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Indian Found Dead In Norcross

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: An Indian engineer, Sudheer Kumar Rudraraju was found dead in his house at 4100 block of Magnolia Glen Walk in Norcross, Georgia recently under suspicious circumstances. Rudraraju, 31, was a quality assurance engineer with Atlanta Toyota Corporation. He lived alone during the time of his death. Gwinnet county police has termed the death a homicide.

According to the police, a friend of the victim contacted them on Tuesday, February 03 afternoon and wanted the police to check on Rudraraju as they had not heard from him in the past few days. Upon entering the house, the police discovered the body of the deceased on the floor down stairs. Police say it was unclear how long the victim had been dead before officers found his body. The medical examiner's office has not yet determined the cause of death.

Rudraraju hails from Gudimula village, near Rajahmundry of East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh. His parents now live in Hyderabad. After completing his B. Tech in Bangalore, Rudraraju came to the US to pursue higher studies. After completing his MS in 2003 from Southern Tech, he joined Toyota Automotive Group in 2004 as an engineer.

While the cause of death is still unknown, as per initial information, it appears that he died in his home on Sunday, Feb 1st, 2009 on the night of Super Bowl game. Sudheer's friends called him on

his cell phone but there was no response.

On Tuesday morning, they called his work place, Toyota Automotive Group to see whether he had been to work and discovered that Sudheer didn't show up to work on both Monday and Tuesday. They, then, went to Sudheer's home and to their surprise

found his car parked outside his home. Immediately, they contacted the police. When the cops opened the door, they found Sudheer's dead body.



On receiving the information, the consul general of India at Houston deputed his vice consul V. K. Azad to Atlanta to expedite the process of sending the body to India. Azad is assisting the team of volunteers from TAMA who are working on logistics to complete the paper work and the formalities to send the body to Hyderabad. He also attended a condolence meeting convened by the community on Thursday, February 05 in Global Mall, Norcross. Several representatives from local temples, IACA, Gandhi foundation, Tamil Sangham, VHP of America and several others came together and expressed shock and appealed to the law enforcement authorities to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice.

Speaker after speaker appreciated the efforts of the members of TAMA in alerting the community on receiving the information of this heinous crime. The community has passed certain resolutions unanimously proposed by noted community member Subash Razdan, and sent them to the concerned authorities. The community appealed that the police department should not leave no stone unturned in its investigation to get to the bottom of the cause for death with transparency and integrity. They also appealed that police department needs to take extra precautionary measures under the current economic situation to control criminal activities against innocent citizens in society.

Community member Narender Reddy, while addressing the gathering, drew attention to certain media reports that every Indian in America is being killed. He said: You know for fact that it is not true and such incidents happen any time any where in the world. It's unfortunate. This type of news media reports gives lots of tension to our parents back in India.

He appealed to the gathering to educate and explain to parents that these news reports are not correct and that we are safe here in America.

Reddy helped the community to get things moving with the authorities. He told one of the officers about the sentiments of Indians- that they would not touch food until and unless they see the body.

Is this 'IT'? – Indian IT Blues

BY RATI KUMAR

Atlanta: Remember when you would awaken to the sounds of communal lunch packing by Mom at 8 a.m. on a Monday morning? Apparently, those days are back again, sans mother. "I never used to get a lunch box to work; but now I do," muses Kiran Mudigonda, an employee of the Sun Plus Data Group, an Information Technology based company in Atlanta.

This new trend is less a matter of dietary restrictions and more of monetary ones. "A dollar saved is a dollar earned after all," he states. His concern is a spawn of the current American recession. Like the weather, this topic has become the beloved of most editors – each day bringing bad news for another business sector. For the Indian population in

America, the recession became real when it hit the Information Technology sector.

When software Srinivasa Rao, 30, first landed on American soil in 2008, he did not envision himself stranded on a Friday morning with

nothing except \$150. "They didn't care about me at all", he says, talking about his employers. With his first project in Atlanta being wrapped up in a month's time, he was on the bench for a couple of months before securing another job in California. He recollects how his employers sent him to the project site without any monetary support or appropriate living accommodation. When he ventured out on his own to find a place to live he didn't have much luck. Disgusted with his American



People are very concerned: Lalit Dhingra, President, North American Operations of NIIT Technologies

sojourn, Srinivas returned to India five months later, to wait out this market crisis.

Even people with jobs seem to be precariously poised. "People are very concerned," observes Lalit Dhingra, President of North American Operations of NIIT Technologies, a global public listed IT outsourcing company with US Headquarters in Atlanta. "Suddenly people's 401k's which is their future financial security has gone down. With the housing market taking a downturn, investment in real estate is also a big question mark." He notes that these previously non-existent issues have become standard backdrops for professional conversations.

"I don't think we have seen the worst of it yet," speculates Sunny Duddilla, the CEO of Sun Plus Data Group. He predicts that we should start seeing the real effects of this recession in the first or second quarter of this year and if we are lucky it will only run up to 2010 summer.

Continued on Pg 7.....

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Dr. Hyma Mikkilineni New President Of HTA

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: Dr. Hyma Mikkilineni along with her executive committee assumed charge as president of the Hindu temple of Atlanta, Riverdale for a two-year term (2009 and 2010) in the presence of a huge gathering on New Year's Day at the temple.

Talking about her plans for 2009 and 2010, Dr. Mikkilineni said: "Our temple has grown tremendously over the years. We have two temples-



Dr. Ravi Sarma with Dr. Hyma Mikkilineni.

one is the Balaji temple and the other dedicated to Lord Siva- educational center and priest quarters. We need to have Yagasala. It is going to be our next project. We will start it shortly. We just finished the Indianization of Siva temple."

Dr. Ravi Sarma, immediate past president of the temple said: "When I handed over this office of presidency, I felt very good about the fact that the temple is sound, financially stable and it is being given to a very wonderful executive committee who will be led by our current president Dr. Mikkilineni."

Hundreds Celebrate Kite-Festival At BAPS

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: The new BAPS Swami Narayan Hindu Mandir in Lilburn Georgia, celebrated its second annual Uttarayan-kite festival on January 17. Uttarayan marks the changing of the sun's pattern and the end of winter in India. The vibrant and colorful festival marked with fun and gaiety drew hundreds of devotees and visitors of diverse faiths and cultures. The immaculate parking facilities and the huge forecourt in front of the resplendent Mandir ensured plenty of space for the excited kite flyers. As the biting winter wind howled, imaginatively designed, colorful kites of ruby red, canary yellow, and emerald green went up, up and up in the clear blue skies. The radiant laughter of children, racing to get their kites air-borne and jubilant, triumphant cheers of 'kaypo chhe' when razor-sharp manjha cut a competitor's kite, rant the air. Parents and elders were lost in the precious nostalgic memories of kite-flying in their past, as they taught their own children the art of kite-flying.

As the day progressed, the weather became warmer and more visitors and devotees joined in the festival. Among them was Binal Naik, 25, of Ndola, Zambia, who attended the festival at the Mandir for the first time. "I think it was really interesting to see the enthusiasm with which people celebrated this festival," she said. "Since it was my first time, it was pretty amazing to see all the kites in the sky." Men and women, young and old alike, came together to celebrate this festival. Akash Patel, 24, of Boston, commented, "This is the first time that I have seen such an environment on Uttarayan in America," he said. "After moving from India, this festival brings back childhood

memories." Mainstream community members were also among the attendees. Ms. Sheryl Goode (a Lilburn resident) and her friend Ms. Littleton (from Gainesville) who were attending for the first time praised the volunteers for teaching them how to fly the kites and also explain the significance of the festival. They also commented that they had a very good time and

As famed Gujarati music maestro Avinash Vyas put it, "Patang no parivar, jagat chhe, patang no parivar"

The ever-courteous and hospitable PR teams of Ritesh Desai, Mitesh Patel, and Jigar Patel together with all other committed and dedicated volunteers deserve full plaudits for the joyous kite-festival. Uttarayan is one of many



looked forward to attending the next festival.

While kites flew, music added to the festive spirit. And so did the mouth watering Undhiu, jalebis and other delicious snacks with hot, spicy tea!

Kite flying symbolizes spiritual, cultural and emotional bonding of diverse nations and cultures.

Hindu festivals that are celebrated at the BAPS Mandir throughout the year. The BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir keeps the spirit of Hinduism alive through these festivals and helps nurture Indian traditions and culture in young Indian-Americans.

Aditi Acharya Displays Bold Mudras & Dramatic Abhinaya

Atlanta: Aditi Anand Acharya entered the stage with grace, confidence and a wonderful presence on December 21st 2008 during her *Bharathanatyam Arangetram*. Aditi, who is a student of Preeti Vinayak Shah for the past several years, had rigorous training from her Guru in aspects of posture, perfection of movements, presentation and mostly *abhinaya*. Under Preeti's tutelage at The Narasimha Academy of Arts, Aditi has been groomed in the *Kalakshetra* style of *Bharathanatyam* and innumerable hours of preparation by Guru and Shishya culminated in the Arangetram.

Aditi dedicated her Arangetram to PAST Atlanta, which stands for People Against Slavery Trafficking. This is a youth created organization that raises awareness about the problem of sexual trafficking in Atlanta as Atlanta ranks as the number one city with the most number of child sex trafficking cases. As a volunteer, Aditi has helped PAST Atlanta in fundraising and outreach activities.

The stage decorated with the Nataraja statue also featured a large projected image of the deity of dance on the backdrop. Artists on the stage included Smt. Kala Subramanian on vocals, Sri. Subra Viswanathan on mrudangam, Smt. Jassotha Balasubramanian on violin and Guru Preeti Vinayak Shah as the nattuvangist. The invocatory item, new to Atlanta, was the *Prasanna Vadana Shuthi* on Lord Ganesha. A brisk *Jatiswaram* and *Shabdham* followed.

The piece de resistance, the varnam, was set to ragam Ramapriya. This varnam has been



L to R: Guru Preeti Vinayak Shah with Aditi Acharya.

written and composed by Guru Preeti Vinayak Shah's grandmother, Smt. Kamakshi Kuppuswamy and choreographed by Preeti. The

lyrics in Tamil were punctuated with original *jatis* by Preeti that were recited with precision and

beautiful voice modulation by her. The dramatic stories of *Mahishasuramardini* and *Sati* came to life before the audience with Aditi's convincing *abhinaya*, body language and bold mudras. Aditi's stamina was put to test in this item and she delivered with ease and poise. The team work of Subra on mrudangam, Preeti on *nattuvangam* and the perfect *nritta* of Aditi came together in unison throughout this 30 minute varnam.

The chief guest, James Williams, Assistant Principal of Northview High School, was introduced by Ravi Vemuri. Mr. Williams said, "When watching a graduation recital like this, I can only imagine the kind of preparation that has gone into it. Physical preparation to endure the length and intensity of the repertoire, mental preparation to take on the challenge, anxiety and expectations from the teacher, audience and family and spiritual preparation to tackle each piece that is immersed in Hindu divinity and devotion are all part of the training process. I

hope that you all as the audience not only see this as an entertaining event but as an educative one as I have."

Aditi continued with "*Nadatanumanisem*" in ragam Chittaranjini. Her athletic abilities, chiseled poses, and crisp footwork came through in this piece. The next padam, "*Aadadhu Asangadhu vaa*", was well received with vocalist Kala Subramanian's melodious rendition. Aditi's subtle *abhinaya* as she played the role of a mother was well done.

The *Arangetram* ended with the famous Thillana in Dhanashree, "*Geeta dhuniki*." Jassotha Balasubramanian's opening sequence on the violin was perfect with the series of slow and graceful poses taken by Aditi. The pace of the Thillana had audience members tapping their toes and putting the Thalam all along. Mangalam in Saurashtram concluded the repertoire.

