



India Association of Minnesota is a non-profit corporation registered in the State of Minnesota for the educational, cultural and charitable purposes. It is operated by the volunteers from the community.

Upcoming Events for 2003 !

Mark your Calendars

- May 1st- 4th **Festival of Nations**, at the River Center in downtown St. Paul. IAM operates a food booth that sells Indian Food and also organizes cultural programs and a bazaar featuring Indian artifacts.
- August 16th **Independence Day**, at Snail Lake Park, 12:00pm to 5:00pm. Held in mid-summer to celebrate the Indian Independence Day followed by picnic with food and games.
- October 5th **Festival of India**, at the Landmark Center, 12:00pm to 5:00pm. This is an annual event held in early Fall at the Landmark Center in St. Paul, showcasing music, dances, cultural entertainment programs and food stalls from India.

**** Volunteers are needed for each of these events. If you are interested, please contact any of the board members (Page 8).**

Quarterly Report from the President

Dear Community Members:

I want to extend my thanks to you for your support and presence during the annual dinner celebration. The event was a resounding success with thoughtful speeches, good food and good company.

In this newsletter, as before I want to talk to you about the mission of IAM. The India Association of Minnesota represents the Indian population of Minnesota to the broader community. The Association draws people from all parts of India and tries to put a comprehensive face on the Indian population. Without this collective voice each one of us is but one insignificant immigrant who has reached his or her position in the society by exploiting op-

portunities given in this free land. Each one of us is less recognized, and less secure without this united front. Organizations like IAM provide a collective voice, and a united front to community members. IAM provides us a forum to share our social, cultural and religious beliefs with other members of the society. It gives us an opportunity to take pride in our heritage while being a part of the American society.

The IAM sponsors or participates in a variety of activities designed to foster cohesiveness among the Indian population. You can find out about different events being organized or sponsored by the IAM at our web site (www.iamn.org).

Information about upcoming events sponsored by the IAM is also provided in this newsletter. Contacts for regional Indian organizations can also be found at the IAM web site. If you belong to a regional group and would like to post information about it on the IAM web site, please contact our web master.

As I write this note, our country is in the midst of a war. At uncertain times like this we need to draw

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Report from the President Contd...

more closely together as a community. We need to be more intentional and explicit about our many contributions to the American society, so that we are viewed as an essential unit of the American economic and social structure and not as an individual immigrant who has benefited from many opportunities available in this free society. IAM has an essential role to play in times like this. However, we need your support to successfully carry out our mission. The IAM board has decided that special efforts will be expanded this year to increase the active membership. So, I will take this opportunity to urge each of you to renew your membership. If you have a current membership, change it to a lifetime membership. If your membership is expiring, renew it for three years or for lifetime. If you are already a lifetime members ask your friends to become members. Some of you will receive a renewal notice with this newsletter. If you receive this notice,

please take immediate action to renew your membership. Other ways to support the organization are by sponsoring an event organized by the IAM or by volunteering for a special project (such as speaker's bureau) or regular events (such as India Day) held throughout the year.

My appeal to you as a community member is to support IAM by attending our events, volunteering for our events, and giving us your invaluable feedback, comments and suggestions. Your suggestions and comments will help us chart a course for the organization that will meet your expectations.

- Deepshikha Gupta



Volunteer at the Soup Kitchen

As part of the community outreach program, IAM volunteers serve midday meals at the House of Charity's Food Center, the last Sunday of every month. This soup kitchen has a "no questions asked" philosophy—they serve anyone who walks in and is in need of food. The food center is located in Minneapolis downtown, at 714 Park Avenue South.

The job involves the simple act of serving food with a cheerful disposition—no food preparation or clean up work is needed! We need an average of four members each month from 11:15 to about 1:30 p.m. Dates for this year are: March 30, April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, August 31, September 28, October 26, November 30, and December 28.

If you would like to volunteer, please call Preeti Mathur at 651-483-0793 or send her an email at p_mathur@att.net

Thanks to Prem and Veena Khara and Sujan and Preeti Mathur for volunteering last month.

- Preeti Mathur

Annual Dinner Highlights

At a time when news headlines are swarming with talk of America going to war, the India Association of Minnesota's (IAM) annual dinner held on Sunday, February 9th at the Radisson Hotel, Roseville, MN offered a refreshingly different vantage point - how America spreads the word of peace and free enterprise across the globe.



