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New Year Celebrations...A Little Something for Everyone

By Deepa Walia
December 31, 2012

Once again, there was a lot happening for South Asians all over the valley as they looked to pick their party location for New Year's Eve.

Just like last year, there was something for all age groups and different interest groups to choose from – whether that be a quiet, spiritual evening at the local Mandir or Gurudwara, a magnificent masquerade ball at Tandoori Times 3/Holiday Inn, or a party at Arizona's own India Garden.

For pictures from the Masquerade New Year's Eve ball at Tandoori Times 3/Holiday Inn, see page 6.

For pictures from New Year's Eve at India Garden, see page 7.

For pictures from New Year's Eve at Nishkam Sewa Gurudwara, see page 11

For pictures from New Year's Eve at Bharatiya Ekta Mandir, see page 12.

For pictures from New Year's Eve at ISKCON, see page 16.

United Indo Pak Christian Church celebrated Christmas

United Indo Pak Christian Church, located in Chandler, Arizona is composed of Indians and Pakistanis that praise and worship in their native languages of Hindi and Urdu. We are non-denominational Bible believing Christians. We believe that Bible is a true word of God. We believe that God sent his son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins and provide an everlasting life. Furthermore, we believe that Jesus is the only way of salvation and that the salvation is available to all irrespective of their religion as long as they accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior and change their life.

• Continued on P3

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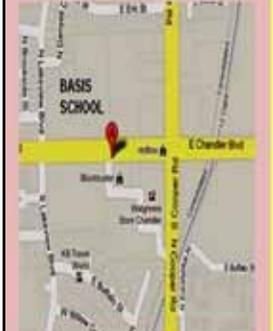












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United Indo Pak Christian Church would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Additionally, we believe that Jesus Christ is going to come back to take his church (his people) with him.

The Ministry is led by Pastor Jit Pegany and Assistant Pastor Kevin Jacob. Along with the Pastors, the entire family of United Indo Pak Christian Church would like to invite everybody to our Church service that is conducted every Sunday at 5 pm in Desert Spring Church located 6135 W. Detroit Street, Chandler, AZ-85226. Lastly, United Indo Pak Christian Church would like to wish everybody a very Happy New Years.





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New Year, New Experiences

With the passing of each year, it is important to reflect back on the year that has passed and learn from one's encounters and experiences. But once that reflection is completed, one should hang on to the positive and leave the negative behind in the passing year in an attempt to welcome the upcoming year with hope and a positive attitude.

There are many things that change as time passes...circumstances, feelings, people. However, the people that sustain regardless of circumstances are the ones that are your truest family and friends and the feelings that sustain are genuine. So, each passing year is almost like a filter that filters out the negative as it passes through leaving you with purified relationships and genuine feelings. Once this simple truth is realized, you will easily be able to say goodbye to all you have lost in the last year and better appreciate all that endured and stuck by you in the coming year.

Often, when people lose something or have their trust broken, they start holding back in fear of it happening again. Regardless of what you gain or lose or how many times you have your trust broken, don't ever start holding back from new people you encounter in fear of getting hurt again.

I am grateful for all the new people that became a part of my life last year – only time will tell how long



Editor's NOTE

that connection lasts but those that last will become friends for life and those that don't will leave behind them lessons learned for life.

But I am also grateful for all those that got filtered out of my life, because they left behind valuable lessons helping me grow as a person. By both gaining a relationship and losing one you will benefit but if you start holding back, you will either miss out on good people that would have become a

part of your life for a long time to come or good lessons that you would have learned that would enable you to better face what you may encounter in life.

I hope everyone had a safe, relaxing, and family and love filled holiday season and is ready to embrace 2013 with positivity. If you haven't already done so, reflect on your 2012 experiences, make peace with what is lost after learning whatever lesson it may have left behind, and embrace 2013 with a positive attitude.

Like always, it has been a pleasure serving this community and being a part of its happenings in 2012 and we look forward to contributing to and covering all the excitement and fun our community has to offer in 2013. Thank you for all that have supported us in the last few years. We look forward to growing with the fast-growing South Asian community in Arizona.

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

Do you have your new year's resolution ready? I have mine, it's going to be.....well sorry I can't really say! It's personal! I like this time of year because a lot of change happens at the end of the year, or Q4 in business lingo. I know what most people say "well we shouldn't wait until the end of the year".... I think we should! It really gives us a chance to reflect. It's hard to know what the wrong or right answer is or what we should have done or shouldn't have. It takes time for us to realize that. That's why I think that the time of change is really the end of the year. I always think about the year, the people I met. Some I still talk to, some just weren't meant to be. Certain people I would have prefer to stay but looking at it now, I think it's better that they didn't.

Nothing against anyone, but I think it's always beneficial to surround yourself with people that help you move forward and fit with what you're trying to do. Ideas / thoughts can be different but as long as we are all moving forward and improving not only ourselves but the people around us, that's what we should be doing. Moving forward just like the year is. It was a bad year, it was a good year...it doesn't matter let's make the next year even better! This year we lost many great visionaries and individuals who will surely be missed. Who is next? Who will be the one to take their spot? What's the next big invention that is going to make our life easier or maybe more difficult? The Mayan calendar came and went and nothing was destroyed and the world is still here. I am going to stand by my

view that, no one can predict the end of the world. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen without warning. I doubt any one cares to gives us a heads up. It doesn't matter if you believe in the Rapture, or The Mayan Calendar or whatever. If the end of the world happens, it's going to happen before anyone even realizes it. So live on! Dream on! And learn from your past to start a new future, and when the world ends, it'll end!

2013 is here and this year is going to be a busy busy year. So many things going on, it's going to be fun, exciting, and tiring. Family is family, and one thing I've learned is that family's will fight, and they will fight worse than probably any fight ever, but the sign of a true family is to come back together and laugh about it. 2013 is bringing a lot of changes that are going to take time to understand and get used to, but it'll happen and then we'll look back at them and laugh. Thank you everyone for your support this year. I would like to say that this year was the year for our culture to shine in Arizona. There were so many events and so much involvement with the community that it definitely kept us busy. Asia today is getting older and our reach is getting farther and farther every year.

-Raja Walia
Publiser, Asia Today, publisher@asiatodayaz.com



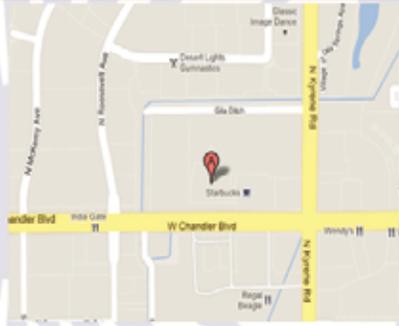
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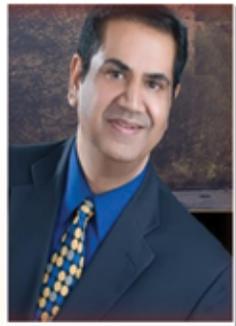
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Masquerade New Year's Eve...at Tandoori Times 3/Holiday Inn

By Deepa Walia
December 31, 2012

Photos courtesy of Diana Reed Photography
(www.dianareedphotography.com/602.793.5006)

On New Year's Eve this year, Phoenix had a magnificent Masquerade Ball courtesy of three young, enthusiastic organizers that wanted to do something new: Dev Thirwani, Dr. Megha Sharma, and Gopal Kundra. They worked with Tandoori Times owner, Sunny Chopra, to host an elegant, exciting evening at his banquet hall at his Tandoori Times 3 location inside the Holiday Inn at 12027 North 28th Drive Phoenix, AZ 85029. Guests had the opportunity to part into the late hours of the night as they welcomed 2013 with the convenience of hotel rooms to sleep peacefully and avoid the chaos on the roads on New Year's Eve.

The evening was a huge hit and kept the crowd of over 150+ entertained throughout the night with performances by belly dancers, a live band (Pathos), a balloon drop and countdown at midnight, and many other activities. The organizers also provided stylish masquerade masks and, in keeping with the theme, had the hall decorated to match the masquerade theme by Dcore Elegante (www.dcoreelegante.com). They also provided a professional photographer (Diana Reed Photography) to capture the memories of the magnificent night. The event DJ'd by Phoenix's very own DeeJay Isaac (<http://www.hyperproductionsdjs.com/>) was a tremendous success. It was evident that the success of the event was due to the care and detail that went into every aspect of



the party, whether that be décor, food, entertainment, music, etc. Gopal, Dev, and Megha cut no corners and got the best of the best together to raise the bar for event such as this in the valley. They would like to thank Sunny Chopra of Tandoori Times, all the

volunteers, friends, and family that helped make this dream a reality, and all the attendees without whose presence the evening would not have been the same. Asia Today is thankful to Diana Reed Photography for providing the pictures that accompany this article.



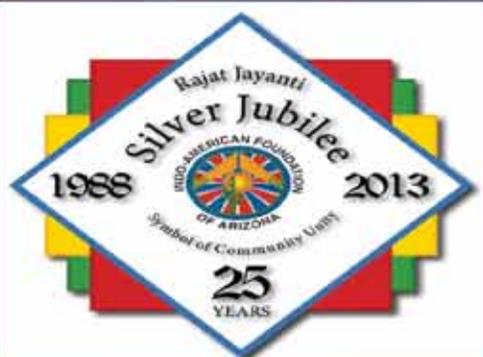
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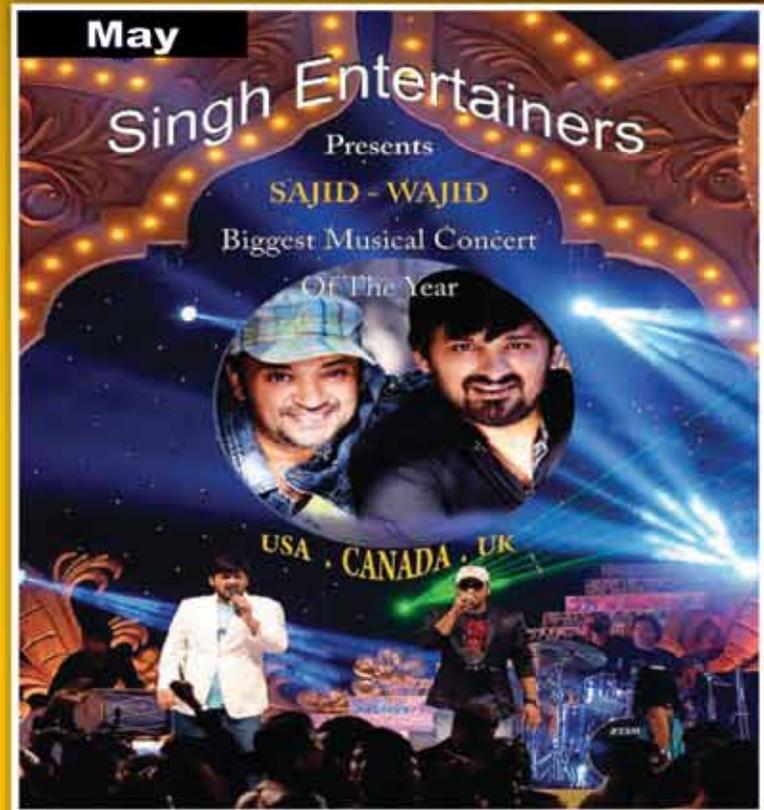


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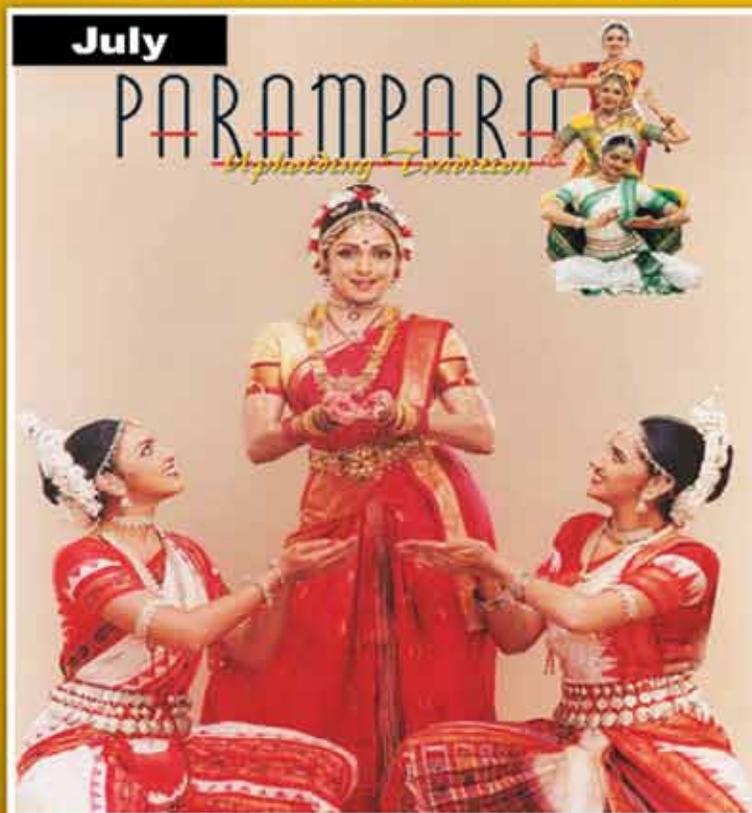


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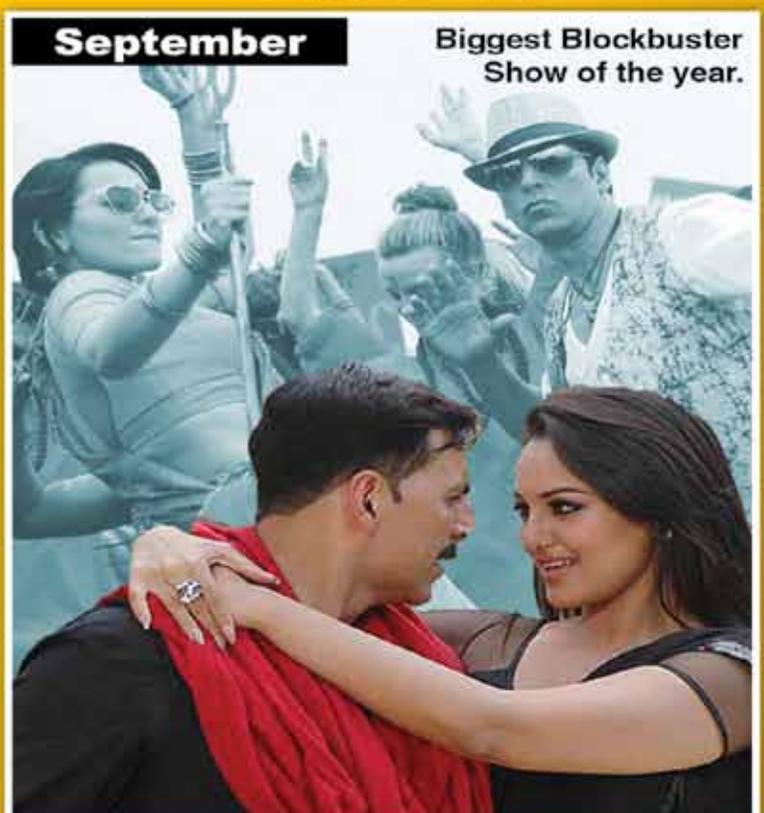
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Observance of Guru Nanak Devji's Prakash Utsav Ceremony at White House



Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, M.D.