Shyamala Acharya thanked all who made the Arangetram possible. Kala Subramanian was appreciated for her vocal presentations, Subra Viswanathan on the mrudangam was perfection, Jassotha Balasubramanian was the ideal support on the violin and Preeti Shah kept it all together with the Thalam and nattuvangam.

With her lissome figure, stage presence, and confidence, Aditi has a promising future in *Bharathanatyam* ahead of her. More information about The Narasimha Academy of Arts and Preeti Shah can be obtained at www.natyam.com

NRI PULSE
Community News Magazine

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Atlanta GA 30329
Tel: 404-235-4998

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Newsmakers Meet Atlanta Mayor Franklin

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: New America Media in collaboration with Atlanta Black Journalists Association, Hispanic Journalists Association and UGA Grady College of Journalism organized a Newsmaker briefing with 'Atlanta Mayor Hon. Shirley Franklin and the Ethnic and Community Media of Atlanta, at the Mitchell Room of Old City Hall on Monday, January 26.

This was the first in a series of events building visibility for Atlanta's robust ethnic media sector. These events lead to New America Media's national ethnic media Expo and Awards, cosponsored by UGA's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication set for June 4-5, 2009 at the Atlanta Hyatt Regency. The founding member of the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists, Inc. Stan Washington welcomed all and introduced main sponsor of the event, New America Media's Executive Editor and Director, Sandy Close, who resides in San Francisco. Sandy, a seasoned journalist launched New America Media, a nationwide non-profit Association of 2,000 ethnic media outlets to give these outlets greater reach and economic viability. Stan requested the attendees to attend the Expo in June. He further requested the media representatives to introduce themselves by mentioning their names and the media represented.

Sandy Close began with a brief history of NAM, and requested the ethnic media to share her vision of collective strength by coming together and sharing content. This will help access Federal, State and City Hall newsrooms and ensure survival with the help of bigger share of advertising dollars as well as Federal and State grants." This is the future of journalism. They need us more than ever and we need each other' she said. She went on to thank all the partners and allies as well as all participating in the briefing

Mayor Franklin, in her short but far ranging briefing and Q & A session which followed, touched upon some of the setbacks, and challenges faced by the City in the past seven years and informed the attendees of her plans for the current year. She admitted that during her tenure as Mayor, the city was going through the worst recession forcing her to plan for cuts in projects and programs. The present times called for political will as well as financial muscle and partnership between public and private sector. She said that despite the financial crisis, personally, professionally and morally, she has always believed in and strived to balance the budget. She said she was proud of her record of improving the crumbling infrastructure, especially the city's sewer system and clean water. "To better serve the Atlantans, we have added the component of technology and sustainability. We have tried to address the problem of homelessness by transitional housing. We are also striving to improve city's carbon-print and make it a carbon-neutral zone. In transportation, happily due to partnership with airlines, we have improved the facilities at the Atlanta's Hartsfield International airport. In my view, we need a regional rail within the State and with the help of Federal, State, Corporate funding and private philanthropy, finish the beltline project which will enhance the City of Atlanta's quality of life. We will do our best to prevent job-

losses. We prefer job retention first and job-increases later when the economy rebounds. Improving Healthcare facilities is also an urgent priority-we need more trauma centers for instance," she said. The Mayor also touched upon Immigration and Sister-City relationships.



Immigration: "Atlanta is still a primary location for jobs and businesses in metro area. Atlanta has diversity, famed educational institutions, enhanced quality of life, and many amenities. We welcome all legal immigrants."

Sister-City Relationships: "Atlanta is definitely a global city. These relationships help attract international investment to Atlanta. We have 18 cities in partnership with Atlanta, so instead of rejecting any more requests, we have decided to

put a temporary hold till there is an economic recovery"

Editor and Co-Founder of Atlanta Latino newspaper, Judith Martinez thanked the Mayor's Office staff and catering services. She further thanked the attendees for turning up in large numbers to support the event.

'India Tribune' newsweekly's Atlanta Bureau Chief, Ravi Ponangi, in his 'vote of thanks' lauded the Mayor for her informative and insightful speech. He appealed to her to allocate budget for ethnic media to help it flourish. He went on to thank Sandy Close.

"She has infused into traditional mainstream journalism and media, the vibrant experience of the ethnic communities that make up the fabric of mainstream American society. In her efforts to create a more inclusive media, she

has given mainstream America a unique window into often-ignored communities that now shape and influence our American culture. It is her vision to identify, unite and support ethnic journalism in print, broadcast and digital," he said.

Ponangi also thanked the faculty and staff of Grady College of Journalism of University of Georgia for their strong support and partnership with NAM. The College is a pioneer in imparting special training to the needs of ethnic media Journalists through NAM.

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Georgia Minority Business Award For Paddy Sharma

Atlanta: Dr. Paddy Sharma, President & CEO Data Point Systems, Inc. will receive the Technology Industry Award at the 12th Annual Georgia Minority Business Awards to be held February 19 at the Georgia International Convention Center in College Park, Georgia. KV Kumar, President of the U.S. India Trade Foundation will be a guest speaker at the event.

This event is designed to provide an excellent opportunity for local, national, and international businesses to network and develop business relationships. It brings together a diverse group of people, races, and cultures.



The awards program recognizes a wide range of busi-

nesses and business leaders that exemplify leadership, commitment and professional growth, have a major impact on business and have demonstrated diversity in the workplace.

Businesses will benefit from attending this prestigious event by having the opportunity to reach and connect with chamber members, CEO's, non-profit organizations, political leaders and organizations from various industries all in one evening.

After the event, attendees and audiences will be able to view the event on Comcast's Zeel TV Channel 25.

"Srivaani Kuchipudi Academy" Raises \$ 27,000 For Vibha Child Devt Projects

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: Atlanta based Srivaani Kuchipudi Academy raised \$ 27, 000 for child development projects of Vibha with a presentation of "Sri Vighneswara Vaibhavam", a dance drama in Kuchipudi style. The dance drama was presented recently at the Rialto Center of the Arts, Georgia State University.

"Sri Vighneswara Vaibhavam", an original production of Srivaani Kuchipudi Academy is yet another landmark in the growing tradition of classical music and dance in Atlanta. When the "Mangalam" was over, the long and thunderous applause from the house-full capacity of audience was a testament to four years of meticulous choreography and planning by Ms. Revathi Komanduri, and months of dedicated practice by her 30 plus students.

At the conclusion of the dance drama, while felicitating Ms. Revathi Komanduri, Dr. P.V. Rao, an eminent Literati of Atlanta summed up the entire experience - "Borrowing words from the lyrics of the drama itself, I will say, it is not an exaggeration to describe the event as a feast for the eyes, sweet melody for the ears, satisfaction to the fullness and an amazing performance". Dr. Rao also told the audience an interesting story about Kuchipudi dance. He said, when Kaliyuga started Gods of heavens wanted to enter Bhooloka (earthly world). You go into black stones in huge temples. No movement, no mingling. You can not control your emotions. You will spoil humanity. This is what the Gods were told. Of course they felt and

begged Lord Brahma. Then Brahma said okay, when Bharata promotes this classical dance and brings characters to this earthly world you can enter those characters and dancers showing your emotions, pleasure and happiness. In this dance drama, Gods and Goddesses are come here and show their characters.

"This is my humble attempt in furthering the art of Kuchipudi in the best way that I can. It is



given to the child development projects of Vibha, which is striving very hard to make a difference in the lives of underprivileged children" she added.

The script was written by Sri. Dandibhotla Narayana Murthy for this production and the rich and deep voice of Sri Dandibhotla Venkata Srinavasa Sastry from Hyderabad and the melodious voice of Atlanta's very own Subhashini Krishnamurthy took the audience to a different world.

The song and dance scene with folk dancers and the Nandi, synchronized by two young artists, brought fresh energy into the ballet. The scene when Shiva beholds the little Vinayaka was stunning and emotional. The excellent timing in lighting and stage management resulted in the magic created in several key moments.

The academy had earlier reproduced and participated in several dance dramas like "Menaka Vishwamitra" and "Sivoham Sivoham". These productions benefited several non-profit organizations and in the same spirit, the net proceeds from this dance drama, expected to be more than \$27,000, are donated to Vibha.

my offering to my Guru Padmabhushan Dr. Vempati China Satyam" said Komanduri. "With the blessings of Lord Vinayaka and my guru, we presented this dance drama. I am particularly proud today because we presented this ballet with an almost all-girls cast, most of whom were born and raised in this country with the best of values, best of academics and most importantly best of parents. It also gives me immense pleasure because the net proceeds from this program will be

Thanking the academy for their support to Vibha through this fund-raiser, Sri. Vijay Vemulapalli, Secretary of Vibha said "It was a pleasure working with Smt. Revathi and Sri. Raghu Komanduri. Vibha would like to thank all the parents and the sponsors for their support and TAMA for their help in the publicity efforts. We especially thank the Hindu Temple of Atlanta for co-sponsoring the show. "

Shyam Reddy Gets DoD Grant For Prostate Cancer Research

Atlanta: Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) will be able to continue its revolutionary research on prostate cancer – a disease that killed more than 27,000 men in the United States in 2006 – thanks to a new grant by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).

Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC) Distinguished Cancer Scholar E. Shyam P. Reddy, Ph.D., professor and co-director, Cancer Biology Program, MSM Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Georgia Cancer Center for Excellence at Grady Health System and has received a \$525,000 grant from the DOD to continue his groundbreaking work on prostate cancer.

African-American males are 1.7 times more likely to develop, and two to three times more likely to die from prostate cancer than White males. Thus, African-American males within the United States are affected disproportionately by prostate cancer compared to White males. One of the goals of the DOD program is to identify features of molecular pathways that differentially affect African-American males compared to White males.

The ERG gene discovered by Reddy and Veena N. Rao, Ph.D., co-director of the Cancer Biology Program,

is involved in 60 to 80 percent of prostate cancers. Reddy and his colleagues (Rao; Roland

Matthews, M.D.; Yasuo Fujimura, Ph.D.; Ganapathy K. Bhat, Ph.D.; and Shubhalaxmi Kayarthodi) developed a novel cell based assay to assess the function of ERG proteins. Using this novel assay, Reddy identified a novel targeted therapeutic agent that inhibits ERG function and



also functions as an anticancerous agent against prostate cancer.

"This award gives us an opportunity to study the mechanism of action of this novel drug, which may lead to the cure of prostate cancer," said Reddy. "It also will enable us to develop more potent drugs that are targeted against prostate cancer."

Reddy will use the award to test the novel drug in preclinical trials. The studies will not only

explain the molecular mechanism of activation of the ERG gene in human prostate cancers, but also provide clues for therapeutic intervention.

Reddy and Rao also have identified several other novel drugs that function as targeted therapeutic agents against a variety of cancers including prostate, pancreatic, ovarian, colorectal and triple negative breast cancer. "We take this

opportunity to thank the GCC for its support and encouragement. Without the GCC

Distinguished Cancer Scholar award, we would not have discovered these novel drugs," said Reddy. "We are truly grateful to GCC for standing up for our cancer research. These novel targeted therapeutic agents will also help to reduce health disparities seen among minorities, which supports the mission of Morehouse School of Medicine."

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Maitri – A Club For Parents Visiting Atlanta

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

Atlanta: So your parents are visiting from India, or maybe they just decided to stay back here with you, Wonderful. After the initial few days of enjoying and absorbing their new environment, they long to find something familiar and someone they can connect to. How do you keep them occupied and entertained? The Telugu Association of Metro Atlanta (TAMA) has come up with a novel idea of creating an exclusive club 'Maitri' for parents and families visiting Atlanta, at the Hindu Heritage Center in Global Mall, Norcross.

