



'JEKO CHAWANDO JHULELAL
TANHIJA THINDA BERA PAAR'

SINDHI SAMACHAR

News Bulletin for Sindhi Hindus in the UK

CHETI CHAND EDITION/ APRIL 2008

Your SAUK Committee

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www.sindhiassociation.org.uk

Registered charity 282 447

Note from the President

Dear Sindhi Association members,

Firstly, let me wish you all a happy Cheti Chand on behalf of the Sindhi Association committee.

Very importantly please remember to ensure that the Sindhi Association has your up to date contact details (especially your email addresses). Everyone should have received a form to complete and this needs to be returned to the Sindhi Centre. This is vital otherwise you will not be able to receive the most up to date information. Communication is moving online since it is cost effective and quicker. Community events are planned to ensure we meet the needs of everyone. We want everyone to enjoy and benefit. Do remember, we have our AGM in June and invite everyone to attend.

Yours in service,

Gul Chugani

Forthcoming community Events for your diary

Cheti Chand Mela at the Sindhi Mandhir
Sunday 6th April 2008, 1pm until 6.30pm
Open to everyone
www.holymission.org.uk

Sunday Silver Group
For Senior members of the community
27th April onwards, 1pm at the Sindhi Centre
Contact Kalpana Tekchandani on 07932 981 972

Mehfil night at the Sindhi Centre
24th May 2008, 7pm onwards
£15 per person includes dinner

Young Sindhi Adults Retreat
22nd-26th May in Boston, MA, USA
Age 21 years +
www.youngsindhiadults.org

Football 5-a-side at Powerleagues, Mill Hill
Age 21-40 years
11am-2pm
After party at Firefly
June / July date tbc
For more info contact:
Jai Mulchandani on 07956382508
Priya Narwani on 07780861152

Annual General Meeting at the Sindhi Centre
Sunday 15th June 2008, 1pm onwards
Open to everyone

15th International Sindhi S sammelan
27th – 29th June 2008, Barbados
www.sindhisammelan.com



Community News: Deaths

It is with deep regret we announce the demise of Mrs Geeta Bhag Lalwani who sadly passed away on Monday 25th February 2008. Mrs Lalwani is the wife of late Mr Bhag Lalwani. She leaves behind her sons, Sonney & Sunil, her daughter in laws Jaya & Raakhee. She also leaves behind two grandchildren, Deepa & Karan.

It is with deep regret that we announce the demise of Mr Nandlal Masand who sadly passed away on Saturday 15th March 2008. Mr Masand leaves behind his wife Anita, his daughters Sonia, Bina, Helena and Serena and his sons in laws Sanjay Patel, Aakash Khatwani and Xavier Roig.

Let us remember dear Mrs Sunita Ramchand Vaswani who sadly passed away on Sunday 10th February in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She leaves behind three children, Geetanjali Mirpuri, Deepak Vaswani and Sunil Vaswani. She also leaves behind her seven grandchildren.

Let us pray for dear Mr Haresh Surtani who passed away on Wednesday 23rd January 2008. Haresh is the son of late Mr P.M. Surtani and Mrs Janki Surtani. He leaves behind his son Rishi Surtani.

Please remember the departed souls in your prayers.

Cheti Chand is Sindhi New Year. As you know we Sindhis follow a lunar calendar. The first month in the year is called Chaitra and in Sindhi it is called 'Chet'. So we can see how we have the formation of Chet- i -Chand. Here below we have an excellent article written by Kirat Choithram Babani a Sindhi Writer/ Journalist who was born in Nawabshah, Sindh in 1922. We encourage you to read this article to your children so they can fully understand the background to Cheti Chand. Enjoy!

Uderolal 'Jhulelal' – The Warrior Saint of Sindh, by Kirat Babani

Sindhis celebrate 'Cheti Chand' (the last moon day of the lunar year) with great gusto and enthusiasm. It has acquired an aura of national festivity for Sindhis in a very similar way as Ganesh Utsav for Maharashtrians, Durga Puja for Bengalis, Besakhi for the Punjabis and Onam for the South Indians.

The occasion of 'Cheti Chand' has dual significance. It is the occasion for heralding the new year, according to Hindu Vikram Samvat, when the spring has set in with its grandeur and the rivers are in full bloom. Creation is in ecstasy; everything breathes freshness and fragrance. The people in Sindh, in the olden times, celebrated the occasion by worshipping waters of Sindhu, by making sacred offerings of rice, flowers and sugar as the Indus was the life-line of the people of Sindh.

