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# Today

Monthly Newspaper

# ASIA

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## Maha Shiv Ratri Celebrations All over the Valley

By Deepa Walia  
February 19-20, 2012

In honor of Maha Shiv Ratri, the various temples of Arizona held diverse events celebrating this grand occasion. Held on the 6th night of the dark Phalgun (in February or March), on this auspicious day, devotees observe fasts and keep vigils all night. It marks the night when Lord Shiva performed the 'Tandava' and is also believed that on this day Lord Shiva was married to Parvati Ma.

*For pictures from the Shiv Vivaah held at Ekta-Mandir of Arizona on February 19, 2011, see Page 3.*  
*For pictures from Shiv Ratri celebrations at Hindu Temple of Arizona on February 20, 2011, see Page 6.*

## “DEVELOPMENT IS ABOUT EDUCATION” SAYS AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI

### AKSHAYA PATRA FEEDING 1.3 MILLION CHILDREN DAILY

Phoenix, February 11

On February 11, 2012, Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, permanent representative of India to the United Nations, New York, was the guest of honor at the annual Akshaya Patra Foundation Food for Education benefit event in Phoenix, Arizona.

Speaking to over 200 guests, Ambassador Puri remarked, “When we look at development needs of countries, no matter which way we look at it, it is about education. We have to ensure that children

• Continued on P16



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# Shiv-Vivaah at Bharatiya Ekta Mandir

by Deepa Walia

February 19, 2012

For the first time ever, EktaMandir in Phoenix, Arizona held a Shiv-Vivaahin honor of Shiv-Ratri marking the marriage of Lord Shiv Ji with Goddess Parvati. Children dressed as various Gods

and Goddesses, and demons as they marched in the wedding procession of Shiv Ji.

Congratulations to organizing committee for brining another unique celebration to Arizona .Langar, or food, for the evening was sponsored by Dr. Malhotra and his family.





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**Motivation**

We have all heard of positive support, loving friends and family, and constructive criticism adding much-needed motivation in one's life to help them succeed. This month, I had an encounter with a new force of motivation – judgmental opinions, anger, and negativity. You may wonder how negative emotions like judgmental opinions and anger can provide one with motivation. Well, at the end of the day, you cannot control what people send your way but you can control what you do with it. As the saying goes – “If life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” And the same is possible of those that add negativity to your lives – you have the power to take that negativity and allow it to bring positive results in your life.

If someone judges you on your actions or doubts your ability to succeed, take that and use that as motivation to push yourself ahead and surpass your own expectations, leaving those with doubts behind in awe and envy. Had I let those that doubted me or hurled negative criticisms my way get to me, I wouldn't be where I am today. We had doubters when we started the inaugural issue of Asia Today man years ago and look at where it is now – a distinguished newspaper recognized for its quality and concentration on local news. Now, we get contacted by new and emerging organizations to help spread the word about their purpose and vision instead of us going out selling our vision and future. With hard work and dedication, we have become a recognized name in the valley.

Last year, when a few of us got together to start the first annual Diwali Mela in Arizona, we had people doubting our ability to succeed. The event attracted thousands of attendees and numerous vendors, impressive for its inaugural year. Again, all



**Editor's NOTE**

that was possible with hard work and commitment and the desire to not let those that were waiting for us to fail get the better of us.

Even early on in my career, as I applied to the Computer Science program at University of Arizona, I had the enrollment head of the Department ask whether I wouldn't be more suited in a program that is a better fit for women such as Business or Marketing. The lack of females in my program and this professor's doubts in a female's ability to be accepted and graduate from the program didn't shake my determination, it only made it stronger. I wanted to prove to him that not only could I do it, I could do it better than his biased perception of an ideal student for the program. And, I did – I completed that program in two and a half years, graduating at the young age of 20.

If someone doubts your ability to succeed in something or makes comments or judgments without really knowing your potential, you have two roads in front of you – you can either stew in anger and hatred, detrimental to your own health or take the road of using that as fuel to push yourself harder, faster, and make yourself stronger. Each time I have applied that in my life, it has taken me to a new height of success. I am thankful to my family, friends, and loved ones for all the support and encouragement they have given me throughout the years. But, today, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those that discouraged me and questioned my ability to succeed; even if unintentionally, you helped me become stronger and, for that, I will always be grateful to you as well.

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

The older I get, the younger I feel. I'm turning 29 soon, a year away from the dreaded "30". Time has seriously flown by. Each passing year I keep thinking, "Man, I'm already this age; I'm the youngest in my family". What am I supposed to say when I hit 30? The speech of what I've learned along the way to hit this milestone of an event, THE 30'S. The next chapter in my life, or...so I've been told. I've learned a lot of things so far, and I know I'll never stop learning. In fact, no one should ever stop learning, because if you have nothing left to learn, that's when you know you've gotten old. I've been asked many times "how old are you?" or even questioned "you're an adult?", as I play with Nerf guns with two of my favorite kids in the world. I consider myself mature to a point; when I need to be I can be and when I don't need to be, why put in so much effort? I've been told time and time again and I'm pretty sure everyone's been told as kids "don't pretend be who you're not". Why does that change as we grow older? Recently my boss at work mentioned a book that I read a long time ago, and to this day is one of the simplest and most meaningful books I have read...."Everything I Learned, I Learned In Kindergarten"

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and cold milk are

good for you.

- Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out in the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together.
- Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
- Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup - they all die. So do we.
- And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned - the biggest word of all - LOOK.

Basic concepts about how to live and what to do and how to be, take any of these bullet points and put them into "adult terms" and use them in your work life, family life, and very the world around you. You'll be surprised!

Have I ever mentioned how much I hate seeing things fall into place? Only when there bad things, good things I don't mind very much. I hate it even more when I see it coming and can't do anything about it. Recently I had a "situation" come up and I was able to resolve this situation and made it clear where I stood on my decisions. It was sound, it was logical, and it was correct. I stood by it, firm and proud! Unwilling to move from my stance....after much debate and conversation over the weeks of February, I gave in. I know! It's really my fault.



**Publisher's NOTE**

I understood and even made sense of the "situation" and it was quite plausible, if not possible! A few days later, what my initial concern had come true and, everyone who had convinced me into believing otherwise, agreed that my initial position in this "situation" was correct. Which left me with this expression "....." ARE YOU KIDDING ME? Now if you

know me, you know that very rare occasions do I get mad, this was probably not me "mad" or "angry" but it was definitely something that would have made me transform into the "INCREDIBLE HULK" and pick apart portions of the ground as if it was play-doh. It wouldn't have stopped there, I would made it a habit to make sure I jumped on as many cars as I could before being transforming back into a mild mannered Desi boy. Why? Why? Why do people plan ways around making something possible...then realizing oh wait, I have a concern. Oh wait, not only do I have a concern it's the same concern you pointed out at the beginning – Oh Really? What an epiphany you must have had – it is as if the stars aligned and pointed you to a path that you ran around before, like Washington Street in downtown Phoenix. Next time let's just sit back, take into consideration EVERYTHING, and then THEN lets come to an agreement. That isn't too hard to ask right? Right? It's not getting old that gives me gray hairs, it is times like these. Raja Out.

**-Raja Walia**  
Publiser, Asia Today  
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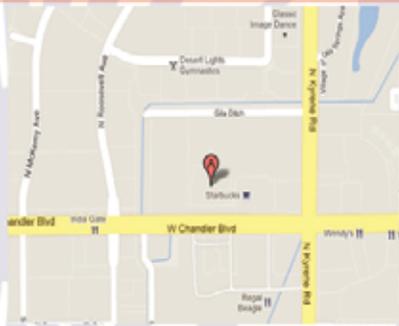
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## HINDU TEMPLE OF ARIZONA MARCH 2012 PROGRAM



Chaitra Navratri Ramayan Reading  
Friday March 23<sup>rd</sup> - Sat 31<sup>st</sup>  
During Temple Hours



Vishal Bhagwati Jaagran by Satnam  
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Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> from 7pm-2am

### HOLIKA DAHAN

Thursday March 8, 2012 @ 9pm after Satyanarayan Puja

Mumbai Beats Show sponsored by Ekal Vidyalaya to aid children in  
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Bhaja Govindam Pravachan by Hari Kandadai (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sat 530-7pm)  
Meditation and Scriptural Reading every Sunday 8-10 am

### APRIL UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Ram Navami - Sunday April 1, 2012 11am-2pm

Hanuman Jayanti & Satyanarayan Puja - Friday April 6, 2012 12pm-9pm

#### Satyanarayan Puja

Thursday March 8, 2012  
7pm-9pm

Contact: Nirmalji (480)  
926-8835

#### Maata Jaagran

Friday March 30, 2012  
7pm-9pm

Contact: Shashiji (480)  
614-1322

#### Hanumanji Puja

Every Tuesday  
7pm-9pm

#### Venkateswara Swami Puja

Every Saturday  
10am- Noon

#### Sunday Puja

11am - 1pm

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday - Ram Parivar

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday - Shri Jagannathji

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - Balaji/Krishnaji

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Shivji

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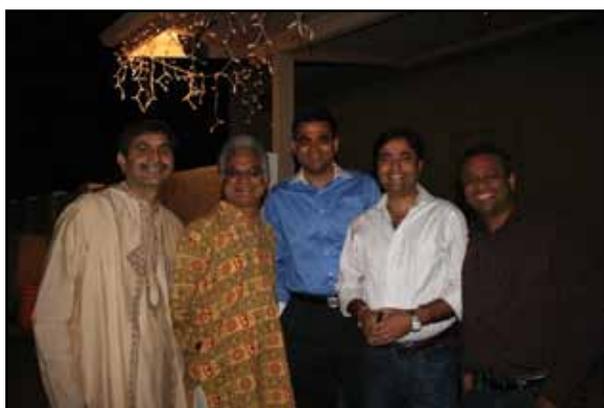
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# Maha Shiv Ratri at Hindu Temple of Arizona

Article by Deepa Walia,  
Photos by Raja Walia  
February 18, 2012

Hindu Temple of Arizona celebrated Maha Shiv Ratra in all its grandeur and attracted over 1,000 attendees. Langar, or food, for the evening was sponsored by Asia Today and cooked by Bollywood-renowned chef of Kebob and Kurry – Parveen Puri.





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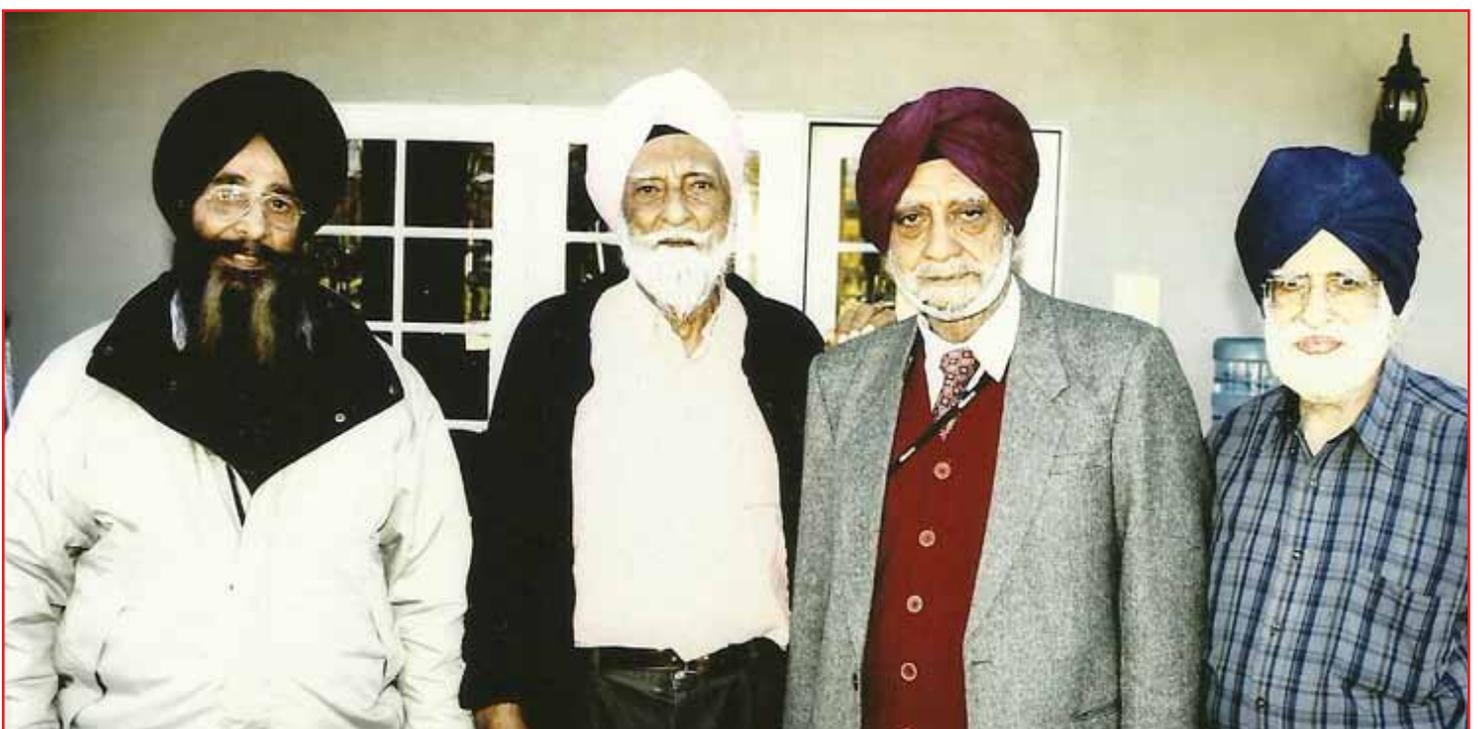
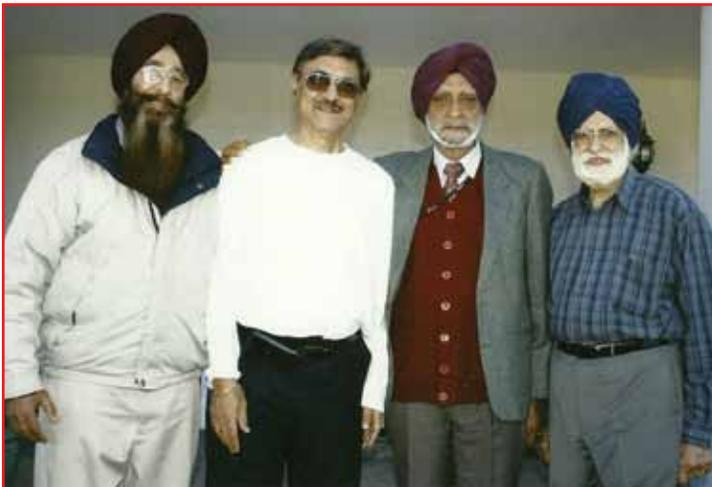
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# The Golden Punjabi Fellowship Club