The keynote speaker at the IAM dinner was Mr. Gopal Khanna (shown in the photograph above), Chief Information Officer of the Peace Corps. In his

delightful address he focused on how the Peace Corps volunteers were serving in 136 countries across the globe and were helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served in the various countries. He also used the opportunity to highlight how Indian Americans could be more involved in public life in the United States, especially by imbibing the spirit of volunteerism.

The meeting which began with a moment's silence in honor of the seven astronauts killed in the space shuttle Columbia accident, featured Minnesota state senator and a perennial supporter of the Indian community in the state, Sen. Satveer Chaudhary who attended the event and addressed the gathering. Sen. Chaudhary, who recently won re-election to the state senate, thanked the community's support during his election campaign and lauded IAM's efforts in

bringing the Indian diaspora together. He also drew interest from the audience at the dinner to a non-violent peace force that he has been involved with and



sought participation in its activities from the Indian community. Sen. Chaudhary presented the IAM annual achievement awards at the occasion. This year's awardees were Dr. Sarat Mohapatra (shown receiving the award in the photograph above), Dr. Vasant Sukhatme and the Association for India's Development (AID-MN). Dr. Mohapatra and Dr. Sukhatme received the awards in recognition of their many years of

Annual Dinner contd...

volunteer service to the Indian community. Both have served the India Association of Minnesota in various capacities in the past, including its Presidency. They have made great contributions to advance understanding between the Indian community and the community at-large in Minnesota. The award given to organizations went to AID-MN, which was recognized for being a strong contributor not only to development projects in India, but also to the education and cohesion of the Indian community in Minnesota for many years.

The occasion also saw the Indian Association of Minnesota kicking off its 30th year of operation. Ms. Preeti Mathur provided the audience with a vibrant, visual depiction of the organization's long and rich history.

IAM President Deepshikha Gupta while leading the day's events with her opening address highlighted plans for an active year for IAM, the umbrella organization of all Minnesota based Indian ethnic and cultural associations, and foresaw many more years of success for the organization.

IAM, established in 1973, is an organization representing about 18,000 people of Indian origin in the state of Minnesota. IAM and its affiliated organizations including SILC (School of Indian Language and Culture), PIC (Parent of Indian Children), AIWA (Asian Indian Women Association), and 55+ (a forum of Senior citizens) have been responsible for building a strong and active Indian community in Minnesota. In the past IAM has orchestrated successful fundraising for different calamities in

India from time to time. IAM holds regular events and also participates in the events held by other organizations in Minnesota. Some of these events include the Indian Independence Day celebration, the Festival of India, and the Festival of Nations. Details on the times and agenda for these activities are usually published in the IAM newsletter, a quarterly publication sent out to members.

- Balki Radhakrishnan

Giving back to the Community: How Elango Transformed Kuthambakkam Village

Elango, a chemical engineer, working in Central Electro Chemical Research Institute in Chennai, left his position in 1994 and returned to his village.

There are about 1000 families in Kuthambakkam village. Each family lived in a thatched roof hut ("kudisai"). Elango obtained government assistance to buy the necessary materials to build each a brick house. He taught the villagers how to make the bricks from clay that are sun dried. The Tamil Nadu government provided about Rs 45,000 to get materials for each house. The villagers provided the labor to construct the houses. Brick houses have replaced almost 90% of the huts. He also helped rebuild the main roads, sewer lines and other village essentials.

While I was in Chennai in October 2002, I went to see the miracle that Elango had created. We started with the common meeting facility ("Samathuvapuram") in the village. Villagers use this for various functions, family celebrations and religious ceremonies. He had secured a contract with a shoe manufacturer and the women in the centre were knitting the

top portion of a shoe. They had also produced some handbags and purses using jute and other materials.

The school in Kuthambakkam has about



100 children. A few senior students have attended a school in a nearby city to learn more about computers. He hopes that some of these college students will return to the village and become part-time teachers. He also took us through the "production centre". In this centre, the village men and women receive training to engage in revenue producing activities. In most of the projects (Thoor dhal processing, Dairy project, Soap making unit, Bakery project, Ground nut oil production) the resulting products are

cheaper and the process provides employment to the village men and women.

Since the successful transformation of Kuthambakkam, 4 or 5 neighboring villages have sought his advise and are on the mend. He is now in the process of creating an "Academy" in Kuthambakkam that will serve as a place to teach Panchayat presidents from other villages to come and learn.

