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Sahar Ghumkhor

Former Iraq hostage and New Zealand student Harmeet Sooden shares his experience in Iraq, with Sahar Ghumkhor.

Sahar (SG): What did you witness amongst ordinary Iraqis?

Harmeet (HS): We, like the Iraqi people, suffered from lack of food, an inadequate supply of electricity and shortage of kerosene during the cold winter. We actually went to the power generating facility in Al Dura.

The power plant was severely damaged in 1991 by American bombing – a war crime. Much of the construction in Iraq has been US military facilities, concrete blast walls and oil extraction facilities. One reason the US has for the construction and reconstruction is to serve US companies, like Bechtel, which has been given a contract to rehabilitate the Al Dura power plant. Many Iraqis I spoke with believed the US had invaded their country for its oil.

The NZ troops were... constructing military facilities... much like the British imperialists who commissioned the building of railways in British India.

SG: What is your relationship with Christian Peacemaker Teams and your reasons for going to Iraq with them?

HS: I wished to acquire a greater understanding of the nature of the conflict and to learn various non-violent conflict resolution techniques. My role was to bear witness to the suffering of Iraqi people, and to provide this narrative to a wider audience.

You know, my great-grandfather was a soldier in the British Indian army. He was killed in Basra in 1916. Now a century later not much has changed.

SG: How influential a role have the NZ government played in Iraq and Afghanistan?

HS: In 2003, the New Zealand government deployed “engineers,” a euphemism for army engineers, to Iraq



under the direct control of British occupying forces. The NZ troops were there, in addition to their stated goals, constructing military facilities and repair military equipment– much like the British imperialists who commissioned the building of railways in British India (having destroyed indigenous industries), not for the local populace, but to transport goods and troops for the benefit of the British economy.

(This is an edited version of an article first appeared in the Craccum, the weekly magazine of the Auckland University Students' Association. Sahar Ghumkhor and Harmeet Sooden are students at the university.)

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Abdul Ahmad, Mumbai

If reportedly 400 Kiwis are leaving for Australia every week, India is experiencing a reverse trend since the past two years. The emerging superpower has become an attractive market to be employed in. Indians living in India are less keen to look for offshore opportunities. Many Indians living overseas have started returning. And to top it all, many non-Indians are eager to get an India stint on their CV.

The latest global salary survey by the Hay Group, a global HR consultancy, shows that senior managers in India are the second-highest paid in the world (in real terms), after Turkey.

The author of the Hay Group study, Ben Frost, says: "The rapid growth of emerging economies such as India, Turkey, Brazil and Eastern Europe is creating unprecedented demand for senior talent."

Well that's where all the action is. "Now people feel if they are not in India they are out of action," Sanjay Bharwani, country head for human capital consulting firm Watson Wyatt in India was recently quoted in an Indian publication.

In fact India is currently facing a shortage of senior managers. That has pushed the salary levels to historically high levels. The second reason is India's low cost of living. And Ben adds, "This should make sobering



reading for companies in Western Europe and the US, who face not only an increasing competitive threat from buoyant new economies, but a cross border war for managerial talent."

If the trend continues, India may lose its cost advantage, especially in the outsourcing sector. But positive fallout of this could be, the economically disadvantaged can expect better wages for their services and higher prices for their products.

Unlike India where benefits of economic growth are largely derived by its people, China is yet to catch up. China is offering real senior salaries of just €42,000 – less than a graduate starter salary in Switzerland. "As an emerging economy, Chinese salary levels remain pegged at a low level," says Ben. (with inputs from TGI team)

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VISION FOR U.N. FOR 21ST CENTURY



Staff correspondent

The first straw poll in the Security Council for the secretary general position saw Shashi Tharoor, with 10 votes, come a close second to South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon (with 12). And Shashi is very assertive about his candidature. "I... believe I offer a genuine alternative, of a candidate from the South who can articulate a positive vision for a UN of the 21st century." Shashi is campaigning extensively, and has in fact taken leave from the UN.

There are concerns that Shashi's candidature for the UN Secretary General's position may affect India's chances of a permanent seat in the security council. And there are distracters like Pakistan who announced that they will put forward their candidate for the position, but have not declared a name yet.

Shashi is currently United Nations Under-Secretary-General for



Communications and Public Information and has led the Department of Public Information since January 2001. In this capacity, he has directed the reform of one of the larger Departments in the Secretariat, with some 750 staff and field offices in 63 countries around the world.