Viju Chiluveru, the current coordinator of TAMA Maitri says that the idea of creating Maitri originated from his own experiences with his parents and in laws visiting the US. The idea was tossed around with a few people including the President of TAMA, Satyanarayana Reddy and having recognized the need to engage visiting parents and replicate a homely atmosphere, Maitri came into existence on Dec 7th, 2008. Currently there are about 12 couples who are members of this club and some of them also pool in as volunteers.

TAMA Maitri organizes various activities ranging from debates, quizzes, contests, discussions, games and movies to engage and entertain its members. Currently, the members along with volunteers meet biweekly unless there

is a good reason not to. Each member is encouraged to discuss a topic of their choice such as healthcare for parents, repatriation of assets from India, and cultural differences between India and USA and how to cope with them. Members also share some of their fond memories with each other. The quizzes about US geography & history,



road signs help members enrich their knowledge about the US. Maitri also had local physicians attend the meetings and share valuable advice on health related topics and volunteer to conduct a health camp.

TAMA Maitri also maintains a comprehensive website where session details are

updated and members are encouraged to share ideas through Google groups. You may check <http://www.tamamaitri.org> for registration and any further information.

Mrs. Ratnamamba Cheerla, a current member says that Maitri has provided excellent opportunity to meet with several like minded visiting parents, exchange views and share perspectives on a broad variety of subjects. "Maitri brings out the latent talents in each of us" Mrs. Ratnamamba added as she explained that a member who was a designer now shares his designs through e-mail and she herself, wrote a poem that she shared with the members. Members are also extremely happy with the Masala Tea and Indian snacks provided by TAMA. She is thankful to TAMA for hosting the club that offers an optimal blend of fun, education, enrichment, and networking.

Maitri also creates an "individual identity" as Mrs. Ratnamamba puts it, to parents who deal with the transition of being identified as somebody's parents. TAMA Maitri provides a platform for all parents to create their own space, share their experiences and bond with like minded people.

Kudos to TAMA for hosting Maitri and here's wishing them continued success in the years to come.

Artist Malika Garrett & Family Indicted In Nanny Case

Atlanta: Noted Indian-American artist Malika Garrett, 42, of Woodstock, Georgia, her husband, Russell Garrett, 43, a Forsyth County Deputy Sheriff, also of Woodstock, Georgia, and her father-in-law, D. William Garrett, Jr., 72, a Fulton County Magistrate Judge, of Alpharetta, Georgia, have been indicted by a federal grand jury in a nine-count



indictment, charging the defendants with human trafficking, alien harboring, witness tampering, and making false statements, according to a press release issued by the US Department of Justice.

Malika was the first South Asian artist to have a solo exhibit at the prestigious

Woodruff Arts Center (Atlanta) in August 2004. She has been featured, amongst others, by Southern Living Magazine, East West Woman, Mercedes Momentum Magazine, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, and has also appeared on Fox's Good Day Atlanta.

The indictment alleges that in January 2003, all three defendants conspired to encourage and induce the victim, a female Indian national, to enter the United States under false pretenses for the purpose of serving as a nanny for Malika and Russell Garrett's children. According to the indictment, Malika and Russell Garrett later stopped paying the victim for her work as a nanny, significantly curtailed her freedom and ability to leave their home, and threatened to malign her to her family in India if she did not work for them. Malika and Russell Garrett compelled the victim to work in their home for up to 16 hours a day, nearly every day. The indictment further alleges that, to control the victim, Malika and Russell Garrett insulted her, intimidated her, and threatened her with jail and deportation. With the assistance of a neighbor, the victim escaped the Garretts' home.

In addition, the indictment alleges that after the victim escaped, Malika and Russell Garrett conspired to spread vicious, false rumors about her in her Atlanta neighborhood and her Indian community, and that they falsely accused the victim of theft to local authorities; reported the victim's illegal status to federal authorities; and falsely accused the victim of engaging in terrorism-related activities to the Department of Homeland Security. Finally, the indictment alleges that Russell Garrett and D. William Garrett made false statements to the Department of State to obtain a visa for the victim in which they attached documents showing that they were in law enforcement.

If convicted, Malika Garrett faces a maximum penalty of 60 years' imprisonment; Russell Garrett faces a maximum penalty of 50 years' imprisonment; and D. William Garrett faces a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the FBI and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Is this 'IT'? – Indian IT Blues

Continued from Pg1...

Predictions seem to be turned on their heads from early 2008, when some pundits predicted the invincibility of the IT sector, quoting the stellar earnings of bigwigs like Intel, IBM, Hewlett-Packard and Apple. Some historians and economists noted the prevalence of escapist entertainment like the television and the internet during times of economic hardship, with roots in the Great Depression of 1929, when some people chose to watch movies rather than eat.

However, with the financial and banking sectors still floundering, the information technology sector finally seems to be hurting. Mudigonda says that the IT industry is the backbone for many fields including finance and brokerage. Many of these industries are supported by databases provided for by IT companies. With such a vast proportion of these non IT sectors losing business the technology sector is feeling the heat. "The ripple effect caused by the downturn of the other industries has affected the IT sector as well", observes Rakesh Gupta, the Vice President of Technologies for First View Financials in Atlanta.

Companies from all over the spectrum like Caterpillar, United Airlines, Intel, Home Depot, Microsoft, General Motors, Pfizer and Sprint, to name a few, are announcing layoffs. Even so, the IT sector will likely suffer less; compared to others, states Duddilla. "The IT industry is faring better as a result of the lessons learned during the dotcom burst", he says. However, he fears that despite the government clientele being a stable source of income, the private sector client base in

the software products section of his company may dwindle or want to renew contracts at much lower rates. Mudigonda seems to agree. He too, notes that during the 2001 dotcom burst, consulting companies were not as badly affected as the product based companies. That may not be the case this time around.

In addition to the layoffs, the Damocles' sword of visa processing also hangs heavy over Indian IT professionals. Dhingra says, "We may not see the same number of HIB's as we did last year unless the IT industry rebounds quickly." He notes that there may also be the possibility of projects being sent offshore from America. According to Mudigonda, clients prefer to hire people who do not require the hassle and expense of visa filing. Duddilla narrates the tale of his friends in Sacramento who were on forced vacations as a strategy by their company trying to prevent layoffs.

The downfall of Indian IT giant Satyam, may also exacerbate the dilemma of the IT professional. Gupta says, "We haven't seen many effects of it yet because it is so recent. However, Indian IT companies will be subject to more intense scrutiny as a result of this event." Also, the disclosure of the World Bank's ban on Wipro has not helped the credibility of Indian IT companies abroad.

There seems to be a unanimous feeling of fat trimming. Dhingra compares the situation to running

a low income household. He says, "We have become very cost conscious. We are cutting costs so we don't have to cut people." He says his company has reduced travel expenditure, and authorizes travel only when absolutely essential. Duddilla too, talks of streamlining the processes and cutting costs. He advises people to look for other opportunities other than IT and to explore options such as advertising, art, catering, writing, etc.

Jagadeesh Mupparaju, the CEO of Savi Technologies also suggests an alternative. "Train the consultants in different technologies. That is the advantage of the IT sector." For example, he notes that if necessary, web developers who cannot be placed in the current market should be trained in database technologies. "It depends on the market," says Mupparaju. The other option is to send them back to India, and have them relocate to America once the economic situation improves.

How long will this spiral last? Dhingra anticipates the situation will take about twelve to eighteen months to improve. He says, "When we have bad times, they always seem longer. But when the good times come, people stop counting." He believes things will definitely improve due to the cyclic nature of these economic problems. "Once the financial sector is fixed and the credit for the companies starts improving we may see a significant boost to the industry." His salt-of-the-earth advice is, "Work hard, spend less, train effectively and hope for the best".

So after the statistics have been spouted, the politicians blamed and the losses lamented, what it all comes down to is the revival of common sense – and lunch boxes.



Sunny Duddilla, CEO, Sun Plus Data Group



Kiran Mudigonda, Sun Plus Data Group

Bollywood Promoter Taneja Jailed For Mortgage Scam

Washington: (IANS) An Indian-American mortgage broker and Bollywood film promoter has been sentenced to seven years in prison for defrauding banks of \$33 million and cheating fellow Indian immigrants with phony home loans.



"I'm very sorry about my conduct and the embarrassment to my family," Vijay K. Taneja, 48, told the US federal court in Alexandria, on the outskirts of Washington, at his sentencing recently.

"I fully accept my responsibilities, and I am really very sorry."

Taneja was a prominent member of his community, helping people with mortgages

while seeking to promote the culture of his homeland by promoting shows with Bollywood stars.

A stage producer from Mumbai wrote to the court on his behalf, saying that Taneja had played a role "to enlighten the Asian communities overseas of their cultures and traditions".

Federal prosecutors revealed in November, however, that Taneja's persona was a sham, saying some of the money might have financed his high-flying cinematic endeavours.

Local residents became unwitting pawns as Taneja obtained phony home loans in their names and damaged their credit, prosecutors said.

In November, Taneja pleaded guilty in the US District Court to one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering in what prosecutors said was the largest mortgage fraud case in at least two decades.

Taneja immigrated to the US at age 10 when his diplomat father was posted here, according to court documents. He later became a naturalised citizen and worked at several banks before launching his own mortgage company in 1990.

His early clients were from the close-knit Indian community, many of whom were purchasing their first homes with his help.

Taneja's reputation grew when he founded a company called Elite Entertainment that brought glamorous stars such as Shah Rukh Khan and Aishwarya Rai to the US. At their peak, the galas attracted more than 10,000 people. Taneja began investing in Indian films as well.

About 2001, however, Taneja began obtaining phony mortgages along with genuine ones, prosecutors said. Four banks lost millions, while ordinary citizens found their credit scores ruined with numerous fraudulent mortgages in their names, they said.

In 2003, flush with cash from an overheated real estate market, Taneja built a palatial home that ended up on the auction block in November and sold for \$3.9 million as part of ongoing bankruptcy proceedings. When Taneja filed for bankruptcy in June last year, he said he was \$77 million in debt.

Washington: (IANS) In a "Washington Chalo" campaign in the aftermath of the Mumbai terror attacks, over 200 Indian-American community leaders from across the US have urged lawmakers to take a tougher line on terrorism emanating out of Pakistan.

Spearheaded by the Indian-American Task Force, the "Washington Chalo (march)" campaign capped day-long meetings with some 60 members of the Congress and a reception in the evening at the Capitol Hill. The group also met prominent policy makers.

The campaign raised awareness about the escalating global terrorism, specifically directed against Indian and Western targets, said a leader of the task force made up of leading Indian-American organisations.

The group held a series of meetings with India Caucus co-chairs Democrat Jim McDermott and Republican Joe Wilson, top Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Illeana Ros-Lehtinen, and leading Democrat Congressmen including Van Hollen, Steve Israel, Frank Pallone, Joe Crowley and Paul Hodes.

"I am proud to meet Indian-American community leaders of the task force dedicated to raising awareness and understanding within Washington policy circles about the nature, extent, and ramifications of last November's Mumbai attacks,"



said Ros-Lehtinen.

"We must continue to work together to shed light on the true reach of the Islamist militant global network operating out of Pakistan," she added.

"We identified many lawmakers who are willing to champion the need to make firmer demands of Pakistan in the fight against terrorism," said

Sanjay Puri, chairman of the US India Political Action Committee (USINPAC), a member of the coalition.

"We intend to keep the issue alive in the US Congress to 'condition' future US military aid on

Pakistan's efforts to close down terrorist training camps and better accountability of the funds," he added.

Representative McDermott, who had earlier sponsored an India resolution after the Mumbai attacks, pledged strong support on this issue.

"I was very pleased to have a productive meeting with USINPAC and this passionate group of Americans of Indian origin to reinforce for us the importance and depth of

the circumstances surrounding the Mumbai attacks," he said.

"Our meeting highlighted why the Mumbai attacks represented not just an assault on freedom in India, but freedom anywhere. I hope to keep this dialogue front and center in Washington," said McDermott.