Once in a while, an unexpected occasion in the life of a person suddenly appears that leads to indelible impression on one's mind. An invitation to attend Guru Nanak Devji's Prakash Utsav observance on December 7, 2012 at White House was one such unique occasion for me.

On that day, we, a group of six Sikh members of Phoenix, Arizona had the proud privilege of joining in one of the most historical events in assertion of Sikh Identity and creation of Sikh awareness at the highest level of United States Government. Arranged under the guidance of Mr. Paul Monteiro, the office of public engagement for President Obama, a two hours event was

held in the executive offices of White House. Close to 150 Sikhs from all over the U.S. gathered at White house to celebrate Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Birthday, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Rajwant Singh, a concerned Sikh for the cause of Sikh faith in Washington D.C. His consistent efforts over prolonged period of time brought fruit when White House invited Sikhs to celebrate Guru Nanak Devji birthday along with White House Staff and other dignitaries.

Hymns from Sri Guru Granth Sahib were sung in a very sweet melody by local Ragi Jetha after opening prayer. Several high level executives from White house i.e. Mr. Tom Perez, Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Eric Treene, Special Counsel for Reli-

gious Discrimination and Mazen Basrawi, Counsel, Office of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights all from United States Department of Justice were at hand to join in the celebration. Director Grande Lum Community Relation Service, Department of Justice, Jerry McNerney, a Congressman from 11th District of California as well as two representatives from Indian embassy also arrived to pay their obedience. Every one spoke highly about the founder of the Sikh faith and assured full safe guard Sikh Identity. In addition to highly officials in Obama administration, congratulatory statements were also delivered by several representatives of Sikh Coalition, United Sikhs, SALDEF, American Gurdwara Parbandik Com-

mittee, California Sikh delegation, Arizona Sikh Delegation and other Sikhs leaders. Members from the family of victims of Wisconsin tragedy were also flown in.

The role of Master of Ceremony was handled by D.Paul Monteiro who also gave welcoming remarks while Dr. Rajwant Singh, the main force behind the event delivered the closing remarks.

These programs are important for Sikh awareness and for preservation of Sikh Identity especially in the wake of what happened at Wisconsin Gurdwara Tragedy. Dr Rajwant Singh deserves special credit for his consistent efforts in undertaking such tasks at a great personal sacrifice.

Phoenix City Council Members Begin Session with Sikh Prayer

Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, M.D.
Phoenix, Arizona

5 P. M. December 5th will go as one of the important moments in the history of Sikhs of Arizona in relation to their struggle for Sikh awareness and Sikh identity after 9-11. On that day, the author was invited by the Mayor and the other council members to deliver Sikh invocation (Ardas) prior to the beginning of their session.

A few members of Sikh community were at hand to accompany the author on this important occasion. At 5 P.M. the honorable Mayor Mr. Greg Stanton announced that Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev from Sikh Gurudwara will be delivering invocation prior to the beginning of the agenda. In fact, this was also announced in the agenda and the event was on city calendar. Rest is



history.

It is my firm belief that every little step we take to make our presence felt wherever an opportunity shows up, goes a long way and all efforts should be made to take advantage of such a situation.

Given that many Sikhs unfortunately are voluntarily shunning their

identities with resultant loss of courage to stand up as Khalsa, the pressure keeps on building upon those who still are trying to maintain their Guru-given identity under his command. Therefore, it behooves upon each and every one of us to do our part in keeping our promise with our Guru. And this was just another small step in achieving

that objective.

As far as prayer itself was concerned, it was begun with the original verse of Mool Mantra along with its translation followed by a humble request to the Almighty to make the meeting a success. And it ended with Nanak Naam Chardi Kalaa, Terey Bhanai Sarbat Daa Bhalaa.

Nishkam Sewa New Year's Celebrations



Memorial Service for Newtown, Connecticut Students at Guru Nanak Dwara Ashram

(By Deepa Walia) Guru Nanak Dwara Ashram in Phoenix, Arizona held a memorial service and candlelight vigil in memory of the 26 lives lost in the horrific shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School. As these senseless crimes increase in number, Guru Nanak Dwara Ashram has regularly held these services to mourn the untimely death of those lost in these tragedies. During the event, attendees signed consoling messages for the friends, family, and loved ones of those that were lost on December 14, 2012.



New Year's Celebration at Ekta Mandir

As many ways of celebrating and welcoming New Year. Some do it by opening the bubbly and dancing the night away till the early morning. Some others do it very differently. As the morning sun rose over the valley, to lift the morning frost and warm-up the hearts, few families got together early in the morning to welcome the new year in the traditional way by doing Ganesh Puja and then performed Havan or Homa at Ekta Mandir. Each family was given a separate Havan Kund and they performed the ritual Homa welcoming the new year and seeking blessings of Lord Ganesh to remove all the obstacles and the blessing of Shree Lakshmi to bring prosperity in the New Year.

As the day progressed, more and more people started strolling to the temple to seek Lord's blessing. At any given time, there were anywhere between 50 to 100 people gathered in front of the shrine to do Aarchna and the prayer. In the afternoon, even more devotees came to the temple to perform Aarchna and Abhishek of Lord Ganesh and Devi Mahalakshmi.

The Day ended with devotees performing Hanuman puja and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa followed by Aarati



and Prasad. It is expected that during the day, over 500 people visited the

temple to welcome the new year and seek the blessing to start the new year

and make them successful and prosperous.



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**Season's Greetings – Safe & Happy Holidays!
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On Dec 18, 2012, the ISAA celebrated Christmas a week sooner as we are closed on the Christmas day and also on New Year day. The hall was decorated beautifully in the spirit of Christmas. Caroling was provided by Kishor Ganatra and his two daughters Trina and Shaina. Our own Joe Solomon arrived from the North Pole as Santa to wish everyone the happiness. People were eager to have their pictures taken with Santa. The group offered happy birthday wishes to Hiraben (Diamond) Daulat. The Christmas breakfast of bagels, donuts and juice was arranged by Sharad & Anju Shah with added compliments of Dunkin Donuts. The Group observed one Minute silent prayers paying tributes to victims of violence, natural disaster here at home and other tragedies around the world including brutal Newtown shooting. The luncheon today was sponsored by Umaben and Jagan Lingamneni. Over seventy five members and guests enjoyed the delicious meal.

On Dec 11, 2012, luncheon was sponsored by Kamlesh and Deepa Patel who celebrated Hasmukhbhai's birthday (Deepa's dad). The menu consisted of freshly-made masala dosa, vegetable biryani, menduwada, gulab jamun and chutneys. Almost eighty members and guests enjoyed the treat and wished Hasmukhbhai a very happy birthday.

On Dec 04, 2012, with lauded song- "Umaria Ghati Jaye Re..e..e...", we watched a comedy-based movie "UMAR". It offered a lot of light moments as the audience had laughs galore. The theme was such that many could relate to it. Two hours were well worth the laughs and lessons learned. Thanks to Bharatbhai for selecting a wonderful comedy. Ashaben celebrated her grand- daughter Vedangini's birthday with almost seventy members and guests who enjoyed the home-cooked luncheon. Cupcakes were served by Kanwal and Chandrikaben brought papadi. Shard shah brought in energy drinks for all. Everyone got a lot of energy. What a treat!

On Nov 27th, 2012, it was quite an enjoyable gathering with socialization and playing games. The group was informed that the membership renewal requires completing the form with an annual fee for \$25 per person by January 31, 2013. Jitubhai was welcomed back from his somewhat arduous but extremely rewarding trip to India. Amongst the guests introduced were Mr. & Mrs. Bakulbhai Amin visiting from N.J., Mr. Mrs. Modi visiting from India, and, Mr. Ganatra from Scottsdale. Luncheon was sponsored by Lataben and Chandrakantbhai with assorted variety of pizzas, salad, chips and home-made yami Gulab Jambun!

Announcements:

- Sponsorship calendar-2013- dates for luncheons are getting filled rapidly. Please mark your date for occasions such as- birthdays, anniversaries, festivities and religious days.
- The ISAA will start a wellness program effective from January 2013.
- Please inform the Working Committee in advance for any program proposal for approval.



Proud ISAA seniors with Santa (Joe Soloman)



Santa was welcomed in traditional style with banging band played by these pretty and happy ladies!



One of many ISAA seniors groups posing with Santa



Jagan & Uma Lingerneni - sponsors of the X-Mas luncheon



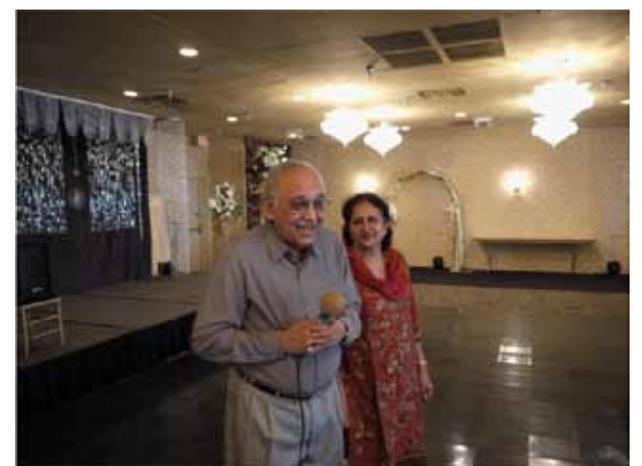
Shayana (R), Trina (M) and Kishorbhai - carol singers



Divyaben & Kamleshbhai celebrating Hasmukhbhai's birthday with ISAA seniors



Ashaben Bhatt & Family celebrated granddaughter - Vedangini's birthday with ISAA Seniors



Mr. Mrs. Modi enjoying ISAA meetings whilst visiting from Mumbai, India

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HAPPY NEW YEAR !

NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS AT THE HARE KRISHNA TEMPLE

On Tuesday, January 1st 2013 we welcomed a lot of devotees to the Hare Krishna Temple, Chandler, at 4.30 am for mangalaarati. There were adults as well as young children. His Grace Krishna Prasad Prabhu led the Arati&Kirtan followed by Narsimha prayers by His grace Govinda Prabhu. His Grace CakriPrabhu led the Tulasiarati. After Tulasiarati all the devotees chanted the Maha Mantra on japabeads . Two years ago, the temple started a tradition of chanting one million names of the Lord on New Year's day.

Mid morning there was a fire sacrifice ceremony conducted by His Grace DamodarPrabhu. Many congregation members participated in the auspicious yagya.

We also celebrated SrilaBhaktisiddhantaSaraswatiThakura's disappearance day after the fire sacrifice ceremony. His grace PruthuSarva, a senior disciple of his Divine Grace SrilaPrabhupada, spoke about SrilaBhaktisiddhantaSaraswatiThakura after offering pushpanjali.

BhaktisiddhantaSaraswati Thakur was the spiritual master of A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. It was A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada who set out in 1965, at the age of 69, to America to try to fulfill the request of BhaktisiddhantaSaraswatiGoswami Maharaja of preaching to the West. Within 12 years A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada had set up a world wide society of devotees of Lord



Krishna and Lord ChaitanyaMahaprabhu (called ISKCON)- and fulfilled the prophecy of Lord Chaitanya. Not only that, A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada established 108 centres world wide (personally traveling to USA, England, Scotland, Germany, France, Hawaii, Russia, Australia, South Africa, Nigeria, Japan and many other coun-

tries.) He also made "Hare Krishna" a house-hold term in the USA, translated texts into English and gave purports to various Sanskrit Vedic texts such as the Bhagavad-Gita and SrimadBhagavatam - allowing thousands to benefit from learning these valuable ancient teachings.

In the evening the celebrations

continued with Sandhyaarati and ecstatic bhajans by Krishna Prasad and BrajGovindaprabhusuntil Shayanaarati at 8.30pm.

Wishing each and every one of you a very prosperous and Krishna Conscious New Year. Best wishes from the Hare Krishna Temple devotees. 480 705 4900 . www.iskcon phoenix.com



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Hidden Gems... IACRF & Radio Sri Little Champs Competition

December 9, 2012

Once again Radio Sri and Indo-American Cultural and Religious Foundation came together to host a talent competition for South Asian children. A few months ago in September, these two organizations had come together to host a dance competition and they joined hands to give children with vocal talent an opportunity in this singing competition. Held at

the Indo-American community center, the event was once again a hit and attracted many children. It is heartwarming to see community organizations give children an opportunity to showcase their talent with such events.

The winners of the competition Age Group 11-17 were Aditya Sudhakar and Aditi Tata and in Age group 10 and under were Nisha Kulkarni and Ak-

shaySudhakar.

Congratulations to Radio Sri and Indo American Cultural and Religious Foundation for another successful event that encourages and showcases talent in the coming generation.

Once again, we are replacing our regular Hidden Gems column to highlight the young, local talent that can be found in Arizona.



