

SOUTH ASIA NEWS

Opinion by Moe Sihota

Congratulations to South Asia News on launching their newspaper in Victoria.

I believe that there is a significant market for a locally established newspaper to keep our community abreast of local developments. Victoria and Vancouver Island not only have a large number of South Asians residing here but in many ways the roots of Canada's South Asian Community are found on this island. After all, many of the pioneers of our community still live on the island. This provides the paper with a wealth of potential information about the history and experiences of those that came before us.

I am no pioneer. But I was born on this island and grew up in the Cowichan Valley as did my wife. Our fondest childhood memories revolve around our experiences in places like Paldi, Lake Cowichan and Meschie Lake. Who can forget the strong sense of community that we all felt when we congregated weekly at the old gurdwara at Hillcrest. Or who can ever forget the annual gathering of the community at the Baisaki Festivals in Victoria. There was an enormous sense of pride in the community in those days and that sense of pride provided us with our sense of identity. The challenge for my generation is to

pass on our language, culture, traditions and values to the next generation. This is no easy task. After all, the world is far more complex today than it was when we were children. The community was far more close knit back then. Today, children are raised in a complex and often anonymous urban environment, where television more than verbal tales told by grandparents is the predominant cultural influence. Sure, there are things that government can do to protect cultural identity. Multiculturalism policy is one example. The teaching of Punjabi in our schools is another example. But at the end of the day the responsibility rests with the individual family. It is the family unit that must determine its level of commitment to pass on traditions and values that define our culture. There is also a role for community organizations in that regard. For example, this summer a number of young people from Victoria organized a summer camp for South Asian youth. It is the first time that I can ever remember someone organizing such an activity for children. The week long camp focused on teaching young children a little bit about India, its culture and history. Children were taught

Humor

Top 10 ... US-India Business Deals

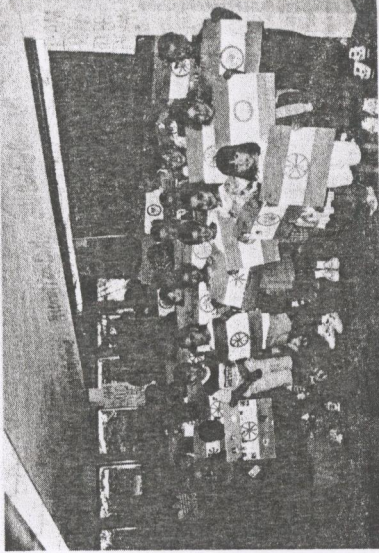
10. A chain of "Bhaskar-KaoBins" ice cream stores all over the country, in collaboration with Baskin Robbins.
9. Kraft will make "PARAMESAN CHEESE" at Madras, in collaboration with Parameswaran & Co.
8. Kentucky Fried Chicken will open its chain of CHICKEN" and will be headquartered at Bangalore.
7. Pizza Hut will open a chain, in the back alleys of all cities, its version, to be named: "PICCHE HUT". Headquarters: Kampur.
6. McDonalds will open its fast food restaurants to be named: "McDosalu". Hqs. Hyderabad. Main menu: Idli and Dosa.
5. Mr. Submarine will name its restaurants as "Mr. SUBRAMANI", to be headquartered at Madras.
4. Red Carpets coloured with biodegradable (hence environmentally friendly) red PAAN Juice extracts will enjoy duty-free status in US.
3. Dallas Cowboys will own a new franchise: Dilli's COW-BHAIS, to teach Indians how to play Football.... with hands.
2. Duty-free import of Ambassador cars into USA, as long as they are not used outside of Demolition Derby.
1. Internal Revenue Service will provide technology transfer of its Tax System software to Indian Income Tax Dept and to be named: "UNCLE SHYAM".

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Local Report: Shan-e-Punjab Day Camp

The idea for starting a summer Camp came about when Sonia Grewal, Harparm Sra and Suman Atlas were casually discussing about the fun they would have by holding a Summer camp, with in a few days they were planning for the camp at St. Margaret's School with Shan-e-Punjab group and others who were helping out such as Seema Komal, Sara Komal, Suman Atlas, Harparm Sra, Jaswinder Bamra, Amy, Sonia Grewal and Darcy Dheensaw. There was a lot of preparation that went into organizing this camp since it was for 5 days event We had the children into 4 different groups depending on their ages such as a) Spicy Sabjia ages 7-8 years, b) Bombay ages 5-6, D) years, C) Mast Mast ages 5-6, D) Jawani (youth) ages 9-10 and were introduced to the counselors who all

themselves and then had to remember the names of the other children in the group, and answering " Han sas Sri akal ji " when their names were called out by the counselor. Their main activity on this day was to write their hobbies and interests on a paper plate on one side and their face on the other, the activity was called Shakal (face), then the children started to talk about their culture and were introduced to the family roots and were asked to prepare their family tree chart by talking to their parents, grand parents and showing their family tree and later were introduced to the National anthem of India called Jana gana mana and explained what it meant and how they should sing it with pride and Honor, some children could be heard singing, Jana gana mana as they left for the day.



Children are holding an Indian Flag which they prepared during the day.

India and later they learned about the Bharatmatyam gestures to a Canadian poem choreographed and composed by Dr. Sidney Sparling. The children were taught a few things such as the meaning of Langar (lunch) in Punjabi, how to receive Kurtha Parshad, which is a sweet butter and sugar pudding. On the Final day of the Summer camp few of the children performed what they had learnt at the camp in front of their parents, during the day there was a speech, dances, awards and all the parents were thanked for their support in making Shan-e-Punjab Camp a Success and all the organizers believe that when people get together with a mission of accomplishing their goals it can be done as a team and this is an example of united strength of a determined group. If you have any questions or comments regarding this or any other feature in this newspaper, please contact us at 477-7285 or Fax at 598-4157. Contributions to this articles were made by: Sonia Grewal, Suman Atlas, Sara Komal, Harparm Sra, Seema Komal.



Kids are preparing the Indian Flag in their Craft Class

Next day Started with a few lines of the Punjabi alphabets and they learned the manners in the Gurdwara such as a) always wash your hands after touching your shoes, b)

Congratulations to South Asia News.

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Punjabi Ceremonies and tradi-