



Indian Jewish Congregation of USA Newsletter

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Useful Link

jewsofindia.org

The official website of the Indian Jewish Congregation of USA. Here you will find useful information about our organization, our heritage, future plans, and more.

Hanukkah in Canada (Link)

The Samson and Moses families in Canada celebrate Hanukkah last year. A short TV interview.

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President's Message (by Romiel Daniel)

Thank you, my angels

This newsletter has taken a little longer to be published. I underwent a total knee replacement surgery at the end of October. Five weeks later, I am feeling like a new man ready to walk the globe.

However, the credit for this recovery goes to many people. Firstly, my orthopedic surgeon Dr. De la Valle at the Hospital for Special Surgery, Grace Plaza, the Rehab center where I recognized that color, race or religion made no difference. Everyone I met was so helpful, was so concerned, and was there when I needed them, especially the first few weeks when the body was protesting vehemently. The physiotherapists, the nurses, the attendants, the administrators and the doctors, all made me feel like I was so special. Then there were the ever so numerous telephone calls, visitors, and blessings from so many people, which I know speeded my recovery. Our community members who visited and gave me their blessings made me feel special.

Last but not the least, my family who were at my side, day and night for weeks, to make sure I was not left alone and helpless even for a minute.

Thank you all my angels.

Hanukkah

This is the season of miracles. Hanukkah starts on the evening of December 3rd. when we light the first of eight candles celebrating the victory of the Hasmonean priest, Mattathias who along with his five sons (Judah, Simeon, Yohanan, Jonathan and Elazar), regained the second temple of Solomon. It took three years and thousands of lives before this happened. They rededicated the temple with pure oil sufficient only for one day but which miraculously lasted for 8 days.

The festival of Hanukkah was really to celebrate the festival of Succoth which the Israelites had not been able to celebrate because the Syrian Greeks wanted to defile the Jewish soul. They wanted the Jews to assimilate and accept the Hellenistic culture. Many Jews succumbed to this. The struggle therefore started with the pro and the anti Hellenistic Jews.

The victory of those who had faith in G-d and fought alongside Mattathias and Judah Maccabee was a victory of good over evil, of the weak with the help of G-d over the strong. The time of miracles.

Let us celebrate this victory not as a victory of war but a victory of bringing peace on earth. Let us all join in the effort to fight a war against evil using peaceful means of showering love and affection knowing that G-d will ultimately supplement our efforts and bring peace to all.

Happy Hanukkah.

Romiel Daniel

President

Upcoming Events

The Indian Jewish Congregation of USA along with the Consul General of India in New York, USA, Ms. Neelam Deo will be celebrating Hanukkah on December 11th 2007 . The program starts at 5:30 PM.

Romiel Daniel will speak about the significance of Hanukkah after which the Consul General of India will speak. This will be followed by the lighting of the Hanukkah candles by eight different personalities with the chanting of the prayers in the Bene Israel tradition using the centuries old melodies. There will then be a speech by the Israeli Consul General Asaf Shariv, followed by a program of Indian and Israeli dances. There will be a Kosher Indian Buffet dinner to bring the evening to a close. It will be a memorable and exciting evening for the Bene Israel community and the Indian Jewish community to be recognized and honored by the Consul General of India.

The Indian Jewish Wedding Ceremony: A Showcase

Venue: The JCC in Manhattan

Date: Sunday, February 17th, 2008

Time: 1:00 PM

Entrance: \$20 (JCC and IJC Members)/\$25 (Non-Members)

Includes a Kosher Indian Vegetarian Meal

Code: **ACFINDOOW8**



Join Romiel Daniel, president of the Indian Jewish Congregation of USA, as he takes the audience step-by-step through an enactment of the Indian Jewish wedding. You'll discover the unique aspects of this life-cycle event which includes special blessings and the Eliyahu Hanavi ceremony, a uniquely Indian Jewish ritual performed on special occasions. The evening will include a display of photographs of Indian synagogues and mikvaot (ritual baths), music and a festive kosher vegetarian Indian dinner. Come in traditional Indian dress, if you like, and don't miss this exciting opportunity.