The Golden Punjabi Fellowship Club held their January meeting at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. G.S.Gill in Cave Creek, AZ. The meeting was held on the 18th of January 2012. This picnic meeting was attended by a very large number of existing members. The meeting was a very lively meeting filled with cultural songs, poetry, and typical Punjabi humor. The food preparation by members and Dr. Gill's family was delicious. We had an abundance of vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian foods including Indian style barbeque chicken. We all sat there for 4 hours and discussed issues important to the group. We also discussed the upcoming trip to Rocky Point, Mexico in April 2012.

The Golden Punjabi Club has been in existence for the last four years and meets on the last Saturday of each month. We generally meet at the Dr.Jasbir Singh Saini community hall at 11:00am and conclude our monthly meeting by 2:00pm. Our meetings are enabling the senior citizens to have forum where we discuss things of common interest. Most of our member's communicate in Punjabi and share Punjabi culture. Our meeting's agenda covers areas of interest to all the members. We plan outdoor activities such as picnics, dinners and sometimes sightseeing trips. We also invite doctors, sociologists and other speakers to share things of common interest such as medical needs, living wills, dual citizenships etc... All our meetings conclude with a delightful meal. The club membership is open to all Indian Seniors who can communicate in Punjabi. Any person interested to join our group can contact us at 623-266-0171. Our last picnic was a grand success and the credit goes to all members who made it such a pleasantly affair. Our special thanks to Dr.Gills' family for hosting this event.



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*Holi will be celebrated on Sunday March 4th & Wednesday March 7th after Mahaprasadam*

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# Ekal Vidyalaya Presents Bollywood Milestones

It is rare to find people who pursue two professions successfully and such that they excel in both at a level where they justify both their vocations. One such person is Singer Performer and Architect Samir Date.

A well-known name in the music industry, Samir has been the playback singer for numerous hindi films like Parampara, Jazbaat, Fauj and more recently Emotional Atyachar and Hang Up. Samir is from a family of gifted musicians. He is the son of Ravi Date, a renowned music composer and his uncle is Arun Date, a very famous Marathi singer.

Samir got his first break singing for film "MAINE PYAR KIYA" English version titled When Love Calls, which Samir sang all the songs. What followed was series of bollywood playback offers and songs in films like PARAMPARA in which he sung for Aamir Khan under the baton of Music Director Shiv Hari and Director Yash Chopra. He followed this up by singing 2 duets with Asha Bhosle in film JAZBAAT. He has also sung playback for various Marathi and other regional films. Samir has performed at innumerable live shows in India and abroad. Samir is a prolific stage performer and has recently returned from a 12 concerts tour

of West Indies & UAE.

Samir has learnt classical music under noted singer Shri Suresh Wadkar. In his career as a singer,



Samir has worked with the likes of Yash Chopra, Asha Bhosle, Shiv-Hari, Raam Laxman, Sooraj Barjatya, Bappi Lahiri, Suresh Wadkar, Anuradha Paudwal, Alka Yagnik, Kavita Krishnamurty, Ekta Kapoor etc. Apart from being a versatile singer, Samir hosted 70 episodes of Balaji Telefilms music show "Dhun Dhamaka", which made him a known face in TV watching households. Samir has made various TV appearances as an special invitee on Zee TVs SAREGAMA hosted Sonu Nigam and other

programs as a judge.

Samir's forte is his versatility due to which he can sing anything across genres from 1960's music till today's hits. Samir is also a qualified Architect and heads a virtual reality company called Impact Communication. His clients include LAVASA, Amby Valley, Godrej Properties, Mahindra GESCO, Shapoorji Pallonji, GVK and many more corporates. His company impact is a known brand name in the real estate 3d animation industry.

Samir has recently launched his new show titled SOUL OF RAFI which premieres at Rangsharda Bandra. This concert is a spectacular extravaganza of Rafi sahebs melodies recreated with full splendor of a 30 piece live orchestra.

Samir is surely a talented blue eyed wonder to look out for. Samir is accompanied by Deepali Somaiya for this Bollywood Milestones night.

Dipalee stormed the citadel of music when she was only nine years old walking away with prizes and awards galore. Her proficiency in Urdu lends an ethereal charm to her rendition of Ghazals and Nazms. She is one of the few lucky artistes to have recorded with Shri Jagjit Singh. Her contribution to film music has been in the form of back-

ground aalaps for the film GHOONGHAT. A few lines in the film HUM TUMPE MARTE HAIN. Her recently released solo for the film CHOORIYAN has been very well received. She has made her presence felt in the Gujarati Film Industry by rendering playback for over 80 films. She is the winner of THE GUJARAT STATE AWARD FOR THE BEST PLAYBACK SINGER 2004. She has also sung for many MARATHI BHOJPURI PUNJABI and RAJASTHANI films. She has over hundred albums of devotional music pop and remixes to her



credited. She has performed at home and abroad in innumerable concerts with the likes of Shri O P NAYYAR, SUDESH BHOSLE, JATIN LALIT, SONU NIGAM etc.

She has performed Garba concerts during Navratri at New Jersey, Manchester, Leicester, Hong Kong etc. She represented Gujarat State in the recent SA RE GA MA mega challenge and was a winner and won the hearts of audiences and the judges.

The Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation is a tax exempt, registered non-profit service organization dedicated to bringing education & village development in rural India. Ekal's philosophy is to take a holistic approach to social and economic development. The Ekal movement is the largest, grassroots, non-government education movement in India, operating in remote and tribal villages of India.

Ekal Vidyalayas operate innovative, non-formal schools which run on a minimal budget of \$1 (50 Rs.) a day. Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation believes in empowering the people to establish "Gram Swaraj" or "Self Governance" as visioned by Mahatma Gandhi.

The Bollywood Milestones in Phoenix is brought to you by Ekal Vidyalaya in Phoenix on March 9th at Dobson High School. It is co-sponsored by Mumbai Beats, Solar Topps, Akshayabhasha and Hospice of the Southwest. This event is a part of over 40 shows Samir and Deepali will be performing all over USA in their tour.

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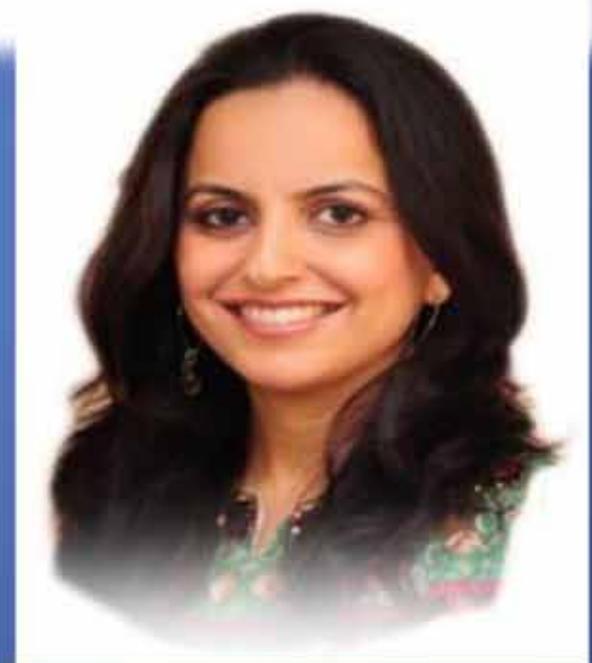
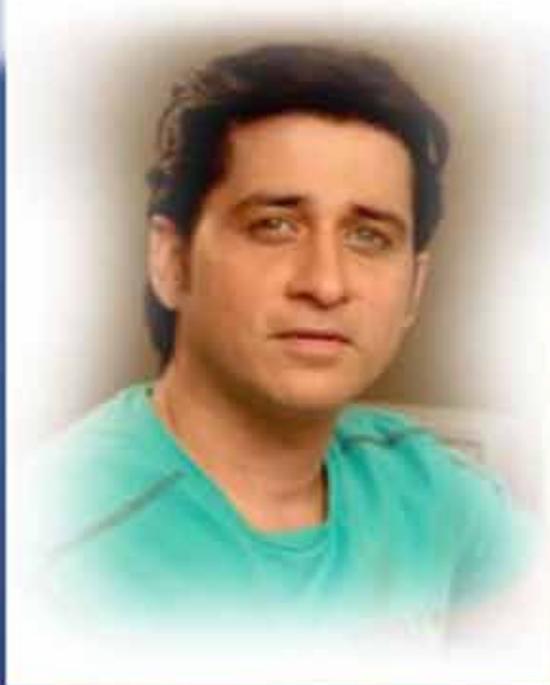
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Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of USA is a 501 (c) (3) Charitable Organization - ID 77-0554248

# Phoenix Temple of Self-Realization Fellowship

By Deepa Walia  
February 18, 2012

On February 18, 2012, I had the pleasure of speaking with Brother Balananda, Self-Realization Fellowship Temple Minister and member of the Fellowship Monastic Order, who gave me a glimpse into the Phoenix Temple, its rich history, and their upcoming Open House.

## History of the Self-Realization Fellowship...

In 1920, Paramahansa Yogananda (author of the infamous Autobiography of a Yogi) came to the United States and landed in Boston to be a part of the Parliament of World Religions as India's delegate. During his visit, people were blown away with his idea that God is approachable and lovable and you can commune with him or her. He travelled all over the East Coast and in 1924, he embarked on a cross-continental speaking tour. Upon arriving in Los Angeles in 1925, he established

the international headquarters for the Self-Realization Fellowship atop Mount Washington.

In 1931, Yogananda came to Phoenix and held classes on his Kriya Yoga teachings and during that visit, fell in love with the city because it reminded him a lot of India and, in 1948, he established the first Self-Realization Fellowship Center in Phoenix. In 1970, as an outgrowth of the Self-Realization Fellowship Center, the Phoenix Temple was established at its current location.

Today, the Fellowship has centers in all states of the United States, as well as over 200 international locations in Japan, Russia, Venezuela, Norway, Thailand, and many other countries. Some locations where there are 200-250 members are called centers, those with 50-100 members are known as Meditation Groups, and those with less than 50 members are known as Meditation Circles. The Fellowship offers a spiritual lifestyle that encourages meditation and provides services

such as counseling – both in-person and conference calls to support members all over the world. They also hold an annual convocation in Los Angeles which is filled with spiritual classes, kirtan, videos, meditation techniques, and attracts approximately 4,000+ attendees from all over the world. In addition, they also hold Monastic tours where they travel to places all over the world and go on the road to spread Yogananda's teachings.

## About Brother Balananda...

Brother Balananda was a Professor of Chemistry at Arizona State University, who stumbled upon Paramahansa Yogananda's Autobiography of a Yogi while looking for an alternative to Christianity. He remembers his first thoughts when completing the book being that "if this book is true, my whole life is about to change." When he looked further, he realized that there were many individuals whose lives had been changed through these teachings including celebrities such as Ravi Shankar and George Harrison. Even today, a video titled Glimpses of a Life Divine – which includes snippets of devotees whose lives were changed with this lifestyle – is played at many Fellowship events all over the world.

As I spoke with Brother Balananda, he described to me his experience with following these teachings and the effects of meditation. In his own words, three things happen when you meditate – you feel good and content about life, you get along harmoniously with everyone, and you learn to remain calm when things go wrong. When this happens, people around you notice and start questioning how you are so calm and composed and this is how the word of the Fellowship spreads. Members are not encouraged to go out and spread the word but rather wait for people to approach them and ask what they do to get this sense of calm and control and then provide information upon asking.

One thing that intrigued Brother Balananda and attracted him towards the Fellowship was the fact that he stated in his book that everything that he is talking about, anyone can do himself/herself. He did not expect to be worshipped but expected people to turn into him – become him. In 1979,

he came to the Phoenix Temple as an usher and was so enamored, he wanted to do this for the rest of his life. In 1983, he left his life to become a monk. He is glad that he lived his life and saw the world before deciding to dedicate his life to this cause and recommends the same for anyone thinking of going down a similar path, so they have no regrets or curiosity about what else is out there.