At the Secretary-General's request, in January 2001 Shashi accepted a temporary assignment as Interim Head of the widely-criticised Department of Public Information (DPI). His hands-on leadership and reforms led the Secretary-General to confirm him as Under-Secretary-General in 2002.

Shashi is the award-winning author of nine books, as well as numerous

articles and op-eds in a wide range of publications.

Born in London in 1956, Shashi was educated in India and the US, completing a PhD in 1978 at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where he received the Robert B. Stewart Prize for Best Student. At Fletcher, Shashi helped found and was the first Editor of the Fletcher Forum of International Affairs, a journal now in its 31st year.

He is the recipient of several awards, including a Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and was named to India's highest honour for Overseas Indians, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, in 2004. Shashi is the father of twin sons who graduated from the Yale University this year.

Very few will envy Shashi if he makes it to the Secretary General's position, knowing the challenges ahead, ranging from global warming, refugees, to terrorism and drug trafficking.

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ASIANS NZ'S LARGEST WEB USERS

Over two-thirds of New Zealanders now have Internet access at home, placing this country eighth out of 30 developed countries, according to the Ministry of Social Development's latest NZ Social Report.

The most connected households are Asian and other ethnic groups, whose Internet access rose from 50.5% to

79.6% by 2004.

There were some other interesting findings. Almost three out of four respondents (73%) thought Asian people were subject to a "great deal" or "some" discrimination – almost at the same level as discrimination perceived by gays and lesbians.

Less than two out of three (62%) Indians in New Zealand can speak a 'first language' of their ethnic group.

The report has also shown some confusing social trends. Compared to the 1980s, the overall unemployment has continued to fall. Also, there are more people with higher qualifications. But, there were more people on low incomes in 2004 than in 1986. Does that partly explain the trend of highly skilled migrants being under-employed in our society?

INDIA'S REAL ESTATE IN HOT SEAT

Global property adviser DTZ has strengthened its presence in India with the launch of a new office in Mumbai.

DTZ established its first Indian office in Bangalore in 2004 and has continued to broaden its coverage by expanding into New Delhi and now Mumbai.

Ankur Srivastava, managing director of DTZ Debenham Tie Leung India comments: "As the

financial and entertainment capital of India, Mumbai is a very important real estate market. An increasing number of clients are looking for representation in the city."

DTZ Director David Steventon comments: "These are very exciting times for India. It has one of the fastest growing economies in the world and a rapidly expanding real estate market presenting great opportunities for DTZ."

FIRST TV CHANNEL FOR NRIS

In what seems to be the sign of things to come, India is probably world's first country to launch an exclusive television channel for its Diaspora. The new Internet-based television channel will be subscription-only and can be accessed from anywhere in the world. There are over 25 million Indians living outside India, and this channel, known as PIO TV, will provide a variety of contents, ranging from sport, Bollywood, to news from India and overseas.

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DOES INDIA STILL LIVE IN VILLAGES?

City-dwellers travel for miles and hours before they can see a village. Welcome to the new India. And no, we are not talking about a distant future. The year is 2026 – just 20 years away.

According to a report by India's Registrar General and Census Commissioner's office, almost two-thirds of India will be living in cities. The urbanisation will be lead by India's current most urban state – Tamil Nadu, to be closely followed by Maharashtra. The other states expected to record most urbanisation

in India will be Punjab and Gujarat. Close to half of Karnataka and Haryana will also be urbanised. The slower rate of urbanisation in Haryana could probably be attributed to agriculture-based industry. Slower on urbanisation will be West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

ELECTRIFYING INDIANS

Two Indians stole the limelight at a recent conference of electrical engineers in Auckland. Tyco Electronics' Sunil Kumar Gulati won the IET Best Paper Presentation on 'Reliability, Improvement and Asset Protection of Electrical Power Networks by Mitigation of Fauna

Induced Outages'. Auckland-based Sunil Kumar completed a BTech (Civil) from one of the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology in 1979. Usha Ganesham of the University of Auckland won one of the Electricity Engineers' Association's University Scholarships, designed to encourage university students into power industry engineering. Both

were honoured at the EEA Annual Conference and Awards Ceremony. Ironically, when the country's 500 electricity professionals were putting their heads together at the conference to discuss future power issues, New Zealand was experiencing power blackouts and snow whiteouts.