Learn more about the positive developments taking place in India today. Do something. Visit <http://akash-ganga-rwh.com/village/TripReportKuthambakkam.html>

□ Out of a total of 22 million NRI's today, about 2 million NRI's live in USA. Of this number, if 1,000 NRI's every year start by "doing something", it will soon make a difference.

□ Select a part of India that you have emotional ties to and contribute your skills and time to solve just one problem or issue. A program called "NRI Home Coming" is under planning now.

- Ram Krishnan
rkrishnan46@yahoo.com

From Minneapolis to Vijaypar, Gujarat: A Bond for Generations to Come

On January 26, 2001, a catastrophic earthquake struck Gujarat, India, leveling entire villages and leaving more than 20,000 people dead. The earthquake, measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, was the worst to hit India in 50 years. In a matter of minutes, 400,000 homes were reduced to mere rubble and survivors were left without homes and jobs with more than 1000 villages being leveled.

The response to the most devastating earthquake that struck Gujarat, India by Gujarati Samaj of Minnesota in partnership with India Association of Minnesota (IAM) was significant and overwhelming resulting in a collection of \$283,000 from community and corporations in Twin Cities including a \$40,000 grant from 3M corporation to CARE. The broad-based participation by the Minnesota community was reflected in more than thousand people doing check contributions and thousands more doing cash contribution. This truly demonstrated the compassion, the unity and generosity for a true humanitarian cause by members of Indian American community. This was the most significant humanitarian effort by Indian American community in Minnesota and was made possible by the tireless efforts of more than 100 volunteers.

After careful analysis the relief agency of CARE was selected in rebuilding the village of Vijaypar. The village of Vijaypar situated 15 kms from Rapar and in the district of Rapar was leveled by the quake and 211 of the 215 homes were totally demolished.

A total of 117 homes, a community school, an anganwadi center and a panchayat ghar were rebuilt with the contributions. The remaining villagers opted to rebuild their homes with direct monetary subsidy from the Gujarat State Government. The villagers are back in the homes and the village is humming with excitement and enthusiasm.

The villages in Vijaypar remain united and enthusiastic of their association with us. They have hosted families from Minnesota on several occasions, putting a welcome ceremony where the whole village has

come together and enthusiastically received guests from Minnesota. The villagers hosted Ram and Neena Gada in February, 2003. Let us keep those ties and bond alive. The appeal remains to every single member of the Indian American community to visit the village that they have helped sponsor and reaffirm the bond with Vijaypar. Visit Vijaypar and develop the mentoring relationship with the



villagers, share with these villagers your ideas of social, economic and political reforms. We want each family within our community to serve as host to one or more families in Vijaypar. It is up to our children and youth to take up the challenge of sharing their knowledge, their know-how with the children of Vijaypar and demonstrate the compassionate side of American life.

As we look into the future we are now embarking on the second phase of the effort that includes undertaking one or more of the projects in the area of livelihood restoration, healthcare and secondary education. We have the money to undertake these initiatives and are seeking ideas, creativity and volunteerism from the Minnesota community to make this a reality. So, in the same vein as our community pulled together in conducting the most successful fund-raising drives in rebuilding the village, let us put our energies and creativity in shaping the future of this and other villages in earthquake stricken Gujarat. This will serve as a model for other humanitarian undertakings and leave a legacy for future generations of Indian Americans in Minnesota to cherish and be proud of.

- Bhavesh Damania

Utkal Sammilani Fund

Utkal Sammilani fund was created to establish an elementary school to teach Oriya language in remote or parts separated from Orissa. Last year, we collected \$6131.00 from the Orissa group in Minnesota. The money was deposited in the Utkal Sammilani fund, an account created through the India Association of Minnesota. The Orissa Group of Minnesota is thankful to IAM for their continued support. Contributors were Durga Panda, Bhabani Misra, Sarat Mohapatra, Gyan Dwibedy, Nihar Nanda, Sudhansu Misra, Anjan Pradhan, Bani Mohanty, Debesh Khattoi, Swapnakant Mohanty, Ashwin Mansingh, Amitabh Sahu and Rudra Narayan Panda. Special thanks to the contributors for their generous support.

During my trip to India in May 2002, I attended the Utkal Sammilani meeting in Cuttack, Orissa and handed over a check of \$6000.00 to Dr. Guru Prasad Mohanty, President, Utkal Sammilani, Cuttack Chapter. The Cuttack Chapter has established a Trust fund. Two elementary schools got started in Parshudiha and Cable Colony, both in Jamshehpur. Each school employs two teachers to teach Oriya to the small



children. The teachers are paid from the interest generated from the Trust fund. A picture of the school in Parshudiha is attached.