## Brother Balananda's Message to Phoenix Residents...

Even though Brother Balananda made the choice to join this cause full-time, that is not a requirement. An individual can become what is known as a "lay member," in which they are members and follow the lifestyles and Kriya Yoga techniques but are permitted to maintain their normal lives including job, families, etc. In addition, members are also free to practice their own religion as these teachings are not religious but spiritual in nature. The Fellowship promotes a way for direct understanding and communication with God, but that God can be any being you believe in.

The study of Yoga is found on the principle that the goal of life is self-realization, which is in parallel with realizing God. However, Yoga does not promote any specific religion or religious entity. It does however provide a step-by-step, scientific method of meditation with proven results to attain that goal. It also reduces stress in one's life and, in fact, Intel Chandler having realized that, offers virtual, guided meditation workshops for its employees to reduce stress.

## An Open House in Phoenix for More Information...

The Phoenix Temple will be hosting an Open House on March 24, 2011 from 10 AM – 2 PM. All attendees will receive an informational folder with teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, as well as simple tips to decreasing their stress and improving their lifestyle. The temple has reached capacity with its growth and is looking to expand by purchasing the house that has come on the market at the end of their current property. In our hectic, stressful lives, if you are looking for a way to reduce stress and give your life purpose and direction, be sure to visit them at their Open House at 6111 N. Central Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona.

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## GURDWARA MONTHLY

A Monthly digest of Gurdwara Programs and Events

### MARCH 2012 Programs & Events

19 Phagan, 543 – 18 Chet, 544 Nanakshahi Era (NE)

Mar. 8 (Thurs.) – Pooranmashi Kirtan Diwan program  
7:00PM to 8:00PM.

Mar. 11 (Sun.) – Hola Mohalla Anandpur Sahib Festival  
To learn more about this festival visit  
[http://www.sikhwiki.org/index.php/Hola\\_Mahalla](http://www.sikhwiki.org/index.php/Hola_Mahalla)  
(Actual Day: Mar. 9)

Mar. 14, Chet 1 (Wed.) –  
Nanakshahi NEW YEAR 544.  
HAPPY NEW YEAR Everyone!!!  
Gurgaddhi Siri Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji (1644)  
Sangrand and Monthly Sehj Path  
Sehj Path Bhog 9:00 AM.  
Sehj Path Arambh for new month at 9:30 AM.



Hola Mohalla Anandpur Sahib Festival

Mar. 18 (Sun.) – Homeless Dinner Seva. Phoenix Rescue Mission,  
1801 S. 35th Ave, at 3:30 PM. (Call 602 741 8021)

Mar. 23 (Fri.) – Joti Jot Siri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji (1644)  
(Actual day: Mar 19)

Mar. 31 (Sat.) – Free Kidney Health Screening  
9:00AM to 3:00PM at Gurdwara Sahib.  
Please see separate flier for details.



Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji

**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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# “DEVELOPMENT IS ABOUT EDUCATION” SAYS AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI

go to school, are motivated, and that they stay in school. We must make the young generation of India productive and that is what this evening is about. That is why we have all gathered here together.”

Akshaya Patra, one of the largest NGO run mid day school meal programs in the world, leverages technology to deliver freshly prepared nutritious meals to 1.3 million underprivileged children in over 9000 schools across 10 states of India through 21 kitchens, daily. A public-private partnership it cost Akshaya Patra \$15 to feed a child for an entire academic year. After reaching its initial goal of feeding one million children each school day, Akshaya Patra's next milestone is to serve 5 million children daily by 2020.

Introducing Akshaya Patra to the invited guests, Dr. Jagdish Patel, Chair of the Akshaya Patra USA Phoenix Chapter said, “The Akshaya Patra mission is quite simple. We know that the most effective way to break the cycle of poverty is through education. If a child's basic needs of food are not met, learning cannot be a priority. Akshaya Patra helps children refocus on education by providing healthy nutritious meals while in school.”

During the Q&A session the crowd was thoroughly engaged as Desh Deshpande, Chairman of the Akshaya Patra USA, and Madhu Sridhar, President and CEO of Akshaya Patra USA, focused on the nutrition, operational efficiency and distribution network of Akshaya Patra which they said quite often is missing in NGOs. The primary focus of the event was to raise awareness and funds for Akshaya Patra and



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its unique and innovative program for fighting hunger and promoting education simultaneously. The benefit was attended by key community leaders, business executives and eminent change agents committed to unlock these children from the vicious and perpetual cycle of poverty and determined to closing the gap between the

haves and the have-nots.

Inspired by Ambassador Puri's words, the residents of Phoenix responded generously with an impressive \$81,000 to further the mission of Akshaya Patra and to expand its already astounding program.

“We are touched by the generous support of the Phoenix community to

help build this program of highest relevance for the bottom of the pyramid. Akshaya Patra is an inspiring movement that is bringing smiles of hope to the deserving children in India,” said Madhu Sridhar, President and CEO of Akshaya Patra USA. For more information about Akshaya Patra, please visit [www.foodforeducation.org](http://www.foodforeducation.org).

**W**hen we think faith is God, our mind asks; although I believe this, why can't I see God? The answer to this question is we don't have communication with the Divine. If we want to love someone, the first step is communication. Without communication, nothing is possible. If we love our neighbor, we start to communicate.

Communication is the only source to bring us close to each other. In our mind we think God is an unseen. That thinking is a great obstacle in our life. It keeps us away from the reality. There is a simple explanation for this. When we think of ourselves we think only our physical body is our existence. This is not true. If the mind is not in this body, existence of the body is not possible. We mostly believe our physical body

## Faith Is God

is everything. This is our problem. We need to understand that mind is the life of our body. Soul is the life of our mind. Supreme Soul (God) is the life of every soul. God manifest through the soul in this universe. The entire universe is the physical existence of God. We just need to realize this. How do we realize this? Start the communication with the Supreme soul to see the unseen.

It's a matter of fact, our physical body is a combination of the seen and the unseen elements. Our physical body is a combination of the external five elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Ether. Our mind is unseen. It's a combination of the internal five elements; Lust, Anger, Greed

Pride and attachment.

If we understand this statement, there is no doubt that we are both seen and unseen. Our mind is unseen and without it our body is worthless and dead. Human life is a chance to see the unseen in our self.

Where there is a will there is a way. If we desire to see God, we have to believe. Creator is in the creation and creation is from the Creator. Through worldly relations we connect with this universe. When we wish to establish a spiritual relationship with the Creator, first we need to love the creation without discrimination toward any creature. If we love God as our beloved, he is our beloved. If we love God as our lover,

He's our lover. He's our father. He's our mother. He's our sibling. He's our friend. He's our protector. He's most kind to us, like a mother to a child.

Let us begin to talk to him with reverence, devotion and confidence. Before we lay down to sleep, we pray the Divine our soul to keep. If we die before we wake, we pray the Divine our soul to take. When we awake continue this discourse; “Oh Lord, bless me with peace, joy and grace”.

This is not just an article. It's the goal of the human life. Read it again and again and learn more with each reading. Thank you  
- Harbhajan Singh Sandhu



Interview by Manju Walia & Raja Walia,  
Pictures by Raja Walia  
February 11, 2012

During the Akshaya Patra Foundation's charity event, supported by Indo-American Cultural and Religious Foundation (IACRF), held in Phoenix, Arizona, Asia Today had the immense pleasure of speaking with Hardeep Singh Puri, India's representative to the United Nations in New York, Gururaj Deshpande, Chairman of Akshaya Patra Foundation, and Madhu Sridhar, President and CEO of Akshaya Patra Foundation.

The foundation, started in the year 2000, used to feed a few students in a school. Over the last 12 years, it has scaled quite a bit and has expanded to 20 kitchens in 10 states that feed 1.3 million children every day with local cuisine and produce. Children in South India get rice and sambar, while those in the North get Chapatti, Sabzi, or daal. It costs \$37 to feed a child for an entire year and with it being a public/private partnership, this goes down to 15 dollars per child per year with a subsidy from the government.

Hardeep Puri was introduced to the Foundation in 2010 via word of mouth and educated himself on its history and cause. In his opinion, any organization that can feed 1.3 million school children in a day must be strong and regarded as performing a function that is necessary. After his initial exposure, he was invited to an event in 2011 and then Madhu asked him to be a part of this fundraising event in Phoenix, Arizona. There are very few organizations that are completely transparent in how they raise money. Akshaya Patra is a modern foundation, providing nutritional meals in a clean, hygienic, cost-effective manner. Charities typically have large overheads and spend a lot of money on themselves but Akshaya Patra is a transparent organization that is raising and using money towards a good cause. And that is why Mr. Puri is supporting them now and will for years to come. According to Gururaj Deshpande, the level of support they have received in Arizona is amazing. If we can get Arizonans to feed 1 or 100 kids at \$15 a year, it would be an amazing program and so far the foundation is very impressed with the support. There is a level of excitement here that is unmatched and that is something we can all be proud of. Instead of concentrating on the poverty, look at how people are bringing best practices together to take of people and give them an opportunity. It is not just about feeding a child but educating them so it changes the whole family.

Madhu Sridhar continued on with what Deshpande was saying. "I feel

## Asia Today...With the Representatives of Akshaya Patra Foundation



in the Phoenix community, like many others, most Indians are doing very well and are successful in this country. Part of the reason is because of the education they received back in India and they are eager to help India in some way or another. If they can find an organization that is producing results and has an impact, that determination increases. Akshaya Patra is an organization that is not only feeding children but giving them an incentive to come to school and get educated. That is why we feel this message resonates well with the communities because they want to do something for India and it is a great chance to do that through an organization like Akshaya Patra."

When asked about best practices, Deshpande responded by telling us that the best engineering and procurement, as well as efficient supply chain and accounting are used to ensure success. And they are used to solve a very simple problem – educating a child by giving him/her a nutritious meal. A combination of simple, yet effective problem-solving skills coupled with sophisticated technology to increase efficiency contribute to their success.

Finally, we asked Mr. Puri how he goes into the UN with organization such as Akshaya Patra in the back of his head. He replied that he keeps those two things separate. The UN deals with a wide canvas of issues, related to peace and security. India is a member of the Security Council and entrusted to deal with the responsibility of threats to international peace and security, as well as assisting on economic issues.

However, solutions like Akshaya Patra or the Barefoot Doctors, utilize best practices and models to solve common problems in India, but could have a high impact on other countries. He mentioned another friend of his in India "Banker Roy" that takes grand-

mothers from Africa, places them in Indian villages in a scheme called "Solar Grandmothers," teaches them how to be solar engineers, then sends them back to their villages in Africa with solar panels – resulting in rural electrification in a number of countries in Africa. When asked why grandmothers, he replied because young men are economically and socially mobile, they will leave their village and go to the city and if you take mothers, they are too occupied with their own children. These are all unique, out of the box solutions to solve simple problems.

When you're dealing with economic development and you're dealing with countries that have enormous developmental challenges, what is it that you're looking for? The answer is education, education, education. It's very easy for the apex court or the government in India to say "we would find free education" and they perhaps will. They will provide the empty infrastructure; they'll get a building and a few teachers, but how do you motivate children to come to school? This is where unique and simple ideas like Akshaya Patra come in – once a child from disadvantages section of society are promised a meal and delivered those meals, there is an incentive for the child to come to school and there is an incentive for the parents to send their children. It's a relationship that builds up and the child wants to stay in school, resulting in the final goal of education for the children.

From the team of Asia Today, congratulations to IACRF for supporting such an honorable cause and all those that attended the fundraiser and contributed. We can definitely be proud of Akshaya Patra Foundation, its cause, and its unique angle at solving such a common, age-old problem – we are proud of the fact that this concept was born in India.



# Hidden Gems...Dr. Madan Singh

By Deepa Walia

On February 19-22, 2012, Society for Mining, Metallurgy, & Exploration (SME), held its annual convention in which Phoenix's very own Dr. Madan Singh was honored with the 2011 SME Rock Mechanics Award for his contributions to the mining industry which include contributions to several fields related to geo-technical engineering, mining, tunneling, ventilation, and sustainability.

From a very young age, Dr. Singh knew that he wanted to be an engineer but did not know what type of an engineer, even though his father wanted him to be in medicine. As luck would have it, one day his father was travelling from Lucknow to Calcutta and passing through Dhanbad on the way and he ran into students from the Indian School of Mines in Dhanbad, India heading back from vacation. They told him about this school, which only accepted 40 students in each class, but prospects for graduates in that industry were very high. There was a competition all over India to select the 40 students for the upcoming year so he suggested Dr. Singh take the exam, which he did that same summer and got in. While being in school, his interest in mining gradually developed because it was a specialized type of engineering.

During his senior year, there was a travelling professor from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who was teaching us on the Columbo plant. He approached Dr. Singh to do graduate work in the SUA, since there were no facilities in India for mining-related graduate work. Using him as a reference, Dr. Singh applied to 2-3 schools and in 1956 came to the University of Illinois. He completed the program there and then went to Pennsylvania State for his PhD. While teaching at Penn State, he went back to India and married his lovely wife Sonia with whom he has a son, Aman, who currently lives and works in Oregon for the State of Oregon's Department of Human Services.