But in the course of history, it acquired an added historical-religious significance, as it is the day of incarnation of the Water God, Uderolal, a millennium ago on the banks of the River Indus. The life story of Uderolal is awe-inspiring. *He was a saint, a warrior, a secularist and a messenger of love and harmony to the people of Sindh.*

A certain ruler known as Murkh Shah reigned in Sindh from his capital Thatta in the 10th Century. He was a tyrannical, bigoted Muslim who was highly intolerant of the religious faith of his Hindu subjects. Advised by the fanatical fringe Muslim clergy and his imprudent minister Ahiyo, he adopted strong muscle methods against the Hindus to force them to accept Islam.

Finding themselves helpless against the tyrant, the Hindus decided to invoke Higher Power. They assembled at the banks of the river Sindhu at Nasarpur, with their children and women-folk and continuously prayed for three days and nights, imploring the Gods to save them from the cruel ruler, who was bent on their satanic intention to defile their faith.

The prayers of the oppressed and frightened Hindus were answered. They heard an oracle ordaining that a son would be born to one Ratanrai, at Nasarpur, who would be their saviour. They were consoled and happily returned to their homes with great hope that the days of their anxiety and agony were over.

As ordained, Ratanrai was bestowed with a male child in Samvat 1007 on the moonday. The child was of unmatched beauty and divine glow. All the people gathered at Ratanrai's house singing, dancing and celebrating the birth of their spiritual master, who was named Udaychand, but the mother Devki called him Udero out of fondness. The child while in the cradle showed miracles that convinced the harassed Hindus that the boy was endowed with spiritual powers and would bring an end to all their worries and woes.

Murkh Shah soon came to know about this prodigy, and his command over superior powers. It is even believed that the boy appeared in the dreams of the ruler and performed miracles to put fright in his mind about his misdeeds and cruelty. Murkh Shah hatched a conspiracy and sent his minister Ahiyo to invite the boy to his court so that he could capture him with deceit. Udaychand accepted the invitation and visited the Court of the King at Thatta. He soon sensed the evil designs of the ruler and disappeared, but soon he reappeared riding on a blue horse followed by a sizeable army. Murkh Shah, recognising the supernatural powers of Uderolal, was unnerved. He surrendered before him and asked him to be pardoned and promised to treat his people justly and tolerantly.

The story is as simple as any other mythological religious lore. But its deeper significance lies in the teachings and the life of this *great secular saint of Sindh*. Uderolal is said to have preached to the ruler the true spirit of religion. He said, "All people are children of God and they follow their faith as is willed by Him. Brotherhood of all men is the highest ideal of all true religions. God prevails in each human being; therefore treat all your subjects justly and equally, irrespective of their faith. You have to be answerable to God for your misdeeds done to his creation." He further devoted himself to the service of his people and inculcated among them a sense of unity and a spirit of service to the needy and the helpless. His mission is said to have been accomplished at the age of 13, and after instructing his brothers and disciples not to despair but to continue to tread the path charted out for them by him – the path of brotherhood, service and right actions – he vanished riding on his horse in the holy waters of Sindhu in Samvat 1020.

The story of Uderolal has a very rich and radical bearing on the life and culture of the people of Sindh. It is perhaps the earliest folklore of Sindh laying the foundation for secular traditions and non-interference of the state in the matter of faith and worship of people professing different creeds and observing different ways of life.

Uderolal, popularly known as 'Jhulelal', became beloved of both Hindus and Muslims alike. There were many devotees of the saint from the Muslim faith, who held him as a *Peer* (seer) and approached him for solace and blessings. A very interesting anecdote is connected with his life. After many wanderings, it is said, he found a piece of land with a well containing sweet water just ten miles away from Nasarpur. He decided to establish a monastery on this land with a view to serving the needy and the poor through a charitable centre. But it so happened that the land belonged to Muslim couple, Mian Maman and his wife, who had no issue. When Uderolal expressed his desire to acquire the land, Mian Maman thought it to be a frivolous joke from a child. He asked him to come out with the cash. It is said, Uderolal drew two lines on the ground, dug it to uncover great treasure, then asked Mian Maman to take as much as he desired.

