Yes, this director can tell her story really well and has proven that she is a force to reckon with.

Post Rock On, Farhan Akhtar, Zoya's brother has his own fan following and he does not disappoint this time around either. He is natural and brings Vikram to life with spunk and dedication the character demands. Konkana as Sona compliments Farhan perfectly and it is treat to watch them embark upon their journey of success and failure. Rishi Kapoor as the Producer is adorable and Juhi Chawla as Minty Rolly, the wife the Producer does her part of selecting the lucky gems and performing appropriate poojas with diligence and sincerity. Sanjay Kapoor as Ranjit Rolly does well too. Dimple as Neena Walia looking as gorgeous as ever, performs perfectly masking her ugly side with grace and sophistication. Isha Sharvani as Nikki Walia steps into her role with ease. Hrithik Roshan as Zaffar Khan too emotes to the T as he drops out of his godfather's movie explaining that Zaffar Khan is an image to which he has to cater and needs to do the right thing for the image and also when Karan Johar explains to him that the only way new comers get a chance to squeeze into the industry is when a huge star like Zaffar Khan opts out at the last moment.

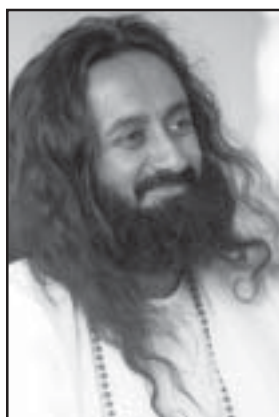
Zoya Akhtar will always be the daughter of Javed Akhtar, but with this movie she clearly establishes her new identity as a director and a brilliant one at that. Zoya who also wrote the story herself waited for a long time before her story transpired to celluloid drama. There are moments in the movie where you feel like Zoya is taking potshots at the industry she is so much a part of, but then she does that abundant warmth and delivers this baby with tender loving care and it shows in every single shot. So take this journey of Bollywood with its characters as they make you laugh and cry (sometimes at the same time), it is worth it.



Akhtar handles the subject at hand with a well-balanced mix of humor and sensitivity.

Luck By Chance is a tale of the film industry that walks us through the lives of two struggling actors Sona (Konkana Sen Sharma), a simple and trusting actress and Vikram (Farhan Akhtar), a charismatic go-getter who believes in himself. Sona and Vikram have no godfathers in the industry and so have to work hard to get that one big break that transports them to celebrity status overnight. They are introduced through a common friend and develop a friendship that blooms into love through their tears and heartbreaks as they try to find footage into the world of cinema. Zoya establishes the nature of her characters with sequences that are very real and believable. For example, the scene where Sona and Vikram go shopping, Sona who needs a refrigerator refuses to fill a contest form that promises a fridge for a winning quote asking Vikram what makes him think he would win the contest to which Vikram answers that all he knows is that if he does not fill the form, there is no way he will in fact win defining Vikram's nature with Javed Akhtar's script that supports the story with finesse all through the movie.

Being smart and smooth comes naturally to Vikram as he charms Neena (Dimple Kapadia), a yesteryear superstar at a party who is currently busy launching her only daughter Niki (Isha Sharvani). He tells her exactly what she wants to hear, that she still has what it takes adding cleverly that his parents got together since they were huge fans of hers and so in a way he was in



The God Within

His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is the founder of the Art of Living Foundation, a multi-faceted organization that offers a wide array of educational and humanitarian programs that uplift individuals, make a difference in local communities, and foster global change. To learn more, please visit www.artofliving.org/atlanta or contact us at 877-AOLIVING or atlanta@us.artofliving.org.

God is never an object of isolation but the very core of your being. The difference between Self and God is just like the wave and the ocean. Can there be a wave without the ocean?

Who are you? Do you know about yourself? Find out about yourself first. If you think you are just the body that is not possible because the body has its limitations. If you think that you are the mind then that is also not possible because the mind too has its limitations. It is just another layer of our existence. If you know that you are silence or that you are space, then it is possible God is also space.