Dr. Singh established a

consulting engineering company in Chicago that specialized in Civil Engineering and Rock Mechanics, which also opened a branch in Tucson in 1992, where the mining business was thriving. He eventually moved the offices from Tucson to Phoenix in 1996 and, wanting to get away from the cold, Chicago winters, he himself moved with his family to Arizona in 1998. During his consulting days, he gained a variety of experience, each brining new challenges and learning opportunities.

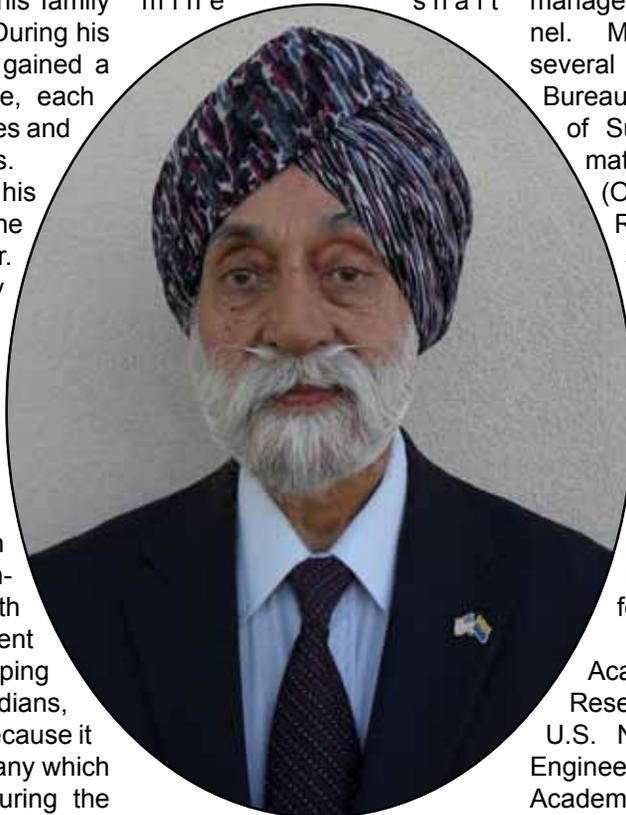
In addition to his contributions to the field of Mining, Dr. Singh was also very active in the community. As a student, he was active in foreign student bodies and was the President of the Cosmopolitan Club, dedicated to foreign students. He was involved in the inter-faith community and spent countless hours helping them understand Indians, as well as Sikhism because it was a problem for many which was made worse during the time that Indira Gandhi was killed by her Sikh bodyguard.

On behalf of the entire team of Asia Today, we would like to wish a hearty congratulations to Dr. Madan Singh and his entire family for one of his many accomplishments, the SME Rock Mechanics Award 2011, and thank him for his contributions to the field of Mining Engineering. We are proud to showcase further details on the career, contributions, and accomplishments of such a remarkable individual.

### A Brief Bio...

Dr. Madan M. Singh was Director of the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources for the State of Arizona from August 2005 through January 2011. He served under Governor Janet Napolitano (now Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security) and Governor Jan Brewer. He moved to Arizona in 1998; prior to which he was in Illinois for 32 years and in Pennsylvania for 9 years. So Singh

is intimately familiar with the mineral resources of the country and their interface with economic, environmental, health and safety, and other issues. He has testified before Congressional Committees and the Arizona Legislature. He served on Legislative committees to update Arizona's mining regulations, abandoned mine shaft



clo - sure, and the creation of the Centennial Museum(now called The Arizona Experience) under the Arizona Historical Society. Madan was also a representative of a cooperating agency on two Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) – one for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the other for the U.S. Forest Service (FS). He has prepared briefs for the Governor's policy advisor on natural resources. He was on the Governor's cabinet on Renewable Energy Development in Arizona.

Prior to joining the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources, Singh had over 30 years of experience in operating a consulting engineering firm, which he founded and developed from a one-man operation to a company with a staff of over 50 and three offices. He managed all aspects of the company – technical, financial, marketing, and human resources; he wrote pro-

posals and reports and made presentations. Thus he could also serve in Business Development.

He has served as a manager in a not-for-profit research organization for eight years (IIT Research Institute), and was on the mining faculty at Penn State. Thus he has demonstrated that he can manage budgets and personnel. Madan has performed several projects for the U.S. Bureau of Mines and Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and other government agencies.

### Professional Service & Recognition

Dr. Singh has been active in the mining, minerals, and natural resources professional community.

For The National Academies (National Research Council of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering/U.S. National Academy of Sciences), Singh has served on committees that produced the reports entitled "Managing Materials for a 21st Century Military" (2008), "Managing Coal Combustion Residues in Mines" (2006), and "Coal Waste Impoundments" (2002). He was elected to the U.S. National Committee for Rock Mechanics and has served on the U.S. National Committee on Tunneling Technology. He was Chairman of the Subcommittee on Rock Strength for a decade for the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). He has recently served as an invited expert for minerals in a climate change workshop for an agency of the United States Government.

The Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration, Inc. (SME) inducted Madan as a Distinguished Member in 2004, and installed him in the Legion of Honor in 2005. He has been selected for the 2011 SME Rock Mechanics Award. He was awarded the Howard

N. Eavenson Award in 2000. The Coal Division of SME presented him with the Distinguished Service Award in 1997. Since 2010 he is serving on the Structure and Governance Strategic Committee of SME, and is Vice-Chair of the Research Committee. In May 2011 he was chosen as the Local Section Hero by the SME Maricopa Section.

Dr. Singh was awarded the Robert Stefanko Distinguished Achievement Award by the Department of Energy and Geoenvironmental Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University. He was selected Centennial Fellow by the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences at Penn State. Singh was conferred the Distinguished Alumnus Award by the Indian School of Mines and Applied Geology.

Dr. Singh was elected Fellow of the American Consulting Engineers Council (ACEC) and Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). He is a Life Member of the Society of the Sigma Xi, Life Member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and was a Charter Member of the Institute of Shaft Drilling. In 1990, he won the Minority Vendor of the Year Award (Illinois Minority and Female Business Enterprise Council). The Federal Highway Administration selected his company, Engineers International, Inc., for the 1999 Environmental Excellence Award.

He was selected to serve on a Coal Mining Delegation from the United States to the Peoples Republic of China. He was elected to serve on the prestigious Washington Award Committee. In the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers, Inc. (AIME), he served as Chair, Environmental Conservation Distinguished Service Award committee. In 2007 he chaired the Robert Earll McConnell Award Committee.

He won the SME Student Paper Prize, Graduate Division, of the Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration, Inc. (SME). He was a Director of SME, and was Chair, Coal

Division of SME. He chaired the SME Underground Ventilation Committee. Madan was elected chair of the Chicago Section of AIME/ISS-SME. He was chair of the SME Maricopa Section from 2006 through 2010 and served on the Arizona Conference Board (2005 – 2011).

Dr. Singh was elected National Director of the American Consulting Engineers Council (ACEC) (1997-98). He was elected President of the Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois (CECI) (1996-1997).

He was appointed to the Panel of Arbitrators of the American Arbitration Association. He was active in HWAC (an association of engineering and science firms practicing in hazardous waste management), served on its insurance committee. He was editor of its "Legislative Update". Singh was elected a Director of Demeter Insurance Co.

Dr. Singh has chaired six (6) national conferences (including the Silver Anniversary Rock Mechanics Symposium and two Engineering Foundation Conferences). He is listed in Who's Who Among American Executives, Who's Who in the Midwest, American Men and Women of Science, and several other biographical compendia. He has lectured extensively in the USA and abroad. He has authored 131 technical publications, many of them peer-reviewed. Most of the reports to government agencies were reviewed extensively by agency staff prior to acceptance.

## Dr. Madan Singh Receiving Rock Mechanics Award

This award shall be given for distinguished contributions to the advancement of the field of rock mechanics and is open to all regardless of age, nationality, SME membership, or professional field. The Award shall consist of a suitable plaque containing a citation of the service or achievement upon which the award is based.

Selection of Recipients: Recipients of the award shall be selected by the Award Committee, subject to the approval of the Coal & Energy Division Executive Committee, the M&E Division Executive Committee, and the SME Executive Committee. The Committee shall submit its report through the Coal & Energy Division Chair and the M&E Division Chair to the SME Executive Director not later than August 1 of each year.

Not more than one award shall be made each year. An achievement in rock mechanics by a team of two or more may be recognized in manner designated by the Award Committee. If in any year the Committee of award shall not find a nominee whose contribution merits the award, or if the available funds are not sufficient to merit the costs of an award, it may recommend that no award be made.





### Rock Mechanics Award to Madan Singh

The Rock Mechanics Award is presented to Madan Singh "for his continuing leadership and broad based contribution in promoting, publishing and applying Rock Mechanics principles to practical problems in hard rock and coal mining practices."

Singh is a Legion of Honor member and a Distinguished Member of SME. He has received the Eavenson Award and the Coal & Energy Division's Distinguished Service Award. He was chair of the SME Maricopa Section and was selected as an SME Local Section Hero. He has served on the Arizona Conference board since 2005. Singh served as a director of SME and chaired the C&E Division, the Underground Ventilation Committee and the Chicago Section of SME. He has served on the Professional Engineers Exam Committee and on the Investment Committee. He was elected to the U.S. National Committee for Rock Mechanics and served on the U.S. National Committee on Tunneling Technology. He served on three National Research Council committees and chaired the subcommittee on rock strength from 1968-1977 for the American Society for Testing and Materials. He received the Robert Stefanko Distinguished Achievement Award from the Department of Energy and Geo-environmental Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University. He was selected Centennial Fellow by the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences at Penn State in 1996. In 1978, he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Indian School of Mines and Applied Geology.

Singh was elected national director of the American Consulting Engineers Council and served as president of the Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois 1996-1997. He chaired two AIME committees and served on the AIME Washington Award Committee from 1980-1982. In 1990, he won the Minority Vendor of the Year Award from the Illinois Minority and Female Business Enterprise Council.



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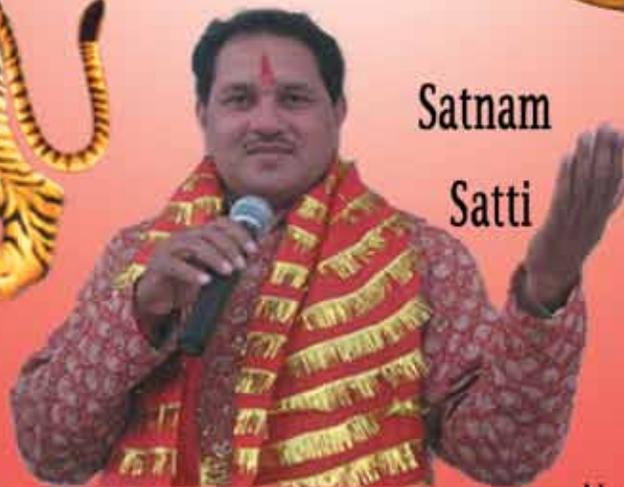
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# INDIAN SENIORS ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA

February 14, 2012 (La Soiree Banquet Hall) – On Valentine’s Day, the Indian Seniors Association of Arizona gathered for a lovely afternoon. Men offered their spouses, sisters, and friends Red Roses and wished each other a very Happy Valentine’s Day. Couples reminisced on the years they have been married and their children and grandchildren; some described unusual events in their life and gave advice based on their experience. Over sixty members and guests enjoyed delicious pizza sponsored by Vishnubhai in memory of Urmilaben and Madhuben and fruit salad, made by Hansaben.



Timeless Romance!



The lovely ladies of India Seniors Association of Arizona



Presenting Roses to their Loved Ones

February 21, 2012 (Rio Vista Park) – Indian Seniors Association of Arizona held its first picnic of the year at Rio Vista Park in Peoria. Mother nature supported the event by giving the best of blue skies and abundant sunshine. The morning started off with some sumptuous bhajias, chutney, salsa, and masala chai. As the lunch was being prepared, people were absorbed in card games, antakshari, and gossip and socializing. Light music in the background added to the ambience and by two in the afternoon, over sixty five members and guests were enjoying kichdi, shaak, padi, athanu, and chaas. Thank you to Thankorbhai and Kapilaben for sponsoring the picnic.



Fresh snacks perfect for a relaxing picnic!



Sharing stories and experiences



Seniors relaxing and enjoying mother nature’s gift of beautiful weather



Attendees gather for a group photo



Seniors enjoying the delicious food

# Getaway to the French Riviera?

Rows of palm trees enveloping glittering sandy white beaches with sparkling blue waters, the capital of French Riviera, is the winter home to celebrities and tourists alike owing to its breathtaking natural beauty and amazing mild Mediterranean weather. With a range of options to have a relaxed summer to choose from - Plush sea facing hotels, carnivals at the city square and casinos for a royal night out - no wonder this is the second most visited tourist destination in France, next to Paris of course, which made it a must visit on our itinerary during our recent visit to Europe.

For a city that's supposed to be one of the oldest settlements in the world, its interesting mix of how the old and rustic meets the new and jazzy is jaw-dropping.

While the old nice provides options to the art and culture enthusiasts - with its cobbled streets and vibrantly painted rows of houses with brown windows and old town markets. The newer part of the city has metros running on the roads and buildings flaunting contemporary architecture and rows of designer labels temptingly inviting from the display windows.