India Health Card Brings Quality Healthcare To NRIs

Washington: (IANS) An Indian American group of professionals has launched a first of its kind India Health Card, a prepaid, reloadable card that lets Non-resident Indians (NRIs) fund healthcare needs of their family and friends back home.

Instead of wiring money to help an ailing relative or friend to pay doctor's bills, all that an NRI has to do is to load the India Health Card through the Internet. They in turn can simply use it like a debit card to get access to quality health services through an extensive network of medical, dental and other providers across India.

"India Health Card is a result of our vision for the healthcare industry in India. Our research has demonstrated a need for innovative healthcare payment solutions," said Ravi Halekote, founder and CEO of India Health Card.

"With a management team of veteran health care professionals and an established network of providers, we are delighted to launch India Health Card and help make health care more affordable and convenient to the families of NRIs in India," he added.

NRIs keep sending money to India for various purposes. But many a time, money sent home does not get used for the intended purpose and healthcare often takes the back seat as priorities change.

But money sent through the India Health Card can be used only for healthcare, Halekote

told IANS explaining its advantage over other methods of remittance. "The bottom line is that the control is in the hands of the sender," he said.

One can become a member by paying a fee of \$10 for an individual and \$25 for the family and then keep loading and reloading the card as and when required at a five percent loading fee. There is also a \$1,000 a day loading limit to prevent any misuse.

The card is accepted by 2,000 plus providers across India who also provide 10 to 15 percent discount on their usual customer care fees. They in turn get an increased flow of paying patients as the card works like a deposit card, but for a specific purpose.

Its promoter Transglobal Beneficial Inc, a Texas based privately held company launched by a team of medical professionals aims to get 50,000 members in 2009.

Because India Health Card covers healthcare payments only, it helps prevent the unproductive expenditure of NRI remittances, Halekote said.

Some of the leading hospitals that have signed up with India Health Card as registered service providers include Manipal Cure and Care Centre at Bangalore, Pune, Ahmedabad and Mumbai, Taneya Hospital, Faridabad, Sanjivani Heart and Medical Hospital, Ahmedabad and Lord's Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram. The company is also negotiating with Fortis, Apollo and other leading hospitals across India to sign up as registered providers.



Obama To Initiate Peaceful Dialogue On Faith With World Leaders

Washington: (IANS) Noting that no religion, be it Christianity, Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism, teaches hatred, President Barack Obama said he will reach out to world leaders to foster a more productive and peaceful dialogue on faith.



"No matter what we choose to believe, let us remember that there is no religion whose central tenet is hate," he said during a speech at the National Prayer

Breakfast. "There is no God who condones taking the life of an innocent human being. This much we know."

"We know too that whatever our differences, there is one law that binds all great religions together. Jesus told us to 'love thy neighbor as thyself'. The Torah commands, 'That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow.'"

"In Islam, there is a hadith that reads 'None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself'."

"And the same is true for Buddhists and Hindus; for followers of Confucius and for humanists," Obama said.

"It is, of course, the Golden Rule - the call to love one another; to understand one another; to treat with dignity and respect those with whom we share a brief moment on this earth."

Obama said Washington "will also reach out to leaders and scholars around the world to foster a more productive and peaceful dialogue on faith. I don't expect divisions to disappear overnight, nor do I believe that long-held views and conflicts will suddenly vanish."

Their Jobs Gone, India's Young Seek Out Psychiatrists

New Delhi/Bangalore/Mumbai: (IANS) Laid off after eight years as a successful IT professional, Rajiv Chander Das is undergoing counselling at a psychiatric clinic. Experts say Das is one of scores of youths who are battling depression in the wake of the global financial crisis.

Across India's major cities, once successful professionals are seeking medical help after either losing jobs or fearing possible job losses.

No one seems to know precisely how many in India have received their pink slips, but the numbers are estimated to be in thousands.

"These people are under significant stress. If laid off or while facing the threat of getting fired, these individuals often end up battling depression and are often anxious wrecks," Sameer Malhotra, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist at the Fortis Hospital in New Delhi, told IANS.

Malhotra said that the number suffering from stress-related problems had shot up since recession destroyed the financial surety of people employed in a variety of industries including IT.

"Now we see 20 to 40 people each day. The number of patients in their mid-20s has gone up. These are mostly people faced with job uncertainties or a career crisis," Malhotra explained.

Bangalore-based software engineer Rajiv Chander Das, who lost his job two months ago, said that being without work was a shock.

"I was employed with a top IT company till two months back. Today I am jobless. It was a rude shock. I am worried that if I don't get a job soon, I will face severe financial crisis as my bank balance is fast waning," Das said.

Das is, however, lucky. He enjoys his family's support. "They are helping me mentally and monetarily," said Das, without naming his last company.

Like Das, IT professional Minati Bhatt too lost her job four months ago. She is undergoing counselling at a psychiatric clinic in Bangalore.

"I am uncertain about my future. Initially, I used to have panic attacks. Now that I am undergoing counselling, I am much better. Help is also at hand from family members," said Minati.

In Bangalore, the hospitals are yet to calculate the number of such patients. But sources in different institutions say there is a clear rise.

"In the past six months the number of professionals from IT and allied services seeking psychiatric assistance in our hospital has gone up manifold. Many also come for medical help and counselling, fearing they will lose their jobs. A few with acute depression have already lost their jobs," B.N. Gangadhar, a professor of psychiatry at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences in Bangalore, told IANS.

"After counselling and medical aid, many have improved. Youngsters should know that losing a job is not the end of life," said M. Srihari, a psychiatrist with the Bangalore Medical College.

The global meltdown has hit Indian industry hard, including sectors such as manufacturing, cement and steel. According to one official estimate of November 2008, about 50,000 jobs were scrapped during August-October.

Leading IT and BPO companies say they have their own set of counsellors to help employees deal with stress and anxiety.

Psychiatrist Malhotra said he often comes across corporate professionals in their mid-20s on the verge of being fired. "I can't tell names... but one man's situation was critical. He had suicidal tendencies. He was always restless, suffered anxious fits and kept comparing himself with friends who were doing better," he said.

Malhotra said such patients needed support from friends and family — and a positive outlook to tide over hard times. Medicines, he said, were not enough.

Compared to the rest of their country, Mumbai appears to have taken the crisis stoically, a leading psychiatrist in the city said.

"I talked to a hardware engineer who now services home computers and laptops using his expertise. He earns less than half his previous pay, but he is mentally stable and occupied," Harish Shetty said.

There are more such cases. A 27-year-old married woman call centre employee now teaches English. An employee of a former realty firm operates from home — as a real estate consultant. A sacked 4-star-hotel assistant chef vends masala dosa in a suburb, said Shetty.

US National Alleges Rape In Mumbai ISKCON Temple

Mumbai: (IANS) A 23-year-old US national has said she was raped by an unidentified man in the International Society for Krishna

Consciousness (ISKCON) temple premises here, though the police Wednesday said it was a case of molestation.

The victim, whose name is not revealed in accordance with Indian laws, in her police complaint Tuesday said an unidentified man forced himself into her room at the temple guest house Monday night and raped her.

"Our investigations are on in the matter. So far, we have confirmed that it is a molestation case and not rape," senior police inspector Deepak Katkade told IANS.

A spokesman of the ISKCON temple termed the US national's charge as "baseless and intended to malign" the image of the place of worship.

In the police complaint, the victim said when she shouted for help and people rushed there, the attacker escaped. She was staying in the guest house of the temple in the upscale Juhu locality of northwest Mumbai for four days. She also gave a detailed description of the attacker to the police.

Despite the allegation of rape, the victim refused to undergo a medical examination, the police have said, adding that investigations were underway to trace the attacker from the description she has given.

The US national is related to a life member of ISKCON. Outsiders and non-members are not permitted to stay in the 76-room guest house of the imposing temple.

India's Official Estimates Peg Growth At 7.1 Percent

New Delhi: (IANS) The Indian economy is expected to log its lowest growth in six years, falling to 7.1 percent for the current fiscal, against

9 percent in the previous year, official projections of national income said recently.

The estimates, compiled by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), said the growth for all the three main components of national income, namely agriculture, manufacturing and services, were expected to fall during the current fiscal.

The manufacturing growth has been pegged at 4.1 percent, against 8.2 percent, farm output is expected to expand 2.6 percent, as opposed to 4.9 percent, while services growth is estimated at 9.6 percent, against 10.9 percent.



The only sectors expected to log higher growths are community services, which mainly constitutes the government's revenue expenditure, up 9.3 percent, against 6.8 percent, and mining, up

4.7 percent, against 3.3 percent.

The per capita income, the organization said, is also expected to expand 5.6 percent to Rs.25,661, against Rs.24,295 in the previous year, when it expanded by 7.6 percent.

Reacting to the projections, India's Finance Secretary Arun Ramanathan and Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia said the projections were on expected lines and that the country's growth story remained in tact.

"There is some soft of optimism. That's what the numbers indicate," Ramanathan said. "Indications are there," he said, when asked if he now expected commercial banks to cut interest rates.

"It's broadly what we have been saying. It's not a surprise. It's a pleasant outcome, a positive development," said Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia. "This shows growth momentum during the year remains strong."

Beware! Here Comes The Anti-Moral Policing Brigade

New Delhi: (IANS) Namrata Kotwani is preparing to observe Valentine's Day in a big way. Coochie-cooing with her partner however, is not her plan. Instead, she is gathering support to form an anti-moral policing brigade which will get together Feb 14 to tell all the self appointed moral vigilantes that what they do will not be tolerated.

"I am not a champion of Valentine's Day - I will be the first one to say that it's just an excuse for the greeting card companies to sell their things. But this kind of moral policing on V Day and others by the so-called moral police is not just harassment, but also unconstitutional," Kotwani, 24, told IANS.

"Therefore, our protest is against all kinds of moral policing that has become so frequent in our country. Goons bashing up young couples and others on Valentine's Day is just one of the instances which has become almost like a regular feature every year," she said.

A student who aspires to become a lawyer championing civil liberties, Kotwani said that the idea of such a campaign struck her after the Mangalore incident in which 40 members of the Sri Rama Sene assaulted several young women in the name of upholding Indian values and culture.

"What they do is just a perverted interpretation of culture and religion. One of the

most beloved icons of the Hindu religion is Krishna, who championed love. We all have our personal interpretation of religion and no one has the right to impose their ideas on others," said Kotwani.

"Ever since the Mangalore incident took place, I have been reading about it every day in the newspapers and each time I get very angry. These kinds of acts are a murder of our Constitution and a threat to our civil liberties.

"Unfortunately though, the moral police don't seem to be aware of our Constitution which is the hallmark of our democracy," she added. Kotwani is not alone in her endeavor.

Certain sections of civil society like the Earth Saviours Foundation and even the Delhi unit of Kashmir-based National Panthers Party (NPP) have chalked out plans to oppose anyone assaulting people on Valentine's Day.

In response to threats by the Sri Rama Sene to marry off couples celebrating V Day, Ravi Kalra of the Earth Saviours Foundation told IANS: "No one dare violate the law by harassing women and

marrying off young couples in the name of upholding Indian culture.

"We will make sure that people who break the law are handed over to the police."

Kalra has formed 10 Valentine Help Escort team which will be on patrol in the capital Feb 14.

Similarly, the Delhi chief of the NPP Sanjoy Sachdev said that their members will go around the capital armed with chilli spray to fight off any trouble maker on the street. Karate experts will accompany them.

"We have set up a control room in the party office which one can get access to by dialing 9313784375. Such fascist forces will not be tolerated," Sachdev said.

Kotwani added: "We will make posters, banners and flyers with various slogans like 'Girls are not cattle, stop locking us up after dusk!' 'We stand by our Constitution' and one for the National Commission for Women (NCW) 'Your loyalties should be towards women, not political parties', besides others.



