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DEATH OF A DREAM!

Sangeeta Anand

“Chitra was kneeling at the kitchen shrine when the brick hit her. It gashed the skin on the top of her head, knocking her sideways, then slammed into her forehead, peeling back the skin, so her skull gleamed through the blood. Then, as she scabbled towards the phone to call the police, her husband grabbed her from behind, yanked back her neck and slit her throat from ear to ear”, Carroll du Chateau wrote in *the New Zealand Herald*.

Thirty-six year old Aucklander Laxman Rajamani has been sentenced for life with a non-parole period of 12 years by the Auckland court. Readers of *The Global Indian* will recollect (from a story in our earlier issue) that he was charged with murdering his 32-year old wife, Chitralekha Ramakrishnan, in January last year.

Chitralekha and Rajamani migrated from Bombay to Auckland where Rajamani worked as an accountant with American Express, while Chitralekha worked at Pacific Retail Finance.

But the justice has not made the loss any easier to bear for Chitralekha's parents who live in Bombay. "It hurts



“The groom's credentials should be properly checked before a final decision is taken.”

more when we think about how he tortured her for one whole year. After Chitralekha's murder, I see her everywhere in the house," Chitralekha's mother, Sharda Ramakrishnan, 65, told Mumbai newspaper, Mid-Day.

"Rajamani often apologised after hitting Chitralekha. Just a day before he killed her, he called me and said that he had quit all his vices – liquor and drugs. And the next day he killed her in cold blood."

The case brings up a lot of issues – social and cultural. Chitra's death should send a warning to all Indian parents chasing the dream of marrying their daughters to prospective grooms settled abroad, Chitra's 71-year old father, P V Ramakrishnan, had told the Bombay newspaper last year, immediately after hearing the news. "The groom's credentials should be properly checked before a final decision is taken," he said. The issues faced by newly-wed brides married to NRIs (non-resident Indians) are so common and serious that some Indian state police like the Punjab Police have opened special cells to address these issues. The perception in India that NRIs offer a sure ticket to marital happiness needs to change.

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The other issue is surviving the cultural change after migrating to a new country.

Beautiful and intelligent Chitra, who had previously worked in a western environment in Dubai, was quick to adapt to Kiwi culture, while average-looking Rajamani followed more traditional and orthodox Indian values. Chitra had worked for glamorous Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai for nine years. She was “experienced in Western ways and independent. Her husband was quieter, family-oriented, traditional”, Carroll wrote. “There were the kind of arguments common between a sophisticated woman and a highly traditional man: control of money; whether cooking was indeed a woman's job; who did the cleaning; Laxman's drinking.”

Even as the fear of loss of her parents' goodwill in India kept Chitra in her marriage long enough for her life to be threatened, ironically the same fear of social stigma forced Rajamani's father to insist that Rajamani hand himself over to the police.

While the New Zealand Police and the justice department played their role in bringing justice, the case has raised more questions for the Indian community in India and overseas. Does marriage to an NRI groom indeed ensure happiness? Are parents justified in putting their social standing above their daughter's well-being? Do we need to address the challenges of assimilation?

What do you think? Email: editor@theglobalindian.co.nz

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U.S. MUSLIM SHARES VIEWS ON LIFE

US Department of State

American Muslims seek the same opportunities and face the same challenges all Americans do as they pursue their hopes and aspirations of achieving the 'American Dream', says Tina Kareema Dauod.

Dauod, a graduate student and State Department 'citizen ambassador', discussed her experiences as a Muslim American and her work to build bridges between Americans and Muslims worldwide in a March 30 webchat marking the close of Women's History Month.

Dauod is a student of Arabic linguistics at Georgetown University in Washington. She also works for the U.S. Department of State on public diplomacy initiatives involving the Middle East and outreach programmes to Muslims around the globe. Dauod is a first-generation American of German and Arab descent who is also a practising Muslim.

"The road to dialogue is two ways: we need to understand one another, and others need to understand [the United States] in this ever-increasing globalised world," said Dauod, echoing earlier statements by Under



Georgetown student discusses efforts to build bridges of understanding, friendship.

Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes. "There may be differences, but in fact I believe that the world can and is coming closer together," Dauod said.

The webchat attracted a diverse and geographically dispersed audience. Questions were submitted from online participants in the Middle East, Europe, South, Central, and East Asia and Africa.