Here's a chance for our readers to go into a draw for a free copy of "Get your Groove Back" written by our columnist Jasbindar Singh. All you have to do is read Jasbindar's column "Mind Matters" in *The Global Indian* and tell us



what you look for in *Mind Matters*, and what topics you would like Jasbindar to cover in future. Please email

your responses by 20th September to editor@theglobalindian.co.nz



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TRADE ME'S INDIAN CONNECTION

When Sam Morgan was setting up Trade Me from his garage back in 1999, another Kiwi was setting up a similar business in India. John Clegg

launched an auction website in India, which merged with baazee.com and became India's largest auction website. It was finally bought by American online auction firm, eBay for \$55 million a couple of years ago.

Now, Trade Me has launched a website with an electronic map of New Zealand. The website uses technology supplied by Wellington-based ProjectX, which is headed by John Clegg. It's a small world, isn't it?

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A GOOD HABIT

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A HERITAGE TRUST SET UP

Auckland entrepreneur and owner of one of largest hardware supermarket – Mega Mitre 10, Vinod Kumar is one of the people instrumental in setting up a heritage trust for Hindus in New Zealand. Known as The Hindu Heritage Charitable Trust, the trust is expected to bring together all Hindu-related organisations and institutions in New Zealand to promote universal human value and co-existence.

As a first step, the trust has set up the Hindu Heritage Centre in

Mangere, Auckland. The centre will deliver services of education (Indian school), self-development, cultural and sport development, and provide care for the elderly, youth and children. It'll also have facilities to advance Hindu folk art, drama, traditional dance and classical music.

The trust was set up after



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ONLINE PASSPORTS

In a step towards simplification of passport application procedure, Delhi's regional passport office (RPO) introduced online registration of passport applications last month.

A passport applicant can go to the website <https://passport.gov.in>, and fill in the form. Applicants can register online for fresh passports, reissue of passports and new passport booklets to replace lost or damaged passports.

The applicant can then print the application which will show the date to visit the RPO, Delhi for submitting the application with documents. The existing system of submitting applications at the Passport Office, District Passport Cells and Speed Post Centres will also continue.

KIWIS TO HELP IN INDIA

A group of New Zealanders are travelling to northeast India which was affected by the 2004 tsunami, to build homes. The Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec) is sending 21 of its staff to Pondicherry for two weeks to build houses under a Habitat for Humanity scheme, the Waikato Times reported.

The Indian branch of Habitat for Humanity aims to build 4000 new houses and repair 8000 others by the end of next year, the newspaper report added.

The staff come from around the campus and have an eclectic range of skills essential to build houses.

A KIWI MBA IN INDIA

One of New Zealand's leading education providers, AUT University, launched its MBA programme in India last month.

AUT University's Business School will provide an 18-month full-time and flexible MBA programme for working executives in India, an AUT report said. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed with Bangalore-based Centre for

Developmental Education (CDE), a non-profit educational society.

Faculty from AUT will teach the course in association with the Institute of Finance and International Management (IFIM), a Bangalore-based business school operated by CDE.

AUT's Dean of Business Professor Des Graydon says India's growth in the education sector has been tremendous, but there are not enough

institutes providing executive courses. "We have identified this gap and in collaboration with CDE will strive towards providing an excellent opportunity for pursuing a global MBA programme in India," he says.

Earlier in May, the Minister for Economic Development Trevor Mallard travelled to India with a New Zealand delegation. This was the government's second mission to India to promote New Zealand international education and research.

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Subra Das, New Delhi

Corruption – a common topic in discussions about India. Many complain, some hope, while a few quietly wage a war against it. Corruption makes headlines, but those who fight it rarely do. One such rare occasion was when 38-year old Arvind Kejriwal (*pictured*) was honoured Ramon Magsaysay award recently, equivalent of Nobel prize in Asia. The award, named after the late Philippines president, recognises people in Asia who have helped others generously without anticipating public recognition.

The award citation noted Arvind's efforts in "empowering New Delhi's poorest citizens to fight corruption by holding government answerable to the people."

Ironically, Arvind is a tax officer with India's revenue service(IRS), a government department notorious for corruption. Having seen the abuse of



"Kejriwal reminds Indians that the boons of collective action, such as the honest delivery of services, have already been paid for through taxes," - the Magsaysay Award citation noted.

power, Arvind did what none else had done before – he set up Parivartan (Hindi word for 'change') to bring about a change. Indeed, charity started at home, when Arvind and his team approached IRS commissioner with a request to bring more transparency in the department where receiving bribe was a matter of course. When they could not convince the commissioner, the group moved a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) against the IRS. They also held a non-violent protest outside the commissioner's office, and threatened to invite media for the next protest. The IRS finally implemented a five-point programme to bring more transparency.