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Did You Know You Can Access Your Computer From Anywhere?

BY NABEELA KHAN

Did you know that through the Internet you can access your computer from almost anywhere?

Relatively few of us have taken advantage of facilities like Google Document, Zoho Offline Office or Hotmail co-founder Sabeer Bhatia's Live Document.

These provide softwares like Word, Excel or Power Point. You can use them without having MS office installed in your PC.

"I wasn't aware that something like this exists. Does this mean I can read my excel file without actually having Microsoft Excel installed?" asked Abhishek Jha, an asset manager with IDBI Bank.



Gears plugin. It includes tools for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, databases, note taking, wikis, project management, invoicing and other applications.

Sabeer Bhatia, co-founder of Hotmail, launched Live Documents last year. It has all the features of Microsoft Office 2007, and is available free online.

However experts believe using such online office suites may be risky.

Sahil Khan, a 14-year-old IT prodigy who has written three books on hacking and computer viruses, told IANS:

"The risk increases if you share files with others when you are working from a remote location.

You may unknowingly allow other people to copy private files - even giving access to entire folders, subfolders and sometimes the whole computer. You may also download a virus which can breach your security."

However, Google assures foolproof security for the data being shared. "We provide choices and the control to decide how much users want to share. Google gives you your own private cloud to store your data. Only you can grant permission to access it. So for Google Docs a user can share docs with entire office, or just one friend," a Google spokesperson told IANS.

"To protect data we employ some of the world's best engineers and use the most cutting edge technology available," the spokesperson added.

There are other remote accessing softwares like GoToMyPC and TeamViewer that allow users



to access their computers from anywhere. GoToMyPC is a paid software while TeamViewer is available free of cost for non-commercial use.

To use TeamViewer both the remote and the original computer must have the software. It has the added feature of an user id and password. All those sharing the password can make a virtual private network of computers through cyberspace.

"I was in Jaipur to conduct a training session. Just an hour before I found that the file containing details of the training session was missing. The file was too heavy to be e-mailed. So my colleague told me to download TeamViewer and then he put the file on my desktop. It was a great saviour," Sarfaraz Bora, a human resource manager, told IANS.



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Garlic- World's Most Powerful Antioxidant



Tornoto: (IANS) The organic compound Allicin is believed to give garlic its distinct aroma and flavor, which also acts as the world's most powerful antioxidant.

Until now it hasn't been clear how Allicin works or how good it is compared with more common antioxidants like Vitamin E and coenzyme Q10.

"We didn't understand how garlic could contain such an efficient antioxidant, since it didn't have a substantial amount of the types of compounds usually responsible for high antioxidant activity in plants, such

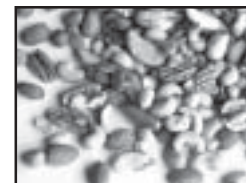
as the flavanoids found in green tea or grapes," said Queen's University chemistry professor Derek Pratt, who led the study.

Through experiments with synthetically-produced Allicin, they found that an acid is produced when the compound decomposes rapidly reacts with radicals."Basically the allicin compound has to decompose in order to generate a potent antioxidant," explained Pratt.

"Until now there has been no convincing explanation as to why garlic is beneficial," said Pratt. "I think we have taken the first step in uncovering a fundamental chemical mechanism which may explain garlic's medicinal benefits."

Along with onions, leeks and shallots, garlic is a species in the family Alliaceae. All of these other plants contain a compound that is very similar to Allicin, but they do not have the same medicinal properties, according to a Queen's release.

Omega-6 Fatty Acids For Healthy Heart



Washington: (IANS) Omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acids or PUFAs, found in vegetable oils, nuts and seeds, are beneficial as part of a heart-healthy diet, according to an American Heart Association (AHA) advisory. Ideally one should aim for at least five to 10 percent of energy (calories) from omega-6 PUFAs, and will derive most benefit when they replace saturated or trans fats in the diet.

Precise recommended daily servings will depend on physical activity level, age and gender, but range between 12 and 22 grams per day.

The AHA report also addresses the recent controversy that omega-6 fatty acids, via linoleic acid, which accounts for 85-90 percent of dietary omega-6, may actually increase inflammation and thereby increase rather than reduce cardiovascular risk. Any link between omega-6 and inflammation, says the AHA, comes from the fact that arachidonic acid, which can be formed from linoleic acid, is involved in the early stages of inflammation, but anti-inflammatory molecules are also formed.

These suppress the production of adhesion molecules, chemokines and interleukins - all of which are key mediators of the atherosclerotic process. Thus, concludes the report, it is incorrect to view the omega-6 fatty acids as pro-inflammatory.

Antibiotics Losing Against Resistant Superbugs



Washington: (IANS) People are dying of superbugs because the antibiotic armoury has run dry, leaving one unprotected from the depredations of ever-changing bacteria, warned infectious disease researchers.

A superbug can evade antibiotics by producing an enzyme that devours the drug; creating a barrier to the drug; pumping out any antibiotic that reaches the bacterial cell and modifying the target of the antibiotic so the drug can't bind to it.

"Most of the public has heard of MRSA (methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) because it produces the most cases each year. However, they have not heard of other superbugs that can be far worse," said Barbara E. Murray, co-author and director of Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Texas Medical School (UTMS).

"The gram-negative bacteria are the most antibiotic-resistant with fewer treatment options in life-threatening diseases, such as certain forms of pneumonia, bloodstream infections, gastroenteritis and even meningitis," she said.

Gram-negative bacteria can release toxins created by their cell walls into the bloodstream, where it is harder to treat them. According to a 2004 report, "Bad Bugs, No Drugs", by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), none of the 89 new drugs approved by the US Food and Drug Administration were antibiotics. Murray and co-author Cesar Arias said people are also taking antibiotics without prescriptions or not following the prescription as directed, said an UTMS release.

"We have run out of options. The promise of genomics has not panned out. Gene sequencing has not helped us find a better way to fight these bugs," said Murray.

Blue Light Destroys Resistant Staph Infection

Washington: (IANS) Two common strains of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, commonly known as MRSA, were eliminated by exposure to a wavelength of blue light.

Antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections represent an important and increasing public health threat. Approximately 40 to 50 percent of Staph aureus isolated have developed resistance to newer semi-synthetic antibiotics such as methicillin as well.

C.S. Enwemeka, Deborah Williams, S.K. Enwemeka, Steve Hollosi and David Yens from the New York Institute of Technology had previously demonstrated that photo-irradiation using 405-nanometres (nm) of light destroys MRSA strains grown in culture. In the current study, the authors exposed bacterial colonies of MRSA to various doses of 470-nm light, the shortest wavelength of blue light that emits no ultraviolet radiation. They reported that the higher the dose of 470-nm blue light, the more bacteria were killed. High-dose photo-irradiation was able to destroy 90.4 percent of the US-300 colonies and the IS-853 colonies.

Be Careful When Accessing Your Computer From Afar

Be careful when you access your computer over the Internet. Here are some safety tips:

* Install file-sharing software carefully, so that you know what's being shared.

* Person to person (P2P) file-sharing applications will, by default, share downloads in your "save" or "download" folder - unless you set it not to.

* You should also restrict users' ability to write files to the file server.

* Limit guests or anonymous accounts sharing so none can upload files.

* Add a firewall; it will help you decrease the risk of someone accessing your computer illegally.

* Use anti virus software and update it regularly.

Online office suites enable you to view or edit existing documents in Google Docs without requiring an always-on Internet connection. It is however not possible to create new word documents while you are offline in Google Docs. Any changes that you make to the documents locally will automatically get synched to Google Docs the next time you connect to the Internet.

This office suite also allows editing of files from the remote location.

"It was very difficult for me to keep updates of the projects and the involvement of employees. Once researching on Internet, I saw the features on Google and started using it to maintain the project's and employees' daily report," Surjeet Kumar, owner of an advertising agency, told IANS.

A similar facility is available on Zoho, which does not even ask for a Zoho e-mail id. Zoho supports offline access via the same Google

Sun Microsystems To Hold Global Conference In Hyderabad

Hyderabad: (IANS) Given the growing international profile of the Indian software industry, Sun Microsystems is organizing its global annual developer conference here Feb 18-20 for the third time in as many years.

James Gosling, the father of Java programming language and Matt Thompson, senior director, cloud developer platform, will be the keynote speakers at the three-day event, designed to showcase how developers can leverage Sun technologies, services and products.

The conference, Sun Tech Days 2009, will focus on technologies around social computing, cloud computing, OpenSolaris and Java, said Naveen Asrani, senior manager of global developer relations and programs at Sun Microsystems.

At a news conference here Wednesday, Asrani said the event would feature technical content, practical 'how-to' information, examples of real world solutions, tips on application performance tuning, and hands-on training.

The conference is aimed at fostering innovation, collaboration and integration among the developer community in order to drive innovation.

According to Asrani, the Indian developer community is fast moving up the value chain and becoming a key influence in the adoption of new technologies. "This is reflected in the fact that India boasts of 780,000 developers, which is the largest developer base for Sun Microsystems in the world," he said.

Blackberry Resumes Bid To Buy Certicom



Toronto: (IANS) BlackBerry maker Research In Motion (RIM) has launched a fresh bid to acquire Indian-owned Certicom Corp. which supplies vital technology for its smart phones.

Based in Mississauga on the outskirts of Toronto, Certicom, which is headed by CEO Karna Gupta, is a global leader in encryption technology used by RIM to build secure messaging system in its BlackBerry smart phones.

Late last year, RIM made a \$66-million "unfriendly" offer directly to Certicom's shareholders for its takeover after it failed

through talks with its management.

However, Certicom succeeded in getting court injunction on the grounds that RIM had violated non-disclosure agreements signed by the two sides during the takeover talks.

But the BlackBerry maker is back within two weeks to stop Certicom's friendly takeover by California-based VeriSign Inc. In a statement, Certicom said it has received an offer of \$131 million or \$3 a share in cash from RIM - which is double RIM's earlier hostile bid for takeover.

The RIM's offer is 43 percent more than VeriSign's offer, the statement said, adding that it (the offer) is "open for acceptance until noon on Feb 12, 2009".

The Certicom statement said its special committee of independent directors will review the BlackBerry offer, in consultation with its financial and legal advisors because of the company's legal obligations under its agreement with VeriSign Inc.

"If Certicom's board of directors determines that the RIM Offer is a superior proposal as defined in the VeriSign agreement, VeriSign will have the right, but not the obligation, to offer to amend the terms of the VeriSign arrangement within a period of five business days," the statement added.

Certicom supplies the crucial wireless technology not only to the BlackBerry maker, but also to Motorola, IBM and Texas Instruments Inc.

RIM, which has been become a world leader in secure wireless communication thanks to Certicom's encryption technology, is willing to go to any lengths to buy this crucial company.

Set up in 1985, Certicom is today the sole leader in this crucial technology. The company's shares rose slightly on the Toronto stock exchange on RIM's takeover bid.

Google India Launches Mobile Internet Bus



Chennai: (IANS) Google India recently unveiled an Internet bus, a mobile vehicle designed to provide information on Internet and computer to people in cities across Tamil Nadu.

Dubbed as 'Google Bus', the vehicle which was flagged off from Chennai will cover 15 towns including Erode, Dindigul, Pudukkottai, Tripipur and Nagercoil in 45 days.

"We are passionate about empowering users with information. With this initiative, we want to take the power of this medium (Internet) to people who will really benefit from it," Google India's research and development head Prasad Ram said.

"The bus is designed to make a simple introduction to the Internet for a new user. With a focus on the four themes of education, information, communication, and entertainment, the bus will be loaded with useful and informative content in English and Tamil," Google India said in a blogpost.

"We'll showcase how the Internet can make everyday life simple through services like search, email, social networking, maps and others," it added.