Take time out from exploring the cities museums and cathedrals, or gorging on sumptuous food followed by a walk at the scenic Promenade des



Anglais ('the Walkway of the English') and drive to Monte Carlo and Monaco to discover luxury in true sense. Now, a stay at these locations is too expensive to be recommended to the faint hearted, but missing a dekko when one is next door in Nice, is absolutely a crime!

Stop over en route at the Fragonard (perfume factory) for a personalized tour and demo on how those scintillating perfumes and toiletries are made, while you head to one of the

most sought after tourist destinations for the rich and famous - with its spectacular hotels, Monte Carlo Casino, grand prix racing tracks and yacht-dock yards! Since this small little country is home to the royalty, you could take a sneak peak at their cathedral and palace and stop by on your way back at the ancient Eze village that gives all those fairy tale books that you read about a run for their money.

Phew...Where else could you find everything that your dream vacation can be about?

## A holy trip to Ujjain

One gets so caught up in the grind of life and daily affairs that we all look forward to a good break. Forgetting the rigmarole of life and hectic pace of activity - my friends Anil, Prashant, Sandeep and I decided to visit the sacred city of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh.

We boarded a train and enjoyed a comfortable journey. It was after dawn when we reached the holy city. The staple food of the town seemed poha and namkeen as we found it every where. After a restful sleep at Hotel Kishan we set out to explore the city.

There are many beautiful temples in Ujjain dedicated to Lord Shiva. We visited many of them on banks of river Shipra. But our most memorable time was spent in Onkareshwar temple - it is one of the 12 jyotilingas located 150 km away from Ujjain. The journey via Indore takes about four hours. The shrine is located near river Narmada. We enjoyed a boat ride.

The Bhasmarti and Abhishek of Mahakal (Lord Shiva) is must visit. Though one needs to buy tickets for visiting there one can avoid it by talking with the pujari. On the whole it was a great trip, more so because it was made with friends. I came back with beautiful memories.





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## THE VOICE for THE People to the World

Thinking... Be~ing Human and Feeling it from within...

America the beautiful  
America the brave  
America the brat  
America the slave

While the whole western hemisphere can be referred to as "the 'America'(s)", I am specifically referencing the homeland of my berth which has become THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

On the land, the united states of America born, From six summed generation land born natives bred, Patriot blue blood believed - morphing Matriot, raised.

America the Beautiful

With limited access to but wide depth of experiencing the land of my birth, I have seen with my own eyes the intense hues and variety of her precious dowries. Every breath a token of gratitude for lives this land sustains. I confess my love toward and adoration for her cornucopiac provision and sustenance. Upon the patinated shoulders of my foremothers and forefathers I stand as a unique individual a steward of the land and ideals in which I dwell.

In spite of having spoken thusly, it has become evidentiary to me that the frequential harmonies among interdependent s of this land augmented by official tewing serve as participational invitations, cautionary warnings and thoroughly thrilling tutorials.

Never was that so obvious to me as when, during a time of expatriation, I newly saw my homeland from another, completely foreign perspective. Living in another country, on another land; hearing their ideas and seeing their take-away s as they heard and saw what this country presented itself as, was indeed shocking, disheartening, and eye-opening.

In my memory, prior to September 11th 2001, the biggest terrorist shock to this country was the Oklahoma City bombing. Within a few months the country was also reeling from the O.J. Simpson trial. The nation's political ability to defend itself was seriously compromised, as the then President Clinton amputated the American military presence in Europe and at 'home'. I was a civilian stay-at-home-mom firsthand witness to the effect the dismissal had on the host country, the American military families, consulate, and "big business".

Each event had its own impression; collectively they were a presentation of the great magnitude of influence and effect the United States had/has in the world. The most dismaying insight was the seemingly arrogant and ignorant attitude of the country-people, its politics, and international antics. Until then, I had always felt grateful and proud to be an American. On the land and in the country of another society and people as my host, I felt the irritation they exhibited as they dealt with the bratty pride of the Americans with whom they interacted. Also at that time the U.S. Federal Reserve Note, the "dollar" was having much difficulty



standing on its own. Many times over a two-year period, I watched as the dollar was brought back to "proper" international standing, propped up by the Japanese yen, the British pound and the German mark.

It was inevitable that as a direct result from my experiences in a country foreign to me, that I would see the world totally different. I began to question nearly all things I had been taught, things I had assumed about the land of my birth and its place in the world.

Although the people I personally knew in my host country were saddened and hurt for the Americans in Oklahoma they wondered as well as I:

How could an American turn on his own people including little children with such calculated vehemence and devastation? What were the ingredients that precipitated and could allow for such homeland based terror as if turning on itself? I wondered what were the internal reasons for an individual - as a representation of America and Americans - to lash out on such a grand scale?

How could other countries, seeing what our judicial system was, ever trust us to know how to execute fairness and truth at any time anywhere, and not turn that into something they could exploit if their interests were skewed against us?

America the Brave ?

As a child of a United States Air Force officer and Viet Nam vet, a particular brand of bravery was ever before my eyes and affecting my everyday life even before I was old enough to understand what I was seeing. At the time of the European vacation of U.S. troops, I also had two brothers who were active military, one of whom served during the "Desert Storm" operation. During that massive exodus, I couldn't help but ask:

What is going to happen to us - the U.S. -- as a military power and influence? How can we in good conscience abandon our European friends and allies during this time of relative peace when they have come to rely on our presence to maintain that peace in their midst and amongst each other? (At the time, the Serbo-Croatian war was still in full bloom



and was within an 8 hour distance from my host country. There were legitimate concerns for the safety of their people.)

Because of the economic/financial reasons and ramifications of such grand-scale movement I had to confront within myself this question: How could the U.S. continue to be such a great and strong world power in the realms of finance and politics if the basic unit of its economy had to be stabilized many times in a two year period, by pouring currencies of other nations into it? How could such an event transpire so many times in such a short period? What were the results of those actions? What were the distractions in which Americans were immersed? Prior to my moving abroad, I had no idea that knowing about international monetary exchange or finance could have such a profound effect on me, my family, my country, let alone the economies of the world. It was just something I never worried about, wasn't interested in, let alone cared about.

I look back on all of my experiences there as a most profoundly preparatory, intensively accelerated awakening. It was by all means of expression, an uncomfortable rousing. I began to see more clearly the true appearance of who and what this blessed continent and its governmental institutions are as "the man behind the curtain".

I saw how much like a spoiled rich self-assumed "emancipated" adolescent this 'young-in-years and experience' country is - compared to the older "elder" countries in the world. When looked at from that perspective, there truly is no reason to wonder why, when in other countries, one hears how as a people and administration "Americans" are disliked for their racism, ignorance, haughtiness, egocentricism.

America the Brat

As most adolescents we - collectively—with our world international policies act like we know what we're doing, that we have the experience and clout as though we were on equal footing to those countries as though we were adults or "grown-ups". Just like a teenager, we want to be treated like an adult with re-

spect and recognition due us. We want the privileges of adulthood without understanding there are also responsibilities and duties that are more inherent in adulthood than perhaps there are wanton pleasures. Also like an Intelligence on the verge of maturity, because our prefrontal cortex is underdeveloped, we regretfully are unable to foresee the inherent consequences of our active outbursts, when because we are still in the process of maturation we can behave very much like the child we are trying to outgrow.

As codified nations go, we are very young and very big. Big in size, big in stature, big in power and potential. We are the child, the collective manifestation of every other civilization that ever attempted to have lawful, idealized, institutionalized freedom and decency for all people. It's a good idea, it's a great ideal and it's a greater Idyll.

In spite of where we fall short, we have provided an enviable example for other nations in the world some of whom have been bettered. As I see it, we still have yet to actually grow into our potential and ideals.

America the Slave

In summary, as my interpretations have surfaced thus far, the outward political, social, economic system in THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA has become a fascist regime in support and dedicated to the survival of itself at all costs. This myopic view has severe and long lasting drawbacks. There seems to be no way out of our self-created soon-to-be-annihilation. Nature abhors a vacuum. We have institutionally surpassed the fulcrum of balance to the other side where it seems that a vacuum is inevitable, and a full spectrum swing to the center is most likely assured. Let us work to ease that transition into greater outward freedom for all.

However, on the personal and private side, there are many who are awakening to see things as they really are. There are those who feel the pull of the pendulum and desire to make the attempt to create and find the balance that will truly relieve us of our subjugation. We have become so disturbed through our comfort that we feel there must be something else, something more fruitful and delicious to our spiritual/soul taste, and we are seeking. We are seeking to find the highest in ourselves and others. We have so much ground to cover, and we need each other. I echo what I feel is the universal invitation, please open yourself to the majesty of kind, compassionate and loving co-creation with others, for the wholeness of "all of our (my) relations". Ajo ~

Wisdom Thoughts Lilly G

~WISDOM ~ will win over the Intellect

~The SOUL~ is more intelligent than the Brain

Salaam~ Namaste~ Ni hao

The Voice for the people Lilly G (~\*~) we like Your opinion please contact us @ lillyinfo@aol.com

## Atharva's Corner

# CITIZENRY

This past month, I went to a national debate tournament at Harvard Square in Massachusetts. I was surrounded by history, a joint of colonial and modern architecture, and plenty of activity. I was walking through a neighborhood of Victorian homes, when I got to thinking about my debate topic: Birthright citizenship would be abolished in the United States. One of my major arguments in support of maintaining birthright citizenship was that it upheld American Ideals. Now this is where things get interesting. What defines American ideals? What are they? It's an interesting topic to think about because it's so arbitrary and abstract that a concrete representation of these "ideals" manifests itself in theory entirely.

Through my long, introspective walk, I was able to narrow down the list to a couple essential "American Ideals" which were: equality, representation, and mobility.

Equality can be broken down into several categories, such as equality of opportunity, gender equality, racial equality, and many more. Equality of opportunity is



very controversial because often enough, people feel as though their abilities are infringed upon; the government is restricting their ability to pursue aspects of life such as higher education, the ability to vote, or even work. Equality is vital in the United States, it's ubiquity in every household is one of the foundational bases on which the Constitution was drafted. Equality is crucial to a progressive and democratic America, as it provides ev-

ery constituent with an even playing field on which they may be represented by their government; this is a theory known as the social contract.

The social contract, created by John Locke, is the theoretical basis of the American government. It states that there is a compromise made between the constituents and the government; the people sacrifice some freedom for protection from themselves through a third party – the government – and

the government is obligated above all else to protect its constituents and represent them diplomatically and civilly. Then comes the interesting topic of tacit consent; no one can be forced into submission – if someone doesn't want to become a citizen, then they should not be forced into the title. Birthright citizenship, going back to the primer in this discussion, is important in upholding the social contract because it gives people the ability to not only exercise equality, but also to expand and engage in social and economic mobility.

Arguably, one of the greatest benefits of being an American citizen is that a person is able to engage in social and economic mobility. Social and economic mobility grants a person the ability to work to earn an income, and income which is not regulated by the government, nor is it limited by any faction. This allows for income classes to grow and expand. However, this provides the counterargument of the rising income disparities and the "negative" impacts they have on so-



ciety. It's a very partisan issue, because on one side is the argument that validates rising income disparities because they are the result of capitalism, while on the other end is the argument that income disparities are causing decreased democratic representation.

What do you think? After analyzing the transition from birthright citizenship and its link to income disparities, is it possible that birth right citizenship is granting too many opportunities to the "anchor babies?" Or perhaps, as justified by the Social Contract Theory, it is the governments duty to provide these benefits to all of its constituents?

For more of my interesting, satirical stories, please visit: <http://reallywarped.blogspot.com/>

Hey guys! Happy March! Gosh, can you believe March is already here? It feels like we just started the New Year last week! So anyways, I have a story to tell all of you about what I experienced a few days ago...

A few days ago, I was at a party. At that party, I met the wisest, most relaxed and free spirited man I have ever met in my life my before. Do you guys want to know what that man told me? He told me two very important things to always remember in my lifetime no matter what paths I cross. The first thing was to never, ever stick these two words in your vocabulary: hate and bore. The second thing he told me was that our siblings, though most of the time very annoying and, well, annoying, are our best friends sent from God to never let us go. I am going to talk to you guys about these two morals this month and even though they do not really relate to one another, I strongly feel like they will effect our lives in a very positive, upbringing way.

## Happy March!

Hate and bore. Hmm, lets ponder these two words for a little bit. First of all, you can never really hate someone or something. Saying, "Oh I hate her" or "I hate this so much" is not only very rude, but also not very true. I think the proper word, or the word we mean is dislike.

Of course, everyone may dislike a lot of things about the world or their life, but no one should hate anything. Yeah? Another word that we over use is the word bore.

The word bore should not be in anyone's vocabulary either because I don't think a person can ever really be bored. There is so much for us as people to think about that we should never get bored. We were born with so many amazing things that we usually take advantage of, but need to realize how much there is to do all of

the time. My younger sister is definitely my best friend. We do everything together. I read a sign the other day about sisters and it said that what happens between sisters, stays between sisters, as well as brothers and other older siblings. God gave us these people, no matter younger or older, to take to, to take care of, to cry on, to be happy with, to enjoy life with. It is always so wonderful and exciting to have someone you can trust and spill your guts out to and be yourself with living in the same house as you. It just brings that much more love and respect for not only them, but your other family too.

I hope these two main points of life affect all of you all in some positive way or another. It is always important to remember these kinds of things because down the line they will bring good things to us.