Having cleaned the home, Arvind took leave and focussed his attention on another government sector – the electricity department. The team

launched their campaign "don't pay bribe" outside the electricity office. They offered to help the visitors to the office. Thankful visitors accepted the offer with a smile (and surprise!) So far, Parivartan has addressed over 2500 complaints with the electricity office and 700 at the tax department.

He then moved his focus to Delhi's slums. Using their rights under India's newly-released Right to Information Act, Arvind's team exposed 64 instances of misappropriations in the 68 public works projects for the slums, amounting to NZ\$230,000.

As fallout, like a Bollywood movie, one of the activists was physically attacked. Some 5000 community people then launched a month-long no-ration fast, forcing the authorities to give in.

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ARE WE ON DRUGS?

If New Zealand is traditionally known for its serene and beautiful landscape, Maori culture, the LOTR and All Blacks, it also seems to be receiving a dubious distinction as one of the largest producers of methamphetamine (drug P) in the world. And it is affecting our communities – not just directly but indirectly with increased crime rate. New Zealand has one of the worst per capita crime rates in the world. (111,000 crimes per million people in 2000).

Most crime stories in New Zealand's newspapers reveal that the criminal was on drugs while committing the crime. Many instances of rape, robberies and murder are linked to drugs – latest being the brutal murder of a Christchurch prostitute who was repeatedly run over by a car as she pleaded for life.

According to Dr Andreas Schloenhardt, a senior lecturer at the University of Queensland School of Law, New Zealand is the largest per

capita producer of the highly addictive drug. What is more concerning but less surprising is that the production of drugs is driven by domestic

James had smoked a kilogram of methamphetamine worth \$1 million before the murder.

demand, and now New Zealand and Australia produce 10% of the world's methamphetamine!

Dr Schloenhardt described the drug use in New Zealand and Australia as the highest in the world, while speaking at an international criminal law conference at the University.

Police reports have revealed that Bhagubhai Vaghela, a dairy owner in central Auckland, was murdered by a criminal on drugs. In fact, police prosecutor, Ross Burns, told the court that the murderer, 28-year old James Junior Lawrie, had smoked a kilogram of methamphetamine worth \$1 million before the murder.

In his 50s, Bhagubhai had migrated to New Zealand from India to lead a

peaceful life. His wife has returned to India and is said to be constantly ill.

The problem becomes worrying when many Kapiti Coast girls as young as 16 are being drawn into prostitution to fund their drug habits, according to a local newspaper.

Indian parents have expressed concern about the trend. "I have a teenage son and a daughter, and I always hope that my children are in good company," a South Auckland parent told *The Global Indian* magazine.

"We have imbibed strong values in them and we know all of my sons' friends. So I am not very worried," says R. Mani from Timaru. Parents' concern is not unfounded as a North Island teacher has recently been charged with possession of cannabis.

Though police have raided many drug facilities recently, we need a 'zero' tolerance policy for drug production. The police efforts need to be redirected from ticketing speeding motorists to people producing 'speed'.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS' HINDI WEBSITE

India's Ministry of External Affairs has launched a Hindi version of its English website, as a vehicle for the ministry's efforts to promote Hindi in both India and abroad.

Hindi, the world's third most-spoken language after English and Mandarin, is being taught in about 600 universities and schools in over 40 countries. In countries like China, Japan, South Korea, Poland,

Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Germany, the UK and the US, Hindi is taught at post-graduate level, a ministry release said. This year also saw regional Hindi conferences in Australia, Abu Dhabi and most recently in Tokyo in July. In a country with world's fourth-largest Internet users (50 million), there are very few websites in India's regional languages. Most Indian websites are in English as India houses world's largest English speaking population.

The Hindi website can be accessed at www.mea.gov.in

NEW ETHNIC BODY IN THE UK

The Ethnic Minority Advisory Group has been set up in the UK to help people from UK's minorities find work.

According to AIM magazine, although the employment rate in the UK is the highest of all the G8 countries at 75%, minority employment is 15% lower. Further steps to increase employment opportunity, such as the regeneration of the East London area in the run up to the 2012 Olympics, and looking to engage employers and increase diversity in the workplace, are all part of EMAG's remit, the magazine added.

EARNEST FOR NAURU MISSION

India's high commissioner to New Zealand, K P Ernest, has been concurrently accredited as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Nauru, according to a release from India's ministry of foreign affairs. He'll continue to be stationed in Wellington.

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12TH ANNUAL STAR SCREEN AWARDS



STAR Plus the leading entertainment channel of the country, yet again proves and establishes its leadership, when 20.41 million people across the nation tuned-in to watch television's biggest event of the year Hero Honda 12th Annual Star Screen Awards during the first fortnight of the year on January 15.