"We believe that if we can get people to experience the Internet even briefly, they will find the means to go back again," Ram said.

According to the latest Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) figures, India's cumulative broadband subscribers base stood at 5.45 million in December as against the targeted 20 million connections by 2010.

Nasscom Pegs Indian Software Industry Revenue At \$60 Bn

New Delhi: The Indian software and services industry is expected to grow 16 percent this fiscal and log revenues of \$60 billion despite the global slowdown, a top lobby for the industry said recently.

The National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) said in its report that together with the business process outsourcing (BPO) sector, the revenues are expected to top \$71.7 billion with a growth of 17 percent.

Of this, the export of software and services will account for \$47 billion, growing by 16-17 percent. The association also said the domestic BPO industry would log a growth of as much as 40 percent this fiscal.

"The current financial year has been challenging for economies across the globe. But the Indian IT-BPO industry has exhibited a balanced growth," said Ganesh Natarajan, chairman of Nasscom and global chief executive of Zensar Technologies.

"We have seen Europe, Asia Pacific and rest of the world grow more than US, reaffirming geographical diversification as an encouraging trend for this industry," Natarajan told reporters, while releasing the association's report.

Nasscom also said it expected the software and BPO industry to grow by 15 percent annually till 2010-11 to log export revenues alone of \$60-62 billion.

"Due to our strong fundamentals and as a derivative of the value we add to our global

customers, the Indian industry will continue to grow in spite of global slowdown," said Som Mittal, president of the association.

"We also feel that this is a time of learning and optimisation for the industry, we would urge our member companies to see this as a silver lining."

Following are the key highlights of Nasscom's projections:

-Total IT-BPO industry to touch 71.7 billion in 2008-09

-The industry to account for 5.8 percent of the country's gross domestic

product

-Domestic BPO market to growth by over 40 percent

-BPO exports estimated to grow by 17.5 percent to \$12.8 billion

-IT services exports estimated to grow by 16.5 percent to \$26.9 billion

-Software products, engineering services to grow by 14.4 percent to \$7.3 billion

-Exports to Europe log highest growth, while US remains dominant market

-Uncertain economic environment to prevail in 2009

-Indian IT industry expected to grow 15 percent annually till 2010-11

-Exports projected to \$60-62 billion by 2010-11

-Industry remains a net hirer with 2.23 million new direct jobs

-Indirect job creation estimated at 8 million



US Consumer Spending Plunges To A 47-Year Low

Washington: (IANS) US consumers cut spending for a sixth straight month in December, capping off the worst year for consumer spending since 1961 and pointing to a further slide in the US economy reeling from its worst crisis in decades.

A Commerce Department report released Monday showed spending by individuals fell one percent December, after dropping a revised 0.8 percent in November, slightly less than a 0.9 percent drop forecast by economists.

"The report shows that consumers are in a mood to rebuild their savings but not to go out and spend," said Mark Vitner, economist at Wachovia, cited by CNNMoney.com.

"Generally that's a good thing, but not when everyone does it at the same time."

December marked the sixth straight month in which consumers cut back on their spending, a decline that accelerated dramatically in the last three months.

For the fourth quarter, spending fell a record 8.9 percent - the worst quarter for spending since the Commerce Department began tracking that statistic in 1947.

Spending for the full year rose just 3.6 percent, the lowest level in 47 years.

The report also included the so-called core PCE deflator - a key reading closely watched by the Federal Reserve that measures prices paid by consumers for goods and services other than food and energy. It showed a 1.7 percent rise from year-earlier levels, below the 1.9 percent posted in November.

Half of December's consumer spending declines were due to falling prices as inflation continues to moderate - especially on falling oil and gas prices. But Vitner said as gas begins to creep up in price, consumer spending may actually rise in the coming months as well.

Personal income fell 0.2 percent in December, following a revised 0.4 percent drop in the previous month. Economists had forecast another 0.4 percent decline.

Still, the drop in prices far outpaced the decline in personal income, leading to a modest 0.3 percent rise in real income in the period.

Also because income fell less than spending fell, consumers posted a savings rate of 3.6 percent. That means the average household saved \$3.60 on every \$100 of after-tax income, compared with \$2.80 in November. The American savings rate had been near zero for quite some time, but has been creeping up since the summer as consumers curtailed their spending.

Can I Get My Green Card After Divorce?

Email immigration related questions to chandler@nripulse.com.

BY CHANDLER SHARMA

I entered the U.S. as a K-1 fiancée and married my U.S. citizen fiancé within 90 days, applied for adjustment of status to permanent residence, which was not processed for over two years. However, before the end of the two-year period, we divorced. What can I do?

In the past, the Immigration would deny the application for adjustment of status since the marriage no longer exist. However, (at least in the Ninth Circuit) a person in your situation can still get their Green Card. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals relying on their decision in Freeman vs. Gonzalez, decided recently that if a marriage to a U.S. citizen was bona fide, the fact that the citizen spouse dies or there is a divorce before the USCIS makes a final decision on the application for adjustment of status does not stop it from being approved.

If somebody becomes an American citizen half a year ago from naturalization, can he or she go to another country, live there and then come back after 10 years?? Will there be any problem maintaining citizenship?

Once a person obtains citizenship, they have it for the rest of their life. In extremely rare instances, people lose their citizenship, but it would typically be when they were found to have engaged in fraud to get their citizenship or were not eligible.

I am currently on H-1B Visa and my wife is on H-4 visa. I have heard that she can work in volunteer and non-profit organizations and also that if they file her H-1B she is exempt from the H1B quota. Also she can get paid on the volunteer job?

Actual volunteer work for a charity (which means a job that a US worker would normally not be hired to do) is normally okay on an H-4. You may want to be sure about the actual duties of the position. However, if your wife is going to be paid, the position may not be a true volunteer work. With regard to filing H-1B visa and whether your wife is exempt, not all charities are exempt from the yearly cap. Charities that are exempt have to have close ties with a university or a non-profit research institution. You will need to work with your lawyer on this to be sure that H-1B cap exemption is available.

My wife's I-130 application which was filed by her mother has been approved. When the application was filed, she was under 21 and not married. Her mother is a permanent resident and will be becoming a US Citizen in a couple of months. What happens to the I-130 application now?

It is our opinion that the petition no longer exists. This is because there is no green card category for married children of permanent residents and as soon as your wife married, her petition would have become void. If the marriage had taken place after the parent became a US citizen, the petition would have survived. The likely case now is that the I-130 will need to be refiled.

I came to USA in March 1999 on H1B visa. My Green Card labor was filed by my company in

August 2001. In 2005 my company filed for 7th year extension of H1B. Also in 2006 they filed for 8th year extension of H1B. In Aug 2006 I quit my job to pursue Full Time MBA from a US Institute and transferred my visa status to F1. My question is: Can a company file for transfer of my visa from F1 to H1B after my graduation in May 2008 or I have to leave the country for 1 year before I can apply for H1B again, since I have already lived here for over 6 years.

The current policy of the CIS is that foreign workers (called aliens) who "are eligible for the 7th year extension may be granted an extension of stay regardless of whether they are currently in the United States or abroad and regardless of whether they currently hold H-1B status." The question will be whether you are still eligible. Is your labor certification application still in process? Is it still valid? Has it been withdrawn? Did your previous employer substitute another employee for the position offered you before your departure from the company? The bottom line is that you can still extend beyond the sixth year even if you are in F-1 status provided you are eligible to extend.

I came to US on H1B visa as a teacher. Since July 2003 I am working as a teacher under my sponsor. I got my labor and I-140 approved. I have got my EAD and I am still renewing even if I am not using my EAD to work. I have been renewing my H-1B visa. My husband, instead, is using his EAD for work. We are told that since the visa numbers are unavailable now, we have to wait till it is current. Can I go to India in travel parole? Will that make my H-1B visa invalid? Which is advisable? To go in travel parole or to go and stamp my H1 visa? Can I change my employer (I have worked for my employer for 4 years already)? Can I become a direct employee of the school system I am working? Will that affect my processing of green card? My husband is in H4 dependant visa. If he travels in travel parole will that affect us in any way?

Yes, you can travel on your Advanced Parole without going to the consulates to obtain a valid H-1B visa if that is your choice. However, when you travel and reenter on advance parole and you have a valid approved H-1B petition, you can apply for extension of your status as H-1B and the CIS will terminate your parole and admit you in H-1B status. You can also refile and your H-1B status will be reinstated. You must know too that even if you reenter on advance parole and continue your H-1B employment, you will not be considered to have engaged in unauthorized employment. It is important that you know that if you, as an H-1B holder with a pending green card application, use your EAD to work for another employer, your H-1B status will be affected. You can change employer provided your green card application has been pending for 180 days or more. H-1B workers whose Form I-485 applications have been pending for 180 days or more can change employers if the job position for the new employment is same or similar to the one for which they got a labor certificate. Luckily in your case, the Form I-485 has been pending for six months after your Form I-140 was approved (to change employers, the Form I-485 must be pending for 6 months or more after the Form I-140 is approved.

CC2C: No Hot Pot Fare

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

When you hear the name Ramesh Sippy synonymous with "Sholay", the everlasting gem of Hindi cinema associated with a movie, expectations are elevated, to say the least. Combine that with maker of "Kal Ho Na Ho", Nikhil Advani, a spicy performer such as Akshay Kumar, sprinkled with the Chinese Kung-Fu flavor Gordon Liu, who immortalized San Te from "The 36th Chamber of Shaolin", the picturesque locales from China backed by none other than Warner Bros and the result anticipated is a steaming hot pot of entertainment bonanza. But CC2C fails to extract the essence of its potentially



great ingredients and is served to us cold and bland devoid ironically of all the masala it was intended to be enhanced with.

Considering what a great platform the writers Sridhar Raghavan and Rajat Arora had to build a strong screenplay, the chaotic result is simply surprising. The lack of reasoning for any event that happens in the movie is just deplorable. The editing (if any) follows the footsteps of the stale screenplay. Nikhil however does manage to extract a few tapping numbers such as the title track and "Sidhu" from the music directors. The action sequences are enjoyable but leave you wanting more especially when you picture Gordon Liu in a movie.

Sidhu (Akshay Kumar), a small time chandini chowk cook tries any and all ways to get rich quick trying his luck at lottery tickets, astrologers to name a few. His adopted Dada's (Mithun Chakraborty) efforts to make Sidhu believe in himself land in vain and he continues his search for fame and fortune. He entertains himself watching commercials of products endorsed by Sakhi (Deepika Padukone) his favorite model. Sidhu then goes on to embrace a potato as his ganapati bappa after which a couple of strangers from China declare Sidhu as their reincarnated hero. Thanks to Chopstick (Ranvir Shorey) the conman translator, Sidhu sets on a journey to the Chinese village to protect the villagers from the evil Hojo (Gordon Liu) without realizing his mission to China. And this is where you wonder why the Chinese men landed in Delhi in search of their hero and what exactly led them to Sidhu and Chopstick. Well, Akshay did tell us in an interview to leave our brains behind while watching this movie, so we move on. Oh, there is a scene where Sidhu gets kicked in the rear by his Dada and he goes flying into the air, and you

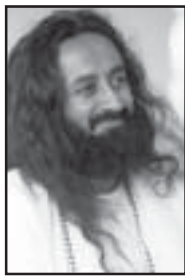
don't even chuckle and even if you wish you did, just a little bit for Akshay's sake, and wonder why? Maybe because we have seen Akshay do this a zillion times and it is so not funny anymore.