- Sanam Mallik

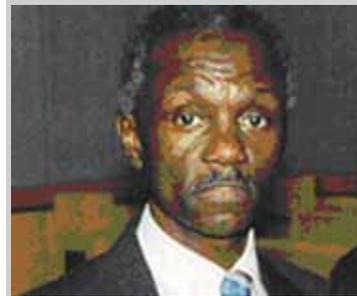


*In the Midst of The Dream, we still hear Your Voice*  
**Dr. Martin Luther King**

By Habibullah Saleem © 2012



Weighing their minds on our universal scale  
 Educating all children to commit to prevail  
 In the Midst of The Dream, we still hear Your Voice  
 Love beyond hate, a much greater choice  
 Once real quiet, but the Dream is much louder  
 Live with dignity, live to be prouder  
 The amazing Dr. King, his words remain  
 Along with his legacy, without any shame  
 Our young future leaders, strengthen their pride  
 The Dream of all dreams, let us keep it in stride  
 In stride for the family, community and more  
 As righteous human beings, each other we adore  
 The Dream for mommy, not to foolishly yell  
 The Dream for daddy, to lead and excel  
 Being providers for the Dream to be real  
 In the Midst of The Dream, we honor his appeal  
 The Voice of Dr. King, the message is clear  
 America the beautiful, without any fear  
 Dr. Martin Luther King, we still hear Your Voice  
 Love beyond hate is a much greater choice



For comments or concerns,  
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 www.futureimpact.weebly.com

**By Habibullah Saleem**

**Ten Years Later The Future is Now (2012)**

By Habibullah Saleem © 2012

Saving ourselves – determined to know how  
 Ten years later – the future is now  
 Ten years later – beyond before  
 Honorable progress – yet there's more  
 Not allowing the vision – to ever escape  
 Continuous achievement – we anticipate  
 Collectively relating – regardless of the task  
 Ten years later – seeking first class  
 Economics, housing – health and education  
 The future is now – with appropriate dedication  
 Preparing ourselves – to prepare our youth  
 Effectively organizing – without excuse  
 Not always witnessing – the brightness of the sun  
 Ten years later – the job getting done  
 The time is at hand – without delay  
 Taxing our minds – making it pay  
 Dismissing all pettiness – doubt or confusion  
 The mission is urgent – beyond illusions  
 Making the sacrifice – with endurance to spare  
 Devoted workers – those who care  
 Giving energetically – financially or other  
 Ten years later – united to recover  
 Scientifically aware – mathematically profound  
 As natural human beings – reclaiming our crown  
 Delivering messages – action in place  
 Recognizing the importance – to respect every race  
 The goal has been set – the mission is clear  
 Establishing the future – those who are here  
 Our legends of the past – extended the baton  
 The relay of impact – continues on  
 Journey of reality – a journey of pride  
 Ten years later – never denied  
 A people of dignity – a people that's proud  
 In spite of opposition – committed to be allowed  
 Respecting the Creator – "He" Who Knows Best  
 The future is now – and nothing less  
 The state of Arizona-- Phoenix the city  
 The future is now --without Self pity

**Opportunity much greater - Ten years later**

**Holi**

**Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup>**  
 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**No outside colors/gulal, or balloons permitted**

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 (four per family) for members

\$7 Ticket includes one color pack  
 and food coupon for non-members

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 Phoenix, AZ 85042-8302  
 602-284-8760 – Venkat Kommeneni

Walking through the corridors of my hospital one day, I encountered a situation that many of us come across every day, a situation that usually sails past our eyes, unnoticed and unregistered.

An invalid in a wheelchair, barely able to move his body, was trying with great difficulty to push himself along the corridor in front of me. This person noticed a small piece of paper lying on the impeccably clean tiles of the hospital floor. He stopped, took a deep breath, and with great effort tried to pick up that little piece of paper. Noticing the difficulty he was having, and assuming that the paper he was trying to retrieve was something he had dropped, I bent to assist him. To my surprise he said "Thank you, doc! Thanks for your help," and then continued, "It gives me a tremendous amount of pain when people show their apathy towards keeping public places clean and neat. After all, we human beings have a responsibility to keep our environments in shape. Isn't it what makes a man different from other animals?" My mind flashed back to an incident that occurred several years ago during one of our family's visits back home. While traveling from New Delhi to Punjab, we observed another car traveling ahead of us. Strangely enough, the riders of that car had flown to India on the same flight we had taken. About fifty miles into the countryside, while our car was overtaking this vehicle, a banana peel flew from the open window of the car ahead of us and went through the open window of our car, landing on my son's lap. Obviously, we were annoyed and stopped our car, as did the other car. The mother of the boy who threw the banana peel out the window instantaneously apologized on behalf of her son. She stated that her son was trying to throw the skin onto the roadside when the wind blew it into our car. Needless to say, her explanation was accurate, so I was ready to drop the matter. However, my son who was barely 12 years old, continued, "But why should your son try to throw the banana peel on the roadside to begin with? Would you let him do this kind of thing abroad, in the country you just came from?"

It was a strong comment that took the lady by surprise. I tried to quiet down my son. However he kept on and said, "Dad, it's not a question of as to why it fell on me and not on the intended target. The issue is why was it thrown out of the window in the first place? Are there not already heaps and heaps of open garbage on either side of the road?" I saw his point, and it occurred to me that if each and every citizen of India would concern himself or herself

# India, Indians and Environmental Cleanliness

with such matters, India would be one of the most beautiful countries of the world to live in. We have the people and we have the cleaning equipment and still we have all this mess. I could not help but wonder why the NRIs behave the way they do when it comes to the cleanliness of the environment, especially back home in India?

Is the attitude and lack of concern displayed towards environmental cleanliness by the woman and her son a part of our cultural heritage? Is that what makes us leave the cleaning jobs to the poorest segments of our society? Or do we let things stay dirty because we believe that in India, anything goes? Could it be that we lack the understanding about the not-so-obvious health consequences of our actions? Or is it due to all of the above factors? We are all aware of the pathetic scenes that are often portrayed in the streets of India. One notices heaps of garbage getting larger every day, while open sewer lines stay clogged in the streets in front of houses and businesses. The residents are not bothered by throwing the refuse into the streets outside of their homes, believing that if the inside of the house is clean, that is all what matters. In fact, at many places, it indeed is part of the lifestyle in India. Little do we realize that the flies and mosquitoes know very well how to fly inside the home from the heaps of garbage lying open outside of the houses? They bring with them the germs of cholera, typhoid, dengue fever and other killer diseases of summer. The diseases and illnesses inflicted by these little creatures do not discriminate between the rich and the poor; all are equal in their eyes.

One may argue that the upkeep of the streets, alleys and open areas is the responsibility of local civic authorities and that residents should not have to bother themselves with such mundane concerns. But as with all other governmental affairs, street cleaners and other sanitation workers often end up working half-heartedly, just to keep the system afloat. Several times in a year, this most important civic function stands still in many towns and cities. Strikes and "bandhs" are frequently announced by the employees and politicians trying to highlight and bring their selfish interests home to the rest of the public. The poorest citizens are left to their own fates, suffering all the time while keeping alive their hope for a miraculous reprieve from their misery. Yet the cleaning crews are usually

found picking up the garbage from the doorsteps of the politician's houses, as they have been ordered to do so, while it keeps on rotting in front of the residences of the ordinary citizens.

India's caste system also has a role to play in our negative attitude towards the environment. The centuries-old distaste for manual labor prevents us from our responsibilities in keeping our environments clean through our physical efforts. Well-established people usually do not concern themselves with the physical labor required in maintaining a clean and healthy environment, for that is considered below their dignity. From early childhood, the Indian culture indirectly reinforces the belief that manual labor is only appropriate for the humblest of the castes. An attitude of not taking an active part in environmental cleanliness and leaving it for the less-fortunate ones is usually seen as status symbol. We are raised to believe that well-established people -- the so-called "rich gentry" -- need not bother with these undignified chores; instead it is to be taken care of by the household servants.

Such strange anomalies of Indian culture become readily apparent but only after we have been exposed to the dignity that Western culture assigns to manual labor. Of course, I must quickly add here that this is not necessarily true with all the Indians all the time for TV and news-media have made the world shrink tremendously.

The personal freedom in India about which we constantly boast about and give sermons to others, has altogether a different connotation for many people in India. To them, it may imply that being an Indian in India means that one is free to let the historical monuments, the streets, the roadsides, and their attendant environments remain dirty. To others, it suggests that it is okay to illegally occupy a plot of land under the excuse of erecting a religious place, or to create slums by building unauthorized structures without civic approval and then paying no heed, whatsoever, to the environmental cleanliness.

The politicians and highly-placed government officials also have the full freedom to expand their personal territorial fortunes by illegally grabbing the land and putting up illegal structures that may not be in congruence with environmental concerns. This may even come at the expense of poor neighbors who have no say as they



Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, MD\* Phoenix, Arizona

have no connections. Yet it is not okay for the authorities to stop their proliferation or to dismantle them, for the politicians are the ultimate authority.

After all we happen to be a free people of a free country. Yet through all of this, we seem to forget that until and unless we use our freedom for the purpose of uplifting the lives of the ordinary citizens of India and maintain its beauty and environmental cleanliness, the freedom of India could remain hollow. Having said so, there is a need to acknowledge the recent appearance of a silver lining on the horizon suggesting rapid development in several sectors.

Our religions usually provide good guidance for making our lives happier in the next life. But we somehow manage to interpret and rationalize, and that too without any true religious support, that it is okay to ignore the ugly and unhealthy environments of our present life. We seem to forget the fact that the purpose of a religion is not only limited to prepare us for the next life. Rather an equally important function of our faiths happens to be taking care of the most pressing needs of our present life. Keeping our environments neat and tidy so as to avoid disease and sickness certainly could not be considered against any such goal.

Only a neat and healthy environment can ensure a healthy body in which a mind full of true spirituality can then flourish. That is why the Eastern faiths have always dictated the significance of cleanliness in the attainment of ultimate "Higher Truth." Shouldn't it then naturally follow that clean environments be once again considered as our prime responsibility as ordained by our faiths, faiths that we otherwise so passionately believe in, feel proud of and often talk loudly about, especially when we happen to be away from our countries of birth?

\*Author of 1. "Square Pegs, Round Holes" [www.SquarePegsRoundHolesBook.com](http://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>

**Cholesterol Vs Fat**

What is cholesterol? Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance found in all animals including people. It is an essential part of cells in the body and is used to make certain hormones and digest fats. In a practical, dietary sense, there is one very basic difference between cholesterol and other fats. Most of the time when we talk about fat in food, we are talking about fairly large amounts of food parts that contain large amounts of calories. It's not uncommon for a fast food meal to contain over 50 grams of fat. These 50 grams of fat provide about 450 calories. This situation is very different from cholesterol. We almost never consume a food that has more than 1 gram of cholesterol, and we never get any significant number of calories from cholesterol

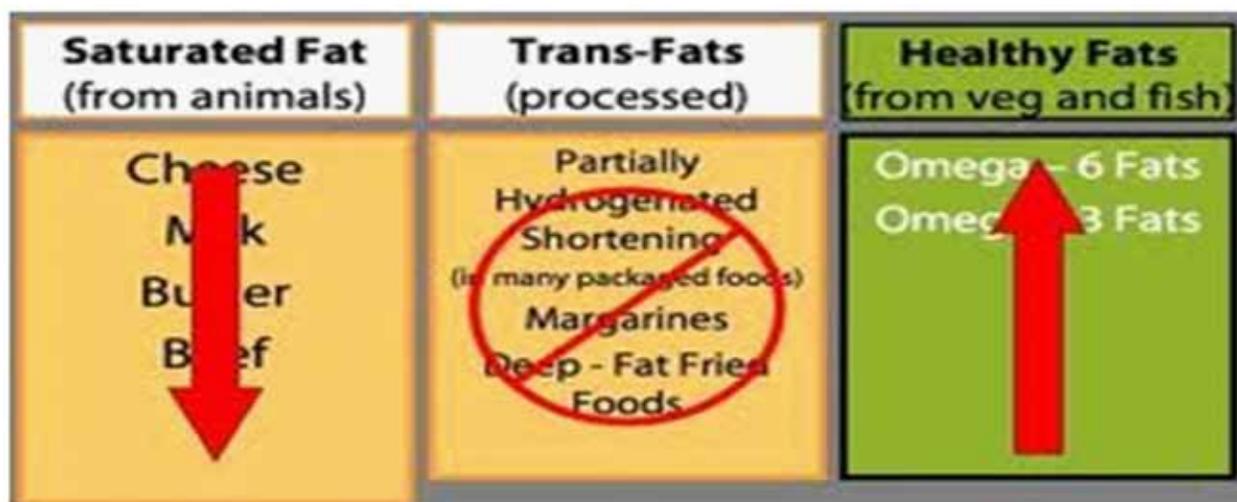
Is cholesterol harmful? Cholesterol is necessary for a healthy body. By itself, it is not harmful. However, a high blood level of total cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease, along with high levels of LDL cholesterol the higher the level, the greater the risk. In contrast, high levels of HDL cholesterol are protective.

Where do we get cholesterol? Our bodies can make all of our cholesterol, but most people also get it from foods. Only animal products have cholesterol.