Just like your body is made up of proteins, amino acids and carbohydrates, your mind and soul are made up of love. You are made up of love. Everyone is full of love and love is God. So you are made up of God! Every little atom of your body is made up of love and that is what is God. Do not think God is sitting somewhere in heaven. God is here and now!

What is not God? What is the definition of God, if at all there is one? You describe it as that which is everywhere; which is all-powerful, which is responsible for this creation, for its maintenance, and for its dissolution; which is Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient. You say, "I want to see God". When you want to see God as something, as an object, then it is not everywhere. Then you are not God. This wanting to see God as separate from you is also an illusion. God is not an object of senses, but the feeling of feelings, the presence of presence, the sound of silence, the light of life, the essence of the world and the taste of bliss.

Just as love is felt in the heart, so is God's presence felt. God is never an object of isolation. God is the sum totality. When you dissolve, God remains. When you are there, there is no God. Either you can be there, or God can be there, not both. So when you meditate, you become one with God. You are God. That is why it is said *tat tvam asi*, meaning, 'Thou art that.'

God is to be felt in the depth of your heart. God can neither be perceived through your senses nor through the mind. God is the seer himself. Who sees? That is God. Space is God. Space is everywhere, and everything is in space. Nothing can touch space. Nothing can destroy space. And you cannot see space as a separate object.

There are three types of space: *Bhuta Aakash*: Outer space in which all this universe exists, *Chitta Aakash*: The world of impressions, thoughts, and dreams that exist in your mind, and *Chida Aakash*: The sky of consciousness that is all permeating, everywhere; the consciousness, the basis of all creation, that is Divine - that which knows all.

You cannot make God an object of your sight. If you make it that, then it is no more God. You can live God, can be God, but you cannot consider God as an object which gives you the path.

The whole existence has a mind of its own. It is just like you. You have a mind and it has such

intelligence, that's why it keeps everything orderly. Similarly, this moment is seen by this big mind. This moment knows exactly what to do. There are so many activities happening in the whole creation. Right now, some people are sleeping, some are waking, some activity or the other is happening in the whole world. Right now enormous activity is happening in the mind, in the present. In the Now! This mind is what you can call *atma* or God and that is what you are.

GOD is the Generator, Operator and Destroyer (Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara). The present moment has generated; the present moment is operating; and the present moment destroyed the past. So you are in God and God is in you. There is a place for everybody in the heart of the Divine.

The mind is so used to looking to the concrete and promises that it cannot appreciate something abstract. Then the mind needs promises. When you love somebody, you want a promise from him or her that they really love you. That is why Jesus says, "I am partially exposed so you will know what I'm saying to you. You just know me partially, and there is a big part of me that you do not know."

If you are inside the house, the doors do not mean much to you. You do not need the door to be closed or open when you are already inside the house or inside the room. When you are not inside the room, you need the door to be opened. Jesus said, "You have burned enough in the sun, in the heat. You have roamed all over the place. Just come inside; this room is ready for you." This is the confidence that a master gives you.

You do not believe what you do not know. You say that you do not believe in God. God is the very core of your being. Like an onion, if you start peeling the layers one by one, when you reach the center, there is nothing. Everything is made up of that space. The whole is God. Everything is God and that consciousness is present everywhere. I am present here, I am present there, I am present everywhere. That being, that space, the very consciousness is what people have called God because it is present everywhere at all times. It is to that omnipresence, that omnipotence that all the different names have been given.

You can look at it this way. In the body there are many cells and each of them has its own life. New cells are coming up and old cells are dying but they have no knowledge of you. Yet, these cells are affected by you and you are affected by a single cell. In the same way, know that the big life and the big mind, which encompasses all our minds and all our lives, is what we can give the name - God. It is useless to find a meaning. A flower blooms. What is the purpose of beauty? You may say that it is to enjoy. What is the purpose of joy? There is no purpose to joy, it is an end in itself.

Life, when it is lived in its totality, is an end in itself and a beginning in itself. Love, joy, beauty, all that is precious and valuable in life, are really beyond value, beyond meaning, beyond purpose.



