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Today

Monthly Newspaper

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Holi, The Festival of Colors

The month of March is perhaps the most colorful in the world. Why, because it is the month of Holi, the festival of colors. Once celebrated mainly in north India, today Holi is celebrated all around the world, by people of all ages. It is a celebration of pure fun and happiness. Here, there are no strangers. With a touch of color to the cheeks or to the forehead, every stranger becomes a friend, unknown becomes known, and the party becomes all the more fun. This year's Holi celebration in Phoenix took place at the South Mountain Park on Sunday, March 8, 2015. Organized by India Association of Phoenix, this was • **More on P26**

IACRF CELEBRATES GRAND INDIA FESTIVAL

The 17th Grand India Festival held on Saturday, March 14, 2015 at the Indo-American Community Center in Phoenix was a big success drawing a large number of people who took advantage of the beautiful weather to come and partake in the celebrations. The event organized by the IACRF in conjunction with all sister organizations is one of the major ethnic festivals in the Valley.

Festival goers enjoyed a scintillating, fun-filled, vicarious tour of a 'desi mela' as the event provided a unique opportunity for residents of the greater Phoenix area to experience a variety of foods, cultural performances and shopping so typical of fairs and melas in India without having to make the long journey to their mother land! It was the perfect setting for friends and family to enjoy time together and have fun. There was something for everyone – good food, fun games for children, great shopping and of course wonderful entertainment put up by local talent.

Tasty Indian Food made by local Chefs from the AZ GOSHALA, Gujarati Community, Hindu Temple

• **More on P16-17**

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Basant Mela by PICO (Pakistan Information and Cultural Organization)

On March 7, 2015 PICO organized its 13th annual kite flying festival called Basant Mela. Asia Today shares some colorful pictures from the well-organized event.





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Why do you...?

I am constantly asked these questions by individuals which relate to my experiences with another individual. Why do you let him/her do that to you? Why you do let him/her treat you like that? Why is this your responsibility? Why do you have to do that? And the list goes on and on. As I listen to the questions imposed by individuals, I notice a few things: 1) They are not impacting the person asking the question in any way whatsoever – it is me giving up my time, energy, etc. to go out of my way to do something, 2) The person asking the question has probably asked me to do something similar for them in the past and had no issues with me doing it for them but they question why I am doing it for someone else or comment on the inconvenience of it for me. I want to explain to them that if it wasn't in my nature to do things for those I loved or forgive trivial comments, I would also not be capable of doing it for them. Instead of questioning why I am doing it for someone else, they should make the connection that my ability to do it for others gives me the ability to do it for them and the day I stop, I will stop for everyone including the person posing the question. However, I don't provide the explanation because I know they won't get it so I let it go and move.

As I ponder this explanation and decide not to provide it, a realization comes to me. Why do I owe someone a justification for doing something for another individual? The only person that has the right to ask questions like these of me is myself and no one else. If I am giving up time, energy, money, or whatever else may be valuable to me for another individual, the only person that has the right to question or pass judgment on that action is myself – not even the person I am doing it for. Furthermore, the only person that has the



Editor's NOTE

right to judge whether what I did was good enough is myself since I went out of my way to do something. I am responsible for deciding to do it, deciding if what I did was good enough, for deciding to do it again, and also for deciding who I will and will not do it for. Also putting to rest the question of why can you do it for him/her but not me?

I am also the only one that has the right to decide whether someone is treating me well or unwell. So questions such as why do you let him/her treat you like that? Why do you let him/her get away with that? Those are another

set of questions that no individual has a right to ask of me because they know nothing of the context of the relationship or situation those were said in. Maybe I know of the golden heart a person possesses and knew the extreme stress someone was under and decided to excuse it away to that because of my love for them. But that was my choice and a choice I don't regret and I am happy with. So why does someone get to come in and question those choices or tell me I should be upset or am being treated unfairly?

As this realization dawns on me, I realize I have two options in front of me. I could either go around providing this long-winded explanation anytime I am posed with this question. Or I could come to peace with what I have observed internally and disregard these questions anytime they are asked of me because the only person I owe an explanation to of why I do what I do is myself. And as long as I am content with what I did every morning I wake up, it is worth doing all over again.

-Deepa Kaur Walia
Editor, Asia Today, editor@asiatodayaz.com



Marketing Director NOTE

Hello Friends,
Another month is over...
This was the most colorful month..Holi was celebrated all over Arizona, people rubbed Gulal and abeer on each other's faces and cheer up, it was really fun to see kids playing holi.

Now another very color full festival is around the corner..yes its Baisakhi The birth of the Khalsa which is celebrated on every Baisakhi Day I wish you all a very happy Baisakhi in advance.. hope to see you Baisakhi festival.

Manju Walia
Marketing Director, Asia Today
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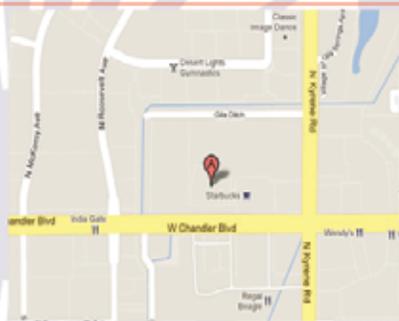
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Hare Krishna Temple, Chandler celebrated Holi on March 22nd, 2015. After the Raj Bhog arati, Syama Mohini devi dasi explained the significance of Holi. There were lot of Holi colors. Adults and children had lots fun with water balloons and squirt guns. There was nice selection of food also.





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PRESENTATION BY HG SURESHVARA PRABHU - APRIL 25TH 10:15AM - 11:45AM, 1:15PM - 2:30PM
 APRIL 28TH 10:15AM - 11:45AM
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Anant Shri Vibhushit Jagadguru Bhaktimayi Meera Bai Sarvanandamayi Lakshmi Devi Sai Maa (Mataji) is a world renowned spiritual master, leader and global humanitarian. Since reaching full realization through the grace of Her Guru, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Mataji has devoted Her life to spreading Sanatana Dharma around the world, tirelessly serving Her noble mission of global enlightenment.

Sai Maa was born on the island of Mauritius, a country known for embracing all religions and spiritual traditions. This spirit of openness, acceptance, and interfaith cooperation, helped shape Sai Maa's universal message of unity and compassion. Mataji's deeply spiritual parents gave Her a traditional Hindu upbringing teaching Her to honor and respect the divinity of life in all things. At an early age Sai Maa demonstrated esoteric healing powers, which blossomed as her mission unfolded.

In January 2007, Mataji received the title of Jagadguru in the Vishnuswami lineage of Vaishnavism, in recognition of Mataji's humani-



tarian service and spiritual mastery. Mataji became the first woman to receive this honorable title.

Sai Maa founded the Sai Maa Vishnu Shakti Trust (SMVST), a registered, non-profit, charitable organization established in Varanasi, India. The humanitarian work includes food distributions to the impoverished, flood relief work, distributions of warm clothing and blankets during winter, medical camps, adult cataract surgeries, vitamin A distributions to children and a women's center and shelter.

Sai Maa's global community is formed of students from the USA, Canada, Mexico, South America, Europe, Israel, Africa, Australia, Japan, and India. Sai Maa tours the world offering Darshan and programs to thousands.

Sai Maa will be offering Darshan at Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort in Phoenix on May 8, 2015 starting at 7pm. The event is free to the public and open to everyone. Please come and receive the blessings of the Embodiment of Divine Mother in the Valley of the Sun.

May 8, 2015 7:00pm Darshan with Sai Maa Open to All No Charge

May 9, 2015 10am-3pm Enlighten Your Brain Workshop

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For more information visit: sai-maa.com

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Maata Jagran

Friday April 10th, 2015
7:00pm-9:00pm

Contact: Shashi (480) 614-1322

Satyanarayanji Puja

Saturday April 4th, 2015
7:00pm-8:30pm

Contact: Nirmal (480) 926-8835

Hanumanji Puja

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Contact: Sushma (480) 970-4439

Venkateswara Swami Puja

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Contact: Sriniji (602) 535-6989

Sunday Puja

11am-1pm

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2nd Sunday - Shri Jagannathji
3rd Sunday - Balaji & Krishnaji
4th Sunday - Shivji Puja
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5th Sunday - Ganeshji Puja

Contact Temple Priest at (480) 874-3200 for any information related to Temple Puja events or if you need to schedule any Special Puja at Home.

Acknowledgements

HTA Board thanks Udupi Restaurant for providing Prasad during weekly, monthly, and yearly events and functions at the Temple.

Hindu Temple of Arizona



HTA EVENTS April 2015



Hanuman Jayanti, Satyanarayanji Puja, & Maata Jagran



Hanuman Jayanti celebrations: April 4th (Saturday 11:00AM - 6:00 PM Hanuman chalisa recital 108 times, Sponsorship \$51 for each chalisa, looking for multiple sponsorships)

Prasad sponsored by Udupi Restaurant

Satyanarayanji Puja : April 4th (Saturday 7:00 – 8:30 PM, Sponsorship \$101)

Maata Jagran: April 10th (Friday 7:00 - 9:00 PM, Sponsorship \$101)

Upcoming event: Nabkalebara 2015 from May 14th through 17th, 2015)

For additional details:

Hanuman chalisa recital:	Ashwani Bakshi	@ (480) 250 -0903
Scheduling puja at home:	Rohit Aggarwal	@ (248) 613 - 4615
Satyanarayan (Small) Murti	Surendra Singh	@ (203) 300- 2302

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AND THAT'S MY HUMBLE DENTAL OPINION...ASK DR. GIDWANI

QUESTION: Dear Dr. **Gidwani,**

I have been wearing dentures for many years but recently, they have become loose and make me uncomfortable. Food gets under them and the corners of my mouth seem to be sticky and wet always. What can I do? PM.

Dear PM,

Your condition is not uncommon. All dentures tend to get loose and worn out over time, As a result of this, it does not fit the gums well, trapping food, creating sore spots and moving around when you chew. It's also because your supporting bone holding the dentures have also shrunk over time and now is too small for your dentures.

In time , the teeth also

wear out and cannot hold the jaws apart as far as they used to. So the distance between your upper and lower jaw reduces creating a deeper fold in the corners of you mouth. As a result of this, saliva flows into those corners and makes them wet and sticky.

Some people even develop a fungal infection on the corners of their mouth around the lips.

Solution: It is advisable to change your dentures especially if it over five to seven years old. The old plastic of the dentures tend to trap fungi and the acrylic becomes porous overtime creating a smell.

If you do not want to



change it, you could get it RELINED or RE BASED.

A reline fills in the voids where the bone has shrunk and tightens the adaptation between the denture base and the bone. However, this will not improve your wet lip condition because your teeth are still going to remain flattened out by wear.

If you are in good health with no major heart, diabe-

tes or a non smoker, mini implants are an excellent option for you. Several tiny titanium implants are placed into the jaw bone which have attachments on them and a new set of dentures are made to snap over these dentures. These work very well, increase confidence and prevent slipping and moving of the dentures. We have made many of these and it can be a life style changer.

But, there is yet another option. It is expensive and done by implant specialists. These are called " IMPLANT SUPPORTED FIXED DENTURES". Here, 4 to 6 larger diameter implants are places in the jaw bone and dentures

are fixed onto these. They are pricey. need maintenance, but are very convenient.

Dentures are like brake pads. The more you chew, the more they get worn out. Jaw bones change over time. Plastics change with age and constant saliva exposure.

The only constant thing in life is change.

And so it is with dentures.....

Best wishes

Dr. Gidwani

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Zakir Hussain's Pulse of the World: Celtic Connections

On Tuesday, March 24, 2015, Arizona residents enjoyed a vibrant and joyful blend of Celtic and Indian Classical music at the Musical Instrument Museum. The group of nine gifted musicians was headed by the world renowned tabla maestro, Ustad Zakir Hussain. The musicians blended together lively Celtic tunes and rhythms along with sage Indian Classical ragas and beats. The result was a Divine experience that transported the guests to a higher level of consciousness.



and has played at renowned theaters and concert halls, including the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. He has accompanied and collaborated with famous musicians like YoYo Ma, Joe Henderson, John McLaughlin and L Shankar. His third concerto, the first composed for tabla, will premier in Mumbai later this year.

Accompanying Zakir-ji were Rakesh Chaurasia on Bamboo flute, Fraser Fifield on flute and bagpipes, Jean-Michel Veillon on flute, Ganesh Rajagopalan on violin, Charlie McKerron and Patsy Reid on the fiddle, Tony Byrne on guitar, and John Joe Kelly on the truly magical Celtic percussion instrument, the Bodhran.

Ustad Zakir Hussain, is a multiple Grammy-award winner, and considered worlds' greatest percussionist. He has performed and composed for films, ballets, orchestras,

Photo Courtesy: Jim McGuire.

Congratulations

Mr. Pavan Yedavalli tied the knot with Sasha Gupta, they got married in the presence of their family members and friends.

Many congratulations on tying the knot! May this is just the beginning of a happy life together. Wish you both a prosperous future ahead.



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Fashion is represented in unique ways throughout many different countries in the world. Each country has its own trends, its own style, and its own people who exemplify the country's unique fashion on the streets. Some countries that show a strong sense of individualism through what they wear are Tokyo, Paris, London, India, and the U.S..