We will be raising additional money in 2003 to add to the Trust fund. Those who would like to contribute, please mail your check payable to Utkal Sammilani/IAM, C/O Sarat Mohapatra, 9233 Cornell Rd, Woodbury, MN 55125. Your contribution is tax deductible.

- Sarat Mohapatra



It's IAM Picnic Time



Come one, come all!

The India Association of Minnesota (IAM) invites you to join in the annual Independence Day Picnic and summer fun.

**When: Saturday, August 16, 2003
12 noon to 5 p.m.**



**Where: Snail Lake Park
Shoreview (see directions below)**



- ☼ Door prizes ☼ Soccer ☼ Volleyball
- ☼ Swimming ☼ Games for kids

Lunch cost: \$5 per adult. Free for children below age 5

For more information, call Preeti at (651) 483-0793.

Visit the IAM Web site: www.iamn.org



Snail Lake Park
4191 Snail Lake Blvd.
Shoreview, MN 55126
Phone: (612) 748-2500

Directions from Rice Street: From **I-694**, exit at **Rice Street** and go north. When the road forks (straight to Hodgson Road, right to Rice Street), stay on **Hodgson Road**. Within two or three blocks, turn left on **Snail Lake Blvd.** and go about 1 mile. The park is on the right.

Directions from Victoria Street: From **I-694**, exit at **Victoria Street**; go north for about 1.5 miles, turn right on **Snail Lake Blvd.** and follow for a few blocks. The park is on the left.

Directions from 35W: Exit at **Hwy. 96** and go east to **Snail Lake Blvd.** (2nd traffic light after Lexington Avenue). Turn right and continue on Snail Lake Blvd. until you see the park on the right side.

Free entrance to the park. IAM picnic shelter is the largest one on top of the hill.

Snail Lake Regional Park, consisting of 450 acres, is located in the City of Shoreview in the north-central part of Ramsey County. At the center of Snail Lake Regional Park are the swimming beach and picnic area on Snail Lake. This area includes parking lots, boat launch and hike/bike trails.

The park's extensive areas of oak woods, wetlands and grasslands provide habitat for many species of wildlife, including deer, fox, heron, egrets and waterfowl.



IAM Membership Application/Renewal Form

Today's Date: _____

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____

Spouse Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____

Address: _____
Apartment Number, Street Number, Street Name

City State Zip Code

Telephone Numbers: _____ (Home)
(Area Code) - Number

(Area Code) - Number (Office) (Optional)

E-mail Address: _____ @ _____

Can we contact you at this e-mail address? YES NO

Can we send our news letter or any other information at this address? YES NO

Type of Membership: Please Check One Box

Individual:

- \$ 15.00 for one year
- \$ 30.00 for three years
- \$ 200.00 for Life time

Family:

- \$ 20.00 for one year
- \$ 40.00 for three years
- \$ 200.00 for Life time

Please contact me for the following activities.

- Community services
- Speaker's Bureau
- Youth Activities (Below 18 years)
- Youth Activities (Between 18 to 25 years)
- Parents of Indian Children (PIC)
- Festival of India
- Host Family Program
- Web Page
- Asian Indian Women's Association (AIWA)
- News Letter
- Festival of Nations
- History Project
- 55+ Club

Please mail your membership form to:

The India Association of Minnesota

P.O. Box 130158
St. Paul, MN 55113

Festival of Nations, May 1 - May 4, 2003

Every spring, when the pure white snow has melted away, the plants and trees, which were frozen in the heart chilling freezing temperatures start showing life again with green leaves and buds, and the little birds come back chirping from their faraway winter getaway destinations, International Institute of Minnesota organizes a confluence of various ethnic groups from all around the world, which is appropriately named 'Festival of Nations'. The purpose of this event is to simulate awareness and understanding of the ethnic groups in our metropolitan community and the state of Minnesota. It serves to strengthen ethnic group relationships as participating members work together toward a common goal. Participation builds close friendship among people of diverse backgrounds as groups work side-by-side in a display of unity.

Festival of Nations provides an opportunity to all sections of the society to get a glimpse of the rest of the world under one roof. All participating countries would get an opportunity to display the language, art, culture, food and other vital information that is critical and important for the social fabric of that nation. The event attracts close to 100,000 people each year and a lot of schools in the state of Minnesota organize visits by the students of their respective schools, as this event is a great resource for some valuable scholastic information that other wise would have been hard to get in a regular class room or through books. Each group will get a booth to display and present information about its native country. All the representatives who participate in this event are normally dressed in their respective country's traditional clothing, each participating group will have cafes serving their native food, bazaars selling artifacts, dress and other articles unique to their countries.