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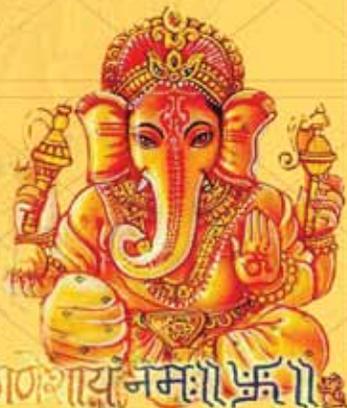


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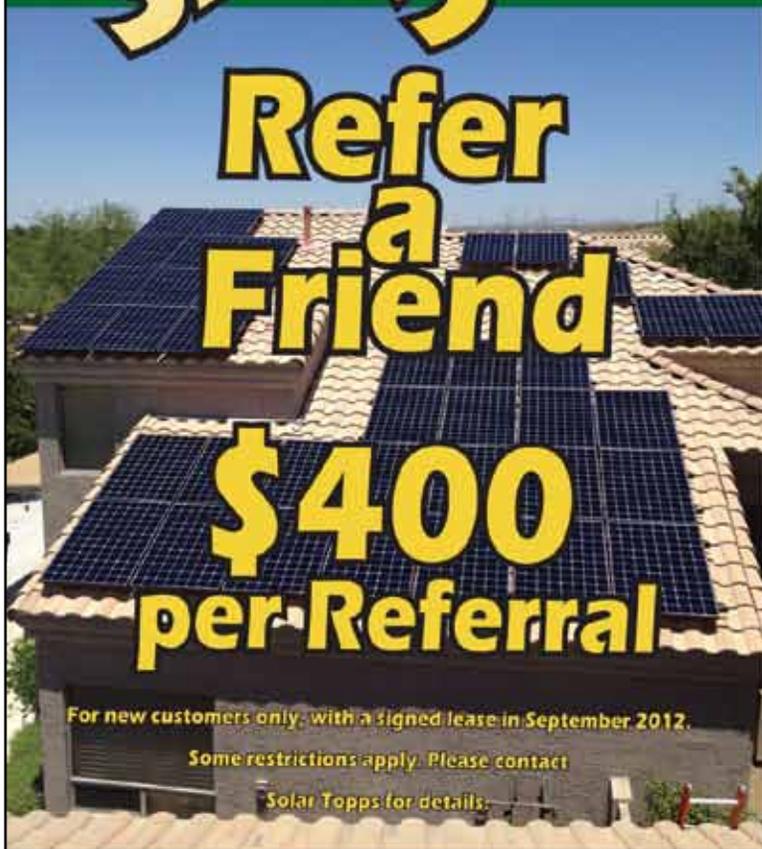
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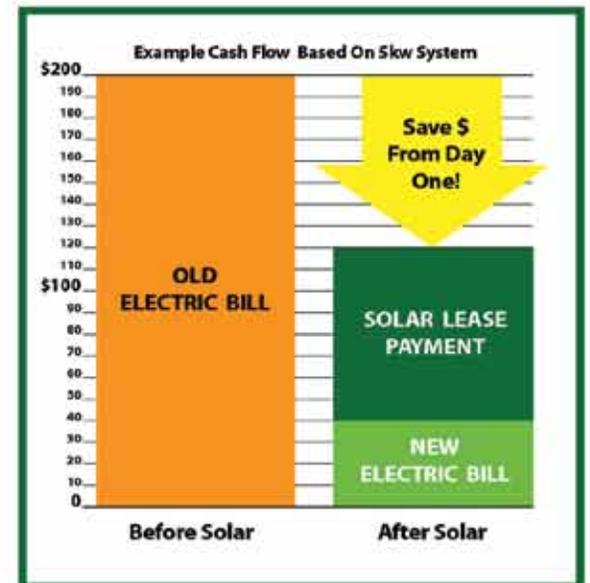
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Peace and blessings of **God** be upon you – a “Thank You” letter from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Chino

The year 2012 has come to an end and we are left with some sad memories, but there were many blessings, too.

A true believer shows patience in the face of difficulties and is grateful when embraced by success. First of all, he thanks God Almighty who has guided the believers to “Be Grateful to Him” and not to deny and be ungrateful for the blessings bestowed upon them.

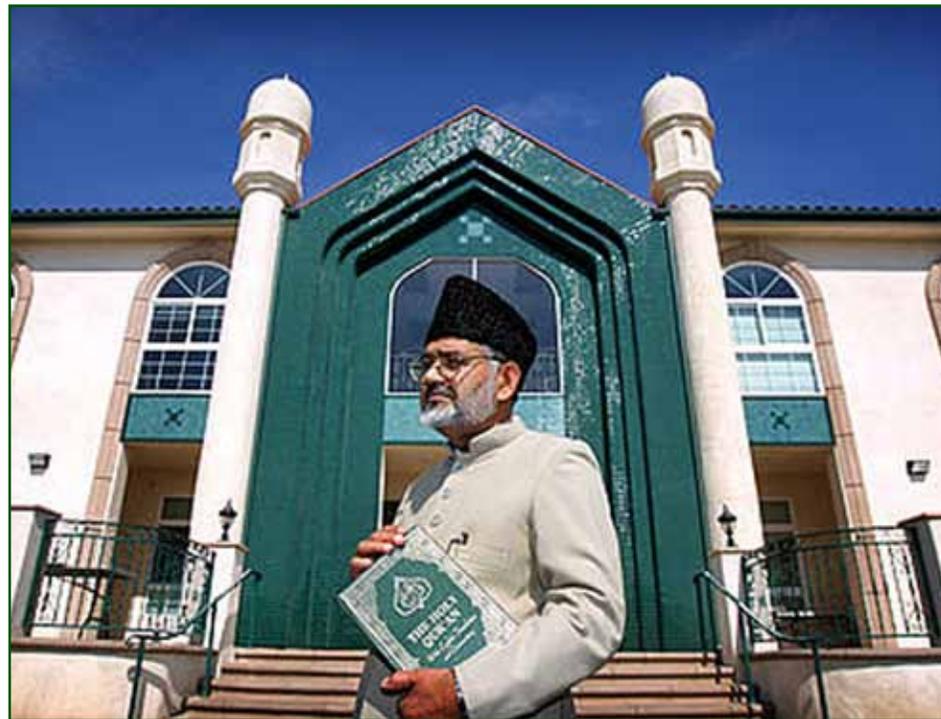
We learn from the conduct of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him), who is an Excellent Exemplar, that in order to be thankful for the Bounties of God, he would pray abundantly. Following his noble example, we should likewise increase our prayers. Also, when we witness the Bounties of Allah showered upon us, we should also concentrate more on the worship of God, and be regular in Tahajjud -- pre-dawn, extra prayers.

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) also said: “One who is not grateful to man is not grateful to God.” Therefore, at the end of 2012, I want to thank all the individuals and religious and civic organizations who have cooperated with us, one way or the other, through interfaith events or who have participated in our educational or Islamic holidays such as Ramadan.

I want to specially thank the Press and Media with whom we have had excellent relations over the years. The American Press enjoys freedom of expression and welcomes opposing views, but some of the Pakistani newspapers are not as open. Nonetheless, Pakistan Express, New York Awam, Dounya international and Pakistan Post have carried our opinion pieces and reported our news items without any prejudice. We are very grateful to them.

On the West Coast, Southern California region, The Daily Bulletin, The Sun, The Chino Champion, The Victorville Daily Press, India West, Asia Today of Arizona and West Side Story News have also accommodated us. Arabic papers, Al Entesharul Arbi and Al Akhbar covered our news and also published summaries of the Khutba Jumma (Friday sermon) of our 5th Khalifa, Mirza Masroor Ahmad. We are thankful for their service to us.

Our thanks also go out to BBC representative Hasan Mujtaba for his cooperation and to ICEEA Radio in broadcasting our Radio programs, and KNBC Chanel 4 for airing detailed



news about us on multiple occasions. Similarly, for publishing correct news and articles about us, we are grateful to Daily Al-Fazal Rabwah Pakistan, Weekly Badr Qadian India and Weekly Lahore, and online sites Ahmadiyya Times and The Muslim Times for their timely coverage of our events as well.

Among the members of government, we wish to thank the Mayor of Chino, Dennis Yates, the Mayor of Upland, Ray Musser, San Bernardino County Supervisor Gary Ovitt, the Chino Valley Fire Department Chief and the Police Chief, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and all officers of both departments for all they do.

We the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community look forward to working together more extensively in the year 2013.

We also enjoyed good relations with religious leaders of the area and the members of various Interfaith councils, and we thank them from the bottom of our heart. They came to our meetings and asked questions that removed their misunderstandings and doubts about Islam, and we gained invaluable insights into their respective faiths.

We are moving ever forward in the new year, upholding our motto: “Love for All - Hatred for None.” This is the real teaching of Islam. Only with love can you win the hearts of the people. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) won the hearts of his enemies by forgiving them, even those who persecuted him and his followers severely,

pouring insults and abuses upon them without mercy. This magnanimous display of compassion and forgiveness on the part of the Holy Prophet drew the hearts of his staunchest enemies towards him and the religion of Islam. We have to show the same example for the victory of Islam. We have to use the same weapon of love to eradicate hatred from the world and to keep on marching in the path of progress.

We the members of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, extend our most heartfelt New Year's Greetings to you in the spirit of brotherhood, and we pray for your good health and well-being. We see that the world is heading fast towards destruction. We can prevent this catastrophe if we can all make the correct choice between love and hate, and play our role as torch bearers of love, mercy and forgiveness.

At the end of year 2012, we held our 27th Annual Convention in which well over 1200 people participated. We are again grateful to the officials of local government who participated in this function or sent messages of peace and goodwill and who cooperated in many important ways to the success of our annual West Coast convention.

America as a Superpower should treat all nations fairly. Justice should be the hallmark of its policies. It should be remembered that the brave nation is not the one who dominates another, but the one who restrains its anger. We love America for what it stands for, and we know the anger displayed by some of the people of the world is not aimed against the people of America

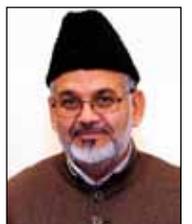
but against its unjust policies.

America is still a country that insures the freedom for its citizens to preach and practice their many different religions, which is something that cannot be said by Muslim countries. In fact, the American Constitution is closer to the true teachings of the Quran and Islam on justice and freedom than any Constitution of any Muslim nation. This is because these so-called Islamic nations are not following the real teachings of Islam and the Holy Prophet. We are grateful that we enjoy this freedom of religion in America that is rare in many other countries. We must take full advantage of this freedom by practicing and preaching our faith and delivering the message of peace and love.

Unfortunately, in the country of Pakistan, Ahmadi Muslims are deprived of all religious freedom. They cannot hold meetings, cannot express their viewpoint, they even cannot say As-Salamu alaikum, for that is punishable by imprisonment. Even at this time, many Ahmadi Muslims are suffering the hardship of imprisonment simply because they dare to call themselves Muslims in violation of the Constitution and civil laws of Pakistan. There is no such thing as freedom. The country is in the grip of some heartless terrorists. Life is cheap and the killing of innocents is on the rampage. Only recently, terrorists tied up the guards and their families and vandalized 120 graves in an Ahmadi graveyard.

We strongly condemn murder in the name of religion and the persecution of any person, whether Ahmadi, Shia, Hindu, Jew or Sikh or any other belief. We are saddened and condemn the killing of 20 innocent children and 7 adults in the senseless massacre in Newtown, Connecticut.

The world is in turmoil these days and unrest, civil war and the threat of much larger conflicts are on the horizon. We need to stop acts of terrorism whether they are carried out by individuals, groups or a society. We need to strive much harder for freedom and justice for all.



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Happy New Year!

As we have just approached 2013 and left 2012 behind in all of its excitement and merriment, a new year of thrill, bonding, and enlightenment is glowing in our futures! Happy New Year guys! 2013 is here and we are all going to live it to the fullest with new resolutions, goals, and accomplishments to look forward to. Along with all these wonderful things, we will also have new things to be thankful for and more things to be appreciative of. Speaking of which...

As you all probably know from reading previous months' articles, I went to India this past December and had the most amazing life-changing experience of bringing clean water to the children who do not have access to any. I delivered the filters to four schools, and the inspiration and brightness that shined in the kids eyes when I set the filters into their hands and taught them how to use it, the feeling of accomplishment and love



brought tears to my eyes. Each of the four schools that we distributed to had a different atmosphere, but the children all felt the same, very grateful and filled with gratitude. For each school, first, I would introduce myself to children, tell them why I was amongst them and what I brought for their lives, then I educated them on how to stay healthy and clean. We did fun little exercises and examples that involved

the children and showed them how to stay clean, and they loved it. Knowing that I could bring so much excitement and joy into their lives brought me a sense of achievement and exuberance.

Out of the schools that I distributed the filters, one of them was a slum and there were thirty-five kids who attended the schools, and also lived with their families in the same slum that the

school was located in. After I gave them the filters, one of the little boys took us around the slum and showed me how he lived his everyday life and it opened my eyes to so much more than just a little boy who did not have clean water. It made me realize how little the world had to offer to these young children and these families and how much we have here in America that we take for granted. The families in the slums' living conditions are so horrible and heart-breaking, yet they still live their lives happier than we seem to live ours at some points, when they find something so little as clean drinking water. I hope my sharing this with all of you opened your minds and hearts to the children out there, and the simplicity of



making a child happy by giving them what they may need most. Thank you guys and Happy New Year!
-Sammy Mallik

Atharva's Corner

Who is the Puppeteer?

Religion and philosophy wage a perpetual battle regarding fate and self-control; one dictates that an individual's discourse is pre-plotted whereas the latter states that humans are free-body beings with the capacity to change and alter his/her future. It's a difficult matter to discuss because the resolution to such an issue is contingent on personal belief entirely. While it can be debated that one holds more credence than its opponent, one must concede that both are held in almost equally popular opinion, and one must exercise a healthy circumspection when discussing this critical issue.

Bigots on either side often refuse to acknowledge the alternative, so a heavily polarized view will not be discussed as it would be counterproductive towards arriving at a consensus. Those who believe in predestination or fate/destiny essentially vouch for an uncontrollable ends. In this view, no matter the means, the ends will always be the same. This is to further say that any step taken was planned ahead by

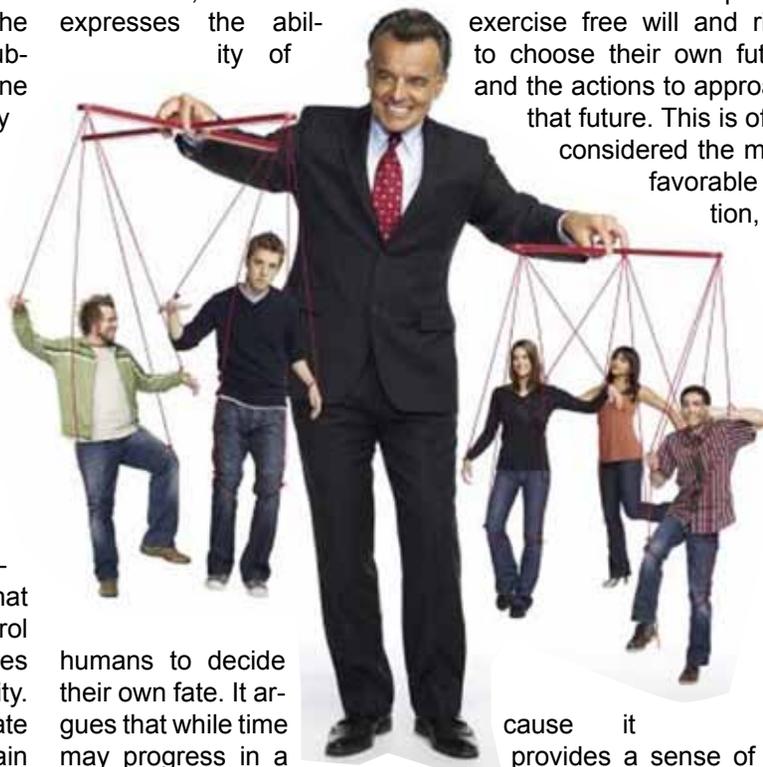
some abstract force, and was therefore calibrated to equate to such a destined "end." One can examine this perspective in positive and negative light; while it provides an assurance that a certain outcome will develop, the person will essentially be vulnerable to the forces beyond one's control. This debate essentially devolves into a question of who or what body/group/entity decides the ends. Religion and the subsequent philosophy hold one view, while other philosophy holds an alternative.