In Tokyo, it is all about the three P's: plaid, platforms, and prints. For plaid, it all started when the employees of Bubbles Harajuku (a very famous boutique in Japan) started incorporating plaid into their everyday outfits. People, specifically teenage girls, took to this trend very quickly and began displaying it on the streets. Platform shoes and sandals quickly became popular as well amongst high school girls as they paired it with their plaid and other trends around the country. Also, two words: cherry prints. Cherries have taken over the Harajuku style; everything from dresses to earrings to shoes is embellished with cherries, and the girls of Tokyo love it. In the U.S., slip dresses, pantsuits,

Fashion Around the World



and velvet are the trends amongst the people. These three trends have a certain edge to them along with a sense of femininity, which is what makes them such popular pieces between girls around the nation.

In Paris, it's all about contemporary minimalism through jumpsuits, neutral colors, and mesh fabric. Jump-

suits are given a modern edge with accessories such as belts, scarves, and statement jewelry to add to this chic uniform look. Neutral colors are also a hit in Paris; they suit everyone and can be dressed up and dressed down. Mesh, according to Vogue Paris, gives a, "suggestive allure," and is, "this season's answer to graphic sportswear."

In London, mod, fringe, and flare are the trends of the country. London fashion focuses greatly on bringing the '70's back, and each time it is more successful than the last. These three styles are showing up on every piece of clothing from pants to tops to jackets, and are great to wear for every occasion. In India, one thing street style includes is chunky statement jewelry, which according to Vogue India, "exudes feminine and carefree vibes." Another trend that is taking over the streets of India is oversized and clean cut tops and dresses which represents a chic and effortless look. High waisted skirts, pants, and shorts are also a thing of the present in India as they are paired with flowy tops and fun jewelry.

Again, fashion is represented in different ways throughout the world and is specific and unique to each country.



-Sammy Mallik

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Hiking a Healthy Habit

Health Conscious Adults: Many Indo-American Community members hike in Metro Phoenix to keep physically in shape, stay healthy and enjoy the fabulous mountains around the city with clean refreshing morning air. Sunday morning Hike is a way of life to many. Shown in the photo from L to R are Devendra Majmundar, Mahendra Patel, Meghji Patel, Bhagubhai Patel, Jayaben Patel, Anjana Majmundar, Mina Kotehca, Prakash Kotecha, Ramesh Patel and Mahesh Shah - from Southeast Valley hiking in South Mountain. To join Sunday Morning Hike group, please contact Ramesh Patel ramesht.patel@yahoo.com or Prakash Kotehca pvkotecha@gmail.com Submitted by: Bhagubhai Patel



Sat Sri Akal, Namaste to all my Readers.

A common phrase we hear in our daily life and narrated by every religious person, "Have Faith in God." A very simple phrase, yet the most difficult to believe and follow. We need to walk the talk.

Almost everyone say "I believe in God" but without needs, we never pray to god. If we do pray, our prayers are demands, not for Thanks, Love, and Grace. We visit Temples, Gurudwara's and places of worship for social reasons. And when we make donation, we donate for Name and Fame. Our worshipping the God as mentioned before, is not a relationship with divine, it's merely a condition.

Divine Grace is not possible with conditions.

My purpose of sharing views with the readers, is to convey one and only one message. Oh my friends! "Life is Dark without Meditation and Selfless Prayers" Those who

Faith in God

pray to god with unconditional love, are able to see and experience him everywhere.

Today, I would like to share an experience of a well know devotee Baba Farid Ji. Sufi saint, Baba Farid Ji was born in Multan, Punjab, now in Pakistan. At a very young age, Farid Ji, learned devotion from his mother.

When young Farid, saw his mother praying, he asked his mother, Mom! Who are you talking to? Humbly, mom replied, "God." With curiosity, Farid Ji asked, why can't I see him? Where is He Mama? Mom answered "My son, he is everywhere." Finally he asked, "Mom, can he listen to me?" Yes, my son, he can listen to you, and he listen to everyone. Next he asked, "Can God give me, whatever I ask for?" Mother filled with curiosity asked, "My sweet child, what do you want from him?" He answered,

"I want sweets from him." Like all children's, little Farid was also attached to sweets.

Farid's mother was a true believer. He asked mother again for confirmation, "when will god give me sweets?" She replied "whenever you wake up in the morning, sit down with folded hands, closed eyes, and pray, "Oh divine, inner knower and ocean of mercy, give me sweets." Afterwards look under your pillow, and you shall find sweets for yourself. The child's mind was pure and he was 100% with his mother words.

Next morning, Farid woke up and said his prayer as per the instructions of his mother. Afterwards upon looking under the pillow, he found sweets as desired. The fulfillment of wishes transformed mother's instructions into faith in child's mind, and morning prayers became a routine.

One morning, circum-

stances forced mother to leave early and she forgot top place the sweets under Farid's pillow. After realizing her mistake, she prayed, "Oh kind protector of the devotee's faith, please bless my child with grace and need."

Routinely, after waking up, Farid offered his prayers and found sweets. Today the sweets were different and unique which he enjoyed blissfully. That day was unique in the life of both Mother and child, when both their prayers became truth.

Mother arrived home nervously, thinking Farid would ask, "Why didn't I get sweets today?" Baba farid prompted, "Mother! I need the same sweet every day because it was unique and tasted different from past" After hearing from Farid, mom was thrilled with unspeakable joy and became a divine mother.

If you wish to develop faith, throw away your mental cleverness, religious doctrine and dogmatic theory.

Become like a child, surrender yourself to the divine. Like a child who cry's for sweets, cry to the divine mentally with pure heart. He will come to protect you from any worldly distractions and bless you with a divine present; and you will be able to say "Have faith in God."

By birth Baba Farid Ji was Muslim. By God's grace he became a divine candle in the Sufi saint's history. Remember! When any human has a divine experience his and her religion transforms to humanity and unconditional love.



Please pray every day for Love and Grace.

Gyani Ji Harbhajan Singh Sandhu

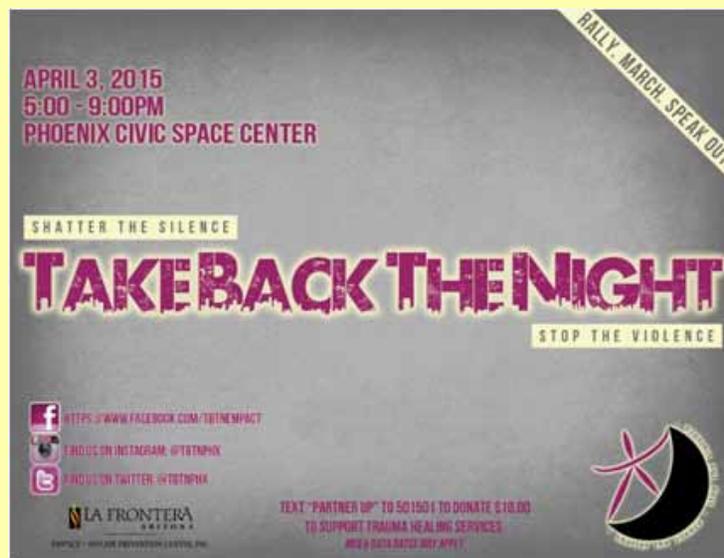
GHSSandhu@gmail.com

Take Back the Night 2015 Phoenix

Phoenix, Arizona (April 3, 2015)-We don't hear enough from sexual assault and domestic violence survivors. According to the Department of Public Safety, every 22 minutes in Arizona, a person becomes a victim of a violent crime. We all know one. Here is our opportunity to hear their voices. Join us in becoming part of the solution at this year's Take Back the Night.

Take Back the Night is a global grassroots movement uniting communities to speak out against all forms of sexual and domestic violence. Any and all persons can be targeted by violence. This year

in Arizona, we are working to change the culture in our community by educating and advocating for those most at risk. As a border state and home of two Pac-12 schools, victims of sexual and domestic violence in Arizona face unique sets of barriers for seeking and receiving aid. With education,



end cycles that perpetuate violence.

On April 3, 2015, the Trauma Healing Services department of La Frontera Arizona/EMPACT-SPC will be hosting Take Back the Night at the Civic Space Parkin Phoenix from 5:00pm-

open to the community. Agencies from the community will be tabling to provide information and outreach. Survivors and supporters will be able to express themselves via designing t-shirts and posters relating their story and their messages of support. The schedule includes yoga and mindfulness demonstrations, live music, food trucks, a candlelight vigil with survivor storytelling, and a rally through First Fridays to raise awareness.

Join us on April 3rd in shattering the silence and speaking out against violence! Your voice matters!

support, and resources, we 9:00pm. The event is free and

‘Indradhanush’ the Rainbow’

On February 22nd, Sunday evening, the art lovers of Phoenix metro were treated to a beautiful program called ‘Indradhanush’ the Rainbow’, presented by Indo American Cultural Connect. The 800 seat auditorium of the Scottsdale Center for Performing Arts was brimming with eager audience to take away sweet memories with them.

True to the expectations, the first part of the program, ‘Parijatha’ was a mesmerizing performance beautifully choreographed. Parijatha propagated only one thing ... it was all about Love.. beautifully presented by five stalwarts of different dance forms, Nita Mallya, Almagul Temirtekova, Radhika Kotwal, Rajul Shah and Padma Aking, combined by the injection of the ecstatic emotions presented in sand art by the sand artist Subhada Sahasrabudhe. Just like the fact that Love cannot be presented in the form of tangible matter, words cannot do justice to what one felt and experienced, watching these great artists come together to one beautifully presented rhythm and form. It can be compared to a kid seeing all his superheroes come together in one story. The graceful tukra of Kathak, the beautiful bhanga of Odissi, the meaningful bhavam of Bharatnatyam to the well choreographed Thalam...with a narration of sensuous emotions by Karla Tandon, well projected by forms taking shape on sand, has left goose bumps on the wide eyed watchers..... desiring more and more.

The second part of the program, presented by “Yellow Bird Productions” was a symbol of simplicity and



connection with nature. Presented by Ken and Doreen Duncan from the San Carlos Apache tribe, this program presented the unique spirit of American Indian through song dance and stories. They also mesmerized the audience with their world famous hoop dancers ranging from small kids to mature adults.

Indo American Cultural Connect has been bringing memorable events, presenting them to the art and cultural patrons of Phoenix and creating wonderful memories. IACC wholeheartedly thanks all its patrons and promoters for the support they have been receiving.



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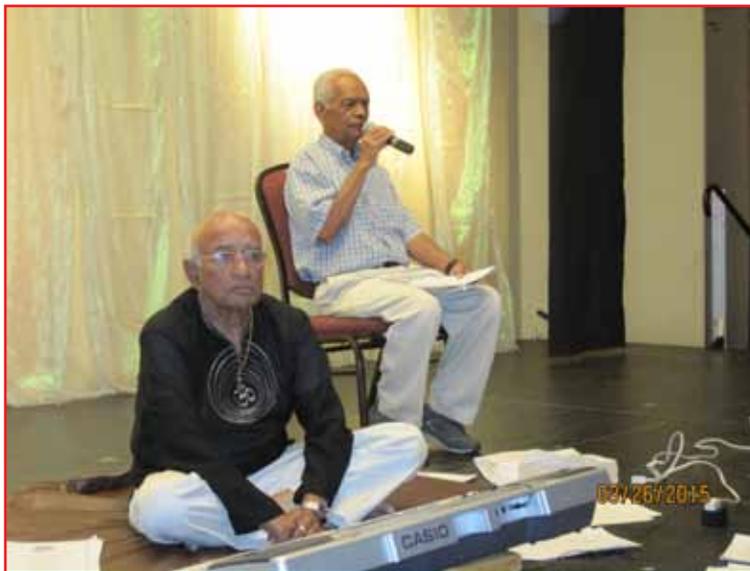
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Senior Folk's Thursdays at Community Center

The Senior Group gatherings had some exciting moments with celebrating various events like Valentine's Day, Picnic and preparing for Dandia Ras for the Grand India Festival. Eleven members returning from India visit shared their opinion and experience of changing India under NaMo Modi Effect, Inflation, historical and pilgrimage places that they visited. The places included Banaras, Patna, Kolkata and Bhubaneswar - exciting pilgrimage and site seeing!!

Seniors celebrated Valentine day with 'young at heart' feeling by offering Rose to their sweethearts. Additional attraction of a skit from Meenaben and Sureshaben made it more lively and the celebration became nostalgic as Sevantibhai did a Bollywood style cooking to Sureshaben by singing with action "Tari Ankha No Afini"!

Seniors celebrated first picnic of the year on February 26th in Papago Park which is centrally located in Metro Phoenix with beautiful buttes all around. Lots of fun hiking, doing justice to freshly cooked Pakoras & Chai, playing Antakshari & Bingo game with prizes, in warm sunny Arizona weather! Thanks to all enthusiastic and energetic volunteers for cooking, cleaning and transportation of supplies & utensils, their caring attitude is so vital for organizing a successful picnic. Ramnavami was celebrated on March 26th, several bhajans were recited by Vallabh bhai, Srikant bhai, Kali Parmanand, Harshad bhai, Deviben where everyone sing



along.

Senior "Snowbirds" are headed back to Homeland and will be missed a lot - particularly Babulal & Nayana Mehta who are almost in charge of Lunch cooking while they are in Phoenix. Abbas and Kaniza Bunglawal are returning to New Jersey and Abbas will be missed in Duplicate Bridge games. Chandrikaben Patel's

heart surgery and Meenaben Bhavsar's Knee replacement operation have gone well and seniors wish early and complete recovery to both of them.

Senior Group participated in Grand India Festival by presenting a Dandia Ras - Senior Style - and volunteering to manage the IACRF refreshment booth. Thursday Get Together have become very busy with

activities - Card games, Carom, Table Tennis, Chair Exercises, Lunch cooking, Singing and chit chatting (sometimes called gossiping!). The added benefit is an opportunity for Darshan at the Ekta Mandir.