WHAT'S COOKING?

BY P.S. LAKSHMI RAO

Almond Gulab Jamuns



1 Cup non-fat dry milk powder
1/3 Cup Biquick
1/3 Cup almond powder. (Make almond powder from skinless sliced almonds in a coffee grinder.)
1 Pinch of baking soda
5 Tablespoons whipping cream (heavy cream)
2 Cups vegetable oil

For Garnish

1/2 Teaspoon crushed cardamom powder
Few almond flakes

For Syrup

3 Cups sugar
3 Cups water
1 Teaspoon rose water (optional)
Few saffron threads (optional)

Mix milk powder, bisquick powder, almond powder and soda. Add whipping cream. Mix until it becomes a soft dough. Keep it covered.

Meanwhile make the sugar syrup by mixing sugar and water in a two- quart size saucepan and boiling for five minutes. (Add rose water and saffron at this time if you are using.) Reduce the heat to low and let it simmer for 5 minutes or until it feels silky in between fingers. Syrup should not be too watery. Keep the syrup aside.

Heat oil in a small heavy frying pan (approximately seven or eight inches size) on medium low heat. Make 16 large marble size balls with dough.

Take a small piece of the dough and drop it in to the hot oil to check the oil temperature. If the small piece of the dough floats up fast that means the oil is too hot. If the oil is too hot Jamuns will be brown outside and raw inside.

Start the first batch of frying with only two or three balls. Do not over crowd the pan when frying because they will expand. Keep turning the balls to make sure they are golden brown on all sides. Remove the balls from the oil with a slotted spoon and put them in the syrup. Dip them in the sugar syrup with a

separate slotted spoon. The gulab jamuns expand again in the syrup. Remove some of them carefully from the syrup to make room for others and place them in a separate pan. Combine all of them at the end and pour the syrup on top and garnish with cardamom powder and almond flakes.

Variations: Instead of bisquick you can use 1/3-cup all-purpose flour and two pinches of soda.

This became my favorite gulab jamun recipe because of the almond powder. My thanks to Vijaya Dasigi for sharing it with me. I thank Lasya Penumarthi and Sasikala Penumarthi for their help.

Mung Murukulu

1 Cup mung flour
2 1/2 Cups rice flour
2 Teaspoons salt or to taste
2 Teaspoons ground red pepper
1/2 Teaspoon crushed cumin powder
1 Tablespoon unsalted butter
3 1/2 Cups boiling water
Oil for frying

Mix first six ingredients together in a bowl. Pour hot water and mix with a wooden spoon. When the dough becomes cold enough, mix it with oily hand.

Heat oil in a frying pan about one and half inches deep.

Fill a Jantika press (having 1/8 inch holes) with the dough and press in to the hot oil. Turn once or twice for crispiness. Spread some newspapers away from the stove, and lay some paper towels on top. Place the fried murukulu on top of paper towels in single layer to absorb oil from murukulu.



HOROSCOPES

Monthly Forecast for March 2009

For annual forecast, visit www.NRIPulse.com

BY DR. PREM KUMAR SHARMA



ARIES: At work the month doesn't promise encouraging results especially at the beginning and end. However this doesn't mean that success will not come to you. In fact if understood in true perspective, this would motivate to remain alert and put-in sincere efforts to succeed. At the same time don't get frustrated even if some ideas do not work. Timely action and keeping emotions under control would immensely benefit.



TAURUS: Professional success is likely to heighten your spirits. There are indications that things are likely to move very smoothly with sincerity and hard work. Your technical skills would be tested on getting a challenging assignment. Completing pending jobs on time would benefit. For some the reward comes in the form of career enhancement. It is only the month-end, which requires you to remain alert to save personal interests.



GEMINI: At professional front things don't look very promising and only respite seems to be in the third week. However it will be in your interest not to allow these odd failures to discourage you. You should rather allow positive thinking to succeed. At the same time working in a close cooperation with subordinates would also benefit. In short use testing times to your benefit.