However, what serves as a push factor from this view is that it places a person's free will supplementary to his/her decided future. It accepts that people will be different along a degree, yet also contends that regardless of differences, each person will be treated the same; either they live a good life or a bad one. It's an externally decided power; one that supersedes personal control and warrant, and thus loses credence in the community. Certain faiths argue that fate is pre-decided unless a certain

sacrifice or understanding is adopted. This delves into an intermediate realm where an action taken does technically offer an alternative fate, but still provides a limited number of outcomes which are subject to change by a force beyond one's control.

On the other end we have those who believe in self-determination, a view that expresses the ability of

linear fashion, you are able to alter your future by changing the present. This would lay you along a new linear timeline in which the newest set of actions takes precedence in determining the future outcome. This is supported by some religions and often enough, provide consequences of higher order to such benevolent action. It's the idea that people exercise free will and right to choose their own future and the actions to approach that future. This is often considered the more favorable option, be-



humans to decide their own fate. It argues that while time may progress in a

cause it provides a sense of se-



curity, self-dependence, independence from external forces, and a self-decisive power. One receives the life they deserve as a result of one's actions and decisions.

Religion often supports this view as well. Hinduism galvanizes the idea behind reincarnation pursuant to how a previous life was carried out. Buddhism follows a similar concept in the eternal pursuit for enlightenment.

Each positive step taken through a life cycle brings one significantly closer to this state of perpetual harmony and understanding. It's this kind of understanding that can only be achieved through careful learning and reaction in life; ideals which cannot be manifested unless a person is free to express will and intent in a future fate.

Making a Difference in Health, Hygiene & Safety Awareness in India

Jitu Patel just returned to his home in Arizona from his long and rewarding trip to India that was dedicated to his mission to protect people, property and environment. This time, he worked little more aggressively with major Indian industries such as TATA, Reliance, IOCL, Refineries, Petrochemicals and Chemicals manufacturing companies, regulatory authorities such as Indian Chemical Association, Gujarat Safety Council, Indian Health & Safety Directorate and also with leading university educators such as IITGN where dignitaries were Gujarat State Chief Minister Narendra Modi, himself, Dr Anil Kakodkar, the former Chairman, Indian Atomic Energy, Mr Mathur, Directorate General, Indian Factory Act who were guest of honors. Patel was also the guest of honor and speaker at NICMAR-Hydrabad, UPES-Dehradun, HNGU-Patan, SPET-Anand, ISTAR-Vidyanagar, and twice in Baroda.

Educational organizations at Anand, Patan, Vadodara, and some others visited by Patel have started graduate program courses and conduct research on Industrial Health, Safety, Fire, Explosion, Hygiene, Toxicology, Environmental Sciences & Engineering, and, more importantly to include off-the-job Safety including Disaster Management, Home Safety, Traffic Safety, Driving Safety, Recreation Safety, Children Injury Prevention, Women Abuse, Drug Abuse, Domestic Waste Management dealing with Epidemiological problems from human, medical and other day-to-day household and industrial wastes.

This is to him a drop in ocean, but, is a step in the right direction. He reckons; "The nation is sitting on a bomb waiting to explode" from the accumulated massive unsafe acts and conditions, coupled with both ignorance and negligence, which has potential to lead to an outbreak of an epidemic from serious exposures to highly toxic materials including carcinogens and biological wastes that could be detrimental to health.

On a positive note, Patel says; "it is great to note that India's technological and economical progress is remarkably noteworthy". However, if the nation fails to address the concerns mentioned on a timely basis, the country could face the disastrous situation! The community needs to work together to make a difference! Patel's trip to India was proven to be a huge success



Mr Shushilkumar, President, Reliance Industries, Dahej welcoming the Guest of Honor Jitu Patel inaugurating Process Safety Campaign.

with obvious results of awareness for healthy and safe environment on & off-the-job.

Patel shared that some Indian industries and educational organizations have good programs in place working effectively but regrettably implemented only on the job. The same needs extended extensively outside the work place where the problems are of huge magnitude! Some others have now been inspired and have begun seeking his help to start the courses beneficial to industries and public sector to tackle design engineering, construction, commissioning, start-up of the facilities safely and also the universities with syllabus, course materials and mentoring to ensure effective course deliveries. During his short stay, he accomplished a lot and established professional health, safety & environment chapters and sections of the ASSE to address the country's devastating problem at hand. He is emphasizing that there is much work to do to make a significant difference and urges everyone to do whatever possible to protect the mother nation from going bad to worse situation!

Here are the efforts exerted in India by Jitu during October 11th through November 26th, 2012 to promote ASSE membership growth for widening the networking of the HSE professionals through formation of ASSE Chapters/Sections for developing and training HSE professionals and also for the advancement of the HSE profession to collectively help this beautiful nation – India and internationally:

ASSE Fellow Jitu Patel is breaking new ground in India representing ASSE. On March 4th 2012, Patel had

launched the ASSE India Chapter which has grown from its initial membership of 51 members to now over 367 members. The number is rising with nearly 300 completed applications with dues paid waiting for further processing. The chapter has organized some effective seminars and symposia to network amongst India's HSE professionals in their efforts to increase and improve public health and safety awareness and also in developing young HSE professionals. India has already made headway in HSE by hosting the International Conference on Safety, which was held on Oct. 12-13 at the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar in Gujarat where Patel was a conference guest speaker and technical session chair. The conference was sponsored by ASSE as the keynote sponsor represented by Patel. He also assisted in organizing and conducting a 2-day Process Safety workshop for benefit of Indian industries, regulatory authority and academia faculty and graduate program students which was attended by over 80 delegates including executives from major Indian industries such as TATA, Reliance and also from oil & gas corporations from the Middle East. Subsequent to significant contributions made at the IITGN conference, Patel succeeded in launching four student chapters in different parts of India and the fifth one was supported by Dr RK Elangovan:

- University of Petroleum Energy Studies (UPES) in Dehradun was launched on Oct. 18, 2012.
- National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR) in Hyderabad was launched on Oct. 22, 2012..

- Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University (HNGU) in Patan, Gujarat, was launched on Oct. 26, 2012.

- Tarapore Management Association (TMA) in Tarapur/Dahanu was launched on the November 6th, 2012.

- RLI-Chennai Student Section was launched on 12th November 2012 at Regional Labour Institute, Chennai.

According to Patel, India's growing population and economy have led to new developments in many sectors, from construction and manufacturing to healthcare and academics. This growth will also call for matching inputs from occupational safety and health issues in terms of technical and advisory services, safety equipment and products, training and skill development, competence enhancement, promotion and advocacy, inspections and audits, and more. Patel is working to add more chapters throughout the country to ultimately bring health and safety to every corner of India.

On the 22nd November, 2012, Jitu Patel visited the DMD facility of Reliance Industries Limited and inaugurated their two-weeks Process Safety Campaign organized in memory of the Bhopal Tragedy focusing particularly on operations. Mr. Patel made presentations to over 100 technical and managerial staff including senior executives from Operations, Maintenance, Project Management, HSE and other support departments on "Hazards & Safe Handling of Pyrophoric Materials".

On November 20th 2012, Jitu Patel met with Mr BN Patel, Managing Trustee & Secretary, Sardar Patel Education Trust, Dr. Raman Patel, FRCS Lond. and Mr Shashikant Patel, Director Co-ordination. The Trust includes the vital medical diagnosis and treatment support of dialysis, MRI, CAT Scan, X-Ray, Mammogram and physical therapy treatments providing at a reasonable affordable. The Trust has introduced the certification program to ensure that the center trains and certifies medical technicians for quality services. The Trust having over eleven thousand students is in full support with Mr Patel in formation of the ASSE Gujarat Chapter.

On November 7th, Jitu Patel addressed HSE professionals and chemical and petrochemical industry executives including dignitaries such as presidents of Gujarat Safety Council (GSC) & Indian Chemicals Council (ICC). In the best interest of our

industries and community at large, HSE professionals, technical and managerial staff from industries, business community and the community social workers who could add value and contribute to increase the public and professional safety awareness, should follow Patel's guidance to form the ASSE Gujarat Chapter. Patel thanked Yogendra Dave & Pradeep Parikh for organizing the meeting and to Dr. PT Shah, President, GSC, Mr. Babubhai Patel, President, Nandisary Chemical Industries Association, and, Mr. PK Mukhopadhyay, Dy Chief Explosives Controller, Nagpur, for words of wisdom in support to improve India's safety and health record. These dignitaries extended deep appreciation to Patel for his caring and timely endeavors with such remarkably valuable contributions for a continued good progress of Vibrant Gujarat and that too safely!

Jitu Patel met with the executives of Indian Chemical Council (ICC) and also senior executives of export oriented huge color and dye pigmentation chemical corporation to brief them about the ASSE's mission. Mr Ravi Kapoor, MD, Heubach Colour Pvt Ltd., agreed to support the society's mission by advising Mr Saxena, Secretary of ICC to participate in the TFC to work toward formation of the ASSE Gujarat Chapter.

On Nov 6th, Jitu Patel visited the Reliance Power Plant campus in Dahanu especially Mr. Anil Ambani's Green Belt growing such exotic variety of fruits and flowers and also unique species of decorative plants from all over the world. These green houses with flowers, fresh vegetables and fruits were out of this world! Jitu Patel indicated that the Reliance Power Plant was immaculate with good safety and industrial security systems in place. However, the road from Dahanu to Tarapur was unsafe and extremely rough. Patel also enjoyed meeting with the president and members of the Tarapur Management Association where he launched the ASSE Tarapur Student Chapter as its guest of honor. He addressed the attendees with an overview on Industrial Safety Perspectives allowing attendees to ask questions prior to conducting the Launching Ceremony! He urged to keep up the good work with the same high spirit but extending it also to outside workplace for a safer and much improved hygiene environment.

Jitu Patel also visited Tata Steel, Global Wires (Tarapur Wire Plant 2 – TWP2) on 6th November, 2012. Patel focused on some critical aspects of process safety. Also appreciated some good initiatives taken by Tata Steel.

Patel made encouraging remarks for TWP-2 focusing on improvement in the field of Safety, review of safety performance done regularly at various levels of management in every month. Each and every employee has its own Personal Safety Action Plan (PSAP), which he has to follow within and even outside the organization. Various competitions like slogans, poems, skits, posters, etc. are carried out during safety week to strengthen the safety awareness. Safety Commandos from workmen are identified which are trained to take care emergencies during shifts are rotated in shifts to take care of enforcement of safety and Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) compliance in shifts. 100% employees have done Tree plantation around the plant area and roadways. Carbon Footprint value for an individual employee is calculated on the basis of distance and means of travel, LPG consumed at home, electricity used, etc. and to balance it each one is proposed number of trees one should plant. Management of the plant participated in the launching ceremony on the November 6th of the ASSE TMA Student section later on the same evening indicating their support to the ASSE Mission. Patel advised the employees and management to take safety also outside work place.

As requested by Gujarat Safety Council, Jitu Patel made a presentation on "ASSE Resources and Benefits of its Joining" to over fifty Baroda industry HSE professionals, corporate representatives and government regulatory authority on 24th November, 2012. The GSC and the leading executives stressed the need to establish ASSE Gujarat Chapter especially in Vadodara in particular urging all the attendees to work as team promoting to join the ASSE and support the mission.

Jitu Patel visited Indian Oil Company Gujarat State Refinery and met with Mr P K Mandal, General Manager, HSE, IOCL and Mr. B. P. Baliga, Corporate Executive, IOCL, Delhi on November 2nd and shared information about the ASSE and walked them through the website www.asse.org and made a presentation about ASSE's mission highlighting the benefits of its values to industry and regulatory authority welcoming comments and soliciting their support to spread the words nationwide and conduct activities for safer and cleaner India through formation of regional chapters!

Projection:

A leading industry executive mentioned that the Safety Professionals, Industrialists and regulatory authority

know that there are very few industries really take initiatives of their own for the improvement of managing safety. If they do act, it only because of statutory compliance under pressure with a tick marks approach. Small scale industries do not even bother for any safety. Most and repeated fatalities are experienced in these small scale organizations. Industries which are well aware of the hazards of their activities wish to improve but they strive for good information, data and experience. ASSE is the professional organization that can provide all back up. For those who are not aware of the risks involved in their daily activities, with Patel's assistance, ASSE would provide the platform to discuss their problems and desired training. Those who are not aware of the safety at all and do not want to even implement a good safety system, ASSE can educate and train them to inculcate concept of safety in their activities.

From these minimal efforts expended during six weeks stay, Jitu Patel projects that there is a strong need for an active HSE organization to work at many locations in India concurrently to maintain the momentum. There exists enough interest for the guidance to make a difference in health, hygiene and general safety at work and off-the-job, and, also for handling all kinds of wastes – industrial, medical or domestic.

Jitu Patel adds that during his recent stay in India, seeds have been sown for launching the following additional ASSE Students and/or full HSE professional Sections/Chapters in the near future during 2013 with possibility for a much wider scope elsewhere in the country at Vaishakhapattanam Student Chapter, Gujarat Student Chapter, Gujarat Chapter, West Bengal Section, Patna Student Chapter, Hyderabad Chapter and Coimbatore Chapters.

Also, the following educational universities or trusts are proposing consideration for signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to partner activities with ASSE by UPES, Dehradun, Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN), Hemacharya North Gujarat University, Sardar Patel Education Trust and NICMAR, Hyderabad. The following educational organizations are interested to add or commence HSE programs that could offer undergraduate degree courses and also post-graduate diplomas and also Masters programs at their facilities which are IITGN, Gandhinagar, HNGU, Patan, SPET, Anand, and, ISTARS, Vidyanagar.

Though physically extremely tiring, how rewarding it has been because it was worth it.



Spirituality, Celibacy and Religion

Pranav Sanghadia

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This is a touchy subject, but it is very essential to understand it right. All the religion of this world has condemned sex or at least their follower understood that way. But why, what is the reason behind it and whether you and I should follow it or not? Let us discuss and try to understand it logically.

There are two basic instincts in all the human being, food and reproduction. Except very few people, everyone in this world is under the influence of these two basic instincts. A poor person might beg and eat whatever food they get, while a rich person would get served most delicious food in a silver plate. However once the food passes test buds there is no control.



Any sensual experience is short lived and limited.

Those very few people who went beyond the basic instincts realized the truth and the reality of this world, they probably realized why do we exist, what is this world about etc, or they at least got glimpse of it. They also realized that everyone and anyone can experience and realize the truth if they can go beyond the basic instincts and senses.

Their experiences were shared with their followers and written into books, and these books became holy books for their religion or sect. But none out of their millions of followers got the same experience and realization, what they got by reading those books is that the sex is bad. Existence of human being is due to very basic instinct of reproduction, but many holy books tell it is bad.

Think about this situation: If a person suffering from fever is sent to a doctor, instead of giving medicine the doctor starts preaching, he tells that the fever is bad and it has no place in abode of god, you cannot attain god if you have fever, you must get rid of the fever if you want to attain god and good health, you will be able to run only if you become free from fever. You cannot enjoy eating or having good time with your family if you have fever.