STAR's continuous innovation in programming and its consistent efforts to entertain its viewers differently, has ensured channels success and leadership in the year 2005 and now with the highest rated event of the year-2006 already in its pool the channel is well on its path to raise the bar for itself as it reaches and far exceeds its own standards.

So stay tuned for more entertaining shows from STAR Plus, as the party has just begun!



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SALUTE TO INDIA'S CHARLIE CHAPLIN

Sangeeta Anand

As a cultural ambassador of India, Raj Kapoor was one of the first global Indians to popularise Indian culture outside India, especially in the former Soviet Russia and the Middle East. He was fascinated by Charlie Chaplin, which explains the shades of grief in the humour that we see in many of the RK films.

Auckland-based Cultural Forum of India's tribute to the man known as the showman of India was a night mesmerised by a voice that can be described as New Zealand's Lata Mangeshkar.

Yes, Sandhya Rao and other singers are testimony to the immense talent that audience



witnessed in Auckland. Ram Iyer and his team professionally put together the event which started on time, was compered well by Dipti Sharma, and orchestrated beautifully by talented instrumentalists. Dipti's research of Raj Kapoor, and Sandhya Rao's ability to remind everyone of Lataji were the highlights of the evening.

INDIA BUYS CHAPLIN'S CANE

Ashok Motwani, DNN, Mumbai

Osian's, India's first auction house and premier arts institution, purchased Charlie Chaplin's screen-used cane from the film 'The Masquerader' for an incredible US\$50,000. Bought privately from a leading dealer in Beverly Hills of guaranteed-authentic original Hollywood Film Memorabilia, the bamboo-ribbed cane is 35 inches long with 25 ribs. Adding to its beauty is a metal tip and bulbous knob at the end of the handle.

Neville Tuli, founder chairman, Osian's says, "Chaplin's cane is one of the great material icons of cinematic history. Its presence in India can trigger many changes, especially in the correct context."

Charlie Chaplin got his start at Keystone when Mack Sennett (owner of Keystone Pictures Studio) hired him fresh from his vaudeville career to make silent films. One of the most creative and influential personalities in the silent film era, he acted in, directed, scripted, produced, and eventually even scored for his own films. His working life in entertainment spanned over 70 years.



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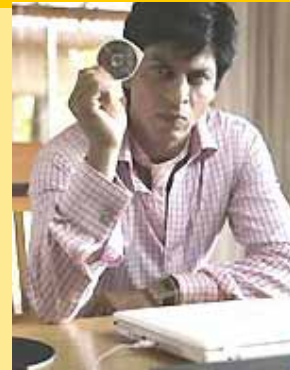
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DON

Farhan Akhtar has accomplished what he set out to do but certainly doesn't take all the credit. Don's credits acknowledge the original screenplay by Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar (who, of course is Farhan's famous father).

And so... the chase begins as 'Don' (Shah Rukh Khan), a ruthless leader of an international gang of thieves, who has a tender spot for Roma (Priyanka Chopra), dies in a police confrontation. A widower father named Vijay who happens to be a look-alike of Don, is in need of money and is hired by a police officer - DSP D'Silva (Om Puri) to pose as the Don so that a new one won't arise in his place. Roma comes to know of the switch but has already fallen in love with Vijay. Things go awry when D'Silva is killed and now the man is on his own to face Jasjit (Arjun Rampal) and his henchmen.

As you'll see, the movie retains the original story. But it will be an updated,



gadget-friendly remake of the original 1978 film. The Don will still take on the women, wine and song. Speaking of songs, two of the original songs will remain - Yeh Mera Dil Pyaar Ka Deewana and Khayke Paan Banaras Wala. SRK will lend his singing voice for some interludes, while Udit Narayan croons the rest. If you remember, late Kishore Kumar sang the evergreen songs in the 1978 version. There will be some other similarities also. For instance, do you recall the polka-dotted shirt Amitabh wore? It won't be the exact shirt, but pretty darn close. 'Don' was filmed in Kuala Lumpur, Paris and India. It's a film you won't want to miss!

LAGE RAHO MUNNABHAI

"Another day in the lives of Munnabhai and Circuit ad their encounter with the truth," reads the tagline. Munnabhai (Sanjay Dutt) and his sidekick Circuit (Arshad Warsi) are at it again in this comedy caper, which promises to be a laugh-a-minute film. Chaos prevails as Munna battles with his nemesis Lucky Singh (Boman Irani) and woos Radio Jockey Jahnvi (Vidya Balan). Munna becomes a philosopher who comes face-to-face with Mahatma Gandhi (Dilip Prabhawalkar). Jimmy Sheirgill and Dia Mirza can also be seen in this hilarious tale.