CANCER: At professional front things don't look very promising and only respite seems to be in the third week. However it will be in your interest not to allow these odd failures to discourage you. You should rather allow positive thinking to succeed. At the same time working in a close cooperation with subordinates would also benefit. In short use testing times to your benefit.



LEO: At work you need to keep passions high to achieve success. The month in general brings a mix bag of results. While there are chances that odd failures could disappoint in first half, later half in particular indicates a smooth ride. The good news is that difficult times will be passed with the timely help of colleagues and success would help in regaining your professional touch.



VIRGO: Professional life brings a mix bag of results. While in the first half you will have to really work hard to achieve goals, later half promises expected success with a simple trying. Your inner values coupled with a positive attitude would help in attaining success. Calculated steps would not only enable to complete work on time but also enhance career prospects. Changing job would bring mental relief for some.



LIBRA: If there is one aspect of life that could disappoint you this month it is your professional life where chances that unexpected problems might make you a sufferer. Therefore to achieve desired professional results, you will have to change working style. It would be in your interest to listen, encourage innovation and above all provide constructive feedback. At the same time remain very alert & cautious to achieve success.



SCORPIO: Your professional life runs on the lines of romantic life where success in first half and some disappointment in later are on the card. To begin with you can expect some positive results when even some unexpected things will also go in your favour. In later half, success only comes on taking calculated risks.



SAGITTARIUS: This month there are chances that you may find it difficult to move the things especially in first half of the month at work. However things would change for better in later half, which, in particular indicates celebrating professional success. It would be in your interest not to hesitate acquiring new skills on confronting tricky problems.



CAPRICORN: Professional life brings immediate results on putting-in sincere efforts. In fact throughout the month there are no chances of facing even unexpected problems. There are indications that you are likely to be entrusted with an important responsibility. Success would not only bring laurels but also pave the way for higher growth opportunities.



AQUARIUS: At work you are likely to put sincere efforts to achieve goals and the success will also not disappoint you altogether. However for you there is a need to remain watchful especially in later half of the month. Circumstances will force you to take some calculated risks to conquer challenging situations. Taking help of colleagues would not only give them a feeling that you care for them but also bring valuable suggestions.



PISCES: At work things are likely to move smoothly except during end of the month when you might find it difficult to achieve expected results. The good news is that the professional success will motivate to work harder. Positive signs are that your sharp thinking would come to aid, enabling to take quick & correct decisions. Do not get influenced through pressurised situations.

How Can I Learn To Speak Up?

Dear Deep Essence,

I have had trouble speaking up since I was a child. I was a quiet child growing up and I just wanted to make everyone happy. At my job, I don't ever share my opinion because I am not sure that my opinion will be considered. At home, I just let my wife make all the decisions. I was comfortable with this before but somehow, now I feel like I am getting the short-end of the stick. How can I learn to speak up more?



AQSA ZAREEN FAROOQUI

Regards,
Tired and Upset

Dear Mr. Tired and Upset,

Many people struggle with this issue in their life. However, speaking is as natural as sleeping, eating and walking. If we repress our speech, our body responds as it would to lack of sleep or exercise. We feel upset. However, we can take care of ourselves through gentle but firm communication.

So, in order to start feeling confident, say to yourself that life is not about speaking up, it's about speaking when necessary. Speaking up implies that someone is 'speaking down' to you. Speech is not about proving that you are right and therefore better than the person across from you. It's about communicating your needs, desires, and opinions with the understanding that we are all equal human beings. I have often heard the phrase, treat others as you would like yourself to be treated. In this case, I would say treat

yourself with the same respect that you desire from others. You deserve an opportunity to state your opinion. That does not mean that you talk over others. It does mean that you wait patiently for the person across from you to complete their thought and then respond (not react) appropriately.

The ultimate goal is about stating your truth, just as you see it, with as much clarity as possible. However, this is not a one-step process. It appears that you have a lot of pent-up energy from holding back for many years. The first step to dealing with some of the ill-feelings is by meditating on and accepting the past. Remember, the purpose of speech is not emotional release, but to create change within you, or in your environment.