The couple were struck by the spiritual power of Uderolal; there and then they offered the piece of land to him free of cost with an earnest prayer to bless them with a child to bring fulfilment and cheer to their life. He granted their prayers and a child was born to them. Mian Maman was appointed to manage the monastery and after him his descendants have remained in charge of the institution.

After Uderolal, a dispute arose between Hindus and Muslims to the claim and sanctity of the place where he has left his worldly attire on departing for his heavenly abode. Hindus claimed that since he was a Hindu deity a *Mandir* would be erected in his memory and Muslims claimed that he was their Holy-man, whom they described as *Zinda-Peer* and wanted to build a *Mukabara* (mausoleum) to perpetuate him.

The dispute was taking a serious turn, but it is believed that the situation was saved by Uderolal himself by a heavenly decree that he belonged to both Hindus and Muslims as incarnation was ordered by the Supreme Power with a specific mission to bring to the people a universal message of essential unity of all mankind. It said, " I belong to both Hindus and Muslims, therefore, the memorial should be so designed, that both the Hindus and Muslims have freedom and facilities for worship and prayers."

Accordingly a tomb was erected at the place from where he departed and in the same compound a *Mandir* was built, where the flame of eternal light was set in. The *Mukabara* was managed by the Muslims and the *Mandir* by the Hindus.

This great tradition of a spirit of unity of the human race has been imbibed in Sindhi culture and character for centuries. Hindus and Muslims lived side-by-side, brotherlier than real brothers in the villages and towns of Sindh. They shared the joy of their festivals- Hindus embracing their Muslim brothers, offering them hearty *Idd-Mubarak* on the occasion and Muslims joining Hindus in the fun and frolic of Diwali celebrations. The mutual faith among them was so strong that if the menfolk among a Hindu family went on a voyage they entrusted the care of the house to the Muslim neighbours and vice versa.

The festival of *Cheti Chand* in praise and eulogisation of Uderolal –the Water God of Sindh, has been celebrated since the warrior Saint was born in *Samvat* 1007. He is known as God of *Jal* and *Jyoti* (Water and Light). Therefore decorated Baharana (a mini temple-like thing with a flame in a hand-made small pot glowing inside) is taken out in a procession. The worshippers dancing and singing *panjras* – short poems of five lines in praise of the Lord of light and water – reach the riverside and offer the pot containing the flame to water along with rice, coconut, sugar crystals, flowers etc.

But after partition, the festival *Cheti Chand* has assumed a great significance for the Sindhis in India and abroad. The Sindhis have been uprooted from the soil of their ancestors; they have been cut from the beloved land with which they were culturally and spiritually bound up thousands of years in history; they have been separated from their great heritage – places of religious faith, their proud historical moments and places connected with the memories of their great saints, *Sufis*, poets, scholars, reformers and others.

On the other hand, this advanced, enlightened and culturally rich community is unfortunately scattered throughout India and other countries of the world. The Community is facing a great challenge in history to sustain its existence in most adverse circumstances and to assert its cultural identity and social unity and make its distinct contribution in every field of human activity as proud people of the ancient land of Sindh.

Uderolal has become the symbol of such unity, faith and determined will for the Sindhis to face this challenge. Therefore *Cheti Chand* has become a National Day for Sindhis- a day not only for celebration but expression of national aspirations of the community. All over India it is being celebrated with great enthusiasm and high spirits. Thousand upon thousands participating joining in huge processions with beautifully decorated *jhankies* (floats) depicting not only the life of Uderolal but the rich Sindhi culture and history. The day becomes an occasion to present and display the multi-faceted rich culture of Sindhi people to the non-Sindhi brothers of other communities. The festivity is assuming vaster proportions with the passage of time and Cheti Chand is being celebrated by Sindhis even in foreign lands.

Cooks Corner

Sanha Pakoras (mixed spices and potato pakoras)

1 cup of fresh chopped coriander and few chopped green chillies

1 large potato thinly cut

½ chopped tomato ½ ground pomegranate (anardhana)

1/2tsp red chilli powder

1tsp salt

1/4tsp bicarbonate soda

1 ½ cup sieved gram flour (besan)

Mix all these ingredients in a large bowl with ½ cup of water till it forms a good thick batter, check the taste to see if anything needs adding

Take a big frying pan

Heat the oil for frying

Spoon the mixture one at a time to make a big batch of pakoras. Make sure both sides are evenly done.