Sidhu and Chopstick arrive in China and we find out Sakhi has a long lost twin Suzi who works for Hojo as a smuggler. Sakhi is also in China to visit her birthplace where she believes her father, a police officer and sister were killed by, no points for guessing, Hojo! Hojo tracks Sidhu and kills his Dada thus incurring a new enemy in the form of Sidhu. Then we are told Sakhi's father who was thrown off the Great Wall of China survived the fall and also managed to save Sidhu when he

was thrown off the same spot. How and why Suzi who was shown to be thrown off the same spot is raised by Hojo remains one of the unsolved mysteries in the movie. After being saved by Sakhi's father who regains his lost memory by looking at a picture from the past, Sidhu undergoes a so called "rigorous" Kung-fu training under him and eventually defeats the evil Hojo and re-unites

the twins with their dad. There is bit of James Bond action in here too, in case you were not confused enough. Yes, all spices have been added indeed, except the cook forgot to make it tasteful.

For a film with the title Chandini Chowk to China, you neither see enough of Chandini Chowk or China. How I wish we did, considering this apparently was one of the first international films allowed to shoot on the Great Wall of China. The only goal that comes clear is the effort to make the movie a combination of comedy and action. Unfortunately comedy surfaces at all the wrong places, for example, when we are told that Akshay is learning Kung-Fu to avenge his Dada's death, the intensity required to master the art and the zeal to fulfill a purpose is clearly lost in a comic overdrive. The art of balancing comedy and action requires a detailed and delicate directorial touch, the kind we see in a Jackie Chan movie. Most of Jackie Chan movies are funny and almost always contain action and yet the lines are clearly drawn between action and comedic sequences thus giving the audience a chance to enjoy both the flavors equally. This is where the screenplay, direction and the editing fall short. Even the graceful Deepika offered in double pack fails to impress although she does look great in the action scenes. The talented Ranvir Shorey simply fades into the oblivion. The movie had all the right ingredients, action, comedy, a bunch of gifted actors, great locales and plenty of financial back up but the director and writers fail to strike a balance and offer a frenzied blend of nothing. At the end of the movie, Akshay mentions Africa, maybe hinting his next destination. We want you to make us laugh Akshay and see you in action, so go ahead and entertain us in Africa, because clearly your trip to China was an opportunity missed.



Love Moves The World

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.

There is strength in peace. There is strength in calmness. There is strength in love... but it goes unnoticed. What you cannot win with a stick, you can win with love. What you cannot win with guns, you can win through love... and this power of love needs to be realized. The most powerful thing in the world is love! We can win the hearts of people through love.

The victory that comes out of ego is worth nothing. Even if you win in ego, it is a loss. Even if you lose in love, it's a victory! Making people realize this innermost strength that we all have is the challenge!

You cannot talk about love when a terrorist is at your door, but is there some way in which we can transform the world? Is there any alternative method that can bring sense to people who do not listen to anything, other than force? We can start thinking along these lines only when we realize that there is enormous power in love and inner peace. When we are peaceful, we radiate that peace to the people around us and they also become calm.

In these times of war and disease in the world, it's so important that we all meditate a little bit everyday. When we meditate, we nullify those vibrations, thereby creating a more harmonious environment around us. I would call war the **Worst Act of Reason**. In every war, there is some reason. Sometimes it becomes unavoidable, like an operation. If there is a wound or a cancerous cell in one's body, we operate. After the operation, nursing is very essential. We need to nurse that part which has been operated. It's the same in the world and in the psyche of people; a lot needs to be done to bring peace, love and confidence into hearts and minds.

So our being peaceful in a meditative, prayerful state will definitely help. Don't think, "what can I do?" or that you are insignificant. When the world is in a problem, you too have a role to play. Like a tiny homeopathic pill—which has 1/100th or 1/1000th potency—makes an impact on a body, which is sixty to seventy kilos! In the same way, every individual—everyone who is breathing, talking, walking, thinking—has an influence on this cosmos, on this planet. So we can all radiate peace, good thoughts, good vibrations, good wishes and that will definitely make an impact on the planet.

I've seen this over and over again. When there is a conflict and you interact with both the groups engaged in the conflict, they soften up! When communication breaks down, it causes turbulence, which in turn causes stiffness and rigidity, but when you re-establish communication through love, through peaceful means, through patience — it does yield.

One thing that is absolutely essential to avoid such fanaticism or religious terrorism in the world is a multi-cultural, multi-religious education for children. It is because a child grows up thinking that other religions or cultures are bad or no good, that he/she is ready to give up his/her life for that

cause; but when a child grows up knowing a little bit about all other religions, cultures and customs, then there is a sense of belonging with everybody.

We need to drive home this message because even if one part of the world is not adopting this idea, the world will not be a safe place as that little part or corner can breed terrorism. I would say you should take up a two-point program — doing a little service in groups and/or as individuals, educating people on human values: friendliness, compassion, non-violence, non-aggression. Aggression has even come into the lives of children. There is a beauty in non-violence; there is a beauty in non-aggressive behavior, which has unfortunately not been highlighted, either by our media or by our surroundings.

This is happening everywhere in the world. Children take pride in being violent. If they lose their temper, they feel that it's normal — they take pride in it. One who is very aggressive in the classroom, gets more attention than one who is peaceful, isn't it? So children grow up feeling, "if I am aggressive, then I have my say."

We need to bring back the pride in being non-violent. If we could instill that pride in being non-violent, in children, their whole life will take a new direction. A pride in being compassionate, a pride in being available and helpful to others around us should be our new motto.

I think we need to do something to bring back those human values in society and smile more! You look at a teenager or a boy or girl who goes to college — do they really smile? See the heaviness in their faces, the heaviness in their hearts. A child is so happy — walking, moving, jumping around and then that same child goes through college and becomes so sad, upset and depressed! Is this the purpose of our education?

Only a few people in the world cause terror, not the whole population. Of the six billion people on this planet, there'll be a handful that is causing problems in the world. There are hardly a few thousand who cause crime and the whole world is affected. Don't you think that with the same law, the reverse will also work? Just a few of us, a few thousand of us, being really peaceful and loving, caring for the whole planet — can we not bring a transformation?

When you point a finger at others, three fingers are pointing towards you! So if I say, "you are beautiful!" that means I am three times more beautiful! If I say, "you are ugly!" I am three times more ugly; but when I include you into me, then there is no you and there is no me. Then there is only one — that is ultimate victory!

Life is so short! We'll all live another 20-30 years and then one day, everybody will be dead and gone! But we cry for what we have and we're upset about what we don't have, isn't it? Is it worth living life like that? We ourselves get depressed and then depress everybody around us! We need to shake ourselves up! Wake up! And when we wake up from this slumber, then we have peace in our hearts and we can radiate that peace and love around us.



WHAT'S COOKING?

BY P.S. LAKSHMI RAO

Note: If neem flower is not available, use chopped lemon peel or chopped orange peel or grated bitter melon (kakarakaya) for bitter taste.

Happy Ugadi!

Ugadi Pachadi (New Year Chutney)



It is a tradition to start the New Year with a taste of a variety of flavors signifying the fact that life can be a collection of different experiences — happy and unhappy, ugly and beautiful, good and bad — of all kinds of moods.

- ½ Cup of tamarind (if it is very black the chutney looks dark)
- 2 Cups of water
- 1 Small green mango peeled and cut into small pieces
- 1 Small apple (peeled and cut into small pieces)
- 1 Ripe banana cut into small pieces
- 1 Tablespoon of fresh shredded coconut
- 20 Seedless grapes cut into half
- ¼ Cup orange rind
- 1 Teaspoon Neem flower (Vepa flower) fresh or dried
- 2 Tablespoons of brown sugar
- 1/8 Teaspoon of salt

Soak the tamarind in water and squeeze juice out of the pulp in to a glass bowl. Mix all the above ingredients in the tamarind juice. It is ready for serving.

Chimmili (Sesame Seed Balls)

- 1 Cup white sesame (skinless) seeds
- ½ Cup brown sugar
- 2 Tablespoons maple or any pancake syrup

Roast the sesame seeds in dry pan until light brown in low heat. Transfer them to a bowl and let them cool completely.

Blend the seeds in a blender or pulse for thirty seconds in high speed mixing once. Add brown sugar and blend or pulse for another thirty seconds. It is O.K if you have few seeds left. Remove the powder



from the blender in to a bowl and mix the syrup and powder. Make 12 to 14 lime size balls.

Note: This is a very quick sweet to make with only three ingredients. You can add few finely chopped pistachio nuts. If you don't have any syrup add 2 tablespoons more brown sugar. Add few drops of milk or water to make balls.

This sweet is usually made for Nagula Chavithi and Pongal in some parts of India.

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HOROSCOPES

Monthly Forecast For February 2009

For yearly forecast, visit www.NRIPulse.com

BY DR. PREMKUMARSHARMA



ARIES: A month of special care for IT professionals when they should devote much of their time to accurately assessing their strengths & weaknesses. You need to keep in mind that you have to be conversant not just with knowledge management but also be good at psychomotor skills related to the thinking process. A large number of strategic moves depend solely on speedy decision-making process. In absence of skill shortage- you will fail to explore the full potential of your software/hardware skills.



TAURUS: This month you are likely to suffer from workload at workplace. You might even find it very difficult to complete it on time. However- it would be in your interest to develop some strategies to enable yourself to complete it at the earliest. Success on your part would not only bring mental satisfaction but also enable to undertake additional responsibilities. As far as possible try to undertake some additional responsibilities.



GEMINI: This month you are likely to realize that interviewing is not an easy job. It is time for you to realize that it requires perceptive & analytical skills on the part of the interviewer. At the same time your wrong choice can have disastrous implications on the organization in terms of efficiency. You should therefore while interviewing-make full use of your eyes-ears and tongue to enable yourself to compile all the factual evidence and then take a final decision.



CANCER: Unexpected things going in your favor will immensely boost your confidence at professional front. There are indications that you are likely to be entrusted with an important responsibility at the beginning of the month. But the good news is that you would be highly benefited by shouldering a variety of assignments spanning across various fields.



LEO: You are likely to meet a professional making a big difference in your professional life. However it would be in your interest not to forget devoting time on acquiring new technical skills to enhance career prospects. A sudden eruption of crisis in mid of the month would require your immediate intervention.



VIRGO: Your communication skills coupled with positive attitude brighten chances at work. It is high time to make the fullest use of your aspirations, supportive nature and open mindedness to your benefit. At the same time there are chances that some of you could slip into self-sabotage under the delusion that you are intelligently self-activating.



LIBRA: A hectic schedule awaits at professional front this month. You will therefore have to prepare yourself to keep the pace with fast changing events. However- the good news for you is that your inexhaustible energy coupled with hard work would come to your aid. Thus enabling you to keep an edge over others.



SCORPIO: A successful professional month as you are able to sort out your long-pending problems with the help of colleagues. You will also find your seniors very supportive and with their help form new strategies. Their guidance would act like a guiding lamp for you thus enabling to find solutions to your problems.



SAGITTARIUS: This month you are likely to suffer from a feeling that your core competency and knowledge is outdated and that you are in danger of being overtaken. In this hallucination there are chances that you could make your mind to search a new job where your skills are more useful. Keeping in mind that it is not easy to hit upon a definitive solution that meets all needs and certain core skills will never go away will help you a lot. At the same time be proactive.



CAPRICORN: It would be in your interest not to be influenced through persuasion & pressurized situations especially in the mid of the month. Your competitors will try to mislead you. You must tackle the situation by keeping your spirits high. At month end- there are chances that you might meet some spirited people who will channelize your determination & courage to enable you to bring some excellent results at professional front.



AQUARIUS: You will find it very tough to handle your subordinates this month. The problem could be compounded by some challenging assignments. It is time for you to turn the tide in your favour by exhibiting your real talent. At the same time your love for a life of ease & comfort will give you the desired energy to keep pace with these fast changing events.



PISCES: Professional life promises success on putting-in sincere & hard working efforts. Keeping business interests in mind would help in making promising agreements. In mid of the month you are likely to be assigned an important responsibility. Success is also on the card for people aspiring to join interior designing course.