Dear Deep Essence

****The advice may be helpful but is not**

intended as a substitute for professional care. Aqsa Zareen Farooqui is a Licensed Professional Counselor. To send her a question about stress, depression, parenting, relationship or career concerns, or to make an appt email her at info@deepsence.com or call her at (404) 312-4950. All inquiries will be kept strictly confidential. Visit her on the web at www.deepsence.com**

SuDoku Challenge

Rules: 1. The 3 x 3 sub grids are called *regions*
2. Numbers already filled in the grid are called *givens*
3. The goal of the player is to fill the blank grids of

- Every row
- Every column and
- Every 3 x 3 box
- With the numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9

However: All rows and columns and regions (3 x 3) should contain numbers 1 to 9 without being repeated.

		1			4		
	9	8	4		7	2	6
4	3					5	7
			5	7	1		
				3			
			8	9	2		
6	1					3	4
	8	9	2		6	7	1
		4			6		

SuDoku Solutions

6	2	9	3	8	1	4	5	7
5	1	7	6	4	2	6	8	3
4	3	8	9	5	7	2	1	6
9	7	3	2	6	8	5	4	1
1	8	5	4	3	9	7	2	6
2	4	6	1	7	5	3	9	8
7	5	1	8	2	6	9	3	4
3	9	2	7	1	4	8	6	5
8	6	4	5	9	3	1	7	2

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EVENTS

Holi At Atlanta Vedic Temple **MARCH 14 & 15**
 Holi At Atlanta Vedic Temple
 Holika Dahan and Dhulandi.
 When: Mar 14 & 15th, 2009
 Where: Greater Atlanta Vedic Temple, 492 Harmony Grove Rd Lilburn GA 30338
 Contact: Temple: 770-381-3662, Dhirendra Sharma 678-581-1189 Mini Sharma 770-270-1757

Atlanta Vipassana Meditation Group **MARCH 15**
 When: Mar 15 from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM
 Where: Dhamma house, 1213 Laurel Cliff Drive, Smyrna, GA-30082
 Contact: Jo'son Bell, Tel : 770-431-9385
 Email: seamansails@gmail.com
 Web Site: <http://www.patapa.dhamma.org>

Holi - Fuldol Celebrations 2009at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir **MARCH 15**
 When: Mar 15 from 4:00 p.m to 6:30 p.m
 Where: BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, 460 Rockbridge Road NW, Lilburn, GA
 Contact: Jigar B. Patel MD, Tel :404-297-0501
 Web Site: <http://atlanta.baps.org>

10-Day Vipassana Meditation Retreat **MARCH 18**
 When: Mar 18, 2009
 Where: Southeast Vipassana Center, Dhamma Patapa, 476 Rogers Break Jesup, GA-31546
 Contact: Tina Savla, Tel : 706-425-0973
 Email: tinasavla@yahoo.com
 Web Site: <http://www.patapa.dhamma.org>

Harinam and Krishna Bhajans **MARCH 20**
 organised by Hare Krishna Temple, Atlanta on March 20th and every third Friday of each month.
 When: Mar 20 from 7.30 p.m to 9.00 p.m
 Where: Global Mall Jimmy Carter Blvd, 5675 Global Mall, Jimmy Carter Blvd, Norcross GA-30076
 Contact: Mohanlal (Madanmohan) Fatania, Tel : 770 979 6679
 Email: mohanvf@yahoo.com
 Web Site: [http:// atlantaharekrishnas.org](http://atlantaharekrishnas.org)

Vibha Khel Mela Charity Chess and Table Tennis Tournament Prizes **MARCH 21**
 When: Mar 21 from 9 :00 a.m to 6:00 p.m
 Where: Riverwood High School, 5900 Heard Drive NW, Atlanta, GA-30328
 Contact: Vinay Uchil, Tel :(404) 444-9619