Initially titled 'Munnabhai Meets Mahatma Gandhi' and then 'Munnabhai Second Innings', this side-splitting roller-coaster ride releases on September 1st.

This column is written by Judi Silva.

Judi 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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ONE OF US BEING ONE OF THEM

Jasbindar Singh

What a thrill and honour it was this week, sitting on the parliament steps, witnessing history being made as the new Governor-General, His Excellency Anand Satyanand was sworn in.

Wellington could not have turned out a better day as the sun shone brightly warming up a cold winter's day and without a hint of the southerlies. In the words of a Maori elder, "we had the blessings of the gods."

The ceremony began with the traditional Hindu welcome for Anand with the sandalwood tikka and mala as well as a powerful Maori welcome. The swearing-in was especially meaningful for those who had over the years

had dealings with Anand in his many previous roles as judge,

ombudsman,

lawyer, family member and friend; as well as for Indians, particularly those from Fiji. The feeling was indeed, "there is one of us being one of them."

Anand delivered a memorable speech which was precise yet inclusive, balanced yet encompassing, totally non-cliché and with elements of subtle humour. Two poignant quotes repeated by many afterwards included, "Over the next five years, my wife and I will be two people making a

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



And the paraphrasing of Mahatama Gandhi's words that New Zealand will be "a place where all winds can blow without us being blown over by any of them."



public journey. I imagine during that time, there will be some who will say 'there is one of us being one of them while for others there is one of them being one of us.'

And the paraphrasing of Mahatama Gandhi's words that New Zealand will be "a place where all winds can blow without us being blown over by any of them."

It is obvious to most that Anand's constitutional and legal background combined with all his other personal and professional capabilities make him an eminently suitable choice for this leadership position for the next five years.

Anand is also a testament of the legacy left behind by the late Dr. Satyanand and Mrs. Satyanand who have served as excellent role models for many generations and across cultures over the years.

It is also a testament to New Zealand that she is able to recognise and embrace talent and diversity regardless of one's cultural and ethnic background.

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SAAG MURGH

Ingredients:

5 tablespoons vegetable oil

4-6 curry leaves

2 onions, diced

1 teaspoon chilli powder

1.5 tsps ginger paste

1.5 tsps garlic paste

1 tspn salt

3 tblspns lemon juice

500g boneless, skinless chicken, cubed

425g pureed spinach (you can use fresh or frozen spinach - boiled and pureed)

2 tblspns chopped fresh coriander

2 whole fresh green chillies, chopped

Heat oil with the curry leaves in a heavy-based

saucepan and fry the diced onions for 2-3 minutes over medium heat.

Meanwhile, mix the chilli powder, ginger, garlic, salt and lemon juice. Pour the mixture onto the onions, stirring constantly. Add chicken pieces and stir fry for about 2 minutes to seal with the spicy mixture.

Add pureed spinach and stir fry for a further 2-3 minutes.

Lower the heat, and add upto 150ml water if the mixture is very dry. Cover with lid and cook for around 15 minutes, checking and stirring occasionally.

Stir in fresh coriander and green chillies and cook for 3-5 minutes. Serve with steamed rice or Indian bread of choice.

(Courtesy: the head chef of Jewel of India)

Fine dining at an award-winning restaurant

A super special for diners!

Fixed menu @ \$16.95 per head: one veg entrée, two veg dishes, one non-veg dish, rice and naans

(conditions: Minimum four people, not valid on Fridays and Saturdays; until September 30, 2006*) Strictly by reservations only; seafood not included *Cannot be used with Bartercard or in conjunction with any other promotions/discounts.



Tuesday to Sunday 5.30PM to 10.30PM

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INDIA'S FIRST KNOWLEDGE VILLAGE

Surijit Kapra, Bangalore



Co-founder Archana Bindusar

Following a story in *The Global Indian* last month about "Hole In the Wall" project which is making use of Internet to educate

India's deprived children, here's another example. This time, an individual's vision is aimed at using the power of Internet to uplift his fellow villagers.

Hansdehar - a small sleepy village with just over 1000 people has become probably the first village in India to have its own website at <http://www.smartvillages.org>.