Responding to a question about the treatment of Muslim women on US college campuses, Dauod drew from her own experiences as a student at Georgetown University. "I will tell you that [Washington] D.C. is a place of diversity and tolerance for the most part."

Another participant asked whether she felt comfortable as a Muslim working in the U.S. State Department. "[T]he work environment here at the State Department is very conducive to all Americans, irrespective of their religious beliefs. I have an equal voice," Dauod said.

Source: U.S. Department of State (Mark Betka, Washington File writer); Photo: C2B2B Newsdesk.

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KEEP OUR LIFESTYLE

Our correspondent

New Zealanders, when discussing what the country should be like in 20 years' time, say the most important things to keep are aspects of our lifestyle and attitudes towards life.

In six focus groups convened at Auckland and New Plymouth, people representing the 'middle majority' New Zealanders (those without extreme views on economic development at all costs, or environmental protection at all costs) have revealed what they most want maintained for the future.

This includes keeping a clean and green lifestyle which allows people to go fishing, hiking, and to the beach, and to also maintain their general quality of family life.

Probed on a range of 20 topics, the middle majority Kiwis revealed higher levels of concern over the future of their fresh water and energy supplies. They are concerned over waste management but are cynical about how recycling is managed.

They express concerns over how New Zealand will cope with population growth and achieve a balance between urban sprawl and regional development.

They think the skill shortage issue is important and link it to making sure New Zealand has wage rates which compete with those overseas.

Climate change generates fierce debate, with worries that recent 'freak' weather events are signs of things to come but find the Kyoto protocol debate frustrates and angers them.

They also give the thumbs down to 'buy local' campaigns saying its hard to



define what is locally made any more and they are unwilling to make the trade off between locally made goods and paying less for imported ones.



The research was carried out for the New Zealand Business Council

for Sustainable Development - whose 51 member companies' \$33 billion in annual sales equate to about 28% of the country's gross domestic product, to see what Kiwis understood about sustainable development, and what issues they most strongly related it to.

The focus group research was followed by a nationwide poll last November.

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WELFARE FOR FAMILIES

Richard Worth

On 1 April the Government implemented its "Working for Families" scheme. It is estimated that the package will mean that 350,000 families will receive the family tax credit in 2006.

The reality is that Working for Families will not help lower-income families. The scheme has been expanded to cover middle and upper income earners. Low-income earners without children at home still miss out and receive no tax relief.

Kyoto

The issues around climate change are complex and confusing. A credible school of thought persists in the view that the earth's climate has always been subject to natural variation which is nothing to do with man's activities – see for example the comments of Lord Lawson in the Spectator of 11 March 2006. He notes that during the period of the Roman Empire for example the Romans were able to produce drinkable wine in the north of England.

More recently, during the 17th and early 18th centuries, there was what has become known as the little ice age, when the Thames was regularly frozen over in winter, and substantial ice fairs held on the frozen river became a popular attraction.



The cost of meeting New Zealand's liability on greenhouse gas emissions is heading towards a billion dollars. Under the Kyoto Protocol, New Zealand is committed to reducing emissions but will not meet its target and is set to buy so-called carbon credits from countries, which exceed theirs.

The last estimate of the cost was \$562 million but the average price of credits has since doubled meaning New Zealand could be paying over a billion dollars or more.

Richard is Shadow Minister of Justice. A law school topper, he was chairman of New Zealand's largest law firm, Simpson Grierson.

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NEW ZEALAND

"FOREIGN" CRIMINALS COSTING NZ \$3 MILLION

A 65% increase in the number of foreigners being held in New Zealand prisons this year has sparked calls for better screening of immigrants and a "first strike and you're out" policy, argues Tony Wall in The Sunday Star Times.

The number of prisoners describing themselves as non-New Zealanders rose from 402 to 624. The total prison population is 7500. The number of Chinese prisoners almost doubled, from 35 to 64.

Corrections Department figures show there were increases in the number of Britons, Fijians, Indians, Samoans and Tongans, among others, jailed in the past year, the newspaper added. Garth McVicar, from the Sensible Sentencing Trust, estimated foreigners were costing the country \$3 million a year to house in prisons.

FIJI

QARASE PICKS ON NFP VOTES

FIJI - Fiji's caretaker Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase says the major obstacle in the Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua Party's track to victory is the unfavourable preferential votes by the National Federation Party. According to the Fiji Times, Qarase said the NFP gave its first preference to the Fiji Labour Party in eight seats over the SDL.