Sheth Lecture In Indian Studies: **MARCH 22**
 Medha Patkar
 Medha Patkar is an environmental and human rights activist who has led the struggle against the controversial Sardar Sarovar Project on the Narmada River in Gujarat, India.
 When: Mar 22 at 4:00 p.m
 Where: Tull Auditorium, 3rd Floor, Emory University School of Law, 1301 Clifton Road Atlanta, GA-30322
 Contact: Kim Palumbarit, Tel : 4047272108
 Email: kpalumb@emory.edu
 Web Site: http://www.asianstudies.emory.edu/sa/sheth_lecture.html

A hilarious super-duper Gujarati Comedy play "Prem Karta Punctur Padyu" Starring super star of Stage Padma Rani, Sanat Vyas etc. **MARCH 27**
 When: Friday, March 27 at 8:30 pm
 Where: Meadow Creek High School Auditorium, Norcross, GA.
 Contact: For tickets and information call Mustafa Ajmeri- 678-463-6613 and Varsh Patel-678-469-5854 and Pankaj Sampat -678-546-0556

Sai And Hearts Health Fair **MARCH 28**
 Free Consultation Only. Extensive Physical Overview Offered from many Specialties like Cardiology, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Orthopedics, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Dentistry, ENT, Pediatrics, Gastroenterology, Ophthalmology, Pediatrics, Urology, Podiatry.
 When: Mar 28, 2009 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 Blood Tests: 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 Where: Hearts to Nourish Hope, 345 Scott Road, Riverdale Georgia 30296, (HWY 85 Across from LOWES).
 Contact: Dr. Sujatha Reddy/Coordinator 478-320-5136 or Deborah Anglin, 770- 997-4517

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More Bollywood-Hollywood Collaborations: Irrfan Khan

Mumbai: (IANS) Irrfan Khan, who shot to global fame with Oscar-winning "Slumdog Millionaire" and now has another offer from its producers, said Bollywood will see more collaborations with Hollywood following the grand success of the film.

"Look at destiny. Look at the kids! People are going mad over Freida Pinto. The photographers won't leave her in peace for even a second. Freida has signed American director Woody Allen and Dev Patel has signed filmmaker Manoj Shyamalan. We're going to see much more Bollywood-Hollywood collaborations in future," he said, referring to the stars of "Slumdog".

Irrfan has been approached by Fox-Searchlight, producers of "Slumdog Millionaire", who want to make another movie with him in the lead role.

"The studio head Peter Rice came to me and said he'd now like to make a film with me in the lead. Do



you know Peter Rice is responsible for the film's ('Slumdog') release (in the theatres)? Otherwise it was going straight into a DVD release.

"Danny Boyle was in a panic mode and was ready to take the DVD offer. But the makers decided to take the film to Toronto and show it to Fox-Searchlight. They chased me all over the world to get some lines re-done, took the film to Toronto. Luckily Fox-Searchlight loved 'Slumdog Millionaire'," Irrfan Khan told IANS..

The fruits of the "Slumdog Millionaire" experience at the Oscars and global box office are already ripening.

Irrfan recalls his association with Resul Pookutty who won the Oscar for best sound mixing. "Resul and I started our careers at the same time. Resul kept working silently for a decade. He deserves this recognition. As for me I was pleasantly surprised to be recognised in LA as the actor from 'The Namesake' and 'A Mighty Heart'."

I Have Karmic Connection With Shakeel: Amrita Arora

Mumbai: (IANS) Bollywood actress Amrita Arora, who tied the knot with businessman Shakeel Ladak recently, says she knew he was the one for her as soon as they met since they have "a karmic connection".

"The minute I set my eyes on Shakeel I knew he was the man I wanted to marry. It's like a karmic connection. I just felt it. I had never felt this before. Shakeel is everything that I want my husband to be. And I'm determined to make our marriage work. I'll do whatever it takes," Amrita told IANS just before her Christian wedding ceremony.

The couple is very clear about their wedding plans - a sangeet Thursday will be followed by the nikaah Friday. However, they haven't decided where to go for their honeymoon.

"The problem is both Shakeel and I are so widely travelled that we have no place that we



can claim as our private honeymoon spot. There doesn't seem to be any place that neither of us hasn't visited," said Amrita.