Current State of Bene Israel Cemeteries in India (by Aylon Samson)

I was first contacted by Isaac Solomon through our organization's website JewOfIndia.org about two months ago. He told me about an e-book he wrote in regards to old Bene Israel cemeteries. Mr. Solomon's e-book is fascinating, unique and one of a kind. He photographed over 800 graves in various locations in the Konkan (which includes Mumbai) and Gujarat state regions.

Mr. Solomon's e-book offers an unbiased, honest view of current status of Jewish graves in India. His work wasn't done in order to serve any personal agenda. Funds that he managed to raise from sales of his book all go towards the preservations of old cemeteries and graves.

Mr. Solomon was quite amazed that in spite being able to find his aunt's, mother's and father's names in the Worli cemetery registry, he was unable to locate their graves. Indian communities have fortunately never felt the wrath of anti-Semitism like in Europe. However, hundreds of graves have disappeared and continue to disappear even today. This article will only provide a short synopsis of Mr. Solomon's holy cause to document and preserve the dignity of the deceased.



Old graves at Nandgav cemetery

Some of the problems cited by Mr. Solomon are land encroachment by hutment dwellers, stray animals, disregard by the municipal authorities and cemetery committees. These issues often stem from the single fact that many cemeteries were left to neglect when mass emigration occurred during the 1960's.

Some of the cemeteries mentioned in this book consist of less than a dozen graves, whereas others are larger or were large at one point before they were damaged and in some cases completely destroyed. Mr. Solomon does make a point in his book to point out some of the success stories as well, such as the one mentioned below.

Although I will not discuss all the cemeteries that are mentioned in the book, I'll start with an inspirational story. The cemetery at Rajkot was being encroached upon by hutment dwellers. The

cemetery was being used as a dumping ground for collected scraps, which were being sorted at this location. The children used these graves as beds and washing stones. Their clothes were put out for drying on these graves and the headstones were used as tabletops. Sharona, the daughter of a well known sportsman, the late Elisha Moses, has realized her father's dream of erecting a wall around this cemetery. She put all her efforts into this project and with the help of the Rajkot municipality managed to erect a wall surrounding the cemetery. Although some graves couldn't be brought in within the wall's confines (due to resistance from the hutment dwellers), her efforts helped preserve the memory of most people buried there.

In Thane, Mumbai, a number of graves were damaged during a road widening project. The surviving headstones were salvaged and moved into the cemetery property. The Mazgaon cemetery opened in 1899 and contains about 200 graves; it has a person who looks after this cemetery. Upon visiting this cemetery, Mr. Solomon noted that it is not well taken care of. There's no or very poor access to many of the graves, and thorny bushes are spread all over the place. The majority of the graves are in dilapidated condition.

The Bene Israel cemetery in Pen, where Mr. Solomon managed to find a grave that dated back to 1870, did not appear to receive much care either. This was evidenced by the wild growth everywhere and the lack of easy access to many of the graves. Also, there were three graves outside the protective wire fence. The Hazan at this location said that the land on which those graves were on belonged to the Indian railway, and therefore they couldn't permit building of a fence around these graves.



Two headstones near a gutter made by the hutment dwellers

About a year ago, Mr. Solomon traveled to the Panvel, synagogue. This synagogue was hit by heavy floods in July 2005. Upon his visit, Mr. Solomon gave his donation as well as the donations given to him by individuals in Israel. When he inquired about viewing the list of individuals buried at the cemetery, he was told that such list is not available and he should refer his request to the Panvel municipal authorities. Mr. Solomon approached the municipal authorities, and they in turn refused his request and asked him to bring the name of the dead and the date of death in order to receive any type of information. The Panvel cemetery is adjacent to a huge pond called Israeli Talav. Following the path toward this pond, a stray tomb was noticed. There was no inscription to identify the person buried there. Upon reaching the cemetery, Mr. Solomon describes the condition of

the cemetery as "dilapidated." Mr. Solomon has written to the managing committee about what he's seen and to date has not received a response.

The Murud cemetery in Kolaba (Raigarh) District used to have a fence around it (built from funds raised from the community). But when Mr. Solomon visited this cemetery four years ago, he noticed that the gate and one side of the fence was pulled down. They insisted that area is not the property of the Jewish cemetery. The fence and the gate were eventually rebuilt and hopefully will remain intact.