Lunch sponsors during recent weeks were Hema & Laxmichand Gogri, Kishor Vyas & Taraben Patel, Deepa & Ramesh Bagai, Drs Abbas &

Kaniza Bunglawala, Hansa & Magan Kawa, and Kali & Mani Parmanand.

Thanks to Mahendra Devgania, Prem Lahoti and Sevanti Shah for taking photographs and sharing the same using Internet.

Contributed by:
Bhagubhai Patel and
Prakash Kotecha



Eating All the Time and All Over!

While sitting in the waiting area at the gate of a terminal of an airport to catch a flight, I happened to watch travelers pass by in the long corridors of an airport. More than two-thirds of the people had soft drinks in their hands. A good number of them were also munching on a variety of sandwiches and snacks while walking and talking.

Watching the scene at the airport, it became obvious to me that this particular kind of constant consumption is not only limited to Westerners but has now taken a strong hold among the young and especially Western-born members of the diaspora. Occasionally one may even find our younger people chewing gum, gulping drinks, and eating snacks during prayers in temples, Gurudwaras, and churches. The religious functions usually don't last more than an hour or so, yet I have seen some attendees involve themselves more in eating than concentrating on their prayers. Worse still, many do not provide rest to consuming even in the restrooms especially when it comes to a continuous nibbling on snacks. It dawned upon me that the society we live, so long as food and drinks are available and one has the money to pay for, this munching and drinking will continue irrespective of time of day, occasion, and place.

I started to compare this behavior with what we grew up back home and realized quickly that the attitudes and behavior of those gone-by days are still clearly affixed in my memory bank. Yet nothing of this sort of behavior about continuous munching came back even from those days of growing up. I remembered that in an Indian household, it was always emphasized that God, the Almighty, was the ultimate benevolence in providing the gift of food to its creation, like it is also done in some of the households here. Therefore, reverence through respect, discipline, and etiquette was considered essential when this most precious gift of food was being served.

Our parents always tried that we should all gather around the kitchen in the house at specified times each day, day in and day out to eat together. It was required for us to sit down properly around the table, if there was one in the house, or else on the kitchen floor prior to undertaking what was considered to be one of the most important functions of human life. Naturally it was not always possible for all the members of the household to assemble together at the same time in the middle of the day. But come dinner time it always was a

different story for the food could only be eaten when everyone had arrived from their respective tours of jobs, school attendance, or other activities.



In Indian culture, the meals are mostly eaten with the hands. Therefore, prior to the act of eating, we were always reminded to wash our hands thoroughly and then dry them before the meals could be served. After the food was eaten, a thorough cleansing of the teeth and mouth by gargling and rinsing was mandatory regardless of whether it was breakfast, lunch, or dinner. In fact, almost all eateries, including a simple dhaba (road side simple restaurant), had a provision for providing a place for its customers to clean their hands and mouths before and after meals. Moreover, we were repeatedly advised against eating, drinking or munching while standing, talking, or performing other chores. These practices were not something peculiar to my growing up; in fact, such was rather conventional among all the people in my part of the world.

Obviously, eating is an essential component that's necessary for the survival of all living beings, including animals, birds, and other species. But what we eat and the way we eat distinguishes us from other living creatures. My parents, like that of many others from that part of world, did not have any schooling and they didn't have college degrees. They didn't go through any formal education in nutrition. Yet they were very aware that one must practice certain amount of restraint in eating habits. Despite their limited knowledge in the science of nutrition, continuous snacking, holding in hands and gulping 44oz. glass or bottle of soft drinks were neither considered healthy nor aesthetically appealing. Except for the custom of evening tea at a specific time each day, a residual lingering custom of several years of slavery under the British rule, no other snacks were ever emphasized.

With the onslaught of so-called modern busy times and due to hurried, and harried, lifestyle, the situation back home and around the world has

changed in as far as eating habits and etiquettes are concerned. We have no time left to ourselves to enjoy the sheer beauty and gift of food or for that matter

“being alone” with ourselves. What was not acceptable at one time has easily become so. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to make us realize that all too pervasive habit of continuous munching snacks all the time along with holding glasses of soft drinks everywhere is not healthy. But unfortunately it has become part of our daily lifestyle.

On top of it, the billboards of fast food restaurants, lining the highways and byways, even in the most remote corners of the Earth, continuously keep on providing visual encouragement leading to a relentless eating. Advertisements on T.V. and in other print media don't help either; rather they add fuel to the fire in pushing this habit of continuous consumption through non-stop drinking and eating. And consume we do: we eat hamburgers while driving cars, pour handfuls of popcorn into our mouths as we talk on the phone, and bring refreshments into public restrooms. We seem to have returned to the kind of animalistic behavior that human beings consistently tried to get away from, throughout the ages.

The story of the snacks does not end here. In fact it is worth mentioning that up to a very recent past, just prior to the times of global economic downturn; the airline industry didn't stay behind, rather it had also been playing its negative role equally well to enhance and support this unique habit of continuous eating. Even for flying a short distance of an hour or so, they wouldn't hesitate in providing fuel for our tummies by offering snacks to respect our indulgence, lest we might lose some weight. As soon as one would sit down on a seat in the plane, the air hostesses' would start handing over those tiny packets of peanuts as if they were the lifelines.

This business of peanut, a favorite snack of the airline industry and the so called snacks of the poor ended up occupying an important role for quite some time. Perhaps it was convenient as well as a cheap way or both to keep our mouths shut which in turn elevated this humble snack to the forefront in satisfying those ever hungry taste-buds of passengers. One caution here, the constant use of snacks of peanuts did take a hit when the concern about peanut allergy started to re-surface. As a consequence, a shift to dry small pretzels and the likes seems to have



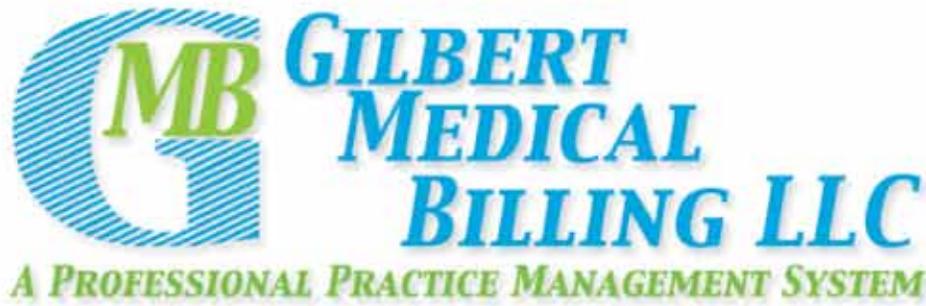
taken place. But thanks to the downturn of modern economy, these goodies now seem to be on their way out.

The homogeneity of the American culture also shows its best at the movie theatres where the popcorn, reserved for movie time always takes the center stage. The munching upon popcorn has adopted such an important significance that the experience of movie-going cannot be considered complete without holding a huge basket of popcorn in one hand and king size glass of soft drink in the other. Such was not the case back home where the social status and economical background actually determined the type of snack. In those times, the snacks served in the movie cinema varied from a simple cup of tea to elaborate dinners.

Now the questions that could be raised include: Does it matter at all if one is continuously munching on the snacks while driving or performing other important chores at the same time? Again should it bother us or should we even care if one is pumping handful of popcorn into one's wide open mouth while carrying on a conversation on a cell phone? Or does it matter if the mouth is full with a big bite of sandwich while rushing to the gate to board a plane ready to leave? Or would it be a crime if one were to head to the restroom with a drink and big barrel of popcorn in one hand while the second hand is busy opening the zipper of the pants? Finally, do I affect any one if popcorn or peanuts have come to assume an important role in our lives?

I may not have honest answers to these questions and these might not mean much to some, but I do feel that there is an element of awkwardness in this frenzy of eating when seen through the eyes of an Easterner. And maybe someday, somewhere, someone might give a little thought to it and try to find a way out of such behavior provided those hunger pangs do not raise their ugly heads and become an issue for our poor souls!

*Author of 1. “Square Pegs, Round Holes” www.SquarePegsRoundHolesBook.com and 2. “Sikhism: Points to Ponder; Perspectives of a Sikh Living Abroad,” as well as a recently published masterpiece about the cross-cultural dilemma of Indian subcontinent diaspora, 3. “One Coin, Two Sides,” For details of the this new book, please go to the LINK <http://inkwellproductions.com/one-coin-two-sides.htm>



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IACRF CELEBRATES GRAND INDIA FESTIVAL

of Arizona, Kannada Sangha of Arizona, Rajasthani Association, Vaishnav Samaj of Arizona, and the IACRF featured an array of 'desi street food' ranging from finger licking bhel puri, paani puri, samosa chaat, paav bhaji, Gota pank, Chole bhature, Chinese bhel noodles, Tandai, 'Garma garam mirchi bhajia', and mouthwatering jalebis, crisp Mysore Masala Dosas, Cotton candy, pizzas, ice cream, masala chai and much more. Indeed the wide variety offered could please any palate.

The festival gave an opportunity for people to shop for Indian apparel and costume jewelry while giving an opportunity for local businesses to promote their products, and non-profit organizations to raise awareness of the work they do.

The highlight of the festival was the Cultural program, organized by Kalpana Batni, which featured over 250 performers ranging in ages from 5 to the IACRF senior group who enthralled the audience with their talent. Audiences came to cheer the performers and were blown away by the array of talent, and the variety of performances that were showcased on stage at the Festival. From Bollywood to Tollywood, classical to Hip Hop and contemporary and folk, there was a true medley of song and dance numbers to please all tastes. The talent on display was truly amazing with some of the classical dances in traditional Bharatanatya and Odissi style, contemporary dances, the senior group garba and the musical concert by Bollywood Entertainment #1 being the show stoppers.

In all, the event was a huge success and a great time was had by one and all. The event would not have been possible without the support of all the vendors and sponsors, and the hard work of the organizing committee led by event Co-Chairs, Kulbhushan Chhibber and Manish Gupta and their team consisting of Achut Kumar, Kalpana Batni, Sudhir Kalra, Neha Gupta, Mahesh Shah, Jai Secharan and Jagdish Sagar under the leadership of President, Mr. Nate Bhadriraju and many volunteers. Special thanks to Mr. Subhash Thathi for sponsoring the drinks for the event. IACRF would like to extend its sincere thanks all the Sister Associations for their participation and support, all the artists who performed on stage, and all volunteers who helped at the event. The event would not have been possible without the combined efforts of all.

**Kalpana Batni
&
Kul Bhushan Chhibber**



IACRF CELEBRATES GRAND INDIA FESTIVAL



INDIAN SENIORS ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA (ISAA)



1. Sponsors of the March 24th luncheon 2. Sponsors of March 17th – Meena Sharma & Family and Kanwal Mumick 3. Winners of the 'Patang' game with the two sponsors 4. Sponsors of the 'Picnic' on 03-10-2015 5. Over 80 'Picnic' attendees waiting for the fake magician's program to begin! 6. Magic of the fake magician! 7. ISAA celebrates Holi 8. Sarlaben's 90th birthday celebrations by a professional magician. 9. Miniben sponsored the celebrations of Sarlaben's 90th birthday 10. Guest of honors participating in Sarlaben's birthday celebrations

On Mar 03, 2015, over eighty members and guests enjoyed the celebration of Sarlaben's 90th birthday as the magician Robert Ray pulled out his magnificent magical tricks to entertain the audience. The show was hosted by Miniben. We celebrated the colorful festival of Holi with great excitement by applying kumkum to each other remembering its significance as narrated by Narayanbhai. Dancing followed to the musical beats of Bollywood. The luncheon was sponsored by Miniben Pandit.

On Mar 10, 2015, almost eighty members and guests had a lot of fun at the first picnic of the year. Some

had a brisk morning walk, others just played cards and others had sit-down activities and plenty of socialization. Plenty of variety of bhajias for snack and badshahi chay to go with that. Prior to lunch a fake magician presented his craft and got many of our friends involved in ex-tempo fun activities like singing, dancing, telling jokes and act out. This produced miraculously lots of fun and laughter. It was an awesome picnic felt by all the attendees. All those participants played their roles with enthusiasm and high spirit. Bravo to Jitubhai for his impromptu and creative show. Luncheon included outstanding Khichadi, sabji. And Chhas. Thanks to

sponsors- Niruben, Hemlataben and Neelaben for their magic touch.

On Mar 17, 2015, it was a happy day of games and fun sponsored by Meena Sharma and Kanwal Mumick. Those who participated in the games of "hair-pins", "patang" and "balloon-passing" had quite a ball. There was appropriate music to go with each game. The winners in each game were awarded prizes. The program was highlighted with the "bhanga" music and dance to go with that. Meenaji and Kanwalji then served delicious homemade food – "Langar" to over seventy five members and guests who enjoyed that very much.

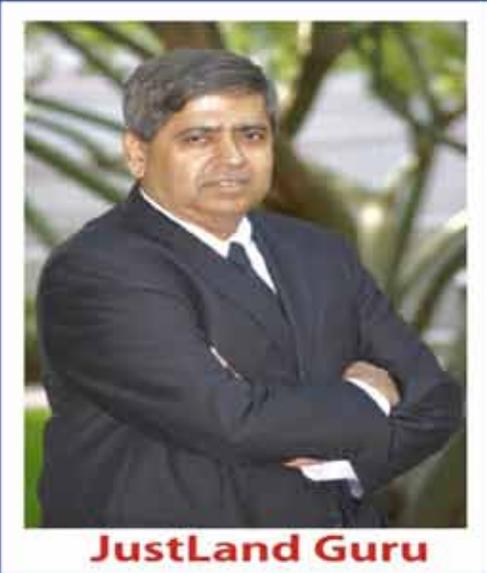
Announcements: ISAA was proud to note a personal letter of appreciation from the White House by the First Lady Michele Obama addressed to our very own Miniben. This was in recognition of her book she authored on nutrition and health. On Mar 24, 2015, Jitubhai shared two recent kitchen fire stories- having lesson learning potential - one involving a fatal injury and the other multiple injuries. One was at home and the other at a picnic. He also presented many mindboggling humorous and entertaining video clippings. Today's joint sponsors were- Jayshreeben, Meenaben, Ramaben. Well over hundred members and guests had so much fun.