The doctor goes on forever...may be for whole life... What do you think is required, a dose of Advil or Motrin? Have you ever met a person who never suffered from fever or any such illness in whole life? It is accepted that illness would come and there is cure for it.

Same way there is a perfect cure available to go beyond basic instincts and senses to realize the truth or god; it has been tested over millions of years by many million yogis of India and around the world.

Meditation and Pranayama (Breathing Technique) is the cure. It is impossible to get rid of fever without medicine; one has to take medicine as long as the fever is not gone or in other words enjoy the fever. Same way enjoy your basic instincts. If you are seeker of god you should meditate regularly, your regular practice of meditation will for sure take you beyond basic instincts and senses. A person who has realized the truth by going beyond senses is free from the fever and he or she knows what to do if the fever comes back.

If you are beginner or regular meditator you should do everything not too much or too less. For example if you don't eat your favorite food you will crave for it and if you eat it too much, it will hurt your stomach.

By statistics those who don't meditate but are god fearing, weekend worshipers or in the management (hence in politics) at the place of worship stands no chance of realization. You see billions of people believe in god, worship god, live in place of worship but they have no realization while they are alive, who knows where they go after their death. If you go out on Sunday mornings you will see traffic jam at many places near Churches, in the evening at Temple and Fridays at mosques; if all these people were purified by going to places of worship, the earth should have become heaven.

In short be open, be logical, don't believe in dogmas, superstition and whatever is written in scriptures without evaluating using your rational mind, meditate regularly and enjoy your life.

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Indian Diaspora and Bollywood Movies



Dr. Jaswant Singh
Sachdev, MD*
Phoenix, Arizona

Entertainment of some kind for each and every human-being is essential for the well-being of the mind and general physical relaxation. Yet a right kind of leisure activity that wouldn't encourage lust or violence is really tough to select. Sports and related kinds of entertainments are common in Western countries. They are easily available even to the poorest segments of their society. However immigrant people from India are not much into sports and as such usually do not show much inclination to that end.

Bollywood movies, on the other hand, happen to be one of the most important pastimes and is a primary source of entertainment for us, the Indians. Watching Indian movies is in our blood, perhaps equally if not more, compared to the people of the West irrespective of the fact that they are often full of violence and sex. The industry is fairly advanced in India and labeling Bollywood industry closer to the top in the world in term of number of movies it delivers each year, will not be an overstatement. Transmigration of Indians to the Western world does not change their established craving for this kind of entertainment much like their never ending craving for Indian foods.

Before the invention of the VCR and the introduction of the Indian channels on small screen, most of us living in this part of the world would try to arrange a special showing of the Indian movies in the auditoriums of the Universities and schools. This was done once or twice a year in the form of a family affair within Indian diaspora whose numbers were not big enough. The intent was not to make money but to have an evening of nostalgia where the entire Indian community would chip in to help arrange showing and thus make the evening full of fun and frolics.

Circa late seventies, as time passed, VCR technology became available, changing the whole scenario. While in bigger cities, the Indian movies were shown in cinema halls for profit, most of the Indian Diaspora in small towns and elsewhere was content with watching movies on videos at home. Unfortunately as time passed, unscrupulous businessmen crept in and the market became flooded with duplicate copies of the Indian videos causing deterioration of the quality of the movies, ultimately leading to their downfall. The purpose of these movies on videos was turned more into an advertisement while the purpose and clarity was lost. Gradually, digital DVD technology with its superior picture

quality took hold and it changed the total landscape of movie viewing once again. At the same time satellite Indian TV channels became available in each and every Indians household; further altering our T.V. watching habits altogether.

Despite all this progress and evolution, the satisfaction and nostalgia of watching movies in a movie theatre stayed unfulfilled in the minds of many Indians. Sitting with other fellow countrymen and having the pleasure of a social interchange brought a distinct pleasure and satisfaction. This led to re-emergence of movie viewing in the cinema hall once again. While there is nothing of concern about this practice, what is bothersome is the way this phenomenon is practiced both by the individuals who arrange Indian movies and those of who go watch them.

During a visit to a regular American movie, we behave in a dignified way, the way one should. But for Indian movie, on the other hand, we rush to occupy the seats on the back of the auditorium. In the process, all the norms of good social behaviors are usually lost. After parking ourselves on one seat we try to control few other seats around us for our friends and relatives much in the same way we used to do in India in yesteryears. Those in the better halves of their fifties and sixties could easily recall the scenes where many of the Riksha pullers and others used their shirts, turbans and whatever else to block the entire rows of seats on the back. They would release them to their friends and relatives or to others for profit through scalping.

The story does not finish here. We do not want to leave our children home alone, 'cause we are "proud and concerned Indians parents". So we try to pack them along, regardless of the fact that these poor helpless souls, barely months to years old, could not have any interest in watching what we watch. All they are left to do is to run around in the auditorium if they could, prior to the beginning of the movies and then become scared when the lights are turned off. When these little souls get hungry or thirsty they cannot help but cry and in doing so they end up spoiling the viewing pleasures of helpless moms. Dads of course are busy in the movie plots. In fact, the entire audience is kept at ransom by their shrill.

Now could it be that Indian community is so poor that its members are not in a position to afford a baby sitter at home to help take care of the toddlers so that poor moms could get

some times off to entertain themselves? Of course it is not the lack of funds that compels the parents to tag their toddlers along with; rather, the driving force is the fixation in our minds that children ought not to be left with the baby sitters. How is it better than subjecting these poor souls to the unnecessary hardship and mental trauma by taking them along? And that too when we know that for the next three hours they would be watching horrendous violence and steaming sex scenes Indian movies are filled with?

Another interesting phenomenon unique to the showing of the Indian movies is worth mentioning here. The businessmen arranging these movies tend to number the seats so that those who buy the tickets first, are served the seats of their choosing, especially near the back. Nothing is seemingly wrong in it. However, this practice unfortunately brings in a typical Indian class system and favoritism where the friendship and relation takes an upper hand. Those acquainted with the organizers end up occupying the so called "good seats" compared to the others without connections or say. We seem to have come a full circle back to square one, to the phenomenon we all were familiar with while back home and the one I am sure, we all hated.

This practice might not exist anymore in bigger cities especially where Indians have bought movie cinema halls and are showing movies as a business. But in the towns and cities where the total mass of Indian population is still not enough for Indian entrepreneurs to have the luxury of owning their own cinema halls, such phenomenon still is evident. I sincerely hope that such practice only remains a manifestation of growing pain and will die its own death with time as is already the case in most situations.

Being smart businessmen as they are, the craze of the diaspora for the Indian movies was not lost on the movie-makers. Their main income comes from dollar-rich expatriates; therefore, they try their best to exploit their weakness while making movies. In doing so, most often than not, they simply and subtly try to touch their raw nerves. We have not forgotten the story lines of "PARDES", "AALC", "TAAL" and several others that reaffirm my belief. The character of a Western grown and raised hero is portrayed as that of a "spoiled brat" busy in finding, fixing and hurting young innocent Indian girls shown as "purer like Sita and simpler than dolls." Similarly young girls grown

in Western countries are shown as inherently "disrespectful" to the families of their husbands settled in India. On the other hand, homegrown Indian youth is presented no less than Sarwana, a faithful devoted son carrying his old blind parents on his shoulders. Yet the "India" they show in movies, is not the one we know, it is a dream, rather than reality.

I hope that one day the movie-makers of Bollywood would use some creativity and try to change the story lines from the same old love triangles. A reprieve from the ghastly scenes of violence and unbecoming steamy rapes will be a welcome sign. Furthermore, the responsibility of the movie critics to warn the public about the nature of the contents of a given movie is the need of time. Grading system that labels the contents of a movie akin to the system prevalent in the Western culture does exist but only on papers. This must also be strictly practiced.

As parents we must make all the efforts to keep our little toddlers and children away from the movies that are full of garbage. Not only will it protect the clean slates of susceptible minds from all the filth, but will also bring poor moms much-needed respite by letting children and toddlers stay with someone other. Asking friends and relatives and taking turns for baby-sitting, if one could not hire one, might do the trick. The audience will also be spared from unneeded interruptions. However, the system of allotting numbers to the seats as opposed to "first come first serve" is an issue that needs further consideration and debate. I will leave this issue to the better judgment of those who run this business and those who watch movies frequently. Let us all strive to turn this great vehicle of traditional Indian entertainment into an enjoyable, sophisticated experience so that it keeps on entertaining us for many more years to come.

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

The Importance of Teacher/Student Friendship Preventing Defective Education and Potential Incarceration

By Habibullah Saleem © 2012

It has long been one of my favorite slogans and that is, "Reach Me Now Teach Me." The importance of building an achievable bond that benefits both the student and teacher. When they are able to relate with integrity and respect the mission of teaching and learning becomes a joyful journey for all concerned parties. The constructive positive results are far more reaching. Being academically and socially sound can spread like cancer with the opposite effect. It is a known fact that it is better to make friends than to multiply enemies.

From years back we've all heard students say – I like my teacher – or – I don't like Mr. Jones or Ms. Baker. Not liking their teacher has caused many students not to like school. Of course they must learn to not allow the dislike of the teacher to become a lasting road block towards the future. However, so many of them do. Building an appropriate friendship with students is not to be seen as a negative. To display an appreciation makes them want to be in school as often as possible. They increase their desire to please the teacher as well as their desire to learn. How can we truly teach them while failing to love them? The perception of their view of our educators must not be misunderstood. I remember my son saying to me – you are my dad, my brother and my friend.

When they face challenges that don't seem fair to them they need to know that they can share their most precious secrets with those they trust. They consider a friend that person and they want as many as they can find. Isn't that the reason bullies are so hated? Bullies are not out to make friends. They destroy the morale of the school and the dignity of others. We've made our world a scary place to live with locks on every door or window. It's not safe because we've lost the ability to prove just how much



we really appreciate and care for one another.

Today, it is so easy to see people walk pass each other and not speak. Stand in line next to each other and not speak. You don't look like me so I'm not going to share a single friendly word with you. I'm Jewish and you're not! I'm Italian and you're not. I'm Irish and you're not! I'm Hispanic and you're not! I'm Anglo and you're not! I'm African American and since you are not I'm not going to speak.

Matter of fact, I'm going to turn my head and act like I never saw you. This is a major part of our total problem. Don't we understand that a kind word goes much further than social stupidity? Screaming and yelling at students is absolutely savage. It's important for all of us to understand that we are helping to make the monster that will eventually come back and attack us. It's okay to make friends by using kind words and kind deeds.

In clear observation it's a known fact that many parents spend many hours teaching

their children to dislike or hate other people. In our Churches, Temples and Mosques we often teach division rather than love and togetherness. Then we wonder why someone will one day pick up a gun and even kill little innocent children. We may not be the problem but we definitely know how to instigate one! We actually think that the Asian is better than the Indian and the Indian is better than the Russian. The Catholic is better than the Baptist and the rich is better than the poor.

We are quick to put status and wealth above being a friend with justice and honor. Too many of us have what is called self destructive behavior. We have attitudes that have long been defectively ruined. We hurry to build clicks and favorite picks while the best qualified get pushed aside or away.

In essence, this kind of poison ends up on the premises of our schools causing contamination and discrimination to destroy the real purpose of inspiration and education. We spend more time staying away from each other than we do getting

to know and supporting each other. Teachers travel miles to come into the school community to make money more than they come to make friends. Not all teachers, but one is too many. At the end of the school day teachers are seen hurrying to leave the neighborhood of the less fortunate to return to their more affluent life style. It's a shame that people even live next door or across the street and seldom speak to make a new friend. Again, this is a detrimental trend that's an absolute sin. Teachers in the same school often don't speak to one another until there is a staff meeting or special event. Many will not sit next to each other because her attire or jewelry is cheap and mine is more expensive.

I'm saying we look for reasons to dislike and separate rather than love and unite. In the end we want to go into total shock when we see our youth joining a gain for the opportunity to destroy one another. Yet two of the biggest gangs in our country are known as the Republicans and the Democrats.



For comments or concerns, contact: Habibullah Saleem at hscrtal@aol.com
www.futureimpact.weebly.com

By Habibullah Saleem

Day after day, year after year, we see them on TV and hear them on radio while reading in our newspapers and magazines how much they hate each other and refuse to agree on hardly anything. We tend to say what we don't mean and mean what we don't day.

We are more committed to playing the lottery more than we love worshipping properly our Creator. Why not value the fact that we are all created to function as loving human beings. We have more people in jail than other countries because defective education leads to years of demeaning incarceration.

Youngsters ten, twelve, some even nine and younger are seen sitting in the back of a police vehicle on their way to jail of some kind of penal detention. Many teachers are being placed in classrooms totally unprepared. Challenging students are often placed on some kind on medication while becoming out of control and dangerous to themselves and others.

In conclusion, we must find a way to replenish our homes, schools, and places of worship. Once these three places fail our children they may never recover because defective education leads to years of incarceration or death. The solution to the pollution is motivation education with truth and justice as the foundation.

Therefore being a true friend to students is one of the major pathways to a greater America.

Peace and Self Restraint

Diet is an extremely important part of the daily lifestyle choices you make. Foods you eat and the dietary supplements you take affect your overall health as well as the health of your eyes.

Why is Diet Important?

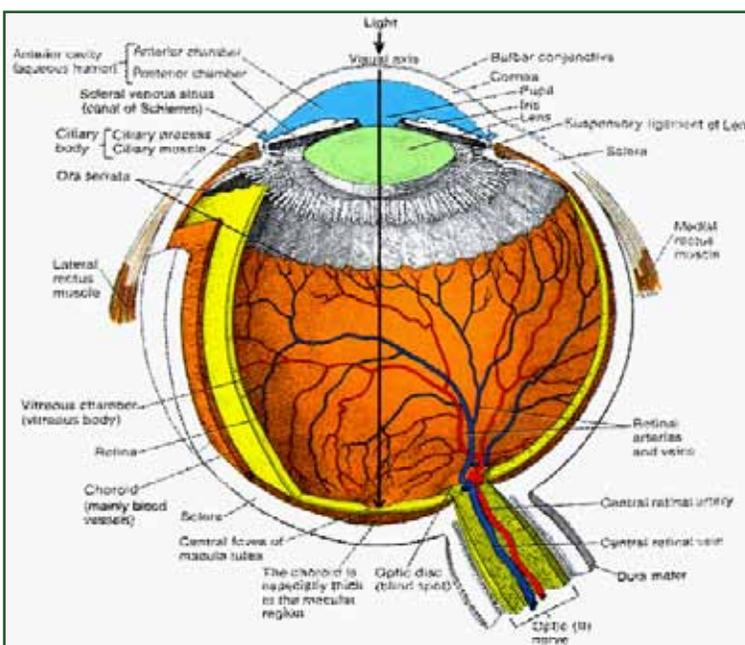
One's diet plays an important part in the prevention and treatment of AMD. Oxidative stress is a considerable factor in the development of the disease. Oxidized lipids, such as polyunsaturated fatty acids, can accumulate under the photoreceptors in the form of drusen. Drusen is characterized by yellow deposits found under the retina. Oxidized lipids that are not completely eliminated through the choroidal circulation result in drusen deposits and characterize early-stage maculopathy.