The Navgav cemetery is over 2000 years old and is the place where the Bene Israel believe their ancestors were shipwrecked. There are 26 graves here and several stone markers on the ground to indicate graves that do not have headstones. Mr. Solomon was told by the current graveyard keeper that the original wood grave markers were sold for firewood by a previous keeper. A monument is erected at this cemetery but only a partial wall was built around this location. The earliest identifiable grave in this cemetery was of one Elisheba Reuben Shelim Binyamin Bhonkar who passed away on March 23rd 1773.

The Worli cemetery, where Mr. Solomon could not find his parents and aunt's graves, lost a large portion of its grounds to a builder (about a third of it). Today, a skyscraper is built on top of this land lost by the cemetery. The existing graves were never removed, the building now stands atop the graves that once existed. This cemetery used to occupy 10,000 square yards when it opened in 1927 (after the closing of the Mazgaon cemetery 1898–1927). The remaining area is in relatively good condition and is taken care of, although



The multistoried building on the Worli cemetery premises (in the foreground)

trash thrown out of windows of the building does often end up on the outskirts of the cemetery property.

The book has many more cemeteries mentioned in it, including many smaller family cemeteries that are on the verge of extinction. The task of preserving these old cemeteries is a big challenge in this area of the world. Some cemeteries are far flung in the outskirts of Greater Mumbai region. In those cases, the challenge is even greater. Aside from being far and difficult to reach, many village cemeteries no longer have anyone left behind to look after them. In other cases there is probably only a single Bene Israel family at the village. In such cases, a fence would only be temporary before the municipality or other elements make these cemeteries disappear. It should be our priority to allow these cemeteries to exist and preserve some dignity for the dead.

You can reach Mr. Solomon regarding his e-book at the below e-mail address:

isaacsolomon@yahoo.com

You can share your thoughts and ideas on preserving cemeteries with us. Feel free to share any successful case studies regarding cemetery protection. We will be glad to hear from you via e-mail or through our forum at:

<http://www.jewsofindia.org/forum>

Nazi Bed Covers Withdrawn After Indian Jews Protest

Mumbai India—A new line of bedspreads called the "NAZI Collection" will be withdrawn from stores after India's tiny Jewish community protested, a furnishings dealer said. The brochure of the collection featured swastikas and its promoters said that NAZI stood for "New Arrival Zone of India." The dealer apologized for the "obnoxious name" and agreed to withdraw the line in a letter this week to the Indian Jewish Federation, the body said in a letter received Tuesday evening.

Below is the text from the apology letter sent by Mr. Kapil Kumar Todi to the Indian Jewish Federation in Mumbai:

"Dear Sirs,

At the meeting held at my request between my uncle Mr. Jagdish Prasad Toi and Mr. Abraham Mhedekar – President Mr. Jonathan Solomon – Chairman and Mr. Benjamin Isaac – Hon. Secretary of Indian Jewish Federation on 1st October 2007, you brought to our notice the anguish caused to the Jewish community in India and abroad, by the use of the words "Nazi Collection" for bedspreads proposed to be marketed by us.

We wish to assure all concerned that we did not have and do not have the slightest intention of hurting the feelings and sentiments of Jews or any other person in any way. We sincerely regret our action in proposing such obnoxious name as "Nazi Collection" for our products. We unconditionally apologize to all concerned for the hurt caused by our actions and assure all concerned that the name "Nazi Collection" and the name "Nazi Collection" and the word "Nazi" shall not be used for bedspread or any other product with which we are or may be associated or with any advertisement or promotional material and booklets and all other materials including bedspreads bearing the name "Nazi Collection" or "Nazi" will be destroyed by us immediately and not allowed to be circulated or marketed."

Anupam Kher in a 6-D film

India In Motion is a film produced by an Israel-based company Orpan. It is a 25-minute long, six-dimensional (6-D) film. Anupam Kher will be the narrator for the film.