According to the website, IT capabilities of the villages are critical

for empowering the rural India and to bring about eR-Commerce. "The villagers of Hansdehar have taken this initiative to bridge the gap between the government and the citizens through this web interface," the website says. "This initiative is purely an effort of the community to create itself an 'Empowered Knowledge Village' which can escalate its problems to the stakeholders." The website lists current problems that the village faces and hopes that it will be able to attract the government's attention to address them.

There is a dedicated team of seven villagers, headed by a husband and wife team of Archana Bindusar and Kanwal Singh, which is behind the project.

After completing his education, Kendal Singh headed to the city (Chandigarh) to get employment. He found work as a web developer. After seeing the major role Internet plays in the city and gaining web development skills, he had a noble thought – to

use Internet to the benefit of his village. And that's how this website was born.

The website also shares statistics about the village including its history, its infrastructure (or the lack of it), its people, religious places, village panchayat, tourist attractions, and of course transport facilities. There is a section for public announcements too.

If the website gains momentum, it can also serve as a portal for everything from jobs, to matrimonial to e-commerce for farmers to get good prices for their produce.

Interestingly, the village has telephone and mobile coverage, but does not have an Internet connection yet. This website may attract the attention of various ISPs to extend their last mile connectivity to this and other villages. In the meantime, let's hope that this project marks the humble beginning of what can be seen to grow on a grand scale – empowerment of Indian villages the IT way.

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DIWALI IN WAITAKERE

Following the success of last year's event which attracted over 10,000 people, the Waitakere Ethnic Board (WEB) is bringing the 'Festival of Lights', or Diwali, to Waitakere City at the Trusts Stadium on Sunday October 8 from 1pm. The organising team is keen to hear from potential performers, volunteers, stallholders and rangoli designers. WEB expects to make this the largest and most inclusive Diwali Festival ever

celebrated in Waitakere City. This year for the first time there will be a spectacular indoor fireworks display along with traditional performances and of course the outdoor fireworks display.

Ann Pala, President of WEB believes that "we will reach our goal of integration of all diversity in the City of Waitakere."

Project Manager Manoj Tahal says that Diwali has great cultural, moral and religious significance to Hindus

all over the world but here in Waitakere we are able to share this Indian festival with all our communities.

The Global Indian magazine is sponsoring the event again this year.

Entry to the festival is free. If you would like to take part in the festival as a performer, volunteer or stall holder contact Manoj Tahal 09 416-4757. Registration closes on 15 September.

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

waitakere दीवाली
celebrations

Sunday 8th October, 2006
1pm - 10.30pm
at
The Trusts Stadium, (House of Diwali)
Central Park Drive, Henderson

- Free Entry
- Fire Works Display
- Classical Dances
- Exotic Indian Foods
- Rangoli Exhibition
- Indian Arts & Crafts For Sale
- Traditional / Contemporary Dances
- Car Parking Available – Hassle Free
- Kids Amusements

Organised by: Waitakere Ethnic Board Inc.
Tui, tui, tu-tuia nga herenga tangata
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Enquiries/information:
021 564 757
www.waitakereethnicboard.org.nz

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DIWALI IN WELLINGTON

Organisers of the fifth Wellington Diwali Festival of Lights are calling on the Indian community to help them make this year's event the most spectacular yet.

The festival is produced by

Wellington City Council and Asia New Zealand Foundation. Last year over 600 participants showcased Indian music, dance, food and culture before some 40,000 people.

The free Diwali Festival will be held on Sunday, 22 October from 3.30pm to 10pm at Wellington Town Hall, Civic Square and Michael Fowler

To find out more about participating at this year's Diwali Festival or to download application forms check out Asia:NZ's website at www.asianz.org.nz/diwali. Or you can phone Wellington City Council on 04 499 4444.

INNER PEACE

For practical tools on how to make the mind peaceful and how to have success with meditation attend a free workshop. Topics: 'The Art of

Meditation', 'Embracing Fear', 'Your Unique and powerful self', and 'Discover the Spirit Within'. Saturday 9 September 2-6pm Massey Community Centre. 385 Don Buck Rd, Auckland. Ph 845-1979 or 832-8607.

ONAM CELEBRATION

Auckland Malayali Samajam's annual Onam celebration, "Grand Onam Fiesta 2006", will be held at Mahatma Gandhi Centre, Auckland on 2 September from 4 to 11pm. Dr. Bill Cooke, Editor-in-Chief of The Open Society and Senior Editor of Free Inquiry will be

launching the Samajam's publication, Darppanam.

Dances, kaikottikali, music, orchestra and Kerala Fashion Parade will be the highlights of cultural events followed by a traditional grand ONAM 'Sadya' (dinner). Contact: Shylaja Benjamin (09 522 0066) Happy Onam!