Is eating fat unhealthy? Eating some fats are necessary. They are an important source of essential fatty acids (linolenic and lionoleic acids) and concentrated energy. However, eating too much fat may lead to obesity, which is unhealthy and might increase risk of heart diseases

How are fats related to blood cholesterol? Eating less fat, especially saturated fats, has been found to lower blood cholesterol levels. Replacing some saturated fats with polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats also can help lower blood cholesterol. Higher levels of HDL cholesterol help lower the risk for heart disease.

# TUNE YOUR LIPIDS



**Foods Rich in Anti-oxidants & Good Cholesterol**

- Garlic - One half or one clove of garlic per day is sufficient to reduce cholesterol level. Garlic is also valuable for hypertensive patients.
- Nuts - Have 4-5 almonds in the morning will help control the cholesterol. Walnuts help in lowering the total cholesterol. Lowers LDL cholesterol. Increases the HDL to total cholesterol ratio. Inhibits free radical damage to LDL cholesterol.
- Yogurt and Skimmed milk - Synthesis of cholesterol is reduced when low fat yogurt and Skimmed milk are consumed.
- High fibre – Oat products, guar gum, whole grains, apples, and guavas with skin helps reducing the cholesterol levels.
- Fish and Fish Oil Supplements - Diets high in fish, especially cold-water fish like salmon, herring, mackerel, and whitefish, have been linked to reducing risk of heart disease.

**Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA)**

Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA) is a type of fatty acid found mainly in meat and Dairy products. CLA is able to reduce body fat in three key ways:

1. CLA interferes with a substance in your body called lipoprotein lipase that helps store fat in your body.
2. CLA helps your body use its existing fat for energy.
3. CLA increases lean muscle tissue - more muscle means your body can burn more fat

To learn more about CLA, CLA supplements, and benefits of CLA please do read our next article Know More:-

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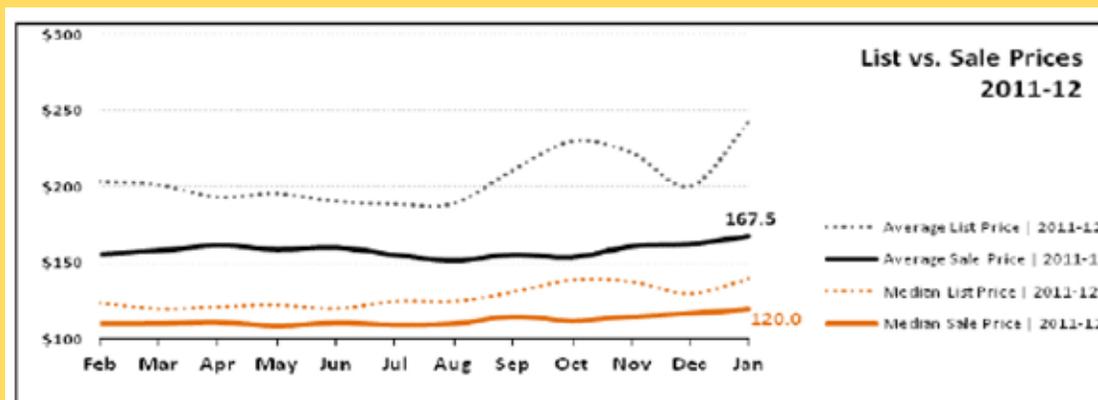
## Good indication of recovery in Real estate

Dear Fellow Readers,

Real estate returns are here again. We had a good start so far this year with January Sales giving a good indication of recovery. Sales for January 2012, single-family homes in the valley were about 5,425 whereas condos/townhomes sales were 902.

Sales pricing showed some gains, although not as dramatic, in both the median and average sales prices. The average sales price rose 3.3% to \$167,500, while the median sales price rose 2.6% to \$120,000. The median sales price has not seen the \$120,000's since October 2010. Likewise the average sales price has not been above \$165,000 since July of 2010. A one-month jump does not constitute an upward trend, but it definitely is an indication in the right direction.

The commercial real es-



tate also saw some sales last month. Some of the highlights were -

- Hayden Ferry Lake-side II, a 12-story, multi-tenant office building at 60 E. Rio Salado Parkway in Tempe, has been sold for \$86 million. The building is in a mixed-use project consisting of 1.6 million square feet of office, retail and residential condominium units on Tempe Towne Lake.
- NAKD Holdings LLC,

a shell corporation for Evolve Solutions, purchased the industrial facility at 15270 N 83rd Pl. in Scottsdale, AZ from BOKF National Association for \$1.3 million, or about \$83 per square foot. The property was bank-owned at the time of sale. The 15,570-square-foot building was constructed in 1997 and situated on a 40,000-square-foot lot.

- LaGrange Plaza LLC acquired the 54,136-square-

foot Higley Marketplace in Gilbert from First International Bank & Trust in an REO transaction for \$5.1 million.

- Westwood Financial Corp sold the 88,225-square-foot Olive Square in Glendale. The buyer, headquartered in Canada, paid \$6.3 million for the asset.

- Seattle buyer Private Portfolio Group obtains the 308-unit San Portella Apartments from developers Mark-

Taylor and Principal Real Estate for \$45.1 million, or \$146,428 per unit in Tempe.

Hopefully these statistics give you some insight into the valley real-estate market. If you need more information or have a question, feel free to reach out to me at arti@artiier.com and I'll do my best to answer them.



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*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, Inman News, Costar, Globest and BizJournal*

**B**e careful not to confuse issues when discussing the matters at hand. Don't give out any personal information that you don't want spread around. You may be experiencing emotional turmoil in regard to your mate. Problems with gas, oil, or water in your home may disrupt your routine. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**ARIES**



Mar 21  
to  
Apr 20

**C**hanges at home might come fast and furious. Be aware of any deception on the part of those you deal with. The talk you have may be eye-opening with regard to your present situation. You need a job with more responsibility and a higher wage. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**TAURUS**



April 21  
to  
May 20

**Y**ou can make financial gains through investments and dealing with other people's money. Moves or the possibility of having someone different living with you may be difficult at first. You will have good ideas for home improvement projects. Children may be less than honest with you. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

**GEMINI**



May 21  
to  
June 21

**Y**ou may be confused regarding your love life. You may find out that someone is trying to undermine you. Your love will not be willing to listen to your criticism. You can be sure that any dealing with large institutions should go well. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**CANCER**



Jun 22  
to  
Jul 22

**B**e cautious and use your head wisely in situations that deal with the use of machinery or vehicles. Don't let any small misunderstandings get in the way. Try to enlist the support of your coworkers first. You can make sound financial investments if you act fast. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**LEO**



Jul 23  
to  
Aug 23

**C**atch up on your reading and correspondence. Your professional attitude will not go unnoticed. Job changes are in order. Go for interviews or send out resumes. Satisfy your passionate mood. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**VIRGO**



Aug 24  
to  
Sep 23

**S**top those bad habits. Erratic behavior may confuse others, and mood swings may result in isolation. Ask others to help, or you may feel that a burden is weighing you down. Do not get upset about situations you cannot change. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**LIBRA**



Sep 24  
to  
Oct 23

**B**e careful not to reveal private information. You may have a hard time relating to children this month. You have been stagnating for some time now and you need a change of pace. Be aware that joint financial ventures could fall apart. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**SCORPIO**



Oct 24  
to  
Nov 22

**Y**ou can expect changes in your financial situation as well as in your status. Your stubborn nature will backfire if you give your mate an ultimatum. Sign up for tours or courses that will enlighten you. Don't let others put unreasonable demands on you. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**SAGITTARIUS**



Nov 23  
to  
Dec 21

**Y**ou need time to make things better. Minor health problems may lower your vitality. Your emotional partner will push all the right buttons this month. You can raise your standard of living if you pick up some freelance work on the side. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**CAPRICORN**



Dec 22  
to  
Jan 21

**T**ake time to talk things over. Travel for business or pleasure. Get them to pitch in, if you need help. Leave things as they are for the moment and focus on reaching your highest potential at work. You should sit down with someone you trust and work out a budget that will enable you to save a little extra. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**AQUARIUS**



Jan 22  
to  
Feb 19

**Y**our sensitivity toward those you love will capture their hearts. You can't help everyone. Don't start a dispute unless you're prepared to accept irreversible results. Don't let anyone take credit for a job you did. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**PISCES**



Feb 20  
to  
Mar 20

March 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
<b>4</b> Free AID AZ Workshops for NSF Contests @ Murdoch Hall  India & The Silk Road @ Steele Indian School Memorial Hall	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Bollywood Musical Extravaganza @ Dobson Highschool	<b>10</b> Free Medical Clinic @ Warner Medical Park  Sangeet Fest 2012 @ Murdoch Hall  Mawlid-Un-Nabi (saws) Conference 2012 @ Chandler Community Center
<b>11</b> Holi celebrations @ South Mountain Park Activity Complex	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Grand India Festival @ Indo-American Community Center
<b>25</b> Basanth Mela 2012 (Kite Flying Festival) @ Crossroads Park	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> MAATA JAAGRAN DURING NAVRATRAS @ Hindu Temple of Arizona	<b>31</b> MAATA JAAGRAN DURING NAVRATRAS @ Hindu Temple of Arizona

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# Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu

“You are perfectly average,” she tells him. “And that’s the best thing about you.”

He’s happy. It’s something he’s been yearning for - a friendly pat on the back; reassurance. And he gets it from her. “I’m perfectly average,” he repeats with a smile on his face. “That actually makes me feel good.”

Director Shakun Batra shows rare deftness for a first-time filmmaker in Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu (EMAET). It is full of honest, warm moments that - to their credit - work without the manipulation most directors resort to in films belonging to this genre. Instead, Batra relies on sharp dialogue, and some well-etched out characters. I’d go a step further and say that the film is the best you would have seen recently in the two genres it melds together - a romantic comedy and a coming-of-age-drama, something Wake Up Sid just about fell short of. Sure, Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu gives you an “I-have-seen-this-before” kind of a feeling. I found traces of Jab We Met, a bit of What Happens In Vegas, some Hangover, some Friends, even 500 Days of Summer, spattered throughout the film.

Yet, Batra manages to retain an original voice as filmmaker, largely due to a more personal style of storytelling and treatment. It’s interesting, most young filmmakers dabbling with romance seem to be poor clones of Karan Johar, the film’s producer, who spearheaded the new-age romance mantra in Hindi cinema. Batra, however, manages to hold his own.

You know the plot: Rahul Kapoor (Imran) is a 25-year-old architect, Riana Braganza (Kareena) an almost-27-year-

old hair stylist. The two meet over a chance encounter in Las Vegas, resulting in a night of drunken revelry and the two getting married at a Vegas chapel. Annulment, hence, is the next step. The two have to wait 14 days before the annulment comes through and the film charts their relationship over those two weeks. Each day comes with a heading - Day 5 is ‘I am Wild’, for example, about a hilarious encounter Rahul has with a horny Indian girl his parents want him to get married to. Day 10 is ‘India’. EMAET’s best scenes come post-interval (“the second half,” as they say in Bollywood parlance), where Rahul meets Riana’s madcap family in Mumbai. He feels at home with absolute strangers, only because his own parents always breathed down his neck in their pursuit for excellence.

Boman Irani and Ratna Pathak Shah play a couple that want their child to grow up in a certain way - Irani a demanding father who expects nothing but the best from his child; Shah, on the other hand, too vain to want to ever think about what either father or son want. The two actors bring weight to their roles, each of them a treat to watch. Also well-cast are Riana’s family members. Nikhil Kapoor as Riana’s father is absolutely adorable.

But EMAET really works for its two lead stars - Imran Khan and Kareena Kapoor. I am astonished at how good Khan is in a role that seems tailor-made for him; you can’t imagine another actor in the role. He was

## Film Review

**Film:** Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu

**Director:** Shakun Batra

**Cast:** Imran Khan, Kareena Kapoor

**Rating:** \*\*\*\*

lovable in Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na, only because there too he fit the character to the T. After some terrible performances in Kidnap and Luck, Khan has been mostly patchy in rom-coms like I Hate Luv Storys and Break Ke Baad. In EMAET, though, he hits all the right notes, the credit for which largely goes to Batra and co-writer Ayesha Devitre. He’s a limited actor, but the film shows that his chocolate boy, innocent looks and an honest approach to his roles can be used to good effect if the director knows his job. Kareena, of course, is the lifeline of the film. Ravishingly beautiful, lovable and zestful, Kareena finally gets a role to sink her teeth into after playing doll to the Khans in films like Bodyguard and RA.One. The role has traces of Geet from Jab We Met, but Riana is a wilder, yet softer character. The two lead actors hold the film together with their wit and charm, their chemistry sparkling, especially in the supremely enjoyable ‘Auntyji’ song. Amit Trivedi gives another great score that works well for the film.

In look and style, the film is like any Hollywood romcom and David MacDonald’s cinematography captures Vegas beautifully. Asif Ali Shaikh’s editing keeps the proceedings sharp and the film’s production values lend it grandeur without it being too overpowering.



Actor Amitabh Bachchan had the entire nation praying for him when we went in for an abdominal surgery over the weekend. The surgery went off well and Bachchan senior was to be discharged yesterday, at the time of going to press. While the actor is currently recuperating, he has been tweeting about the success of his surgery to all his fans and well-wishers on micro-blogging site, Twitter.

He posted, "Back..!! Thank you for your prayers..your love and wishes never fail..indebted for life, one that I shall never be able to pay back."