Years of blue light exposure can also have a detrimental effect upon the central vision. The macular carotenoids including meso-zeaxanthin (MZ), lutein and zeaxanthin act as a blue light filter and offer antioxidant properties.

Cardiovascular disease, diabetes and eye conditions including cataracts and age-related macular degeneration have been shown to occur less frequently in people who eat diets rich in vitamins, minerals, healthy proteins, omega-3 fatty acids and lutein. Lutein, found in dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach and kale, is one of the best known eye-protecting antioxidants. Sweet corn, peas, and broccoli also contain large amounts of lutein.

Choose dark green or brightly colour fruits and vegetables to obtain the most antioxidants, which protect your eyes by reducing damage related to oxidizing agents (free radicals) that can cause age-related eye diseases.

Vision health Diet



Choose good sources of protein. Remember that fat content and cooking methods are what make proteins healthy or unhealthy. Choose lean meats, fish, nuts, legumes and eggs for your proteins. Most meats and seafood also are excellent sources of zinc. Eggs are a good source of lutein.

Avoid sodium. High sodium intake may add to your risk of cataract formation. Use less salt, and look for sodium content on the labels of canned and packaged foods.

Stay hydrated. Round out a healthy diet with low-fat dairy products such as skim or 1 percent milk for calcium, and healthy beverages such as 100 percent vegetable juices, fruit juices, non-caffeinated herbal teas and water.

Try following these diet guidelines to improve your chance of healthy vision for a lifetime:

Eat whole grains and cereals. Sugars and refined white flours commonly found in breads and cereal may increase your risk of age-related eye diseases.

Make sure fats are healthy. The omega-3 essential fatty acids found in fish, flaxseed oil, walnuts and canola oil help to prevent dry eyes and possibly cataracts.

- Eye Vitamins and Vision Supplements**
1. Daily Multi vitamin and multi minerals
 2. Vitamin C
 3. Vitamin E
 4. Omega-3 fatty acid and Lutein
 5. Beta carotene

To know more, feel free to contact:
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Hello Friends,
Wish you all a Very Happy New Year!!! With Syria and Egypt to the presidential elections along Mayan doomsday predictions, 2012 was remarkable in its own way. Among these big stories, 2012 will also be remembered as the year when the valley real estate bounced back from the ashes (Phoenix !!!)

Lets now look at some of the November sales for Maricopa County - Total sales for single family, town-homes, condos were 5976 whereas October was 6169 and September was 5722. The Active listings for November was 18426 whereas October was 18063 and September 14880. Pendings were 8234 whereas October was 8512 and September was 8112. This gives us an idea of how market performed in the last few months of the year..

Below are some market trends comparing 2012 to the last four years.

A reduction in Active listings signify the reduction in Inventory as well as the lower sales cycles of residential homes.

Now lets look at the Commercial side-

Past few months we have been seeing lot of activity going on in multifamily properties. Investors are anticipating opportunities in commercial real estate across all major property

Wish you all a Very Happy New Year!!!

sectors in 2013.

The Mack Company sold the Whispering Wind Corporate Center to a private investor for \$12.2 million in Phoenix. It consists 2 buildings and each building is totaling 38,308 square feet.

Washington-based Kunz Investments LLC purchased the Mountain Park Ranch apartments from Equity Residential for \$30.85 million, or about \$128,500 per unit. The 230,560-square-foot, 240-unit multifamily community is situated on 12.5 acres in the South Tempe / Ahwatukee submarket of Maricopa County.

Tousa Homes Inc. sold the 7,020-square-foot retail building in Phoenix for \$1,546,000, or about \$220 per square foot, to R & D Enterprises.

Astria & Associates purchased the Villa de la Paz apartments at Thomas Rd in Phoenix from Haskell Value Real Estate Investor for \$2.8 million, or about \$27,000 per unit. The 88,960-square-foot multifamily complex was constructed in 1982, renovated in 2009, and has 103 apartment units.

Seattle-based Weidner Investment Services acquired the La Palma Apartments at Bell Rd. in Phoenix from WLA Investments, Inc. for \$30.14 mil-

lion, or \$55,000 per unit. The 548-unit, 469,088-square-foot multifamily community was built in 1984 on 23 acres in the Deer Valley / Airport submarket of Maricopa County.

Lately I have been getting quite a few questions on when and where to invest in the valley real estate. So this time, I thought of putting down a few pointers to new investors in the real estate market.

Now investing in real estate is one of the ways to build your asset portfolio. However before taking a plunge, a few questions to think about -

- Are you in it for short term benefits or long term benefits? Generally real estate investment do well in the long term and is not an ideal investment for short term gains.

- What is your budget for the monthly mortgage and how much down payment can you afford? What is the minimum rental income you would need to make those mortgage payments?

- How many months of cushion can you afford for vacancies. Remember during a vacancy, you are paying two mortgages out of your pocket, your primary residence and the investment property. You may need to have a buffer for some minor home improvements for

the rental property, especially after a renter moves out

- Are you going to cover services like landscaping, pool service, etc or would you prefer the tenants to do it?

- Do you know the average rent in the area you are investing?

Remember sometimes the rent depends on several factors like location, type of property, time of the year, neighborhood businesses, rental terms, etc.

- Always get a pre-approval for an investment property loan before securing the services of a realtor.

Trust the investment pointers assist you for real estate investment. As always, I love all the questions, comments & feedback. Please keep them coming at arti@artiiyer.com or feel free to call me at 480.242.8573 if any questions or feedback.

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 wall street journal, Armls, Cromford Report, Co-star, Globest and BizJournal.



Try to keep your opinions to yourself. Be sure that you have all the facts before you take action. They won't get away with it. Losses are evident. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

ARIES



Mar 21
to
Apr 20

Travel will promote new romantic encounters and additional cultural knowledge. Your emotional reaction will be dependent upon your partner's responsiveness. You can have quite the romantic adventure if you take time to get to know your mate all over again. Romance will unfold through business trips. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

TAURUS



April 21
to
May 20

You should sit down with someone you trust and work out a budget that will enable you to save a little extra. Joint ventures might prove to be unfavorable. Your emotional stability may influence the changes taking place in your personal life. Things are looking up. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

GEMINI



May 21
to
June 21

Opportunities will come through long term investments. Your best efforts will come through making changes in your home. Don't let your emotions interfere with money-making deals. Unpredictable events will disrupt your routine. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

CANCER



Jun 22
to
Jul 22

Social activities that involve the whole family will be enjoyable. Be prepared to make compensations and adjustments. You will learn easily if you put forth an effort. You are best not to confide in anyone right now. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

LEO



Jul 23
to
Aug 23

You can find out interesting information if you get a chance to talk to people you respect. New methods and innovative technology will make your job far easier than you anticipated. Be sure to cover all the necessary groundwork before signing binding contracts. You are best not to say too much to colleagues. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

VIRGO



Aug 24
to
Sep 23

Try to keep ahead of the game. Secret intrigues could get you into trouble. You can make reasonable bids on real estate or large items for your home. Organize your day well if you wish to accomplish all you set out to do. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

LIBRA



Sep 24
to
Oct 23

You must strive to get the most important projects completed properly, rather than doling everything in a half baked way. Hold on; your time will come. Recognition can be yours if you present your ideas and stand behind your beliefs. You should sign up for creative courses. Concentrate on your work. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

SCORPIO



Oct 24
to
Nov 22

You will be able to talk to your lover about future goals and perhaps make plans for the two of you to take a vacation. Eliminate situations that are no longer to your advantage. Beware of someone who is trying to make you look bad. If you can, try to work out of your home this month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

SAGITTARIUS



Nov 23
to
Dec 21

You can make personal changes that will enhance your appearance and bring about greater social activity. You need a job with more responsibility and a higher wage. Invite friends in for a visit. You will have a great day if you just say what you feel. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

CAPRICORN



Dec 22
to
Jan 21

You'll be able to discuss your ambitions with your mate. There might be a problem with a will or with an insurance policy. Make changes regarding your status in society. Patience will be of utmost importance. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

AQUARIUS



Jan 22
to
Feb 19

You are ahead of your time, and trying to stay in one spot could be asking too much. You will have a problem holding on to your cash this month. Go over their important documents and take the time to suggest alternatives. Talk to someone you trust if you need advice about broaching the subject. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

PISCES



Feb 20
to
Mar 20

January 2013						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year Celebrations 10 AM to 7:30 PM @ Maha Ganapati Temple of Arizona New Year's Day @ Hare Krishna Temple	2	3 ART Excel Workshop for Kids	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Ayyappa Irumudi Pilgrimage / Makara Sankranti Celebrations @ MGTOA
13 Annual General Body Meeting & Elections	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Thaiposam Celebrations - Special Milk Pot (Pal Kudam) procession @ MGTOA
27	28	29	30	31		

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Amir Khan is back and yes, with a bang. Even though this reviewer is not a die-hard fan of Aamir Khan, the truth is that you can love him or hate him, but there's no escaping his films. Talaash, which was originally slated to release last year, proves once again this actor's films are not to be skipped and completely worth the wait.

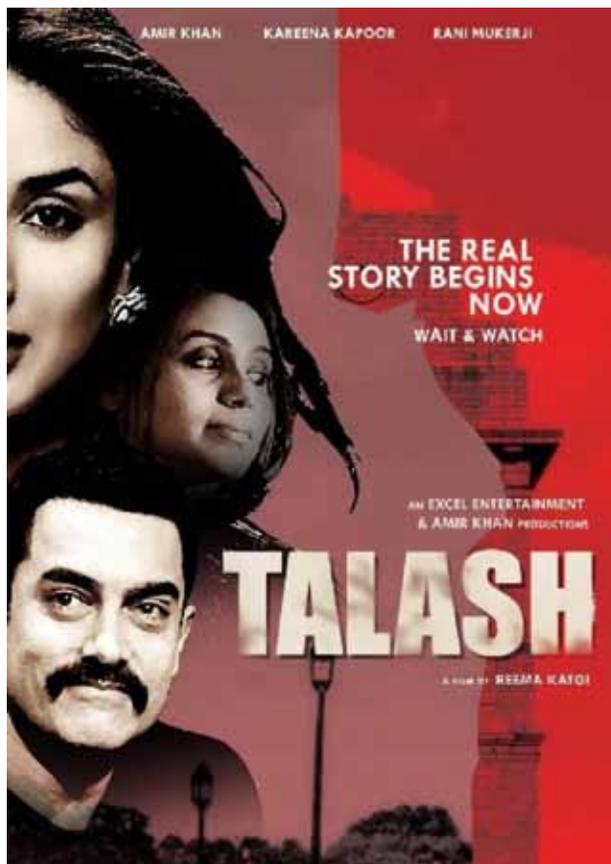
As the credits start rolling, Reema Kagti introduces us to the dark side of the city of Mumbai, which is known to be glamorous. Cinematographer KU Mohanan goes beyond clichéd depictions and showcases the actual night life of this city, which is more than glitter, parties and a fashion-crazed world. And by the end of it, you understand how each opening frame is important to bring the film to a fitting conclusion.

Minutes into the film, we see a speeding car meet with an accident. The driver is a well-known actor Armaan (Bhatena); the witnesses, three unsuspected men; the investigating officer, inspector Surjan Singh Shekhawat (Khan). The deeper Surjan sinks into his investigation, the more he realises that there is a lot going on than that which meets the eye. Meanwhile, a parallel story unfolds, that is, of Surjan and his wife Roshni (Mukerji). While the couple hardly communicates, it is revealed that they lost their child in an accident. While Roshni undergoes therapy to get over the shock, Surjan, who spends sleepless nights, drowns himself in work when he is not thinking of the ill-fated moment in which he lost his son.

While Surjan goes on to investigate the mystery behind Armaan's death, he comes across various

seedy people, which includes a pimp, his right-hand man Tehnur (Siddiqui) and a sex worker Rosie (Kapoor). As he faces the daunting task of finding the reason behind Armaan's murder, Surjan unveils the murkier details of an intricate mystery.

The plot of the film is what proves to be a real winner as it leads to a logical, yet questionable end. While the movie is slow before the interval as it tries to establish the plot moving back and forth in time, the second half will leave you scratching your head as you try to piece everything together along with the lead actor. Khan is not particularly brilliant in the



Talaash is a gripping tale

film, but he does complete justice to his role. To his credit, he plays the multi-layered character of a grief-struck father and an honest cop with complete ease. Mukherjee does not have much to do in the film, but her deglamourised avatar creates a strong impression. She is quite convincing in the role of a devastated mother and a concerned wife. Kapoor does not have much to do in the first half of the film, but her character takes a front seat in the second half. She is charming and looks even more convincing in the role of a sex worker than she did in Chameli. Siddiqui is commendable. He plays an important role and he plays it with sheer brilliance.

Reema and Zoya Akhtar have spun a gripping tale that will capture your attention from the very first minute and will definitely leave you surprised by the end of it. Though there are a few clichés, they can be ignored when you consider the entire package.

The music by Ram Sampath helps carry the movie forward with some soulful melodies. My personal favourite is Jiya Lage Na. The background score is fitting as it adds to the mystery. The cinematography is laudable as it portrays a compelling picture of the red-light areas of the city. Anand Subaya's editing is crisp. In all, Talaash successfully whets the appetite of all the Aamir Khan fans. As for the story, you can always trust Zoya Akhtar to give her best. Talaash is not a flawless film, but it is a fascinating tale that compels one to look beyond that which is evident. You can't miss this one.

Film Review
Film: Talaash (UA)
Director: Reema Kagti
Cast: Aamir Khan, Rani Mukerji, Kareena Kapoor, Vivan Bhatena, Nawazuddin Siddiqui
Ratings: ***1/2

Heroinegiri: 5 actresses who made 'reel' difference in 2012

In our year-end series of what rocked the year gone by us checks out the five Bollywood actresses who made a 'reel' difference

While heroes continued to be the regular moolah-makers all year through, this time around, our Bollywood actresses too had as much to contribute to the hit-pie at the box-office — not just domestic but also overseas markets. Taking reins of the films in their hands, they proved that when it comes to carrying a film to the hit line, their shoulders are just as strong as their male counterparts.

From a Bipasha Basu who had cash registers ringing with Raaz 3 to Deepika Padukone and Huma Qureshi who made their presence felt in Cocktail and Gangs of Wasseypur respectively, actresses are staking their due. Here's looking at the famous five who made the most impact...

Vidya Balan: She ended last year with a hit The Dirty Picture that saw her bump-and-grind on screen as the sexy Silk. This year it was her baby-bump act in Kahaani that saw her be the proud mother of yet another hit at the box-office. A thriller sans item songs, or any 'hero' to boast of, the film went to become an instant hit. And all weight-talk cast aside off screen, her power-packed performance proved that when it came to acting, Vidya's one heavyweight alright.