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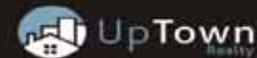
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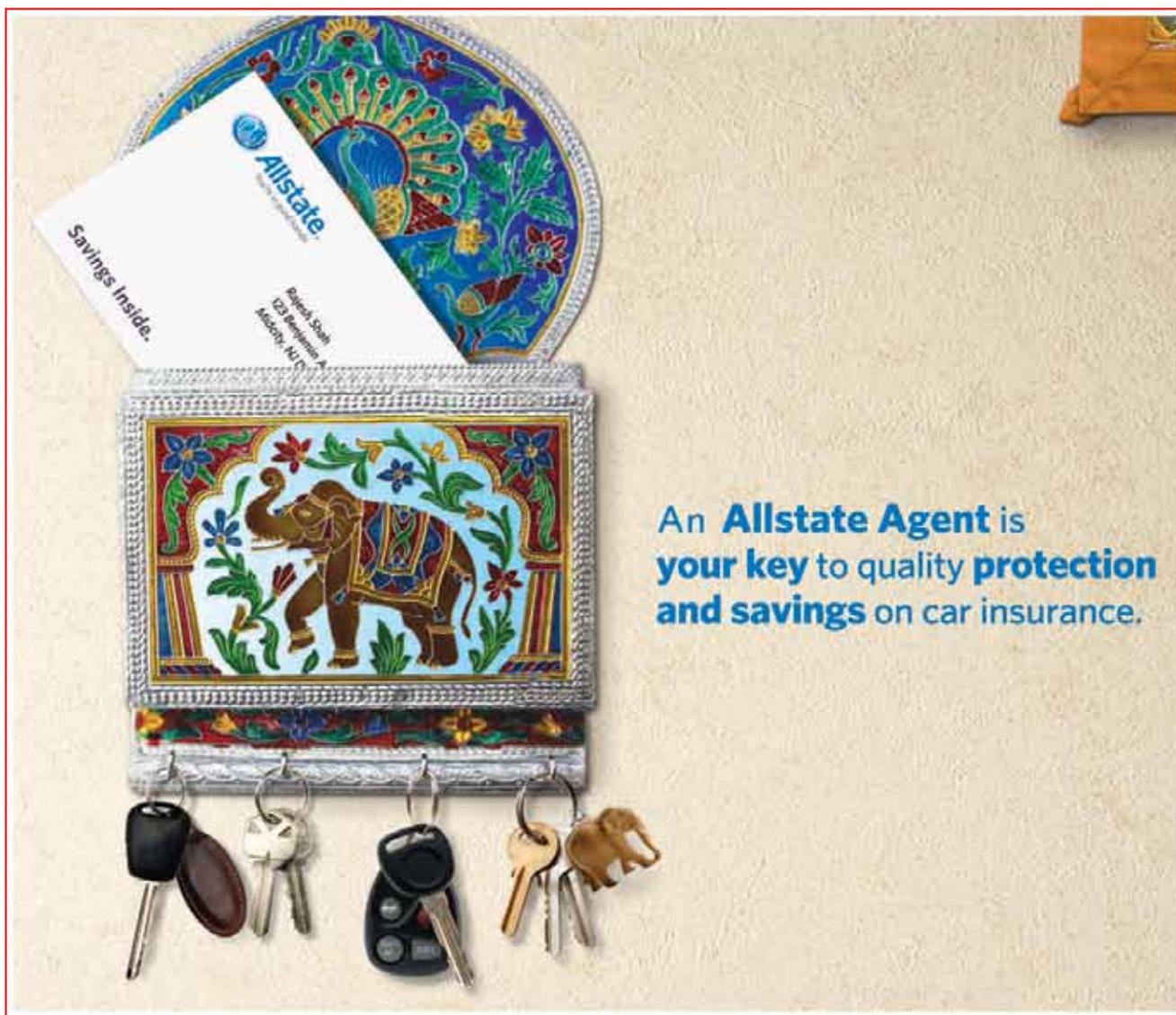
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Verma Highlands at Sonoran Ridge Estates



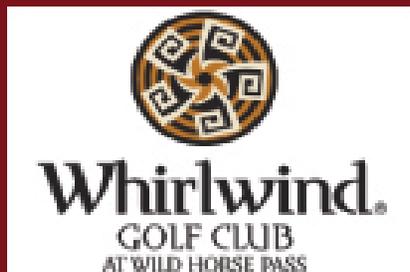
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□ Tee Box Sponsor	\$500	(Includes 1 player both days)
● Individual Player	\$150	(Friday)
	\$175	(Saturday)
	\$300	(Both Days)

Schedule of Tournaments

Day 1 - Friday, April 17th (Ind. Stroke Play)
Tournament Event to be held at
Whirlwind Golf Club (Cattail/Devil's Claw)

11:30am Registration & Boxed Lunch

1:00pm Shotgun Start

Dinner to be held at

Whirlwind Golf Club

Day 2 - Saturday, April 18th (Two Man Scramble) 2015 Tournament Sponsor
Tournament Event to be held at
Whirlwind Golf Club (Cattail/Devil's Claw)

11:30am Registration & Boxed Lunch

1:00pm Shotgun Start

Dinner & Awards to be held at

Whirlwind Golf Club



Imam Shamshad was invited by Sierra Leone Muslim Community to give the Teaching of the Quran.

Worship God alone and serve the humanity

Recently Imam Shamshad was invited to address the Sierra Leonean Muslim Community at Chicago North side that comprised of 60 people. The event took place in the House of Sheikh Mohamed Kallon at 1440 w. jonquil terrace Chicago, who is the chief Imam of the Muslim community of Sierra Leone..

Imam Shamshad was introduced by the secretary of the organization Mr. Ibrahim followed by the welcoming address by Mr. Iqbal who is the president of the group. Imam Shamshad addressed the gathering by saying it is his love and affection for the people of Sierra Leone that brought him to meet them. He said, he had opportunity to serve as a missionary for 4 years in Sierra Leone during 1980's. The love and affection that he was shown during his stay in their country has stayed with and for that matter he also want to always reciprocate that by establishing relationship with Sierra Leonean community wherever he

serves as an Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary.

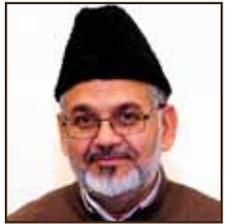
Imam told them he has traveled extensively in the country of Sierra Leone from Freetown to Kanema, Kabala, Sifadu Bo and Rukupur. The people were astonished as to how much he knows their country and listened him with profound interest.

Imam advised them that it is very important to know that why God Almighty has created human being on the earth and that what God said "For my worship alone" So we should all follow the commandments of God and try our best to offer 5 times daily prayers, as mentioned in the Holy Quran and practiced by Holy Prophet Mohammad Peace be on him. It is also important that we should help the needy and poor people of the community, Islam teaches that Muslims should be always at front to serve the Humanity, therefore Ahmadiyya Muslim mission establishes Schools, Hospitals for the benefit of people

of Africa. to include their children in all their religious activities and teach them the Tradition of Islam and its philosophy.

Lastly, Imam extended invitation to the community to visit Baitul Jamaay. He also offered to host the community's up-coming Independence Day celebrations.

the president of the community, Mr. Iqbal and the chief imam Mr Kahloon and other members thanked Imam Shamshad and requested him to provide some copies of the holy Quran with English Translation, upon which imam shamshad accepted their request and said Ahmadiyya Mission will inshallah provide copies of the Holy Quran for all interested . In the end Imam then thanked them for their hospitality.



by Imam Shamshad
A. Nasir
(Baitul Hameed Mosque
- Chino)



Sikh Awareness Travels to Community Church of Christ in Mesa

Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, M.D., F.A.A.N
Phoenix, Arizona

The author has been fortunate enough to have been provided frequent opportunities to inform people of other faiths about Sikh people and Sikhs faith. Recently about 75 members of Community of Christ Church located at Alma School and Ray Rd in Mesa, Arizona listened for one hour to a power point presentation as well as a documentary about Sikh Awareness. At the end of the talk author was asked many questions and queries.

This program was very informative covering Sikh History, Sikh Philosophy, Sikh presence in United States and Arizona as well as the incidences of hate crimes against Sikhs in U.S. since 9/11. The author is of the firm opinion that such grass root Sikh awareness at various places of faiths, Schools, colleges and other communities gathering will certainly make a difference and therefore intends to continue such efforts in future.



Ram Navami by Ekta temple of phoenix, AZ

On March 28, 2015, Ekta temple of phoenix, AZ organized grand celebrations to celebrate Ram Navami. Asia Today is pleased to share some moments captured during this event.



The world had changed in more than one way. As a kid, I have no memory of 'pink' girls and 'blue' boys or very different toys. More often than not, this is considered normal - "He is a boy, so he can't sit at one place; she loves art and coloring because she is a girl".



It is the greatest misconception that girls & boys are born or meant to have a certain kind of personality. Yes, there are some physiological differences by gender but that is about it. Children are not born with a certain 'Gender Gene' and parents

must not classify the same in their upbringing.

Then the Question is -Why, on an average, do we find boys to be more restless and girls to be more attentive? And why do some articles mention differences?

From my education in Psychology and my experience as a Parent Educator for 7 years, I say this: The differences are often observed at a later age, not at birth or within the first 6 months. If it was purely due to genes, the differences in both genders would be VERY evident close to the birth years. On the con-

BOYS vs. GIRLS

trary, most often, parents are pre-disposed to raising each gender in a certain way and eventually this becomes a common pattern of an entire society.

Our choices - Look around yours and say 10 other homes. Observe the toys and colors you find in a boy's vs. a girl's home for all different ages from 1 month to 10 years. Have we as parents chosen certain color dresses for our infant boys and girls? Have we brought home trucks, cars, swords for boys and dolls, coloring books and beads for girls? Blue or red blankets for boys and pink for girls?

Boys are generally more restless because parents have given them such an environment. They have chosen so called 'boy' toys & T.V. shows like cars, trains, and super powers - all of which signify movement and provide a lot more stimulation to the brain. In general, parents ALLOW boys to run and jump more, and EXPECT less discipline from them. Boys are taught and given more 'boy' colors in everyday life things and same goes for girls. You see how much we segregate without realizing. Psychology has proven some of these points in detail and why for e.g. boys turn out to be better drivers vs. girls (because many parents are less protective of boys, are less conscious of the way boys dress and sit and by all these different means, parents facilitate greater self-confidence in boys overall).

Think of this more logically: 70% of chefs around the world or those attending culinary schools are boys. Wait a minute - boys and cooking! And there are many women athletes, managers, engineers, etc. Google related statistics to know more.



To learn and change: Note that, at all times our subconscious beliefs determine the actions taken by our conscious mind. If you have a PRE-CONCEIVED notion of what a boy or girl is like, you are going to bring him or her up exactly in that way. Hence, when you have no pre-disposed notions, you will allow your child's personality to mold itself as per its needs.

I have closely known toddler and preschool boys who thoroughly enjoy art, craft, coloring, reading, toy kitchen, soft-toys as much as they love cars, trucks, robots, etc. and girls that enjoy sports, jumping, being hyper, trucks, trains, etc. This makes it obvious that they have received non-stereotypical parenting.

-Written by Rima Desai

<https://www.facebook.com/parentingbooth>

Illustration by Kristin

WesleyGreenLightToLife@cox.net

B-Town beauties add kilos: Wait, not to their bodies but costumes

While male actors in Bollywood are beefing up for their next films, female actors, too, are putting on weight in their own way. Well, by wearing some very heavy costumes in their movies.

While actor Deepika Padukone will be seen wearing a 20 kilogram armour in her upcoming film *Bajirao Mastani*, actor Sunny Leone has worn a 12 kilogram lehenga for her film *Ek Paheli-Leela*, and Anushka Sharma will be seen sporting a 35 kilogram gown in her film *Bombay Velvet*.

Deepika will be donning the weighty armour for her sword wielding sequences. A source close to the actor says that the actor worked towards getting comfortable in the outfit before she started shooting the sequence.

"She will not only be wear-



ing the heavy costume for the shoot but she also has to perform some physically tough scenes in it. So she has been wearing the heavy outfit and getting comfortable in it. She is also trying her stunts in that

costume as it has to look almost effortless for the character that she is playing," adds the source. Heavy costumes are no surprise for Deepika, who sported a 30 kilogram ghagra for her film *Ram-Leela*

(2013).

Anushka is seen wearing a heavy gown in the posters of her new film *Bombay Velvet*. This is the first time that the 26-year-old wore a heavy costume and reports suggest that

the actor really struggled with the weight of the 35 kg gown. Sunny, too, found it difficult to carry the weight of her 12 kg lehenga in her next film. "The lehenga was very heavy for Sunny and she could not even sit properly.

Though she tried her best, she was not able to manage it, so producer Ahmed Khan got an identical lighter lehenga for her," says a source.