"I guess we'll just hold each other's hand, close our eyes and point to any part of the globe and pick our honeymoon spot. It doesn't matter where we go as long as we're together," she added.

Talking about the exchange of wedding vows, the actress said: "We were supposed to have a church wedding but there were some security hassles so we quickly moved the venue to Olive. But there were no hassles because we had a standby ready."

Amrita gives her sister Malaika all credit for the arrangements.

"I know nothing about the wedding arrangement. It was all done by my sister who put her own life on hold to look into my wedding details. I'm blessed to have such a supportive family," she said.

Freida Pinto Gets New Guardian Angel



London: (IANS) Hollywood's new darling Freida Pinto who climbed the international ladder with Oscar winning drama "Slumdog Millionaire" has found a new mentor in starlet Scarlett Johansson.

Pinto, who has been signed by Woody Allen in what will be only her second film, came across Johansson at the Milan Fashion Week Tuesday morning, reports dailymail.co.uk.

The "Lost In Translation" star, a Hollywood veteran by comparison, took the 24-year-old Indian model-turned-actress Pinto under her wing backstage at the VIP room.

Pinto also mingled with the likes of Kate Hudson and Claudia Schiffer at the Dolce and Gabbana catwalk show.

Clad in a cream tunic trimmed with embellishment and a statement belt, she cut a calm, not to mention glamorous figure as she posed for photographers with the veteran actresses like an A-lister.

Pinto is lined up to rub shoulders with Hollywood stars Josh Brolin, Naomi Watts and Anthony Hopkins in the yet untitled film.

Sonam Kapoor - First Bollywood Actress To Be Dressed By Chanel

Mumbai: (IANS) Sonam Kapoor's metamorphosis as a fashion diva came a full circle at the Filmfare Awards ceremony when she became the only Bollywood actress to wear a specially-designed gown by Paris-based fashion house Chanel.

"I just kept staring at the beautiful basic but simple white gown that they sent me. Yes, I think I'm the first Indian celebrity to be dressed by Chanel in Bollywood. I'm so excited. I felt like Cinderella before the ball. Never before have I been so excited about dressing up for an event," Sonam, who attended the award function Saturday, told IANS.

Apparently, after seeing Sonam on magazine covers like Verve and Elle, Chanel voluntarily decided to send her a gown from their special-celebrity closet.

"That's right. My off-shoulder gown came from their special-celebrity collection," said Sonam who loves dressing up in light shades and avoids accessories.

"They just flew over three Chanel gowns for me to choose from. I liked the white one. I prefer light shades and I avoid accessories. They take away from the basic look of your clothes. And what Chanel sent me for the Filmfare Awards certainly needed no enhancement. It was divine per se," she added.

A lot of designers are comparing Sonam to Penelope Cruz. "It was Sanjay Leela Bhansali who first compared me to her. I think it's a huge compliment. It isn't as if I'm making a conscious effort to dress fashionably. I wear what I'm comfortable in," said Sonam.



Shilpa Breaks The Ice With Preity



Mumbai: (IANS) Stories of the two IPL queens battling it out on the playing field and on television came to a sudden turning point this week when Shilpa Shetty extended an olive branch to her supposed rival in the IPL Preity Zinta.

Shilpa and Raj Kundra are hosting a grand party to celebrate their entry into the IPL March 10 at the Grand Hyatt. And Preity is invited.


Shilpa said: "I really want these unsavoury rumours about our rivalry to end. On an impulse I sent an SMS to Preity inviting her for the party that Raj and I are hosting."

Shilpa was pleasantly surprised when Preity replied back. "She said she'd love to come. But can't because she'd be out of town. I think that just about takes care of that. I'm sure we'll have other occasions to interact. For now it's enough that she accepted my invitation."

Shilpa thinks these rivalry stories are unnecessary. "We're both decent well brought-up girls. We were even together in the Bachchans' world tour. And we got along fine. We don't need to be seen as these warring women at all, please."

About the party Shilpa said: "It's been a while since Raj and I had friends share in our happiness. The IPL deal is a good occasion to have a get-together. We're inviting all our friends."

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