He said the NFP was handing victory to the leader of the Fiji Labour Party without him sweating for it. But Qarase said he was optimistic that his party would come out winners in the general election because of its candidates.

"We (SDL government) play as a team and establish dialogue before we take any action. Even though there are problems we move through them because we don't confront but we have discussions," he said.

WORLD

INDIAN NATIONAL OVERSEAS CONGRESS

New York: The Andhra Pradesh Chapter of The Indian National Overseas Congress was launched in New York last month, and Dr. Gaddam Dasaratharam Reddy, a prominent pediatrician and a veteran community leader, was announced as the president. Dr. Malhotra, president of the US based prestigious overseas wing of the ruling Congress Party of India, has launched the AP Chapter of INOC.

Dr. Malhotra stated the Indo-American Civil Nuclear treaty approval by the US Congress is absolutely necessary to meet the environmentally safe energy needs of growing India.

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EQUALITY OR INEQUALITY?

As I was driving the other morning, I looked at the petrol prices, and my right foot shied away from the accelerator. The policies of the NZ government and the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. The effects of the policies - some intentional others incidental, are more damaging than beneficial for socio-economic equality.

Dr Bollard increases interest rates over a dozen times in the last 18 months. Mortgages become expensive. Effect? Entry-level first home buyers are pushed away from their dream first-home. Many of them are new migrants. They belong to lower income brackets as they struggle to get decent salary jobs (that's a topic in itself). Growing mortgage rates haven't affected high-end home buyers, as evident from house price statistics.

Dr Bollard's higher rates pushes the dollar down. Effects? One, petrol prices go up. Everyone is affected. Most affected are small businesses. Almost 95% of NZ businesses belong to the SME sector (small and medium enterprises). Some small businesses shut down. Close to 50 cents in a dollar we pay for petrol goes to government in the name of taxes? Plus, we pay GST on that (tax on taxes?). If the government can support a few New Zealanders on benefit, why not support others too by reducing (subsidising) taxes on petrol? More than six out of 10 New Zealanders back a policy proposal to provide Government cash grants to people buying fuel efficient, low emission cars, according to a poll conducted by UMR

for the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development. The policy will also help the Government tackle its \$1 billion Kyoto carbon credit deficit.

Lower dollar benefits new migrants coming from strong currency countries.

Second, lower dollar benefits new migrants coming from strong currency countries.

Despite Quotable Value reporting slowing housing market in February and March, North Shore, populated mainly by European migrants, has seen strong growth in house prices. Premium Real Estate principal Brian Guy has sold eight properties ranging from \$2 million to \$6 million each in March alone on the shore (Source: Bob Day Property Report).

So, apparently the government measures taken to cure economic inequality are actually encouraging it. And the effect is more serious than we think.

New evidence shows that inequality itself is bad for our health. "It's not so much the qualities of the individual. It is the system." according to Julian Edney, the author of Greed: a Treatise in Two Essays. Now more than 30 studies show that if you live in an unequal society, you run the risk of a shorter, healthier life and your environment is more violent, according to Julian.

All is not lost yet. In a recent survey, Auckland and Wellington ranked at number 5 and 12 as best places to live in, in a list of 125 international cities.

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FANAA

Zooni Ali Beg (*Kajol*) is a blind girl. While preparing her to venture out into the world, her father advises: Choosing between right and wrong is simple; what defines one's life is the decision between the greater of two goods or the lesser of two evils. Zooni soon meets Rehan Qadri (*Aamir Khan*), a local tour guide and an incorrigible flirt. Her friends warn her about him, but she ignores. Rehan is fascinated by Zooni and wants her to see life in its many colours. What Zooni doesn't know is that Rehan has another side of his life - something that could not only change her life, but also destroy it. See the movie to find out!



MOVIE PREVIEW

KABHI ALVIDA NA KEHNA

KANK is an emotional story, which is centred on the budding romance between Jai (*Shahrukh Khan*) and Shalini (*Rani Mukerji*). But they find themselves in a dilemma, as both are already married to different people. They've settled into a life of ritual, and convince themselves that they're happy in their respective partnerships. Yet, at the same time, they yearn for a deeper and more meaningful relationship, which is exactly what they find in each other.