In the past too, many actors have worn heavy costumes on screen. In her film *Jodhaa Akhbar* (2008), actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan wore a heavy embellished ghagra-choli.

Actor Madhuri Dixit performed in a 30kg lehenga in *Devdas* (2002). In her film *Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja* (1993), Sridevi also wore a 25kg ensemble for her song *Dushman dil ka woh hai*.

Gurgaon girl Aditi Arya wins Miss India 2015 title

Gurgaon girl Aditi Arya was crowned Femina Miss India 2015 at the 52nd edition of the beauty pageant here at Yash Raj Studio.

Reigning Miss India Koyal Rana, on Saturday, enthroned her successor Aditi with the crown made by PC Jewellers. The first and second runners-up were Aafreen Rachel Vaz and Vartika Singh respectively.

The trio was selected from the top five finalists of the fbb Femina Miss India 2015 that also included Tanya Hope and Deeksha Kaushal.

This year, 21 contestants from across the country participated in the beauty contest. The coronation night saw contestants walking the ramp for the final time. Out of the 21 contestants, only five made it to the final question and answer round. The top five finalists were selected on the basis of judges' score. As a result of securing the top three spots, Aditi would represent India at Miss World 2015, Aafreen would participate at Miss International 2015, while Vartika would take part at the Miss Grand International beauty pageants.

Actors Kareena Kapoor Khan, Jacqueline Fernandez and Shahid Kapoor performed at the grand finale.



Along with them, "Balam pichkari" hit-maker Shalmali Kholgade and Meet Bros Anjjan also performed live.

"Welcome Back" team, including Anil Kapoor, John Abraham and producer Firoz A Nadiadwala, were on the

judging panel for the finale. The film's director, Anees Bazmee also attended the coronation night along with stars Nana Patekar, Paresh Rawal and Shruti Haasan.

The beauty pageant, which will

be telecast on April 5, also saw the attendance of actresses Shilpa Shetty, Manisha Koirala, Neha Dhupia, Sonali Bendre, dancer Shiamak Davar and designers Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosala.



Waheguru ji ka Khalsa! Waheguru ji ki Fateh!

GURDWARA MONTHLY

A Monthly digest of Gurdwara Programs and Events

APRIL 2015 Programs & Events

19 Chet – 18 Vaisakh, 547 Nanakshahi Era (NE)

April 4 (Sat.) – Vaisakhi Mela by Phoenix Desi Sports & Cultural Club, 12:00 PM – 7:00 PM at Hammers Park in Avondale AZ.

April 5 (Sun.) – Pagri and Choupai Competition
Please see separate flier for program.

April 10 - 12 (Fri. – Sun.) Vaisakhi Celebration
The Birthday of the Khalsa (Actual: April 14)
Please see separate flier for Vaisakhi program

April 13 (Mon.) – Amrit Sanchar, 4:00 AM – 7:00 AM
Come Join Guru Ji's Khalsa. Please talk to Ragis for details.

April 14, Vaisakh 1 (Tues.) –
Sangrand & Monthly Sehj Path 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

April 17 & 19 (Fri. & Sun.) – Multiple Anniversaries:
Gurguddi Siri Guru Amardas Ji &
Siri Guru Teg Bhadar Sahib Ji (Actual: April 16)
Joti Jot Siri Guru Angad Dev Ji &
Siri Guru Harkrishan Ji (Actual: April 16)
Parkash Siri Guru Angad Dev Ji (1504) &
Siri Guru Teg Bhadar Sahib Ji (1621) (Actual: April 18)

April 19 (Sun.) – Homeless Langar Seva.
Call 602 741 8021 for more info.

April 24 (Fri.) – Birthday Bhagat Dhanna Ji (Actual: April 21, 1415)

April 26 (Sun.) – Vaisakhi Celebration Downtown,
Please see separate flier for Downtown Vaisakhi program.

Regular Programs:

Main Kirtan Diwans on Fridays (7 PM – 9 PM) and Sundays (10 AM – 1 PM).
Morning Banis: 5:30 AM – 6:30 AM followed by ASA-DI-VAAR to 8:30 AM.
Evening Banis: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM.
Sukhmani Sahib every Wednesday: 10:30AM - 11:30AM
Please check Gurdwara notice board for latest details of all Programs and Events

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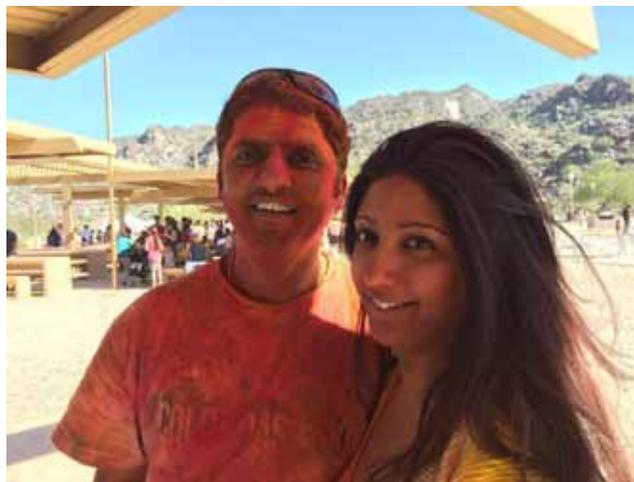
Holi, The Festival of Colors

perhaps one of the largest gatherings for a Holi celebration in the valley, and was an occasion of pure joy and fun.

The India Association of Phoenix is a non-profit organization that serves as an umbrella organization for the various Indian linguistic and cultural organizations in the valley. It is dedicated to the promotion of Indian culture, arts, and values, and its aims and objectives include assisting in the orientation and adaptation of Indians to the American environment, bringing about a better understanding of America and other Americans, providing a forum for exchange of ideas, issues, and common concerns to the Indians, and formulating guidelines for improving the collective image of Indians. India Association celebrates Indian Republic and Independence days in January and August, respectively, the Holi in March, and the Discover India that showcases Indian culture and trade in November.

Now, let's get back to that colorful. What is the origin of Holi? There are several legends associated with Holi. The most popular is the legend of demon King Hiranyakashyipu who demanded everybody in his kingdom to worship him. His own son, Prahlad, however became a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu. At his wits end, Hiranyakashyapu ordered his son to be killed. He asked his sister Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap as Holika had a boon which made her immune to fire. Story goes that Prahlad was saved by Lord Vishnu for his extreme devotion. The evil minded Holika was burnt to ashes, since her boon worked only when she entered the fire alone. From that time, people light a bonfire, called Holika, on the eve of Holi festival and celebrate the victory of good over evil and the triumph of devotion to god. Children also take special delight in the tradition as it was on the Holi day that the children of Prithu chased away the evil Dhundhi who used to trouble them, according to another legend. Therefore, children are allowed to play pranks at the time of 'Holika Dahan' or the burning of Holika.

This year's Holi celebration had all the ingredients to make it really colorful. 5 different colors, and fantastic Bollywood beats by DJ Isaac got everyone going right from the beginning. Once the water pools got filled, pitchkaris, or water guns, squirting colorful water made it real fun under the mild early March Phoenix Sun. Everyone, young and old joined the fun. The crowds swelled to thousands. Strangers became friends in no time. All one had to do was get a packet of color at the venue, take a pinch of it and touch the cheek or forehead of the people around you, and say "Happy Holi" with a smile on your face. One may ask, isn't this the simplest way to make friends? I am ready for next year's Holi.





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Real Estate News of Arizona - April 2015

By Arti Iyer ABR, CFS, CSSN

Hello Friends,

“Pool Season” is here!! It’s the time of the year with warm temperatures, though still not in triple digits yet, so kids can still enjoy the outdoors. Just as the temperatures were getting warmer it seems the housing market was keeping pace with the weather as well, getting warmer.

The overall health of our housing market is improving. The sales volume is up 9.4% while supply is down 11.4%. New Home sales are also up 6.4% year over year. The subtle improvements we’ve seen in our market over the past year, we see traditional buyers dominating the market. The 2 main core of housing market is supply and demand considering this points as neighborhood, price point, features and location, which for agents it will be a negotiating point on the table. As we move deeper into our 2015 season homes priced below \$200,000 are going to move very fast, as millennial home buyers and investors are getting this deals. There were 740 new homes being sold per month on average this past year. Of those, only 12% sold for under \$200,000. The average new home sold for \$360,000 last year showing there is a much desire to build entry level homes.

Now let’s look at the February sales of Residential Homes in Maricopa county-

- Total sales for Single Family, Town-homes, Condos for February were 5,185 whereas January was 4,172 and December was 5,726
- The Active listings for February were 22,313 whereas January was 22,243 and December were 20,247
- Pending sales for February were 5,617 whereas January was 4,506 and December were 3,638

In January the median list price increased 5.4% over December and the average list price

of showings or offers leading to a price change. When we removed all the distressed sales and compared only the normal sales between December 2013 and December 2014, we saw the price per-square-foot rose only slightly, 1.7% from \$133.10 to \$135.41.

A new survey of luxury home buyers by Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate shows that most home buyers prefer houses outfitted with technology features. Nearly 90% of home buyers say they would not even consider a home that isn’t tech friendly, and two-thirds say a “smart” home is more important to them than a “green” home, meaning one with eco-friendly features, though the trend spiked in the past few years as more home buyers became comfortable with technology and saw it as a way to be more efficient. Buyers still prioritize standard features, like security systems and energy efficient wash-er, dryers. But trendier features are becoming more desired. Of home features considered essential, 55% of luxury home buyers cite a home theater; 50% say wireless speakers; and 40% say keyless entry. Traditional spaces are also getting a tech update. A luxury wine cellar used to consist of one climate-controlled room. Now, some are much more sophisticated, with multiple climate settings, built-in coolers and fridges and iPad-control systems are getting more in demand.

Now let’s take a peek in the rental market, as one fourth of our market is dominated by investors. Phoenix rental market is booming, which is good for investors who have multiple properties. Median Lease price is \$1,150, Average Lease price is \$1,287 and Average Days on Market are 39. Most of my clients rentals I closed within 30 days. We got multiple applications on each property. I noticed it’s not just one city but most of the valley, I noticed cities like Phoenix, Chandler, Tempe, Gilbert, Scottsdale are more in demand for rentals.

Closed Rental Units Per Month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg Units
2010	2,281	2,473	2,390	2,226	2,365	2,423	2,613	2,567	2,447	2,541	2,407	2,235	2414
2011	2,363	2,595	2,499	2,563	2,626	2,937	3,050	3,005	2,774	3,146	2,888	2,819	2772
2012	2,717	3,073	3,311	2,790	3,061	3,592	3,495	3,582	3,250	3,043	3,121	2,906	3162
2013	2,859	3,660	3,862	3,542	4,028	4,017	3,993	4,209	3,422	3,311	3,297	2,911	3593
2014	3,013	3,625	3,550	3,065	3,314	3,364	3,311	3,512	2,960	3,014	2,742	2,577	3171
2015	2,620	2,847											2734

increased 7.6%, creating a gap. This gap becomes even more wider when we put the numbers side by side. The average list price in January was \$354,500 while the average sales price was \$255,000. The median list price in January was \$230,000 while the median sales price in January was \$194,700. Why is the average list price so much higher than the average sales price? If the property being marketed is listed too far above market value reality will manifest in the lack

Now let’s take a look on commercial side-
Vaquero Ventures sold the Peoria Center at 3121 W Peoria Ave in Phoenix to Roseben, Inc for \$7.7 million, or approximately \$438 per square foot. The 17,755-square foot, multi-tenant retail strip was built in 2014 and was fully occupied at the time of sale.

Integrated Real Estate Services LLC purchased the fee simple interest in a 45,000-square foot LA Fitness and the lease fee interest in an adjacent 14.5 acre

site located within Camelback Village Square shopping center in Phoenix for \$8.45 million. LA Fitness is located at 710 W Camelback Rd and the adjacent land parcel is situated on the northwest corner of Camelback and 7th Ave in Northwest Phoenix.

Excel Trust Inc has sold the Promenade Corporate Center buildings at 16427 and 16435 N Scottsdale Rd in Scottsdale to Lincoln Property Company and Goldman Sachs for \$65 million or about \$254 per square foot. The 2 four story office buildings total 256,175 square feet in the North Scottsdale Airpark / Kierland submarket, at the center of Scottsdale Promenade, a 730,000-square foot, mixed use retail project offering 1 million square feet of commercial space on 84 acres home to national retailers like Nordstrom Rack, Lowe’s, Trader Joe’s, PetSmart, Pier 1, Ulta, Benihana, and In-N-Out.



Promenade Corporate Center is currently 80 percent occupied, anchored by Healthcare Trust of America with multiple office users including Fitch, Inc., Meridian Bank, and Regus Corp that enjoy the buildings’ freeway access, walkability, proximity to shopping and dining, and numerous other amenities.

Papago Park Center Inc has selected Lincoln Property Company to develop the first phase of The Grand at Papago Park Center a proposed 1.8 million-square foot class A office and mixed-use development to rise in the Downtown Tempe submarket of metro Phoenix. The total project is being developed on 60 acres, the last developable parcel within the 350 acre Papago Park Center, one of the largest business parks in Arizona. The park is home to Salt River Project, First Solar, Wells Fargo, DHL, Union Bank, So-nora Quest, State Farm & Western Refining.

Hope this article gives you a peek in what’s hap-

pening in our valley. As always, I love all the questions, comments & feedback. Please keep them coming at arti@artiayer.com or call me at 480.242.8573

Disclaimer: This article makes no representation or warranties of any kind as to the accuracy of the data. The source of data has been taken from several sources such as Armls, Cromford report, Better Homes and Garden, Costar, Globest, BizJournal, NewsGeni, Realty times, azcentral, wall street journal.