India Association of Minnesota, which represents about 18,000-20,000 Indian people in the state of Minnesota, has been participating in this event for a long

time. In keeping with the tradition, we continue to participate and make the event and our participation in it more appealing and meaningful with the passing of each year, as the numbers of Indians keep growing. IAM is proud to participate in this great event again this year and represent one of the greatest nations on the face of this earth. I encourage all Indians living in metropolitan area and greater Minnesota to visit this colorful event.

Organizing our participation in this event takes a lot of time and effort. Several people have significantly contributed so far and we need more additional help during the actual event. We need at least about 100 volunteers to work during the event. Volunteers can work in different shifts on different days. Those of you, who are interested in volunteering during this event, please contact either any of the FON representatives named below or any of the office bearers of IAM.

Looking forward to your cooperation and hope to see you at the festival of nations.

If you need more information on the Festival of Nations and/or interested in volunteering, please contact:

Ramesh Muniswamy : India, General Chairperson
(651) 994-8015

Rita Mohapatra: Cafe Chairperson
(651)-739-0426

Ashoke Mandal : Bazaar Chairperson
(763)-478-8163

Raj Menon: Exhibit Chairperson
(651)-406-9533

Rajinder Singh: Cultural Program (Children) Chairperson
(651)-683-9995

Sarjit Bains: Cultural Program (Adult) Chairperson
(651)-735-4322

Schedule for Adult and Children's Cultural Programs:

Venue: Roy Wilkins Auditorium,
RiverCenter, St. Paul

Date: May 3rd, 2003

11:00am	Ladies Gidda
11:30am	Boy's Bhangra
12:30pm	Ghoomar (Rajasthani) Dance (SILC)
1:00pm	Flag Ceremony
3:00pm	Dandia Raas (SILC) (Also on May 4 th at the same time)

Festival of Nations

Date: May 1st- May 4th, 2003

Venue: RiverCenter
Downtown, St. Paul
Minnesota

- Ramesh Muniswamy
India, General Chairperson
Festival Of Nations



INDIA ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA
P.O. BOX 130158
ST. PAUL, MN 55113

Phone: 651-454-2124
e-mail: dshikha@stkate.edu
<http://www.iamn.org>

IAM 2003 Board Officers

President	Deepshikha Gupta (651)-454-2124
Vice President	Rabinder Bains (651)-735-4322
Treasurer	Govind Vatassery (651)-699-9498
Secretary	Bankim Desai (651)-784-8916

Civilization in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service.

- Mahatma Gandhi

IAM 2003 Board Members

Anil Kaul (763)-449-6910
Ashoke Mandal (763)-478-8163
Atul Shroff (763)-370-6125
Balki Radhakrishnan (763)-416-4722
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Hatim Carim (651)-736-1638
Indushekharan Nair (952)-881-4847
Ketan Gada (612)-823-2247
Kumud Sahgal (952)-401-7548
Nitin Patil (952)-896-9780
Preeti Mathur (651)-483-0793
Prem Khera (651)-483-2272
Rabinder Bains (651)-735-4322
Rajinder Singh (651)-205-1525
Ramesh Muniswamy (651)-994-8015
Rohit Jalali (201)-491-1538
Sanghamitra Sahu (763)-593-1403
Sanjeev Parikh (651)-894-6431
Sumita Mitra (651)-457-2107

Newsletter Subcommittee

*Manju Parikh, Prem Khera,
and Sanghamitra Sahu*

For Indian and Other Businesses

If you are interested in advertising in the upcoming issues of the Newsletter for '2003, please contact any of the following members on the Newsletter subcommittee by July 1, 2003:

Prem Khera (651)-483-2272
Sanghamitra Sahu (763)-593-1403
Manju Parikh (612)-623-0160

Business card : \$50/issue
Half Page: \$150/issue
Full Page: \$300/issue

2003 Dragon Festival and Boat Race

The Asian Pacific American Communities of Minnesota cordially invites you to celebrate this event:

Date: July 19th-20th, 2003
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Venue: Lake Phalen and Phalen Park, St. Paul.

For more information contact:
Dilip Mallick: (763)-546-9393

INDIA ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA
P.O. BOX 130158
ST. PAUL, MN 55113