The film is based on Indian history from the ancient Mohenjodaro to the present. A theatre that can show case this 6-D movie is being built in partnership with Adlabs at Agra near the Taj Mahal. People can not only see but feel, smell and touch all the



images and visuals in this film. Only two films have been made in this series, one on Israel, the other on Italy. The legendary Topol narrates the one on Israel, which is only 3-D.

When Ori Yarden offered the narrator's part to Anupam Kher, he gave his consent almost immediately. Anupam Kher flew earlier this week to Tel Aviv for this historic venture.

Source: IndiaFM

The Far East Kotel

If you plan to visit the Indian subcontinent, you'll soon discover something familiar. In an unusual cultural-religious cooperation between New Delhi and Jerusalem, soon a model of the Western Wall (the Kotel) and Temple Mount will be constructed in New Delhi.

A model almost identical which will also include the small request notes, will be prepared the municipality of Jerusalem be transferred to the Indians. At the same time the Indians will transfer to Jerusalem the traditional Hindu temple, the type that can be found on every corner in India.

The Hindu temples are known to be colorful and everyday million of believers bringing with them offerings and incense for the different gods. The "Religious Exchange" program is a joint initiative of the mayor of Jerusalem, Uri Lupolianski, and the mayor of New Delhi, Arti Mahara.

Mahara was a guest of Lupolianski as part of a conference where mayors from around the world arrived in Jerusalem. Both came to the conclusion that the model of the Kotel in the Indian capital can be a point of interest to the millions who live in the capital as well as a rest stop to the thousands of Israeli backpackers. "The reputation of Israelis is improving in Delhi" told Mahara, "We already hear of less problematic incidences and I believe that every gesture and positive step, like this initiative, can help tighten the relationship between the countries.

In regards to the idea itself said New Delhi's mayor: "I think the subject discussed is beautiful and positive. When you stroll in Jerusalem you get a good feeling in seeing the expression of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. It's extraordinary and causes an aura of peace. For Hindus it's a way of life where there's place for everyone in society, to have a happy life and peaceful balance."

Source: Translated article from Maariv nrg

Malayalam Introduced at Hebrew University

Agencies Jerusalem, Nov 15: The Hebrew University here has introduced Malayalam for the first time this semester with students already learning Telugu and Tamil among south Indian languages. "There is a growing interest in India here and Malayalam is an important language in understanding the glorious culture of south India", Chairman of Indian Studies department at the university, Yohanan Grinshpon said.

Ophira Gamliel, who earlier translated a book, 'Oh Lovely Parrot', on Jewish women's songs in Malayalam to Hebrew and has just returned from Kerala after three years of stay working on her doctoral thesis and mastering the language has been appointed to teach at the department. "It sounds like a sweet language. I am enjoying learning it and hopefully will be fluent in it some day", Alex Cherniak, a student learning Malayalam said. Cochin's Jewish community in Israel, numbering around 20,000, is thrilled at the introduction of Malayalam in the university curriculum calling it "a fitting tribute" on completing fifty years of aliyah (immigration) to Israel.

"We were unaware of this development but hope that it will help our youngsters who were born here connect to their roots", Nechemia, a Cochin Jew said. The community takes a lot of pride in its Indian roots and also organised a cultural programme recently, attended by thousands of people, to celebrate sixty years of India's independence.

It has a synagogue, a replica of the one in Cochin, and has been striving to make their moshav, Nevatim, look like the village in Kerala from where they immigrated to Israel. The Nirit group, a group of Kerala Jewish women, has kept the Cochini culture alive in Israel by continuing to sing songs their ancestors sang in India for thousands of years and encouraging other women in the community to join them. It holds weekly meetings in the northern town of Rishon Letzion and has been performing in cultural programmes organised by the community.

Sa Re Ga Ma Pa—L'il Champs' Begins on Zee TV

Following the success of Sa Re Ga Ma Pa (SRGMP) Challenge 2007 which concluded yesterday, Zee TV had announced a fresh series of 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa-L'il champs' with 28 new young aspiring contenders from across the globe.