I Lost My Job: I Feel Worthless And Depressed

Dear Deep Essence,

I got laid off a week ago. I was working 70 hours a week and had been at this company for 10 years. I don't know who I am anymore. I feel worthless and depressed. I don't even have the energy to look for another job. Please tell me how to get over this.



AQSA ZAREEN FAROOQUI

Regards,
Mr. Stressed

Dear Mr. Stressed,

It seems like you have always measured your worth by what you do. But how can you even measure what you did? How is it weighed and by whom? Who gets to decide whether it's 'worthier' for you to sleep eight hours or work eight hours? Maybe at this time God's plan for you is to sleep and rest. You know you need it. It's possible that this is what he wants you to learn at this time.

Dear Deep Essence

To perform, to be something, to be recognized by others. Is this what life is about? If so, who were you doing this for? Invariably, the answer is me but at what cost? Sleeping five hours a night, feeling tired and fatigued, and being constantly stressed. Is that a state you desire to live by?

No, I don't believe your 'doing' mode was truly for yourself. I think you did it for the monster in you. The part that believes that if you earned more than others, did more than others then that would make you a bigger person, and consequently a better human being.

Take out five minutes from your day and ask yourself a question. Is the drama that you were caught up in, was that for your well-being or was it just for the façade of security at a very big price?

Please don't take this to mean that you should not look for another job. But take this time as a period of self-reflection. Give yourself and your body a break. I would suggest spending fifteen days just resting and enjoying yourself at home. Find out who you are without your job. That way you won't get caught up in this same dilemma again.

***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, email her at info@deepsence.com All inquiries will be kept strictly confidential. ***

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.

SuDoku Solutions

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

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

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EVENTS

Inner Engineering Program by Isha

FEBRUARY 11

Yoga. The program is an opportunity to discover your true inner nature as a peaceful, utterly blissful human being.

When: Feb 11-17, 2009 Weekdays 7:00 p.m-10:00 p.m, Sat 10:00 a.m-1 p.m, Sun 8:00 a.m-5:00 p.m. Cost: \$290.

Where: Hilton Atlanta Northeast, 5993 Peachtree Industrial Blvd. Norcross, GA 30092
Contact: 614-354-2474 or email atlanta@ishafoundation.org

INDO-AMERICAN FILM SOCIETY & Program of South

FEBRUARY 13

and Southeast Asian Studies, Emory University is pleased to present " Swapna Vijayam – The Making"

Co-Directors: Raktim Sen, Anshul Jain and Rekha Radhakrishnan
Executive Producer: Ani Agnihotri
Cost: \$8/person. Free for Emory Students and staff with valid

When: Feb 13, 2009 at 7.00PM
Where: White Hall 208, Emory University
Contact: Kiran Agnihotri
Kiranagni@gmail.com / 770-310-3998
Ravi Penumarthi: Kuchipudi@BellSouth.net / 678-473-1753
Kim Palumbarit: KPALUMB@emory.edu

Be My Valentine 2k9 @ Shahi Banquet

FEBRUARY 14

Hall - Lawrenceville, Ga
Live Entertainment, Dance & Dinner Party
When: Feb 14 & 15, 2009, Time: 8:30 p.m - 2:00 a.m
Where: Exquisite Shahi Banquet Hall, 851 Oak Road, Lawrenceville, GA-30044
Contact: Sonny Molu , Tel : 404-229-9958
Web Link: <http://www.InstylePro.com>
Email: Events@InStyleProl.com

G A T S Cultural Event & Pongal Celebration

FEBRUARY 14

Chief Guest: Rufus Parker, Movie Producer
Programs include Music, Dance, Skits, and Childrens' talents
When: Feb 14, 2009, Time : 2:00 p.m - 7:00 p.m
Where: Meadowcreek High School, 4455, Steve Reynolds Blvd, Norcross, GA-30093
Contact: Anuraga Raghuraj Tel: 770-367-1861
Email: anuragaraj@gmail.com

Science of Kriya Yoga & Meditation to Manage Thoughts & Emotions

FEBRUARY 14

A Workshop with Paramahansa Atmanandaji
When: Feb 14 & 15, 2009
Where: February 14th at Global Mall, February 15th at Fulton County Public Library
Contact: Nilesh Sharma Tel: 404.324.3302
Email: atlanta.kriyayog@gmail.com
Web Link: <http://www.kriyajoga.com>

Tyagaraju: Musical Drama

FEBRUARY 15

This is a part of the CAMAGA's Great Composer's day celebrations.
When: Feb 15, 2009, Time: 10.30 a.m

Where: Hindu Temple of Atlanta, 5851 GA HWY 85, Riverdale, GA 30274.
Contact: Ram Sriram, 770-493-6534; Kalpana Rengarajan, 770-923-1755.

Art Of Living Course

FEBRUARY 17

Millions around the world have found that the techniques taught in the Art of Living Course have given them:

- Simple and practical tools to eliminate stress from their life
- Tools to handle their mind and negative emotions
- Increased clarity of mind
- More energy to work throughout the day
- Better health
- Improved relationships at home and at work

Course to be held in 2 venues:
1)Art of Living Center - Atlanta, Roswell Rd
2)Studioplex lofts

When: Feb 17- 22, 2009
Time: Tu, We, Th, Fr: 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM; Sa , Su: 10 AM to 4 PM

Where: Art of Living Center, 7730 Roswell Rd, Suite 400, Atlanta, GA 30350
Studioplex lofts
659 Auburn Ave, Atlanta, GA 30312
Contact: Pratik Jagad, Tel: 1.877.AOLIVING
Web Link: <http://us3.artofliving.org/ga/atlanta>

Harinam and chanting of Lord Krishna's bhajans organized by Hare Krishna Temple

FEBRUARY 20

Atlanta at Global Mall , Norcross on the February 20th, Friday, 2009 and every third Friday of each month. All are invited to participate.

When: Feb 20, 2009, Time: 7.30 p.m to 9.00 .pm
Where: Global Mall, 5675 Global Mall Jimmy carter Blvd, Norcross, GA-30076
Contact: Hare Krishna temple, Balabhadra Dasa 404 296 5209, Madanmohan 770 979 6679
Web Link: <http://www.atlantaharekrishnas.org>

HTA Sankranthi Celebrations.

FEBRUARY 21

Entertainment & Dinner
When: Feb 21, 2009, Time: 6:00 p.m
Where: The Hindu Temple of Atlanta, Ga Hwy 85, Riverdale, GA
Contact: Dr. H.N. Ramaswamy, Tel: 770 941 0991
Email: kannadakoota@usa.com
Web Link: <http://www.atlantakannada.org>

International Bridal Affair

FEBRUARY 22

Photographers| Decorators| Event Planners| Destination Weddings Engagement Rings & Wedding Bands|Bridal attire| |Champagne Bar|Complimentary Cuisine|Live Fashion Show|

When: Feb 22, 2009, Time: 1:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m
Where: The Westin Atlanta North, 7 Concourse Parkway, Atlanta, GA-30328
Contact: Vanita Vaswani, Tel: 864.907.2003
Email: info@envieventplanning.com
Web Link: <http://www.bridalaffair2009.com>

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A Bride's Dream Come True

This is the season of brides and bridal wear. Designers are buzz with their new bridal collections for spring. With recession hitting the demand for designer wear; it is the Indian wedding that has come to the rescue of the fashion industry!

This season, lehngas in orange, purple, bottle green, ivory and reddish maroon are in. Each lehnga is loaded with heavy work, and worn with an embellished banarasi dupatta.

I have introduced the A-line, semi-A line and the fish tail cut this season. The materials are a



combination of brocade, tanjoi, shimmer and net. Four layers go into the making of each lehnga. The shimmer material is used as lining. The net made of French lace goes next, bringing out the shimmer from underneath. The net is inlaid with bright real stones.

This year, dots are passé, and stripes are in. The cholis are usually long (at least 18 inches). Dupattas make statements of their own. Some pieces have two dupattas, one for the shoulder, and one to cover the bride's head. The dupatta is heavily embellished with aari work, zardosi, beads, sequins, cut danas, mirror work, swarovski crystals, diamonds etc.

Bridal Jewelry: Heavy, chunky sets that match the outfit with kundan, big stones etc. The rule is to wear jewelry with antique gold polish for the wedding, and platinum with diamonds or crystals that match the outfit for the reception. Use your imagination to wear bangles. I would pair a broad kada with work that matches the embroidery of the lehnga, with eight bangles on either side that color co-ordinate with the basic color of the outfit, and finish on either side with stone bangles for the sparkle. The tikha or matha patti can either be a long one (for a round face) or an oval one (for the slim face). Finish with a nice stone bindi .



BY RANI SHARMA

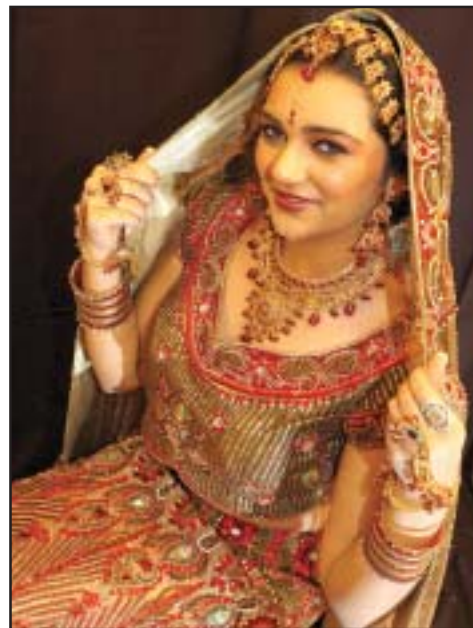
Purses: Avoid clutches. Carry a potli or guchi purse in colors that match the outfit.

Make-up: Bronze make-up brings forth the shine on the south Asian skin tone. Start with the moisturizer and concealer, then apply foundation that matches your skin tone. Finish with a dry compact. Blush on some color to your cheeks and end with a touch of bronzer. Paint your lips in bright maroon lipstick and eye shadows that match the outfit. Don't forget to rub some lotion or roll-on shimmer on your forearms.

Hairstyle: Top knot, or French knot with a fresh flower on the side works best.

Footwear: Comfort is the key. Wear platform or wedge heels in gold or silver.

Groom's wear: An innovative trend this season is for the groom to wear outfits that contrast that of the bride. If the bride wears red, the groom wears an ivory sherwani. The contrast makes for great photo shoots. For the reception, the groom wears a suit that has been indianized with a collar



that is embellished with swarovski crystals or embroidery.

The designer works in coordination with the decorator, color-matching the bride's and grooms outfits and wrapping gifts according to scheme. The end result is the dream wedding that every bride looks forward to!

Rani Sharma is the owner of Raneez Boutique in Decatur. For fashion tips, write to her at rani@nripulse.com.

Necklace With Amore

ROMA
CREATIONS

February is the month of expressing your love for others. We celebrate Valentine's Day on the 14th of this month, and February is the month of Romance. So let us create a simple project.

A simple necklace strung together with some glass beads of heart shape and added with some swarovski bicones. So how about creating a heart necklace with some Amore?

Materials needed: 1 Clear Crystal heart shape for pendant, 14 pieces Red color heart shaped glass beads, 92 pieces – 6mm swarovski bicones colors of your choice, 1 pair SS ear wires, 3 – 1" SS headpins, 1 – SS clasp, SS jump rings, SS crimping beads, 1- SS pinch bail, Flexible stringing Wire, beading mat.

Tools needed for the project: Crimping Pliers, Long nose Pliers, Cutter. Now Layout your design on a beading mat and you are ready to string your necklace and a pair of earrings. I hope you enjoyed the project.

Happy Valentine's Day!



If you have any questions/comments/suggestions you are always welcome to contact: Meena Iyer, Roma Creations
meena@romajewels.com 770-9043135


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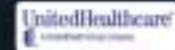
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