APRIL 2015						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 * YES!+ for students	4 * BAPS Charities Walkathon-2015 Vaisakhi 2015 Pangui Uthiram - Lord Murugan @ MGTOA 2015 Phoenix Bazaar at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Mythri (Kannada Movie)
5 * Shantala Subramanyam Trio The Essence of Cow Protection	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 * Nala Charitham (A Kathakali Dance Drama) Ugadi Celebrations Telugu Association	13	14	15	16	17 * PT Kashinath Shankar Bodas Music Festival 2015 Vaisakhi Open Golf Tournament	18 * Yuva Utsav Apr Festival of Colors Holi
19 * Kadri Gopalnath Sax	20	21	22	23	24	25 * Bollywood America 2015 * NSF Regional Contests * Bollywood Bhangra
26	27	28	29	30		

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Chances are you split up the last time because you didn't really want to make a commitment. Try not to attempt to do something unless you are fully intent on following through with the plans. You may find yourself caught in the middle of an argument that has nothing to do with you. Focus on your own domestic problems. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

ARIES



Mar 21 to Apr 20

Sign up for courses that will help you understand yourself better. Time to deal with institutional environments, government agencies, and matters of a private nature this month. Your desire for excitement and adventure may be expensive. Romance is likely if you can bring yourself to go out with friends. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

TAURUS



April 21 to May 20

Deception in your home is evident. Don't beat around the bush. Think before you act if you wish to avoid friction. Be cautious while traveling; minor accidents are evident. Don't prejudge. You may get drawn into a personal situation that will not be to your liking. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

GEMINI



May 21 to June 21

Put your emotional energy into passion not anxiety. Money problems will be difficult to deal with if you have a partner. You will be in the mood to socialize. You may win favors if you present your ideas and include your family. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

CANCER



Jun 22 to Jul 22

You may find out that someone has not been completely honest with you. Channel your efforts into achieving your goals. Avoid letting family get involved in your personal life. Opportunities will come through behind the scenes activities. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

LEO



Jul 23 to Aug 23

Your emotional partner will push the right buttons this month. Do the necessary chores and then do things that please you. This will not be the day to have minor surgery. You would be wise to socialize with as many people as possible. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

VIRGO



Aug 24 to Sep 23

Romance will unfold if you take trips or get together with friends. Don't let coworkers interfere with your objectives. Try to be reasonable. Include friends and family members in your redecorating plans. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

LIBRA



Sep 24 to Oct 23

A residential move may be necessary to get a better job. It's time to reevaluate your motives. Sort situations out as best you can. Watch your spending habits. Don't go hog wild when it comes to entertainment or you could find yourself short of funds at the end of the month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

SCORPIO



Oct 24 to Nov 22

Make sure any presentation you have is ready. Romance will develop through work related activities. You could be cornered, so be prepared to tell the truth. Attend to things that you should have done yesterday. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

SAGITTARIUS



Nov 23 to Dec 21

Things are looking up. Don't let peers distract you or push their work your way. Opportunities will unfold; however, you must be willing to pay the price. Make arrangements to meet friends at your local dance club. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

CAPRICORN



Dec 22 to Jan 21

You could make extra cash through creative hobbies. Visit friends or relatives who have been confirmed. Make plans that will take you to exotic destinations. You may not want to spend time around family or your home. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

AQUARIUS



Jan 22 to Feb 19

Expand your knowledge and sign up for courses and seminars. Try to deal with the problems of those less fortunate; however, don't allow them to make unreasonable demands. Opportunities to get involved in self improvement projects will be rewarding. Be innovative. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

PISCES



Feb 20 to Mar 20

How Manmohan Singh became Prime Minister

Vir Sanghvi's Mandate looks at politics and elections since '71. An excerpt on Manmohan Singh.

In 2004, India was doing extraordinarily well. The middle class had begun to look to the West for its reference points. Foreign companies rushed to invest in the economy. Commentators removed the old hyphenation of India-Pakistan and began a new one: India-China. The BJP government of AB Vajpayee seemed popular...

Almost every poll predicted an overall majority for the BJP if an election were to be called and the party agreed with this assessment. It regarded the Congress as a useless and fragmented opposition led by a woman who Vajpayee had already defeated twice at the polls...

Sonia Gandhi had finally entered politics in 1998... she joined politics and became party president... Though all through the glory days of the Vajpayee government, the Congress kept a low profile, not doing particularly well in assembly elections and maintaining a restrained parliamentary presence.

So when the BJP saw the results of opinion polls that predicted a two-thirds majority, it was so delighted, it even advanced the election by a few months. India was shining and so would the election results.

... Till the very end it (the BJP) remained confident of victory. ...But when the results began streaming in, the pollsters were left red-faced. The BJP had slumped from 182 seats to 138 seats. The Congress had risen from 114 to 145 seats. If it got the support of a few allies, then there was no problem: the Congress would form the next government. A delighted but still strangely thoughtful Sonia set about putting her coalition in place. The Left jumped on board. So did many allies. ... When the coalition was in place and the Congress was ready to take office, Sonia pulled a surprise. She issued a statement in which she said she had listened to her inner voice and decided that she would not be prime minister. ...What follows next is speculation. But two different sources told me that when Sonia went to



see President KR Narayanan in 1999 during the turmoil that followed Vajpayee's defeat in the confidence vote, she told him that she did not wish to be prime minister. One source, RD Pradhan, who was her principal aide at the time, was clear: even in 1999, she did not want the job. My second source was President KR Narayanan who told me that she had asked him to swear Manmohan Singh in once the coalition had gathered the numbers. Of course, that never happened.

Did Manmohan Singh know this? Opinions are divided and the man himself is decidedly shifty on the subject.

There's no doubt he was dying to become prime minister.

In 1997, when Deve Gowda's government tottered, he had gently put it about that he was available for the job. I'd asked him if he wanted to be prime minister and he had replied. 'Who doesn't want to be PM?' To his credit, when he did become Prime Minister in 2004, he reminded me of that conversation. My guess is that Sonia told him in 1999 that he was her choice. And after that, when he knew that the job was within his reach - even if things had not worked out in 1999 - he decided to play it cool. A year later, when I asked him about it, this time on TV, he was evasive. 'Well, Mrs Gandhi has said that the party will take the decision,' he said.

Five years later, when the Congress had beaten the odds and made it to office, Sonia turned to Manmohan once again. This time he was ready. I remember watching him go to 10 Janpath, eyes gleaming with excitement, hands trembling with anticipation, eager to become Sonia's nominee for the job. But the Congress was

not ready. Congressmen and women wept and begged Sonia to reconsider. She refused point-blank. Manmohan Singh was her choice, she said, and she would not be swayed.

What Sonia Gandhi was proposing was unprecedented. She wanted an arrangement whereby she would continue as Congress President and would handle relations with the allies, an important component of the running of any coalition. Manmohan Singh, on the other hand, would have a free hand when it came to the government. ...nobody could deny... that it was going to be difficult to make the arrangement work. There were just too many problems.

The first was the party. Put simply, nobody in the Congress had any enthusiasm for a Manmohan Singh prime minister-ship. He was not well-liked, was seen as a creation of the hated Narasimha Rao and hardcore politicians had contempt for his lack of political skills. He had only ever stood for election to the Lok Sabha once. And he'd been soundly defeated...

The second problem was with the allies... But Manmohan Singh had his admirers. Most people who did not know him well regarded him as a humble, decent, apolitical figure who had no great ambition...

Many in the middle class saw him as the father of India's liberalisation and believed that he would now completely unshackle the economy. So when Manmohan Singh took office, the general reaction was overwhelmingly favourable. Though we did not see it then, it seems clear in retrospect, that the seeds for the fall of the United Progressive Alliance or UPA were sown in the very first years of the government.

POET OF MONTH

Moez Surani

Moez Surani's writing has been published internationally, including in Harper's Magazine, The Awl, Best Canadian Poetry 2013 and Best Canadian Poetry 2014. When his first collection of poetry, *Reticent Bodies*, was published, one critic assessed the book's impact: "Reticent Bodies is that rare book that has the power to be a lynchpin, a hinge in the history of Canadian poetry." In 2012, Surani published a second collection, *Floating Life*, which was described as suffused with "stunning, simple images." Recently, he has been working on collaborations and on interdisciplinary art and performance art pieces.



Near the Pagoda

Near the pagoda,
I made joke after joke,
too shy to take your hand.

And with songs and books,
I thought of you.
I thought of you.

And in my beige uniform
my walking, my way in talking
everything of me was different.

And the further songs,
the further books . . .

I tied my scarf to the library's gate.

I wake these weeks into the smoulder of dreams,
and touch my face

and think

how from your room
to mine, you will have laid
flowers that I pass
too quickly over to
give either foot
a petal's pleasure.

And inhaling the air
around your dark hair,
I will stand with all my selves,
and call you mother, sister, wife, daughter.

Film Review

'Hunterrr' Review: A film in which stereotypes mar fantastic performances

What it's about: Mandar Ponkshe (Gulshan Devaiah) is an average looking guy, who is sort of addicted to sex. It started in his teens, and while all his friends get married, he refuses to settle down. An ugly incident at a nightclub makes him realize that he is probably too old to continue to play the field. He

Film Review

Director: Harsvardhan Kulkarni
Cast: Gulshan Devaiah, Radhika Apte, Sai Tamhankar, Veera Saxena, Sagar Deshmukh
Rating: **



decides to go the arranged marriage way and then meets someone whom he falls in love with. What happens next is Mandar grappling with who he was and who he wants to be

What's good: The performances for one. All the actors pour themselves into the roles and become the characters. Kulkarni has set the film in Mumbai and Pune, in middle-class Maharastrian settings. This the stuff he gets right— the neighbors

of Mandar's parents, the childhood vacations to the village, the house parties, the boy gang antics as they are growing up. You will chuckle every now and then. Like the scene where the boys get their head shaved or the scenes where his parents have

conversations with him.

What's not: The film takes you back and forth from 1989 to 2015 so many times, it will make your head spin. You wish that Mandar would finally figure out what he wants. The premise that all boys change after they fall in love is too thin

and predictable to keep you hooked for the two hours and twenty minutes the film runs. Also the film stereotypes all married women as frustrated and willing to jump into bed with the first single eligible men. Mandar and his friend somehow continue to find

single women with whom they have casual sex in his bachelor pad when they have nothing going for them. It all seems set in some fantastical space, one you just don't buy in the end.

What to do: Watch Balak Palak instead.

Actors and producers should make more films like 'NH10': Anushka Sharma

One of the most fearless actresses in B-town today, both on screen and off screen, Anushka Sharma turned heads with her recently released NH10. A film that has burrowed in and brought out the harsh realities of the Indian society to the fore, NH10 has been working exceedingly well at the box office as well.

What started off as a huge risk has finally paid off for the young actress and the young producer today. But call NH10 a risk and Anushka shoots back almost immediately, "Actually, I never saw NH10 as a risk because you can call it my gut feeling, I always knew that this film is going to work. NH10 is very high on content and in terms of the genre, which is a thriller, I thought that people will en-

joy something like that. There was no fear of whether it will work or not," Anushka continued. "My only fear was that if it does not work, I would still be making such films but it would mean that probably people are not ready to see such films," she added.

NH10 belongs to a very different space when it comes to films and the genres that are repeatedly tried in Bollywood today. Refreshing and giving out a message at the same time, Anushka feels she wants to make a certain type of films—much like her first production venture. "These are the kind of films that I would like to make in future as well. This is more like an offbeat film, very different from the usual kind of films that we watch. NH10 has proven that these films do

have a wide audience today because the kind of numbers the film has done over the weekend, it establishes my faith on my own conviction," she smiled.

The actress was offered the film but the discussion of turning producer came a lot later. But it was the high content of the film that made Anushka jump in as the producer. While NH10 has garnered immense critical acclaim along with commercial success, Anushka feels the success of NH10 will only help other producers to believe in their projects—no matter how unconventional or tricky they are. "I just hope that with a film like this working out and with me initiating it, not just producers but I wish even actors come ahead and be a part of such films. Some-

where, I experienced something with NH10. By turning a producer for the film, I was somehow enabling everything to happen more easily. I was not adding additional burden to the cost of the film by being an actor. This way, we can ascertain that certain films which are a little tricky or unusual will eventually happen. NH10 gives that faith to other actors too and not just the producers. I am not saying this to boast about myself but a film like NH10 needs a mainstream actor to back it. Me backing NH10 gave it a wider reach so I hope other actors too take up the baton now."

But the point is—will Anushka's attempt be successful in getting more and more mainstream actors to try something



unusual and unconventional—something that's starkly different from the staple Bollywood diet? That only time will tell.

I am not engaged or married: Imran Abbas Khan

His debut film *Creature* went with a whimper, but Pakistani TV actor Imran Abbas Khan chalks it up to being an experimental film and is looking ahead. While shooting for his TV show in Pakistan, Imran talks to us about his second film *Jaanissar* and his current relationship status.

How difficult or easy was it shoot for a period drama?

It was very difficult as the character was very different from whatever I have done so far. We were going back in history - the film is set in 1877 Lucknow - and I had to transform myself completely. I had to get the dialect, the body language and the psyche of the character right. I had to play the perfect English gentleman from royalty (he is brought up in the palace) for which I had to get my gait right. At the same time my Urdu had to be extremely good as I had to deliver important lines in poetry. I am a poet myself so that helped. It's a very diversified character.

Did you refer to any books or films to prepare yourself?