The celebrity judges include Music composer Pritam and playback singer Sonu Nigam. Sonu returns to SRGMP after a gap of eight years, SRGMP challenge 2007 host Aditya Narayan announced during the finale of the reality show last night. 'L'il Champs' starting from October 19 would be aired on Friday and Saturday at 2200 hrs. The show would provide a platform to young participants within the age group of seven to 14 years. Aditya Narayan would be the host.

Speaking about the launch, Zee TV's business head Punit Goenka said, "It's been a nostalgic journey with SRGMP since its inception.

Music is an integral part of Indian culture and talent should be nurtured from an early age." Adding further, he said, "On the judging panel, we have some of the leading and established professionals from the music industry, who, would guide and judge our L'il discoveries. We look forward to provide our viewers a refreshingly new show with L'il champs, some talented singing with loads of entertainment." He said 28 participants have been selected from five continents and six different countries would compete with each other under the guidance of their respective mentors.

International auditions took place in UK, Dubai, **USA**, South Africa, Malaysia, Pakistan, New Zealand, Singapore, Fiji, Kenya, Australia, **Israel** and Hong Kong as well as **eight cities in India**.

Source: <http://lil-champs-international.blogspot.com>

'Indian Seinfeld' bringing his shtick to Palo Alto

When comic Samson Koletkar was growing up in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), India, he didn't even know what standup comedy was.

"In India, standup is not a popular concept," he said in a recent telephone interview. "It was more mimicking other people's voices and making jokes out of it."

While he did this with his family, he was never very good at it, he said. It was only when he came to the United States seven years ago that he began frequenting comedy clubs and learning about the art of standup.

At first, he saw only white, African American and Latino comics. Then he saw a Chinese American comic.

Finally, four or five years later, he saw a video clip on the Web of an Indian comic. "That's when I thought, if he can do it, maybe I should try my hand, too."

He's since learned there are quite a few more Indians in the comedy world, but as far as he knows, he is the only one who is Jewish.

The San Francisco resident often begins his act with: "I'm an Indian Jew and that makes me a rare species. So if anyone wants a picture with me, it's five bucks."

Koletkar described the Jewish community in India as tiny, and said most of his fellow Jews are either Orthodox or not-so religious. He grew up in the not-so religious category.

Koletkar works in the software business, but his schedule is quite full with comedy appearances, which he hopes eventually to be able to do full time. He has toured with a group of Indian comedians who call themselves "Pundits With Punchlines." Among his fellow comics, he is known as "the Indian Seinfeld."

Touring with this group has been an interesting experience, he noted.

The comics in the group at first catered their material to things Indian people would find funny — mostly about relatives and family, relationships and marriage. But they quickly realized that not just Indian people were coming to see them.



"If we find a universal appeal, that's what we are aiming for," he said.

While Koletkar has only a limited repertoire of jokes that have to do with his being Jewish, he does like to make fun of the stereotypes about Indians.

"I recently visited Oregon, and I passed through Redding, which I learned is the meth capital of California," he said, referring to the drug crystal methamphetamine. "I asked them why they do so much meth, and they said 'there's nothing else to do.'"

"In India when we have nothing else to do, we do math. Here parents say 'Go to bed and say your prayers.'"

"In India, it's 'Go to bed and do your multiplication tables.'"

Source: Adapted from The Jewish news weekly of Northern California

Dropped from Heaven by Sophie Judah—Book Event

The Indian Jewish Congregation of USA along with the Rego Park Jewish Congregation hosted Sophie Judah on November 11th 2007. She has authored a book "Dropped from Heaven", a collection of 19 stories depicting Bene Israel memories.

The book event was introduced by Lee Lobel Zwang of the RPJC followed by Noreen Daniel who outlined the activities of the Indian Jewish Congregation. Dr. Joan Roland introduced the book itself and the author.

Lael Daniel gave a vote of thanks followed by Indian snacks.

Obituary

Mr. Isaac Erulkar, retired Assistant Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad India passed away in October 2007.

He was a close friend and I still remember my first day in Ahmedabad of March 15th, 1965 when he personally came to the railway station and took me to his home. He was always so helpful. During the communal riots of 1966, 1971 and others we were not allowed to leave the house for days. Isaac would come in the police van just to make sure we had provisions and milk for the children.

His wife Naomi and his son Ephraim were equally helpful.