Sridevi: All eyes were rivetted on Sri as she



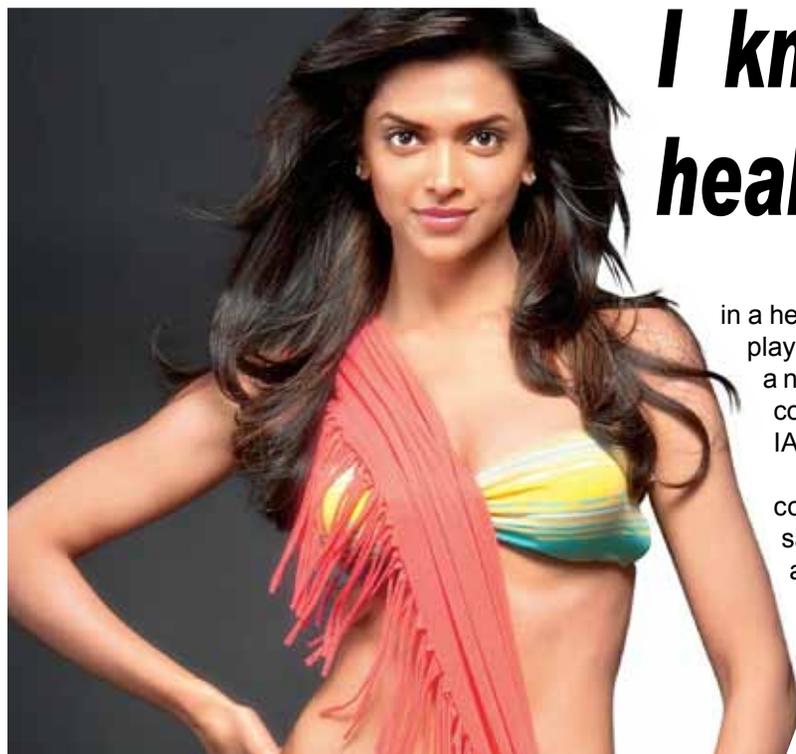
prepared to return to the big screen after 15 years. Will she or won't she be able to create her magic at the box-office again, the question loomed high in and outside the film industry. But if there were any doubts over the Sridevi charm were all brushed under the red carpet, when her film English Vinglish got a standing ovation at an international film festival and

then back home too.

Kareena Kapoor: The actress has always claimed that she was born to be a heroine, and Bebo garnered critical acclaim for her performance in Heroine. She is one of the reigning stars of B-Town and marriage is no dampener in her case. Miss or Missus, the Kapoor gal is a class apart, when it comes to making the cut at the box-office. Ekk Main Aur Ekk Tu, Agent Vinod and her hit item song, Fevicol Se would vouch for the sizzler too.

Priyanka Chopra: It was Ranbir Kapoor who was the most talked about until Barfi!'s release. But the film's release saw Priyanka Chopra's Jhilmil shine through and steal just as many hearts as her co-star. Playing the role of an autistic girl, the actress proved that when it comes to going de-glam, she is just as effective as she is in her glam heroine avatar. This year she started her hit run with Agneepath and ended it with a sweet flavour with Barfi!. All this while juggling a pop-star career too.

Rani Mukerji: Rani's Aiyyaa failed to get a 'dreamum' response at the box-office, but she was appreciated for her role as the middle-class Marathi mulgi. But she made up for it with Talaash. While actresses talk art, Rani talks craft! The actress has proved that when it comes to ruling as a performer, she is the queen of hearts.



I know how to be competitive in healthy way: **Deepika Padukone**

in a healthy way," Deepika, a former badminton player whose father, Prakash Padukone, was a national badminton champion and won the coveted All-England badminton crown, told IANS in an exclusive interview.

This year she had only one release, the commercially successful "Cocktail". She says it is difficult to predict what will work at the box office.

"Many a time, a most predictable film doesn't work, while the least expected films click at the box office. So everything is in the hands of the audience. I don't demarcate any film. If a film does well and gets into the Rs100 crore club, well and good. But I want the audience to appreciate my quality of work," she said.

Her forthcoming film is "Race 2", in which she has teamed up with Saif Ali Khan yet again after working with him in hits like "Love Aaj Kal", "Aarakshan" and "Cocktail".

She hopes movie buffs appreciate their chemistry in the the fast-paced thriller.

"Saif is fun to work with. We have worked in four films together and I share a comfort level with him. The most exciting part is that all the four films are completely different from one another."

"He is a very spontaneous actor. You never know what to expect from him. The audience have liked our chemistry before and, hopefully, they will appreciate it again in 'Race 2'," she said and clarified that they never planned to work together; "it just happened".

"Race 2" is a multi-starrer with big names like Anil Kapoor and John Abraham vying for their space.

Asked what prompted her to be part of the film, Deepika said: "I really liked 'Race' and that excited me to be part of the film. Besides, I like the working style of Abbas-Mustan. The character that I play in the film is also different. I play a very manipulated and very aggressive woman, which I have not played before."

"Race 2" may be a sequel to 2008 hit "Race", but for Deepika it is "an independent film".

"Yes, there is a flow in the story but I joined the crew in 'Race 2'; so it doesn't affect my work anyway," she added.

In the film, the 26-year-old has some steamy and bold scenes with Saif.

Was she comfortable doing them?

"It's not about being comfortable or uncomfortable; I consider each and every scene the same way. For me, each and every scene stands out and I approach each and every scene in the same way."

"Race 2" also features Jacqueline Fernandez and Ameesha Patel and is slated for a Jan 25 release.

Deepika Padukone, whose father was a badminton champion, uses the spirit of sportsmanship while working in film and says she knows how to be competitive in a positive manner.

One of the A-list actresses, she has some good projects in hand like "Chennai Express" with Shah Rukh Khan and "Rana" with southern superstar Rajinikanth.

"I think there are two ways to look at it. Everybody doesn't get to do each and every film. I don't compete with others; I compete with myself. I have been an athlete, a sportsperson; so I know how to be competitive

Did **Salman Khan** intentionally snub **Katrina Kaif**?

At a recent awards function, Katrina Kaif went up to meet Salman Khan in his vanity van.

A source says that when she was barely 50 metres away, Salman closed the door and asked people not to let anyone in.

"When Katrina got to know this, she went back but looked quite upset," adds the source. While Kat's been seen quite often with SRK post their Diwali release, she was also seen visiting Salman's house for Eid.

Did Salman genuinely not see her? Or is her camaraderie with the other Khan making her invisible. Only the Tiger can tell!



Taylor Swift most charitable star of 2012

Taylor Swift beat Miley Cyrus to become the most charitable star of 2012. Moving all the way up from last year's 20th spot, the 23-year-old singer was recognised by DoSomething.org for her 4-million-dollar donation to the Country Hall of Fame museum, People magazine reported.

The Love Story hit-maker is also the youngest recipient of the Ripple of Hope Award from the Robert F. Kennedy Center for her charitable efforts.

Cyrus fell just one spot short of Swift, making it to the list for numerous reasons, including promotion of Saving Spot! Rescue - a non-profit dedicated to finding dogs from high-kill shelters a home. Other celebrities who made it to the top 10 were Channing Tatum, Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Robin Roberts, Pink, LeBron James, Selena Gomez and Ian Somerhalder.



Chai with... Imam Shamshad

I am talking with Imam Shamshad A. Nasir, the spiritual leader (Imam) at the Baitul Hameed Mosque in Chino, CA and the southwest regional missionary in the U.S. for the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Q: Imam sahib, could you tell our readers a little about yourself?

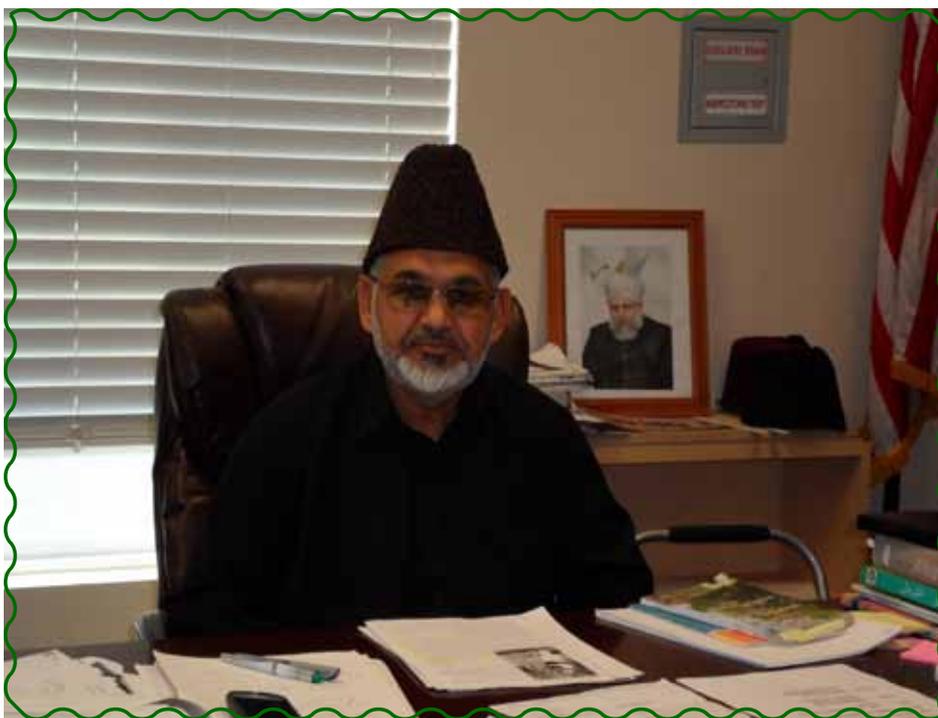
A: Thank you very much. . . My name is Imam Shamshad A. Nasir, I am originally from Pakistan, I graduated from High School in 1966 at the age of 15, and in the Fall of that year, I was accepted into the Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary training college in Rabwah, Pakistan, -- a 7-year seminary training program. I graduated in 1973.

Q: Why did you want to become an Imam?

A: I loved my religion and I wanted to teach it to others, and I wanted to learn my religion as best as I could, so I applied for our Community's training college and was accepted. It was a critical time, when people had very little knowledge of Islam and their perception of Islam was not good. I wanted to educate people about the real teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him).

Q: You belong to a Muslim community that is heavily persecuted in the Islamic world. Was this a factor in your decision to want to become an Imam and tell people, Muslims included, what your true beliefs were?

A: At the time I went into the missionary training program, there was not the kind of persecution like we have today, which really started after 1974. The government of Pakistan had not



yet declared Ahmadis non-Muslims. Back then, I just wanted to learn my own religion so I could communicate those teachings to the people.

Q: So how are the teachings of Ahmadiyya different from the standard Sunni or Shia Muslim beliefs?

A: This is a very important question for this time. As you know all religions have many denominations, sects, like in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and same is true for Islam. There are now 73 distinct denominations in Islam, and ours, called Ahmadiyyat, is one of them. We are the 73rd group. What defines Ahmadis from other groups is that we believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the Promised Messiah. I will go into a little bit more detail about the founder of Ahmadiyyat and

what he claimed.

The rest of the Muslims are waiting for the return of the Israelite messiah, Jesus (pbuh) from heaven, where they believe he was taken up alive 2,000 years ago in his physical body. They think this same messiah will come back down bodily alive from heaven in the latter days. They also believe he was never put to death on the cross like the Christians believe, but was instead taken up alive bodily into heaven where he waits to come back.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim belief is quite simple. Jesus Christ was put on the cross and he suffered a lot, but God saved him from dying on the cross. In reality he only unconscious – he only appeared to be dead. He was taken down by his friends, one of whom was

a doctor who treated him, and he recovered. The Ahmadiyya belief is that Jesus was saved from an accursed death on the cross, that he survived the ordeal, and went on to complete his mission to preach to the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Jesus did not go up alive into heaven; he is not waiting there and will not come back down, as Christians and now Muslims believe. Ahmadi Muslims believe that the founder of the Community, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (pbuh), was the second coming of Jesus. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (pbuh) proved from the Holy Quran that Jesus (pbuh) died a natural death here on earth 2,000 years ago and is not ever coming back. All human beings live and die here on this earth. It is even mentioned in the Quran that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was challenged by the disbelievers to ascend bodily into heaven and bring them down a book for them as proof that he was from God. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) says in response that he is a mortal man like they are and he cannot ascend alive to heaven and come back down. And even if he could do this, it wouldn't matter: the disbelievers would still not believe in him or accept Islam.

What Ahmadis believe is that God raised Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Promised Messiah in the power and spirit of Jesus to restore the religion of Islam and the honor of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and bring people back to God in this way. But the Promised Messiah will be a Muslim and will be completely devoted and subordinate to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He will not be separate from Islam or from



the Holy Prophet (pbuh) – he will under his direction, his teachings and his example. He will uphold the teachings of Islam and the Holy Prophet (pbuh) 100-percent.

Q: Ahmadis claim that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, yet one of the standard beliefs among Muslims today is that Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet and that no prophet can come after him. This is one of the main reasons Muslims say the founder of Ahmadiyyat and its members are not Muslims. Could you explain the Ahmadiyya position and why you believe in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is a prophet?

A: It is true that Muslim raise the objection against the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and our founder on the basis of this belief that Muhammad (pbuh) was the last prophet and no prophet can come after him. This is not the case, and Muslims need to study the history of their own faith as well as the other religions and how God has sent different kinds of prophets to other groups of people in the past.

Muslims also believe in the coming of a prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). They believe Jesus (pbuh) is a prophet and that he will be coming back and he will do so after the Holy Prophet (pbuh). The only difference is the Muslims believe this prophet will be from 2,000 years ago and not somebody born in these times.

What is more believable? That God will keep alive in heaven a prophet sent only to the Israelites 2,000 years ago, rather than raise up a Muslim prophet who brings no new Shariah, no new Holy Book to save Islam from destruction by its enemies?

The Ahmadi belief is that God raised up a devout Muslim who loved and followed the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and that person was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He did not bring any new Law, he did not come to demolish or abrogate the Holy Quran and the teachings of Muhammad (pbuh) but to restore them in the hearts of the Muslims. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be a non-Law-bearing prophet completely subordinate to the Holy Prophet (pbuh). He did not come as an independent prophet who came to change the Holy Quran – no, nothing like that.

Q: Just as Jesus (pbuh) was the Jewish messiah who was subordinate to Moses (pbuh) who was the Law-bearing prophet for the Israelites. . .

A: Yes. But the difference is that Allah says very clearly in the Holy Quran in surah Bani Israel that Jesus son of Mary was sent as a messenger to the Israelites. Jesus even says this in the Bible – that he came only for the Israelites. But the Quran says that Muhammad (pbuh) came as a mercy for all mankind, just as Islam says it is the



completed religion for all mankind as well. In this same way, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came as the messiah for the Muslims and for all other religions as well.

Q: Now, the Muslims are expecting the Imam Mahdi to come along with the messiah Jesus. . . How is the Ahmadiyya belief different from that?