Not exactly. Muzaffar Ali saab himself is a book. He is art personified. He is an artiste, poet, musician, a director helped me in every single way. You earn so much sitting with him. I feel enriched and enlightened working with him.

Tell me how did the film come to you?

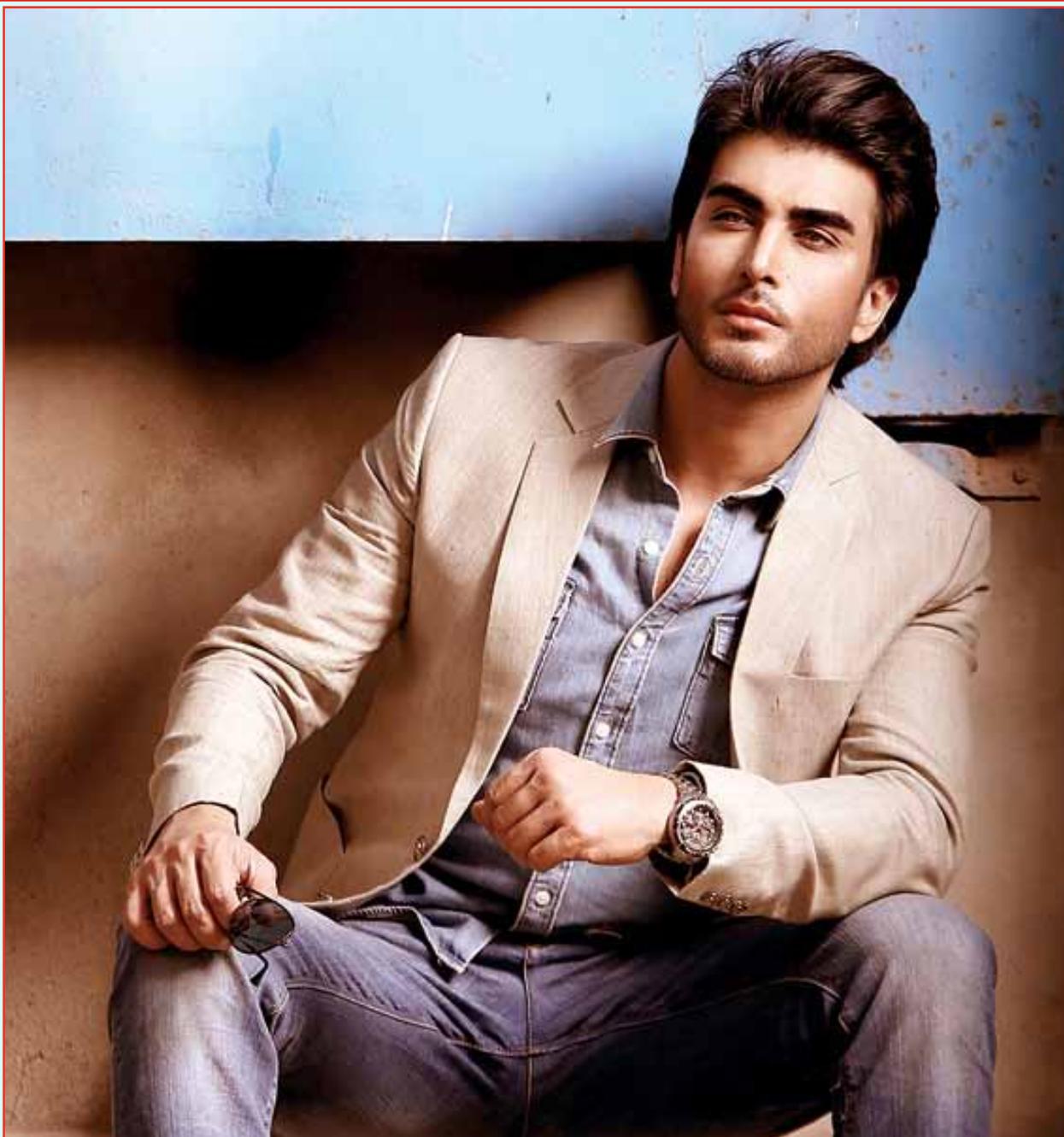
I had just started shooting for *Creature*. Somebody told me that Muzaffar saab wanted to meet me, so, I met him in Delhi. The film had been in his mind for 20 years. Everything was clearly etched in his mind. I was already a big fan of Muzaffar saab. When he told me he wanted to do the film with me, I had no second thoughts. In fact, irrespective of whether I would be in the film or not, I was just happy to meet him. The film, however, got delayed. Fortunately for me, by the time we started *Jaanissar*, there were no date clashes as *Creature* was complete.

The film is set 20 years after Umrao Jaan. Have you seen Umrao Jaan?

I have seen the film several times, not recently though. However, I keep watching the songs. In fact, we shot one song *Humein Bhi Pyaar Kar Le* sung by Shreya Ghoshal in the same place where *Inn Aankhon Ki Masti* was shot. The same choreographer Kumudini Lakhia directed it too! It was amazing to shoot in the same location and ambience. It was wonderful to be a part of it.

Do you feel this should have been your debut film instead of Creature?

I know *Creature* did not do well, but I liked it. All of us involved in the film from the director Vikram Bhatt to the artistes knew we were taking a huge risk. It was an experimental film and not all experiments are successful. It was a new genre in Bollywood and we



have at least give credit to the director for taking the plunge. It was a new thought, but I guess Indian and Pakistani viewers are used to Bollywood masala. If the same idea had come from Hollywood they would have liked it. Nobody can predict the outcome of a film. It was my destiny. There are so many actors whose first films have been superhits but they are nowhere now and at the same time actors whose debut films were flops are doing well.

You must be banking on Jaanissar now?

I am keeping my fingers crossed. But I can tell you that it's a film you'll see again and again. Every element of art has been set like a jewel - characters, poetry, music, lighting, etc everything is perfect. It's a film that will be stored in libraries. Also, not all films are made with the intention of making hits. It's a big responsibility making this kind of a film. Many people want certain historical aspects to be hidden. These are usually brought forth in a subtle manner by Hollywood filmmakers. You'll find that in this film.

Now, that you are doing films, will you continue with TV?

Yes, I am already two shows *Mera Naam Yusuff Hai* and *Alvida*. Pakistan TV is very strong and I will continue to be a part of it. I will not do many shows but one or two in a year.

There is an influx of Pakistani actors in India...

I am happy that Fawad Khan and Mahira Khan

have made inroads in Bollywood. It's a positive sign. Earlier several Indian actors like Nandita Das, Kirron Kher and Naseeruddin Shah have come to Pakistan and have been appreciated. It's about time we stopped talking about borders and hatred. We will discourage it through our art.

There has been talk about you being engaged and married? Is it true?

No, not at all. I am not even committed to anyone! I don't know from where these rumours have started. They have even posted a picture of my so-called wife, but it's of an actress!

When did you start getting Bolly offers?

Since the last six-seven years. But nothing materialised for some or the other reason. I was signed by Rajkumar Santoshi for three films but those didn't happen. I also couldn't be a part of *Goliyon Ki Raas Leela - Ram Leela* and *Boss*, but the one I regret the most is not doing *Aashiqui 2*.

Which directors are on your wishlist?

Rajkumar Hirani, Sanjay Leela Bhansali and even newcomers like Vikas Bahl who directed *Queen*. They are very creative.

Any actress you want to work with?

I love Madhuri Dixit. I have been a huge fan of her and if I ever get a chance to work with her I will be on cloud nine. I would also like to work with Kangana Ranaut. She is a brilliant actress.

Chai with... Arti Iyer

I had the opportunity to sit down and have Chai with Arti Iyer. She is a successful Realtor in the valley and helped many to buy and sell real estate over the past ten years.

Q - Tell our readers a little about yourself and your family

I am a true Mumbai girl at heart, born and brought up in Mumbai. I hold a master's degree and studied fashion designing. I worked in that industry for a few years, and then moved into real estate. My husband is the founder and CEO of appsFreedom, a mobile software company with quite a few accolades to their credit. I have 2 beautiful kids, a 12 year old and 8 year old! They are my strength, motivation and give me the drive to do what I do.

Q - Fashion !! That's interesting, Tell us a little more about it

Well, I always had a creative eye and interest in design, so I decided to pursue fashion designing as a career. Soon after graduating, I was fortunate enough to start my own company. We used to design and manufacture women's ethnic and western wear and supply to exclusive boutiques in Mumbai. My core expertise was designing and I had a lot of fun coming out with creative designs, as it was a startup, I got a chance to do other areas of business like manufacturing, Sales and Operations. Although running a startup as a young girl in the male-dominated fashion industry in Mumbai was not easy, it was a successful venture and a dream run. I not only learnt a lot but throughly enjoyed it.



Q - how did you land into Real Estate?

While in US, I moved around a few places like California, Florida & Arizona. I was always intrigued by how varied each state was in terms of its topology, the nature and of-course the houses as well. Moreover my father has been in the real-estate profession, with our family owned business for over 50 years. So I grew up listening & seeing my dad, day-in and day-out in this business. Also my sister is in real-estate as well in Connecticut. Somehow I got very interested in Real-Estate after I moved to Arizona. I guess moving across the country helped and real-estate profession runs in my family as well. So it seemed very natural to me.

Q - So you have a family history in this profession but that is not enough for someone to be in this profession for as long as you have been.

Yes, you are right, Although family history helps, its not the sole reason why I have been doing this everyday for more than 10 years. The primary reason is I love what

I do. The biggest personal satisfaction, I get is when I see a family move into their new home. All the excitement of a new home, dreams of raising a family, a bright new future all sums up in a unique smile when a family, specially first time home buyers, gets the keys and step into their new home. That satisfaction I see in their face is all worth it. I absolutely enjoy what I do and I would not trade it for any other profession.

Q - Why is that? What is so special about First time home buyers?

First time home buyers have unique needs and being the first time for them, are not aware of the buying process in this country or the pit-falls and gotcha's in buying homes. Home buying is a big step for anyone and it is specially so when you are doing it for the first time. They have lots of questions and concerns, and need guidance in every step of the way. Now the reason I like working with first time home buyers, is for them, this is a unique and a one-time experience. When they find a home of their dreams and allow me to share their moment of joy, it



makes me immensely happy to be part of their joyous moment. There is nothing like that experience. It's not just about showing a house or signing, I try to be with them on their side during their complete process starting from educating them about the home buying process to actually being with them in every step of the way till closing. From Inspection till the final walkthrough I am involved and personally be there. I tend to exceed client-expectations, through real life experience, industry knowledge, effective and efficient thorough communication. Also after stepping into their new home is where their home owning experience starts and I support them in their home owning experience as well, until they are completely self sufficient. My clients still call me if they have any questions or need references, I still give my time and be there for them, irrespective of them being in the market or not.

Q - What areas of real-estate do you cover?

I specialize in residential and commercial properties, help in buying, selling and leasing.

In residential my expertise are in new homes and resale homes, in new homes I help them in selecting their interiors, my clients always like my choices and get that advantage of my designing sense. They appreciate and value my inputs and advice, as its a big step for them.

Commercial side, I have done gas stations, office space and Retail in grey shell and built outs. I have experience in Land deals, well it was more popular in mid 2000, so at that time many of my investors bought it around the valley, I handled investors portfolio who have multiple properties, help them flip and sell or convert into an income generating property.

Q - What are your plans for the future?

I like my profession too much, in fact am devoted to it:) I am full time into real estate and intend to be around for a long time to come. Would like to help our indian community as much as possible in getting the fruits of home ownership.

Thank you Arti for giving us wonderful insights into real estate....



Ram Navami by ISKCON of Chandler, AZ

On March 28, 2015, ISKCON in Chandler, AZ organized grand celebrations to celebrate Ram Navami. Asia Today is pleased to share some moments captured during this event.



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602-510-1541

Gossip: The formula for a stress-free, long life!

A few years back, I had written a column about making a resolution that I shall not indulge in gossip. Now, I want to slap myself for it.

Nasht ho gayi zindagi, saara mazaa hi chala gaya life se. Of course, aspiring to have good values was the intent, but I never bargained for turning into Alok Nath! And on top of this self-invited boredom, I also compromised on my longevity, you see. Because a study by the University of Michigan says in its report - which by the way I have framed and light agarbattis before, every morning - people, especially women, who gossip, live longer. Gossiping apparently elevates levels of progesterone; a hormone that reduces stress and makes you feels good.

Kya baat hai, University of Michigan, kya interesting teer maara hai. Now, you see, whether I like it or not, I would have to gossip in the interest of science and research. And humanity. And divinity. And while on this trip, my mind has figured out some valid benefits of gossiping. But woh batane se pehle let me break my fast and tell you what I overheard coming from Chaddha ji's house this morning. His daughter Bansuri was playing, I mean wailing. Not that it's new, she's been crying about pretty much everything ever since she turned a teenager. But she was crying out rather loud, so purely out of concern and sympathy (ha, ha), I went out to the balcony and heard this...

Bansuri: Daddy jiii, yeh dress poori nahi aa rahi

Chadda ji: Dress toh wahi hai, tum poori nahi aa rahi hogi

Bansuri: Mummy jiii, daddy ji mazaak udaa rahe hain

Mrs Chaddha: Inse kaho pehle apne shaadi waale suit mein poore aa ke dikhaayein

Chaddha ji: Us manhoos suit ko



toh meine 10 saal pehle lohri mein jala diya thaa

Mrs Chaddha: #\$\$^&**Y%#@

Phew! Thank God I could tell someone all this. If you have neighbours like the Chaddhas, AND you have the permission from University of Michigan to gossip, why would stress anyway come near you. Haan? So here's why I think that research would have allowed us this oldest pleasure known to mankind...