May his soul rest in peace.

Legacies (by Bert J. Reuben, St Louis, Missouri, now living in Kansas, USA)

Once upon a time there was a small village called 'AWAS'

Everything was different in 1996 when we took the sentimental return journey to the villages of the Konkan district, 'Awas' in particular. Most of the Bene Israel had migrated to other lands. Like me, they had left to seek a higher material standard of living. Our traditions, beliefs and customs, the important aspect of our origins, are often used as instruments of barter. A difficult fact to accept is that because of this bartering, the people and places of our childhood have changed.

'Awas' wadi (farm) of our grandparents was the place where we had been the happiest in our childhood and youth. After over 50 years, the place looked better than when I last saw it. There were more varieties of trees and plants. The small house, over a hundred years old was intact. The clay roof tiles with 'Mangalore' stamped on it were still there. The space in front of the porch, open on three sides with a roof made from thatched coconut Palm leaves was gone. This was where we slept in beds lined up side by side. At sunset we used kerosene lanterns, ate early and played games. The chirruping of crickets and the distant sound of the incoming tide on the quiet beach was also intact. To our surprise, a woman who as a young girl had worked for our grandmother 'Leahbai', recognized who we were and we talked about the old times at the 'Awas' wadi.

The swing usually squeaked when we swung on it. Here my mother 'Hannahma' sang, sitting on the swing with us clustered about her. Her songs must have had quite an impact on us. Some were in

Marathi, having schooled at Huzurpaga in Pune. One song was about leading an honest and straightforward life. In English, she sang "Should old acquaintance be forgot". She used to sing 'Way down in Missouri' and destiny brought me to St. Louis, Missouri.

Leaving Bombay for Awas was an exciting experience. We traveled in a flat bottomed steamship from 'Bhaucha-Dhakka' harbor to Rewas pier. It took about one and a half hour on the ship, which rocked from side to side. Porters jumped into the ship. We knew many by name and they all knew we were Leahbai's grandchildren. There were many buses destined for the different Konkan villages and we had to rush to get our seats in the bus for Awas. The driver made two stops at Awas—the first near Nagoba (Cobra) temple, where everyone got off. We stayed on, as our destination was beyond Awas near the ocean. A short walk through many paddy fields brought us to the wadi and the house. We then would send a bullock cart driven by Ambaji or Govind. He would bring home the luggage we had left outside the house of our family friend called Babu.

Babu Awaskar was a Bene Israel. He continued the traditional occupation of his and our ancestors- 'Telis' (oil pressers) who observed the Sabbath by not doing any business on Saturdays. Babu had also converted the front of his house into a small provision store. He used to sell essentials as coconut oil, rice and spices. Our grandmother deputized him to keep an eye on the wadi in her absence. He often free loaded as a compensation for his services. I have seen Babu wrap his wares in American newspapers which he bought as 'Ruddi' (old newspapers bought wholesale). He would give us the comics section of the New York Times. I remember Tarzan. Our reading skills were honed by reading these comics and old newspapers.

After our grandmother lost her eyesight to cataract, the wadi began to deteriorate. Free loading became rampant. Any and everyone removed coconuts, mangoes, and other fruits from the wadi. Before she died, our grandmother sold the wadi.

I believe that a powerful factor in the early development of imagination is listening to stories. I have never come across anyone more powerful in conveying emotion with description than 'Shimbai'. Changes in speech, dress and orientation were apparent in my grandmother and mother, since they were exposed to modernization and education in the big city. For me, Shimbai was part of a fading breed of Bene Israel women that would soon disappear. Her mannerisms, speech, dress and her ability to put people in their place, represented an important part of our Bene Israel origins. Shimbai's stories were told to us usually after dinner, by a kerosene lantern light. The seeds were planted and imagination would take over followed by sleep.

Shimbai was a widow who lived with my grandmother and took care of my grandmother. She was tall and strong and always wore gold jewelry. She had a house in Alibag, which she shared with two of her aunts. She was my grandmother's confidant and informant especially after she lost her eyesight. She was loyal to the end of her years.