Leave on a plate to cool off

Now again heat the oil to medium and break the pakoras into small bit size pieces and deep-fry them again until they are crisp and cooked on the inside. Serve with hot chilli sauce, tomato sauce, green mint and coriander chutney and fresh bread.

To make plain pakoras you can choose any type of vegetables such as blanched cauliflower, aubergines, carrots etc or our traditional favourite chilli pakoras (pips out)

Slice the potatoes into thin round shapes

Salt them slightly and leave in a big bowl

Take 1 cup of sieved besan and add some water to form a thick smooth batter

Add 1 small tsp of salt, a pinch of bicarbonate soda, (few ajwain and some crushed red chillies.

Fry on a moderate heat and serve with bread and chutneys.



How to make a Revision Plan for your exams this summer

The top tip for successful revision is to make a plan; otherwise it is easy to waste your precious revision time. Start your revision at least six weeks before your exams begin. It is helpful to look at your exam dates and work backwards to the first date you intend to start revising. List all your exam subjects and the amount of time you think you will need for each one. It is unlikely that the amounts will be equal. Many people find it advisable to allocate more time to the subject or topics they find the most difficult.

>Draw up a revision plan for each week

>Fill in any regular commitments you have first and the dates of your examinations

>Use Revision Checklists or Syllabuses for each subject as a starting point. Look at what you need to know and try to identify any gaps in your knowledge. (A good way of doing this is to look at the results of past papers or tests you have worked through)

>Divide your time for each subject into topics based on the units in the revision checklist or syllabus, and make sure you allow enough time for each one

>Plan your time carefully, assigning more time to subjects and topics you find difficult

>Revise often; try and do a little every day

>Plan in time off, including time for activities which can be done out in the fresh air. Take a 5 or 10 minute break every hour and do some stretching exercises, go for a short walk or make a drink

>You may find it helpful to change from one subject to another at 'break' time, for example doing one or two sessions of maths and then changing to Geography, or alternating a favourite subject with a more difficult one. It helps to build in some variety

>Write up your plan and display it somewhere visible

>Adjust your timetable if necessary and try to focus on your weakest topics and subjects. Don't panic. Think about what you can achieve, not what you can't.

Positive thinking is important! You can do it!

This Newsletter is produced by: Sindhi Association of UK, Sindhi Centre, 230A Kenton Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 8BY

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Sindhi Association of UK/ www.sindhiassociation.org.uk

Working in collaboration with:

Holy Mission of UK (Sindhi Mandhir)/ www.holymission.org.uk

Sadhu Vaswani Centre UK/ www.sadhuvaswaniuk.com



Serving the needs of the Sindhi community

This event is organised by the Sindhi Community House
With the co-operation of SAUK

CHETI CHAND MEHA

SUNDAY 6th APRIL

1pm - 6.30pm

Jhulelal darshan with drumbeaters & Behrano

Chejj, Panjras for Adults

Sindhi nursery rhymes for Children

A choice of over 25 traditional Sindhi delicacies

(Including mohan thal, falooda, mithai, vara, thadal, pani puri, mitho lolo, sahel)

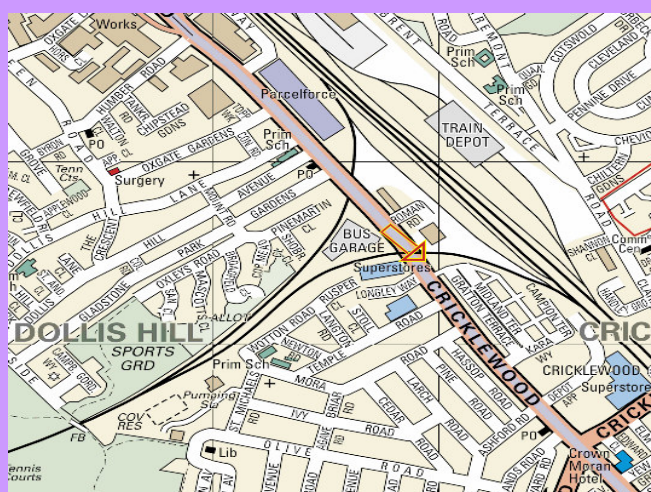
Raffle, games and stalls

Holy Mission,

Sindhi Community House

318 Cricklewood Broadway

London NW2 6QD



Closest overground is Cricklewood station

Closest underground is Kilburn station

See you there!!!

'Creation is in ecstasy. Everything breathes freshness and fragrance', Kirat Babani