JUST A MINUTE

A dynamic new campaign to create personal peace in a global climate of chaos is being launched at Wembley (London) on Sunday 17th September. Titled 'just-a-minute' (j-a-m), the initiative introduces regular one minute periods of silence into people's lives.

Hundreds of thousands around the world will join in virtually on 17th September via the Internet. The whole event will be webcast live at www.just-a-minute.org and, wherever they are in the world, people can link up for the one minute wave of peace. All they need to do is register on the just-a-minute website and their locations will light up on a vast world map visible at Wembley Arena. Register for this free event: www.just-a-minute.org

Visit us: www.theglobalindian.co.nz

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INTERESTING SIGNPOSTS

In a hospital maternity ward: "No children allowed."

At a car wash: "If you can't read this, it's time to wash your car."

At a gas Station: "Eat Here. Get Gas."

At a vegetable stand: "Notice! Take lettuce from top of stack, or heads will roll!"

At a mortgage company: "Ask about our plans for owning your home."

At an antique shop: "We buy junk and sell antiques."

At a burger joint: "We relish your buns!"

COOL MEANINGS

Cigarette: A pinch of tobacco rolled in paper with fire at one end & a fool at the other.

Lecture: An art of transferring information from the notes of the lecturer to the notes of the students without passing through "the minds of either".

Conference: The confusion of one man multiplied by the number present.

Compromise: The art of dividing a cake in such a way that everybody believes he got the biggest piece.

Classic: A book which people praise, but do not read.

Etc: A sign to make others believe that you know more than you actually do.

Contributed by: Brian D'Silva, Auckland

BEING A KIWI

Being a Kiwi is about driving in a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer, then travelling home, grabbing an Indian curry or a Turkish kebab on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture and watch American shows on a Japanese TV.

Only in NZ can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

Only in NZ do supermarkets make

sick people walk all the way to the back of the shop to get their cough, cold, aspirin while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

Only in NZ do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries and a DIET coke.

Only in NZ do banks leave both doors open and chain the pens to the counters.

Only in NZ do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars on the drive and

& lock our junk and cheap lawn mower in the garage.

Only in NZ do we use answering machines to screen calls and then have call waiting so we won't miss a call from someone we didn't want to talk to in the first place.

Only in NZ are there disabled parking places in front of a skateboard park.

Contributed by Sonali Geo, Auckland

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THEY HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO

I enjoy reading the magazine immensely. Kudos for keeping the quality up! I read the August issue and think it's richer in content diversity compared to earlier issues and remains very relevant for Indians overseas.

I liked the idea behind the (August) editorial. I have a personal experience which resonates with it. I've asked one of the recruiters I manage to learn how to pronounce Indian names at least half-correctly if he wants to be understood. The necessity is born from the fact that most of the talent we recruit (we're in IT Consulting) happens to be Indian. Since he can't yet pronounce "Anil" without making me cringe, he, and I believe most of India's new customers, have a very long way to go.

I'd also like to point out a couple of things. First, the term "Bombay Blasts Special" is an oxymoron. I may be wrong here, but we're accustomed to associating the word "Special" in a

starry bubble with a positive and rewarding experience and not one that evokes compassion and even a slight sadness, which is an understatement when you're discussing the terror blasts in Mumbai.

I also read the Bollywood briefs column with interest. I watched Omkara on its opening day here in Chicago and noticed that the review omits reference to the fact that the movie is an

“I've asked one of the recruiters I manage to learn how to pronounce Indian names at least half-correctly”

adaptation of Shakespeare's Othello. Granted, it may not be the most important consideration for most viewers since we're always looking for any good story told in an original style, which Vishal Bhardwaj does extremely well. Yet, it absolutely deserves mention considering the author in question is only the most widely acclaimed poet anywhere in the world.

Ambrish Kochikar, Chicago

ARE YOU SETTLED?

I often get asked by my friends, Indian and non-Indian alike, "why did you migrate?" This question is normally followed by, "How do you find it here?" and the million-dollar question, "Do you feel settled here? Do you want to live here for good?" As I respond with as much dexterity as possible, the last question invariably finds me on the wrong foot no matter how often I get asked.

I am tempted to say that I do feel settled and this is home now, like many of my friends say. But don't we all keep the option of going back open? Even those who obtain PIO card or Australian citizenship are always toying with the idea of moving back. Of course, this is true for first generation migrants like me. For others, India is a foreign land.

Sunil Lakhani, Melbourne

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FEEDBACK

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