A: Our belief is that messiah and Mahdi are not two separate people, but two titles or responsibilities given to one person, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The Christians are waiting for the second coming of Jesus. For them, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is that messiah. The Muslims are waiting for both the messiah and the Mahdi, and for them, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad fulfills those roles in his person.

If a separate messiah came for each religion that was expecting one, how could there be unification of mankind under one messiah? It would never happen. And because God says Islam is the complete and perfect religion for all mankind for all time to come, there is only one messiah required..

Q: You've been an Imam for nearly 40 years. How do you see people's reaction to Islam today as compared to when you first became an Imam?

A: By the Grace of God, we are seeing the acceptance of Islam and Ahmadiyyat growing steadily day by day everywhere in the world. You can see that when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (pbuh) laid the foundation for his Community on March 23rd, 1889, only 40 people joined. Today we have tens of millions of members in 202 countries. So even if we take the most conservative estimate of our numbers, we would still have a million-fold increase in our numbers from the time the Community began in 1889.

The duty of our members is to

show by their example the true teachings of Islam. Our motto is: "Love for All – Hatred for None." We have translated the Holy Quran into 70 languages, we have the Muslim world's only 24-hour satellite TV station called MTA -- Muslim Television Ahmadiyya -- which broadcasts to every corner of the earth in Arabic, English, Urdu, Bengali, French, German and other languages. You can watch it online at www.MTA.tv. Our Khalifa's Friday sermons are transmitted live to the world from London on MTA as well.

Q: You mentioned your Khalifa. . . There has been a lot of talk in the Islamic world about the need for a Khalifa to unify the Muslims. Can you tell me what the difference is between your Khalifa and what the rest of the Muslims are calling for?

A: Yes, this is a very important question, one that is at the heart of uniting the Muslims and restoring Islam to its true, peaceful state. What the Muslim world is calling for today is a political and military Khalifa to lead the Muslims against the rest of the world and restore the lost glory of the Islamic empire. This is only a materialistic goal.

What the Ahmadiyya Khalifa seeks to do is lead the Ahmadis in spiritual Jihad against their lower selves -- the greatest Jihad, as the Holy Prophet (pbuh) has said. The duty of the Khalifa and all Ahmadis is the same duty given to the Promised Messiah (pbuh): to reform Islam by reforming the Muslims, and to bring people back to God.

In the beginning of Islam, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) passed away, the majority of Muslims believe that there were four rightly-guided Khalifas in Islam.

The Holy Prophet even said that there would be righteous leaders of the Muslims for a certain period of time,

and then there would be leaders who were politically and worldly motivated. Muhammad (pbuh) prophesized there would be dictators and tyrants ruling the Muslims and that the religion would suffer and decline. Then, 1300 years from the time of Muhammad (pbuh), God would raise the Promised Messiah and Mahdi to sow the seed of the rejuvenation of Islam and restore it to its original spiritual purity.

Ahmadis believe this occurred with the advent of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the late 1800s. God also promised to re-establish Khilafat on the pattern of prophet-hood after the demise of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. It is no accident or coincidence that it is only the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community that claims its founder was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and that after him came rightly-guided Khalifas as God had promised.

That is the key difference between the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and the other Muslims in the world: Ahmadis are those Muslims who have accepted the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi, and as a result, we are completely peaceful and totally unified around our Khalifa. His name is Mirza Masroor Ahmad, and he is the 5th successor to the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (pbuh) who passed away in 1908.

Since that time, Ahmadiyyat has had an unbroken succession of divinely-guided Khalifas – something no other Muslim group can claim. Our present Khalifa, Mirza Masroor Ahmad, has been at the forefront of bringing the peaceful message and teachings of Islam to the world.

He has addressed political leaders and government bodies many times. Just this year alone he spoke before lawmakers on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, and parliaments in Britain, Holland, Germany and the European Union in Brussels. Each time he has presented the true teachings of Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as the solution to the world's problems and how to combat radical, extremist Muslims. As a result, more and more people are beginning to associate the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community with peaceful, tolerant, law-abiding and loving Muslims and with the kind of Islam they could live with and learn from.

Q: Thank you so much, Imam sahib, for taking the time to tell our readers about your Muslim Community. How can they get in contact with you or learn more about the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community?

A: They can reach me directly at 909-636-8332 or by Email at: shamshadanasir@gmail.com or they can go online at: alislam.org

God's Laws are a blessing, not a curse

by Imam Shamshad A. Nasir

(Baitul Hameed Mosque - 11941 Ramona Ave. - Chino, CA 91710 - 909-627-2252 Email: shamshadanasir@gmail.com - www.alislam.org.)

For everyone who has ever believed in a religion or spiritual teaching, there is usually a book or collection of books associated with it that has the purpose of first bringing the devotee to an awareness of God, and then deepening that awareness into a real connection to the divine. The use of the written word to transmit knowledge about God and His Teachings is fundamentally what enables future generations to benefit morally and spiritually from those Teachings. In most cases, each religion's divine guidance is associated with a messenger sent by God to not only convey His teachings, but also embody those heavenly principles and present to the believers a living example of submission and obedience to God. That's why in Islam, belief in all previous prophets and their holy scriptures is an essential requirement of the faith. While some religious texts and people may insult, ridicule and declare as false and satanic any and all messengers who are not from their own dispensation, true Islam looks at earlier messengers as being sent by God to different peoples to give specific guidance needed at that time. Just as a child starts in kindergarten and 1st grade learning elementary things, as he grows up, the lessons become more and more complex until the child is an adult and in college.

In the grand design of God, all prophets are seen in a similar light, fulfilling a necessary spiritual evolution of giving the teachings each people requires for their time, place and level of understanding. The Israelites, for example, were told by God that He was their God alone and they were His "chosen" people. He gave Moses the Torah to teach the Jews the true oneness of God and cleanse them of the idolatry and paganism they had adopted over their four long centuries of enslavement in Egypt. Moses and the Torah are timeless examples of how God raises prophets and gives them guidance to educate and reform people. As human beings, we progress spiritually, morally and civically when we realize that it is God alone who appoints Law-bearing prophets and reveals to them His Holy Scriptures so people can know and live by God's Laws and thus create righteous relationships and societies. This is why Paul's statements



in the New Testament that the Law of Moses is a curse or that Jesus (pbuh) redeemed us from that "curse" cannot be true. The reasoning is simple. If parents correct their children's immoral or harmful behavior out of love, not wanting them to come to any spiritual or physical harm, how much more does God love us by sending prophets with divine guidance to correct our immoral and harmful behavior on both a personal and societal level? Viewed in this light, how could anyone say God's Laws were a curse? Some teachings may only be meant for a limited time or purpose, and any such commandments which are not meant to be permanent are either modified or replaced with better, more humane or universally applicable Laws revealed to later prophets. This has always been the way of God in rehabilitating mankind through His Holy Scriptures: He raises up Law-bearing prophets with divine guidance for their people,

and then He sends follower prophets to bring a people back to the guidance previously sent to them or to prepare them for the next Law-bearing prophet. This was the fundamental mission in the case of Jesus (pbuh). He states emphatically that he was sent "only to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel" and that he did not come to destroy the Mosaic Law but to fulfill it -- that he was the Christ, their Messiah, but not a new, Law-bearing prophet. That prophet, he said, would come later and "lead them into all truth." This was a reference to Deut. 18:15-20 and 33:2, where the Israelites are given prophecies about their future Messiah, Jesus (pbuh) in 18:15, and of another Law-bearing prophet like Moses (18:18-20) who would come from Mount Paran in Arabia with a new Holy Scripture -- a "fiery Law in his right hand" (33:2). This Holy One from Mount Paran (Habakkuk 3:3) was the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his new Divine Law was the Holy Quran, which was designed to cleanse people of their sinfulness, and transform them into righteous, pious believers in the One True God of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac. And this is exactly what happened with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and Islam in the 7th century AD. The resulting spiritual treasure was the Holy Quran, God's complete and final guidance for all mankind, and the best example and clearest proof that God's Laws are always a blessing and never a curse. As Muslims we believe in all prophets of God and in the truthfulness of their original teachings. We also believe that the Holy Quran and the life example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) answer mankind's spiritual questions and moral needs for all time. We invite you to read the Quran and the Life of Muhammad (pbuh) To read the Quran online in English, Spanish and other languages, go to the "Holy Quran" section at: www.alislam.org. To purchase a Quran in your language, call the Baitul Hameed Mosque in Chino at 909-627-2252.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a dynamic, fast-growing international revival movement within Islam. Founded in 1889, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community spans more than 200 countries with membership exceeding tens of millions. Their motto is: "Love for All - Hatred for None." For more information about the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Southern California call 909-627-2252 or go online to: www.alislam.org or call Toll-Free 1-800-WHY-ISLAM.

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Seniors Celebrates Xmas 2012

Seasons' Greetings to our extended family and Friends and our best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Enjoyable New Year 2013 AC.

The Senior group members showed their appreciation to Hall custodian Gabriel and his wife Sonia by presenting them with a fund collection and wishing them Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

We had a concert of Bollywood songs on Thursday December 20th to celebrate Christmas holidays by Hitesh Desai who sang beautifully and with lots of enthusiasm. The audience enjoyed the concert as evidenced by a pin drop silence. Our thanks to Hitesh Desai who cares a lot for the Senior Group and takes time out from his work to be with us. The session was kicked off by Meenaben and group of women leading the members in singing "Jingle Bell". Amrita Khorana sang a prayer accompanied by Balbir Khorana and Gokulji. Ramaben who is ever ready with a stock of jokes entertained us by narrating few jokes during inter-

mission. Babulal Mehta very effectively carried out the master of ceremony responsibilities. Thanks to Jagu Sanat Patel for providing us the dining table decorations.

The lunch was sponsored by Ramanbhai & Meenaben Bhavasar. It consisted of three sweets, two types of spicy Indian Curries, two farsans, rice and selection of various Rotis. It was truly a "mini" Rajbhog enjoyed by some 51 persons. Thanks Meenaben for a Holiday spirited Lunch sponsorship. Welcome Hot Tea was prepared and served by Kapilaben Patel who is



the Group's Lunch coordinator for December 2012 thru February 2013. Please contact Kapilaben for lunch sponsorships. Thanks to Sevanti Shah and Jayanti Patel for taking the photos of the Senior group.

I A C R F President Dayaram Ahir was with us briefly and conveyed his Seasons' Greetings to the Group. Dayaram reiterated IACRF commitment to provide all necessary support for the Senior Group and wished that many more community seniors take advantage of the Senior Group activities. Welcome

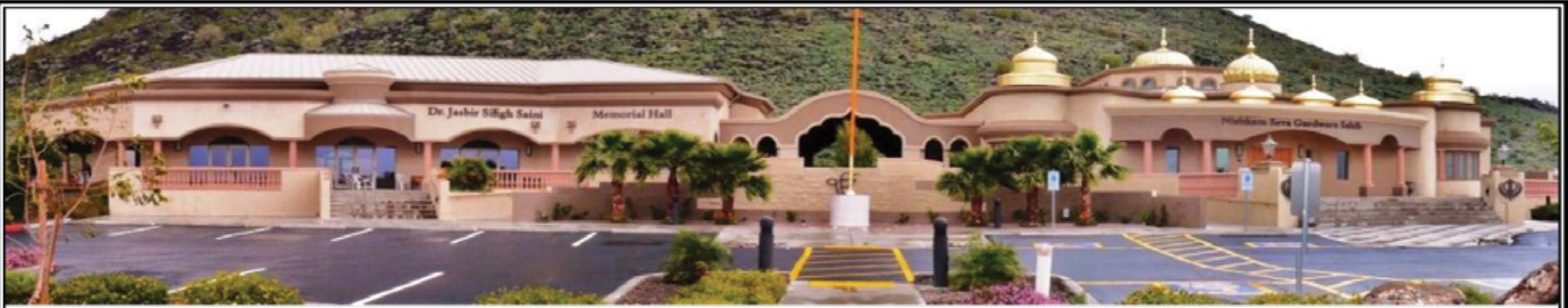
back to Lalitbhai who has returned from his trip to India.

We WARMLY welcomed Devan and Priscilla Mehta – son and daughter in Law of Babulal & Nayanaben Mehta who are visiting Phoenix from Edmonton, Canada. Also, Pallavi Shah (wife of our member Shashikant Shah) and Devika Shah were with us and enjoyed the concert

Mr. and Mrs. Lingamneni sponsored delicious South Indian menu of Idlee, Sambhaar, Coconut chutney, Pulihora rice, fruit salad, and regular salad on December 6th. Lunch sponsors for December 13th were Sushil and Urmila Jain who cooked everything at home and everyone enjoyed the delicious Kheer with roti, Cabbage subjee, Chhole, Rice and Salad.

The IACRF Senior group meets every Thursday 9:30AM to 3:00PM at the Indo-American Community Center located at 2809 W. Maryland Avenue, Phoenix AZ 85017. For additional details, please contact Lalitbhai Patel on Tel: 480-820-8700.





Waheguru ji ka Khalsa! Waheguru ji ki Fateh!

GURDWARA MONTHLY

A Monthly digest of Gurdwara Programs and Events

JANUARY 2013 Programs & Events

18 Poh – 19 Magh, 544 Nanakshahi Era (NE)

**Dec. 31, 2012 (Mon.) – New Year's eve Kirtan Darbar 9:00 PM – Midnight
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!** Followed by Jallabia and milk.

**Jan. 6 (Sun.) – Shaheedi Bhai Satwant Singh Ji and
Bhai Kehar Singh Ji** (Actual: Jan 6, 1989)

Jan. 13, Magh 1 (Sun.) – Sangrand and Monthly Sehj Path
Sehj Path Bhog 9:00 AM. Sehj Path Arambh for the new month at 9:30 AM

Laying the foundation stone of Sri Harmandir Sahib
Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji, Hazrat Mian Mir ji (Actual: Jan 13, 1588).

**Mela Sri Muktsar Sahib (Mela Maghi) – remembering
Mai Bhago and 40 liberated ones (1705).**

Happy Lohri !! – 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Punjabi School Spring session begins.
Please register your children ASAP.

Jan. 18 - 20 (Fri.-Sun.) – Prakash Guru Gobind Singh Ji (Actual day: Jan 18, 1666)

Akhand Path Arambh: Fri. 10:00 AM.

Bhog: Sun. 9:00 AM

followed by Kirtan Diwan, Guru-ka-Langar

Homeless Dinner Seva

Phoenix Rescue Mission, at 3:30 PM. (Call 602 741 8021)

Jan. 27 (Sun.) – B'Day Baba Deep Singh Ji Shadeed (1682-1757)
(Actual Day: Jan 26)

Feb. 1 (Fri.) – Parkash Sri Guru Har Rai Ji (1630). (Actual Day: Jan 31)

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

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa! Waheguru ji ki Fateh!



Sri Harmandir Sahib



Lohri Festival



Baba Deep Singh Ji (1757)



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