1) Law of diminishing hatred: You see, the moment you gossip about someone, pangs of guilt overtake your mind. I'm not referring to the typical readers of this column, but this happens at least with most normal, good people. That guilt suddenly makes you want to be all nice to the victim of your gossip. So without that person even knowing the reason for it, you go out of your way to be good to him/her. Dekha? The devi of gossip actually enhances goodness and bonding between people. Jai ho.

2) It is social work, in disguise: Gossiping about someone else's bad behaviour is simply your way of warning everyone else about it. Toh aap toh charity kar rahe ho. Isn't that supposed to be a noble thing? The other day two girls at work were gossiping about the behaviour of the office Ca-

sanova. Since I was Alok Nath at that time, I immediately went up to lecture them about the sanskaar of not gossiping, but before I could say something, a third girl who was overhearing them, also joined in and they realised that Mr Casanova had used the same pick up line on all three, pretending to be only interested in them. Bas! Girls safe and happy, Alok Nath ji chup.

3) Six degrees of separation: Whether you like it or not, gossiping is perhaps the best way to discover people who are exactly like you. Lifelong rishtey ban jaate hain ji over gossip sessions. We all outwardly take a stand that we hate gossip mongers, but deep inside we know the thrill of being able to high-five a person whose mean-ness levels are exactly the same as ours. A person at work who is my gossip partner would know exactly what I mean. And you know what, people who gossip also have to be creative. Because you can't excel at gossiping unless it's told in an entertaining way. Mehnat lagti hai, talent bhi lagta hai, koi mazaak hai? Denouncing an activity that stimulates the mind at so many different levels is sacrilege.

Ab thoda serious ho jayein, just for a minute? See, I wrote all of this in good faith towards your sensibilities and intelligence. I hope you know the

difference between malicious backbiting and relatively harmless, idle chatter. It's easy to act Puritans and deny it, but I can bet my AAP jhaadu that there's not even a single person who hasn't done the latter, at some or the other time. I'm only asking for an admission of the truth here, as long as we are aware of our boundaries.

Spreading false rumours about someone with an intent to harm his or her reputation is not gossip, it is sin. The thumb rule that I apply to myself is simple.

I imagine a situation where the person I'm gossiping about, turns out to be standing behind me when I'm speaking. If I can still say the same thing about them playfully to their face, I'm doing okay. Don't ever say anything behind a person's back, that, if the need or situation be, you can't repeat in front of them. And, finally, to the victims of harmful gossip. Dekho yaar, there'll always be people in life who would love to see you fail, simply because they didn't succeed. They'll keep talking behind your back, but you've got to realise that they are 'behind' you for a reason. Here's a random, confusing, but golden advice, a la Chaddha ji - 'Agar aap hi har waqt yeh sochenge ki log kya sochenge, toh phir log kya sochenge?'

Drinking raw milk, instead of pasteurised milk, can increase your risk of getting food-borne illness by over 100 times, warns a new study. These food-borne illness that consumption of raw milk can cause include diarrhoea, vomiting, cramping, fevers,

Drinking raw milk? Here's why you should stop right now!

and sometimes more serious consequences such as kidney failure or death, said the study published in the journal AIDS Patient Care and STDs. "The scientific literature showed

that the risk of food-borne illness from raw milk is over 100 times greater than the risk of food-borne illness from pasteurised milk," said the study's lead author Benjamin Davis

from Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF). Raw milk has become more popular in recent years. Advocates believe that raw milk, which contains more natural

antibodies, proteins and bacteria than pasteurised milk, is healthier, cleaner, tastes better and reduces lactose intolerance and allergies in certain people.

Australia win World Cup 2015, crush New Zealand by 7 wickets

As Steven Smith pulled the winning boundary to crush a New Zealand fairytale and clinch a fifth World Cup for Australia on Sunday, Michael Clarke's side celebrated a glorious end to a journey marked by a period of self-doubt and grief for a fallen teammate.

Captain Clarke retires from one-day cricket with his legacy intact but his team will charge on to the 2019 tournament with renewed belief in their ability to re-generate, adapt and rebound from the stiffest of challenges.

Two years after their annus horribilis of 2013 and less than three months after the death of batsman Phillip Hughes, Australia resumed their dominion of world cricket with a ruthless seven-wicket victory at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Brutal in the ultimate back yard battle against the 'little brother' from across the 'ditch', Australia's fifth world trophy may be regarded the sweetest, having played out in front of a record home crowd of 93,013.

Australia have won four of the last five World Cups, an astonishing record of dominance unlikely to ever be repeated.

Roared on by canary-yellow fans in the terraces, Mitchell Starc bowled New Zealand's totemic captain Brendon McCullum for a third-ball duck, setting the tone for a banner day for the hosts' pacers who skittled the visitors for 183.

Clarke made the most of his swansong, plundering a team-high score of 74 runs as Australia emphatically wiped away the stain of 1992 when they were knocked out early in their first World Cup on home soil.

Clarke and all-rounder Shane Watson enjoyed their second such triumph, having toasted success in the 2007 World Cup in the Caribbean.

Though boasting an embarrassment of riches in both bowling and batting, and a formidable blend of youth and experience, Australia were just one of a pack of contenders at this tournament, unlike the great sides who swept to three consecutive World Cups from 1999 to 2007.

Nerve-jangling

A nerve-jangling loss against New Zealand in the pool phase followed a



rained-out match against Bangladesh, fanning premature fears the hosts campaign might be ill-fated.

Those fears were torpedoed with a crushing quarter-final win over Pakistan and a vengeful thrashing of champions India who ended their title defence in 2011.

Though the players will hail a golden six weeks, some may reflect on the dark places from which they emerged.

Two years ago, Australia battled mediocrity in all formats, lurching from crisis to crisis in a humbling 2013.

Humiliated in test series by India and England, Australia meekly surrendered their last one-day title, the Cham-

pions Trophy in England, after opening batsman David Warner punched an England player in a Birmingham bar.

Coach Mickey Arthur was sacked and Clarke was plagued by his perennial back problems.

But led by the calm direction of new coach Darren Lehmann and fired by the renaissance of fast bowler Mitchell Johnson, Australia dragged themselves off the canvas to thrash England 5-0 in the 2013-14 Ashes and upset world number one Test team South Africa in their own back yard.

Those successes would filter down to the one-day side, who finished 2014 with a 13-5 winning record, but the

year would see Australia thrown into turmoil again.

On Nov. 25, batsman Phillip Hughes collapsed at the Sydney Cricket Ground after being struck by a short ball in a domestic match.

The youngest player to score two centuries in a test, Hughes' death in hospital at the age of 25 cast a pall over the World Cup co-hosts less than three months before the tournament.

Their ability to put their grief aside and roar to a successful World Cup campaign underlined Australia's steely resolve in the face of adversity and restored a dynasty that may prove difficult to break.

Double delight in badminton: World No 1 Saina Nehwal, K Srikanth win India Open titles

They seem to like winning together. After triumphing at the China Open Premier last year, Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth came, played and conquered on home soil on Sunday evening. It seemed nothing could stop them in front of a full house at the Siri Fort Stadium. Fitter, confident and literally on top of the world, Saina first smashed her way to glory — winning her first Super Series title in the country.

Srikanth, determined not to be left out of the celebrations, came back in the decider to pick up the winner's trophy at the Yonex Sunrise India Open.

Having come close on previous occasions, Saina didn't leave anything to chance. She lifted, smashed and outplayed former world champion, Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon, 21-16, 21-14 as the crowd chanted her name. "It was good that Saina won before my match. It gave me confidence," said Srikanth after defeating sixth seed Viktor Axelsen 18-21, 21-13, 21-12.

"This tournament has thrown up so many surprises," exclaimed an elated Saina after 49 minutes of tussle on court. Along with her maiden win here, she has assured herself of the world No 1 spot when the rankings are released on Thursday.



Highlights from the match

31.1 overs | M. HENRY TO M. CLARKE

OUT! A brilliant last innings! Short of a length around off, Clarke looks to guide this one but gets an inside edge onto the stumps. 74 of 72 in his last match, take a bow skipper! McCullum appreciates his efforts and gives him a good farewell.

12.2 overs | M. HENRY TO D. WARNER

OUT! Warner perishes! Another short delivery around off, Warner pulls this one to mid-wicket. Elliott comes in running and takes a good low catch to get rid off the well set opener.

1.4 overs | T. BOULT TO A. FINCH

OUT! Boult strikes! An inside edge and onto the pads, gone! Terrific inswinging delivery around middle, Finch looks to flick this one but gets an inside edge onto the pads. The ball hits the pads and balloons straight back to Boult who makes no mistake and takes an easy catch. A dream start for the Kiwis.



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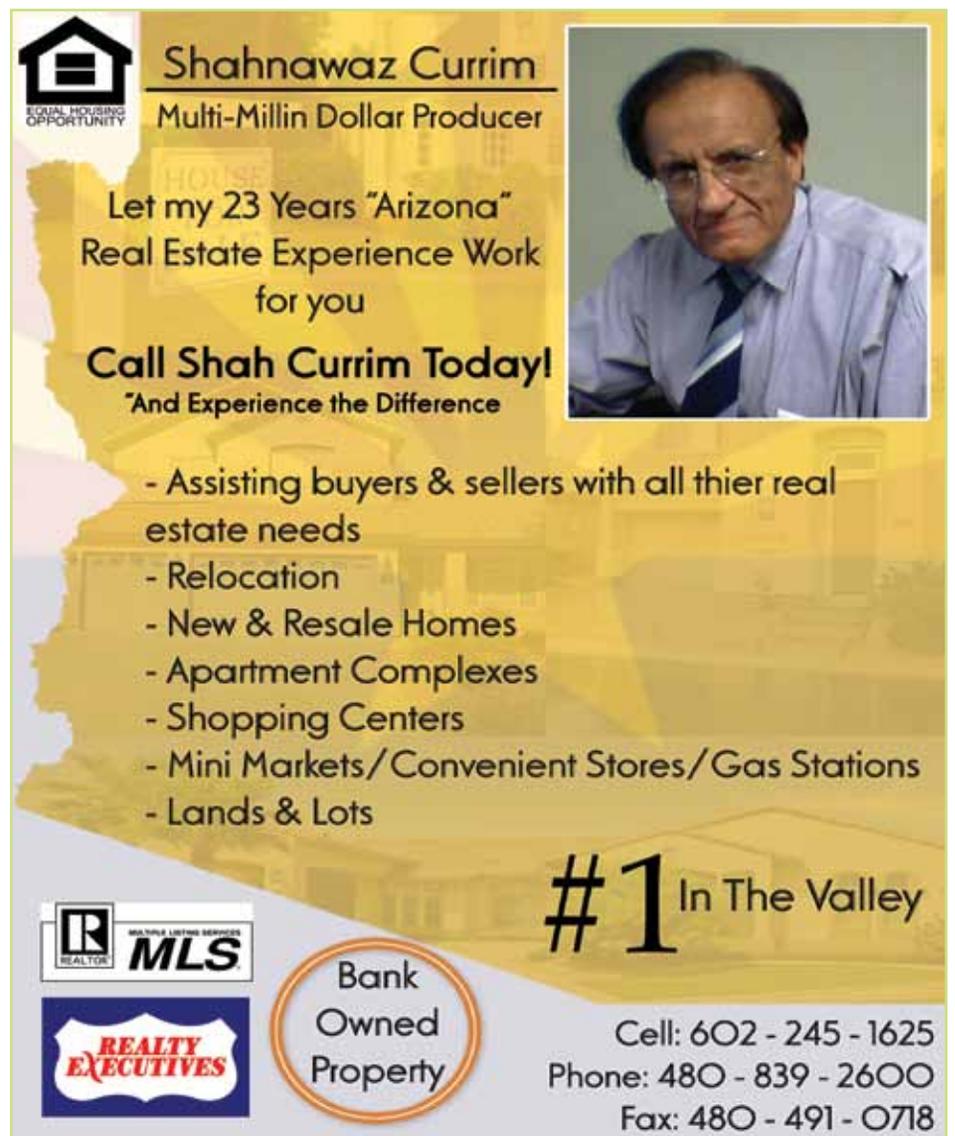
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Kate at age 2

I remember being asked in school to write an essay on my 'My Hero'. Most of my classmates chose star athletes or other famous people. Some even chose comic book heroes. I chose my dad.

I lost most of my hearing when I was about a year old. As a child, I hated wearing hearing aids, because they squealed all the time and were painful. My dad, an electrical engineer, spent countless hours working on technology to create a better hearing aid for me. He even installed a miniature lab set-up just for me, so we could spend time together as he worked. I loved those hours working with Dad in our lab, and it's no surprise that now I'm becoming an electrical engineer too.

It's always a special experience to meet other Zounds wearers, and they often describe my dad as "their hero". Unless you have lived with hearing loss and had it restored to you, you cannot fully understand what it means to those of us who have. It's life-changing.

These people often express gratitude towards the wife, daughter, brother or friend who persuaded them to try Zounds hearing aids. I think they are heroes too, because they helped make a difference in the life of someone they love.

Last August my mom and I were so proud to watch my Dad receive U.S. Congressional Recognition as a Healthcare Hero for Innovation. Sitting there, I thought about all those hours spent in the lab. I thought about the difference he had made in my life, and the lives of so many other hearing impaired people. No one deserves the title of "hero" more than my dad.

Sincerely,

Kate Thomasson



Zounds® Founder and CEO, Sam Thomasson, his daughter, Kate and wife LaWana after receiving the U.S. Congressional Recognition as a Healthcare Hero for Innovation.

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