Friends at first, the two begin to develop and eventually acknowledge their feelings, which lie precariously hidden just beneath the surface. When they finally allow the passion to come out into the open, lives and emotions collide; affecting everyone involved, changing each of them forever.

STAR OF THE MONTH

JOHN ABRAHAM

Born in Mumbai (17 December 1972), John is of South Indian and Persian descent.



The 6'1 tall John was one of India's most successful supermodels. His debut film was 'Jism' (2003) (where his voice was dubbed), although his first blockbuster was 'Dhoom' (2004). His forthcoming projects are Kabul Express, Babul, and Salam-e-Ishq Kabul. On *Water's* opening at the Toronto Film Festival: "I began to see the beginnings of a wider audience for Indian films."

Photo courtesy: Yash Raj Films

This column is written by Simran Silva. Simran is a US-based freelance writer, publicist and author. She has written for many Indian publications in the US. She brings Bollywood briefs for The Global Indian readers.



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THE X + 1 SYNDROME

When an Indian professional becomes a 'Non-Resident Indian' in the United States, he soon starts suffering from a strange disease. The symptoms are a fixture of restlessness, anxiety, hope and nostalgia. The virus is a deep inner need to get back home. Like Shakespeare said, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Strange as it is, it could go by a stranger name, the X + 1 syndrome.

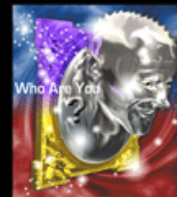
If 'X' is the current year, then the objective is to return to India in the 'X + 1' year. Since 'X' is a changing variable, the objective is never reached. Unable to truly melt in the 'Great Melting Pot', chained to his cultural moorings and haunted by an abject fear of giving up an accustomed standard of living, the Non-Resident Indian vacillates and oscillates between two worlds in a twilight zone. Strangely, this malady appears to affect only the Indians - all of our Asian brethren from Japan, Korea and even Pakistan - seem immune to it.

(Contributed by Hitesh Suryavanshi, Sydney. Author unknown)

COURSE IN FIRST AID

When a car skidded on wet pavement and struck a telephone pole, several bystanders ran over to help the driver. A woman was the first to reach the victim, but a man rushed in and pushed her aside. 'Step aside, lady,' he barked. 'I've taken a course in first-aid!'

The woman watched for a few minutes, then tapped him on the shoulder. 'Pardon me,' she said. 'But when you get to the part about calling a doctor, I'm right here.'



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SHANGHAI NOODLES

ingredients

500gm shanghai egg noodles - blanched and refreshed

500gm rock shrimp

300gm haricots blanched and refreshed verts

1 tsp coarse ground coriander seed

1 tsp each of cornstarch, sesame seed oil, minced garlic, minced ginger

1 sliced red onion

1/2 cup each of sliced black mushrooms, and chicken stock

1/4 cup oyster sauce

canola oil

salt and black pepper

Method

Mix shrimp, cornstarch, coriander and sesame oil in a



bowl. In a hot wok, coat with canola oil, and quickly stir-fry the shrimp for a couple of minutes. Set aside. In the same wok, add a little more oil

and caramelize garlic, ginger and onions and season. Add mushrooms, oyster sauce and chicken stock. Add noodles, haricots and shrimp. Heat up and serve hot.

Contributed by Yen Lin, Singapore



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SANIA IS THE BEST NEWCOMER '05

India's tennis sensation Sania Mirza is now officially the best newcomer on the WTA Tour in 2005. Nineteen-year-old Mirza was honoured with the best debutant award at the second annual joint ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Awards ceremony last month in Miami, Florida. Sania had a remarkable year as she became the first Indian singles winner on the WTA Tour when she won the Hyderabad Open. She then beat two top 10 players on the way to her career best ranking of 31, after being 163 at the start of the year.

Mirza enjoyed a breakout season in 2005, capturing her first WTA title in Hyderabad and reaching the fourth round of the US Open before succumbing to Russia's Maria Sharapova. Under the tutelage of Roger Federer's coach

Tony Roche, Mirza has changed her service action and believes she's making progress.

That she was the first Indian woman to accomplish either feat has sent her popularity soaring among her one billion compatriots. In just one year, she has become a sporting idol, a fashion icon and, like Maria Sharapova, needs her own entourage of burly security guards whenever she steps out from home.