He also explained why the surgery took about five hours to complete, "Took almost 5 hrs on the OT, but could feel the concern and wishes of the TwFmXt every minute .. you all are incredible .. thank you. Took long because 2 surgeries had to be done on either side..yes there is pain, but nothing good in life ever achieved without it."

Besides his son Abhishek, the entire industry is also concerned about Bachchan Sr's health and has been sending him good wishes. "Thank you all for your wishes and prayers. The surgery went off well and dad is now in the room resting" posted Abhishek.

Actor Shah Rukh Khan who has been unwell and traveling since the past couple of days said, ""@SrBachchan sir wish u the best.jaldi hi theek thaak hokar aap aa jayein..my prayers and love to u sir. Nasrun minal lahe wah fatahun kareeb."

Veteran actor Dilip Kumar, who joined Twitter on Bachchan's insistence, posted, "Our prayers are with you (@SrBachchan) for your safe and quick recovery. Ameen." Priyanka Chopra who has been travelling, also send her good wishes, "get well soon sir @SrBachchan .. Love and respect always". New mummy Lara Dutta too sent him a get well soon message on Twitter, "@SrBachchan Speedy recovery sir! Wishing you much love and healing."

## Get well soon... Bollywood wishes Amitabh Bachchan



Actress Bipasha Basu is super-excited, not only did her new film release this weekend, buzz is also that one of her biggest films till date, Hollywood flick, Singularity, will be soon completed and released before the end of this year.

"I'm very excited to reveal that unlike rumours that are doing the rounds, my first Hollywood film, Singularity with filmmaker Roland Joffe is not stalled due to any finance issues. In fact, Roland spoke to me a while back and said that I will be completing shooting for the film in April and the promotions would begin after that. I'm feeling so happy and positive," says Bips.

The actress, who has not got any formal education in acting feels that her perspective towards acting changed after meeting Roland.

"When I first met Roland and his team, he told me one thing — that whichever project you do after this film, you will realise that the way you function has completely changed. And I do agree! It has changed, especially for someone like me, who doesn't come from a film family. I have learnt everything on the job. But doing this film was like going back to film school."

The actor, who is a fitness junkie will soon be working on her next fitness DVD.

"I cannot depend on anyone when I have to do something as important as this. I don't just shoot but also write and do the voice-over for the videos. In fact, I love to be involved in each and every phase of making my DVD. It needs about 15 days at least. Since September 2010 I haven't even taken a week off at a stretch. So I plan to finish it in April now. Meanwhile, I'm juggling travelling between Madh Island and Bandra everyday. I feel sometimes travelling in Mumbai is more exhausting than working for a full day!" she exclaims.

## Bipasha's Hollywood career on track

# Chai With....Sanjay Jawa

February 27, 2012

By Raja Walia

With taxes on everyone's minds, I spent some time talking to someone with very little time on his hands during this season – C.P.A. Sanjay Jawa. Sanjay was born in Gwalior, M.P. India, where he completed his high school. He still remembers his high school teacher, Mr. Shah, who taught the course with such passion, it made Sanjay realize that his passion was accounting as well. He came to the United States in 1981 and graduated from Central Washington University with a B.S. in Accounting.

After moving to Arizona in September, 1995, he started his own practice in 1997. A practice he had to start from scratch, building his own clientele required a lot of long hours working and learning about accounting rules, as well as starting a business. It took almost 3-4 years for the practice to settle, but this being his passion it was well worth it. Sanjay always had a pas-



sion for numbers and helping small to medium size businesses. He believes the core of the economy is a small/mid-size business and wanted to help them organize their

books. Both his dad and brother are physicians and his dad wanted him to become one as well but once he learned that Sanjay's true passion was accounting, he supported him fully.

Sanjay's practice specializes in business accounting, taxes, sales

tax returns, payroll, and tax planning for businesses and individuals. He provides tax services and tax planning services for all states, working year around not just during the busy tax reason. Not planning or budgeting is a common negative practice that he has seen businesses neglect, which can lead to a closure of a business. If there are no long term goals and direction on where they would like to be, a business does not achieve its potential. In addition to not planning, he has seen businesses not invest back into the business and advertising, taking all the money from profit – prohibiting their growth and expansion. Sanjay has experience handling all types of clients including Physician practices, consulting companies, stores, and gas stations. He has five employees – two full-time and three part-time – in his two locations in Gilbert and Scottsdale. Sanjay's key differentiators are focusing more on long term quality and customer relationships. He does not take shortcuts and spends time completing paperwork in a timely manner and ensuring no



stone is over-turned and all information is presented correctly.

His suggestions to our readers are not to wait until the last minute, because it can make one prone to mistakes. Ensure that you explain your situation to your tax consultant, including all details and facts. Before making any decisions, make

sure to confirm with a tax consultant. There are changes with the IRS and taxes yearly and, as an expert that specializes in the field, Sanjay Jawa can help you keep up to date on all changes and provide accurate consulting tips for personal or business related taxes.

A little about Sanjay Personal-

ly...Sanjay is happily married to his lovely wife of 17 years, Shailja and they have two children – a seven-year old daughter named Sia and a sixteen-year old son named Sameer. He loves spending time with his family, watching movies, listening to music, and travelling. He is the youngest of six and has four

older sisters and one older brother.

Feel free to contact Sanjay Jawa at Sanjay@jawatax.com or call him at 480-831-9545 for all your tax and financial planning needs. We are grateful to Sanjay for his time during this busy season and wish him and his practice all the best in the coming years.



# Newton's writings on religion up on the web now

He's considered to be one of the greatest scientists of all time. But Isaac Newton was also an influential theologian who applied a scientific approach to the study of scripture, Hebrew and Jewish mysticism.

Now Israel's national library, an unlikely owner of a vast trove of Newton's writings, has digitised his theological collection – some 7,500 pages in Newton's own handwriting – and put it online. Among the yellowed texts are Newton's famous prediction of the apocalypse in 2060.

Newton revolutionized physics, mathematics and astronomy in the 17th and 18th century, laying the foundations for most of classical mechanics – with the principal of universal gravitation and the three laws of motion bearing his name.

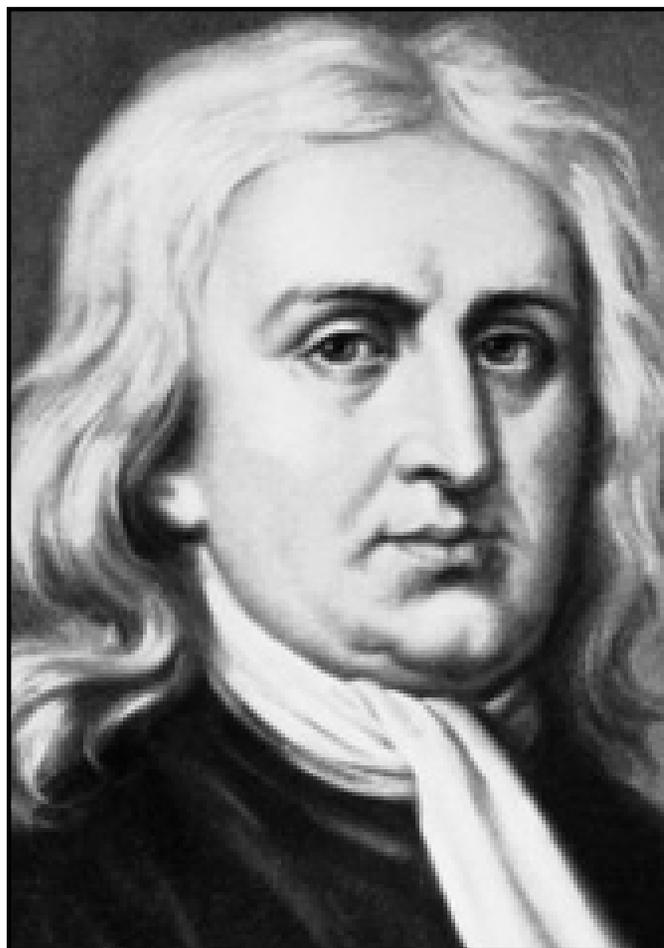
However, the curator of Israel's national library's humanities collection said Newton was also a devout Christian who dealt far more in theology than he did in physics and believed that scripture provided a "code" to the natural world.

"Today, we tend to make a distinction between science and faith, but to Newton it was all part of the same world," said Milka Levy-Rubin. "He believed that careful study of holy texts was a type of science, that if analysed correctly could predict what was to come."

So he learned how to read Hebrew, scrolled through the Bible and delved into the study of Jewish philosophy, the mysticism of Kabbalah and the Talmud – a compendium of Jewish oral law and stories about 1,500 years old.

For instance, Newton based his calculation on the end of days on information gleaned from the Book of Daniel, which projected the apocalypse 1,260 years later. Newton figured that this count began from the crowning of Charlemagne as Roman emperor in the year 800.

The papers cover topics such



as interpretations of the Bible, theology, the history of ancient cultures, the Tabernacle and the Jewish Temple.

The collection also contains maps that Newton sketched to assist him in his calculations and his attempts to reveal the secret knowledge he believed was encrypted within.

He attempted to project what the end of days would look like, and the role Jews would play when it happened. Newton's objective curiosity in Judaism and the Holy Land contrasted with the anti-Jewish sentiment expressed by many leading Christian scholars of the era, Levy-Rubin said.

"He took a great interest in the Jews, and we found no negative expressions toward Jews in his writing," said Levy-Rubin. "He said the Jews would ultimately return to their land."

How his massive collection of work ended up in the Jewish state seems mystical in its own right.

Years after Newton's death in 1727, his descendants gave his scientific manuscripts to his alma mater, the University of Cambridge.

But the university rejected his

nonscientific papers, so the family auctioned them off at Sotheby's in London in 1936. As chance would have it, London's other main auction house – Christie's – was selling a collection of Impressionist art the same day that attracted far more attention.

Only two serious bidders arrived for the Newton collection that day. The first was renowned British economist John Maynard Keynes, who bought Newton's alchemy manuscripts. The second was Abraham Shalom Yahuda – a Jewish Oriental Studies scholar – who got Newton's theological writings.

Yahuda's collection was bequeathed to the National Library of Israel in 1969, years after his death. In 2007, the library exhibited the papers for the first time and now they are available for all to see online.

The collection contains pages after pages of Newton's flowing cursive handwriting on fraying parchment in 18th-century English, with words like "similitudes," "prophetique" and "Whence."

Two print versions in modern typeface are also available for easier reading:

A "diplomatic" one that includes changes and corrections Newton made in the original manuscript, and a "clean" version that incorporates the corrections.

All of the papers are linked to the Newton Project, which is hosted by the University of Sussex and includes other collections of Newton's writings.

The Israeli library says the manuscripts help illuminate Newton's science and well as his persona.

"As far as Newton was concerned, his approach was that history was as much a science as physics. His world view was that his 'lab' for understanding history was the holy books," said Levy-Rubin. "His faith was no less important to him than his science."

## Poet of the Month

### Ravi Shankar



Ravi Shankar co-directs the Creative Writing Department at Central Connecticut State University, is on the first international MFA program in Creative Writing at City University of Hong Kong and founded and edits the online journal of the arts, *Drunken Boat* <http://www.drunkenboat.com>, celebrating ten years in 2010. His books include *Instrumentality* (Cherry Grove, 2004), *Voluptuous Bristle* (Finishing Line, 2010), a collaborative chapbook with Reb Livingston, *Wanton Textiles* (No Tell Books, 2006) and along with Tina Chang and Nathalie Handal, *Language for a New Century Contemporary Poetry from Asia, the Middle East & Beyond* (W.W. Norton & Co., 2008), an anthology called "a beautiful achievement for world literature" by Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer." Along with Leslie McGrath, he co-edited *Radha Says*, Reetika Vazirani's posthumous poems. His forthcoming book *Deepening Groove*, winner of the National Poetry Review Prize, will be out in Spring 2011. He lives with his family in Chester, Connecticut.

## Lucia

My hair, voluminous from sleeping in six different positions, redolent with your scent, helps me recall that last night was indeed real,

that it's possible for a bedspread to spawn a watershed in the membrane that keeps us shut in our own skins, mute without pleasure,

that I didn't just dream you into being. You fit like a fig in the thick of my tongue, give my hands their one true purpose,

find in my shoulder a groove for your head. In a clinch, you're clenched and I'm pinched, we're spooned, forked, wrenched, lynched

in a chestnut by a mob of our own making, only to be resurrected to stage several revivals that arise from slightest touch to thwart

deep sleep with necessities I never knew I knew until meeting you a few days or many distant, voluptuous lifetimes ago.

*First appeared in No Tell Motel; Reprinted in The Best American Erotic Poems: From 1800 to the Present, edited by David Lehman (Scribner, 2008); Forthcoming in Voluptuous Bristle (Finishing Line, 2010).*



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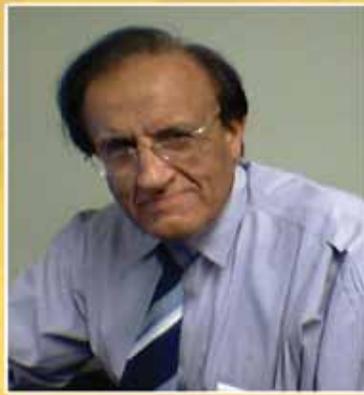
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