In our wadi, many varieties of mangoes like Hapoos, Roomali, Totapuri, and Raival were grown. Fruits like coconuts, guavas, chikoos, jackfruits, papayas, Ramphals, Sitaphals, tamarind and Karvandas have etched their taste on my tongue.

Civilization gives but it also takes away. Electricity and paved roads have taken over lanterns and mud roads. Transport by cars, auto rickshaws have replaces bullock carts and horse carriages, These villagers were very contented people with very few belongings and very few wants. I hope 'Awasi' of my memory will always remain the same.

Source: From the book Awasi—The Growing Up Years (published in India)

Ruby Reuben's Recipe

This recipe comes to us from Kansas, USA. Ruby Reuben is the wife of Bert Reuben

Potato Poha

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of thick Poha (flattened rice, available at Indian grocery stores)
- 2 to 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 3 medium green chillies

¼ teaspoon cumin seeds
2 to 3 fresh curry leaves (kari pata, available at Indian grocery stores)
1 medium onion, diced
2 small potatoes, boiled and diced
¼ teaspoon turmeric powder
3 tablespoons coconut flakes (sweetened)
Lime juice from 1 small lime
Peanut, cashews for garnish
Coriander leaves for garnish

Preparation:

Wash Poha in water, being careful not to crush it. Drain the water. Heat Canola oil in a pan and toss in green chilies, cumin seeds, and curry pata. Cook for a few minutes until the seeds start popping. Add onions and continue cooking until onion becomes slightly brown. Add the previously boiled diced potato and turmeric powder and continue cooking for a few minutes. Add washed Poha and cook until Poha becomes soft, adding a little water if mix gets too dry. Add salt and chili powder to taste. Mix in the lime juice, then the coconut flakes and cook few more minutes.

Note: Gentle Stirring through procedure

Decorate with coriander leaves, peanuts and cashews.

Hanukkah Special Recipe from Noreen's Kitchen

Grated Potato Karanjiya

Ingredients:

2 pounds potatoes
½ pound chickpea flour
½ cup shelled peanuts, roasted and coarsely ground
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
½ teaspoon red chili powder
½ teaspoon sugar
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons coriander leaves
1 ½ cups cooking oil

Preparation:

Wash the potatoes and parboil them. Remove the skin with a peeler. Rub a bit of oil on the grater and grate the potatoes. In a non-stick wok, add ¼ cup of oil and heat it on a medium flame. Add the grated potatoes and fry till slightly golden in color. Add salt, sugar, turmeric powder, red chili powder and mix well. Add the peanuts, coriander, and mix well again. Keep this aside to use as the filling.

Take the chickpea flour in a big dish. Add a little salt, turmeric powder, chili powder and one tablespoon of warm oil. Mix it well and knead into tight dough. Take a little of the dough and make a ball of 1 inch diameter. Roll it with a rolling pin into flat 'puri' about 3 inches in diameter. Place 2 teaspoons of the filling in the middle and fold the top edge of the puri onto the lower edge. Press with your thumb on three sides to shape it like an inverted boat. Wet your thumb if needed to close the edges tightly. Heat on a medium flame about 1 cup of oil in a wok. Fry 2-3 Karanjiyas at a time till they are light brown and crisp. Remove in a serving dish and allow them to cool to room temperature. These Karanjiyas are really delicious and enjoyed by young and old.

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

And to end on a happy note:

Little Ari was having dinner at his grandmother's house. When everyone was seated, the food was served. As soon as little Ari got his plate, he started eating from it right away.

'Ari, please wait until we say our prayer,'

'I don't have to,' Ari replied

'Of course you have to,' said his mother. 'Don't we always say a prayer before eating at our house?'

'Yes, but that's our house.' Ari explained. 'This is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook.'

For more recipes please visit our online forum at: <http://www.jewsofindia.org/forums>

Click on the "Recipes" category.

Submissions to the Newsletter

We would like all our members to send us articles of interest, birthdates or birth months, wedding anniversaries and any other information of interest to the community. Submissions are subject to editing for clarity and style.

Please send newsletter submissions to Evelina or Aylon latest by December 20th 2007.

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To be included in our electronic mailing list, please send us a request to: comments@jewsofindia.org

Special thanks to all contributors.