- C2B2B News



SEE YOU IN DELHI IN 2010

“We wish Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games organizers every success,” Melbourne 2006 Chairman Ron Walker said at the Closing Ceremony last month. Walker's Closing



Ceremony speech was followed by the official Commonwealth Games Federation flag handover by Mayor of Melbourne, Lord John So, and the Premier of Victoria, Steve Bracks, to the next Games' host city, Delhi.

The host of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, Delhi, staged an 11-minute long showcase featuring a yogi-inspired dance performed by Isha Sharwani, Bollywood superstar Aishwarya Rai (seen in the picture), a grand chariot drawn by puppet horses, Miss Universe, Lara Dutta and an array of giant costumed characters representing various Indian cultural traditions.

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WHAT'S SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE?

Jasbindar Singh

We have all heard about emotional intelligence but what about spiritual intelligence (SQ)? In the last decade it has been very encouraging to see the acknowledgement of EQ - emotional intelligence in business. The latter came into light in the mid 90s when the *Time* magazine published an article by Daniel Goleman titled, "Is EQ more important than IQ?" Since then much has been written on this vitally important subject, which includes the dimensions of self and other awareness as well as social awareness and relationship management. For example, research has shown that leaders who are very successful typically demonstrate 75% or more on EQ scores.

But what is SQ and where does it fit into the hard-headed world of business including our careers and working life?

Jasbindar Singh is a business psychologist and executive coach.
www.sqconsulting.co.nz



Spiritual intelligence is the depth dimension that deals with our sense of meaning and purpose, values and vision, who we are being as people and our connectivity to those around us. It provides the basis for the choices we make in our lives including the values by which we conduct our lives, our sense of calling to our careers and work choices and our service to others. If EQ is about how you do things, then SQ answers the why questions of life and is

what builds your character.

Spiritual intelligence (SQ) is the fundamental bedrock of our humanness and it's not an add-on. It has been part and parcel of our lives for as long as humanity has existed. Dana Zohar and Ian Marshall in their book *SQ* regard it as the ultimate intelligence. In terms of our neural functioning,

“The key to success in the modern workplace, as in life, is not just finding the right job, friend, or life partner, it's becoming the right worker, friend or life partner.” Phillip Jarvis

they describe SQ as the unifying part that links our IQ and EQ. It facilitates a dialogue between reason and emotion, mind and body. It provides a fulcrum for growth and transformation. It provides the self with an active, unifying, meaning-giving centre. Of course, how we express our SQ is based on our cultural, familial and learned background and hence the many different spiritual practices.

For me ultimately, SQ is the path of wisdom as it deals directly with our consciousness. To learn, grow and develop as human beings, we need to cultivate and nurture all our intelligences so we can live a fulfilled life of meaning contentment and joy. And it is hard then not to give to those around us – be it love, service, contribution, kindness, tolerance and other similar qualities – all of which are SQ virtues.

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CONGRATULATIONS JUDGE SATYANAND

We felt very proud when we heard about Judge Anand Satyanand's appointment. His appointment is a moment of pride for not just Indians in New Zealand and Fiji, but for overseas Indians everywhere in the world. We wish Judge all the best for his new assignment.

Mr and Mrs C Chand, Kawerau

Editor's note: We received many emails of congratulations for Judge Anand Satyanand's appointment. We are publishing only a representative email here.

TRULY GLOBAL INDIAN

I recently migrated to New Zealand and came across your publication in Google search. I must say I am quite pleased to see a high quality publication in New Zealand which provides very good stories to read. I was used to reading many magazines in Pune (India) and was finding it hard to get good reading material in New Zealand. I am glad I came across your magazine. I wish this magazine

was weekly or more frequent. I am looking forward to receiving regular copies of your issues. Good luck

Saras Mhashelkar, Hamilton

Editor's note: Thank you for your kind words. We'll consider your suggestion.

RELEVANT CONTENT

I really enjoy reading your newsletter. It is very professionally done, has relevant content and excellent journalism. It is very helpful for us migrants here in New Zealand. I am proud to be on your mailing list. Well Done to the team and do keep up the good work.

Vernon Rego, Auckland

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The Global Indian is New Zealand's first Indian magazine, published on the last day of the previous month and distributed electronically in New Zealand and overseas. This e-zine is specifically designed as an electronic publication, and is not an electronic version of a print publication. The subscription is free.

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