

Shri Vayalar Ravi assumed charge as Union Minister for the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

(PHOTO)

Shri Vayalar Ravi assumed charge as Union Minister for the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs here today. He was welcome by Secretary Shri P. Mohandas, Joint Secretary Shri G. Gurucharan and other senior officer of the Ministry. This is second tenure in this Ministry.

During his interaction with media persons, Shri Ravi said that in coming three months, his focus is going to be take forward the initiatives taken earlier and complete the unfinished agenda. He said that priority will be accorded to put in place an institutional mechanism for welfare and security of Overseas Indian students. He further said signing of Social Security Agreements with Denmark, Luxemborg, Hungary and other European countries, signing of Labour Mobility Partnership Agreements with Bahrain and Denmark, launching of four more PIO universities in four states and the introduction of the New Immigration Bill will be given priority.

Immediate after assuming the charge, the Minister also held meeting with senior officers of the Ministry and discussed various issues related to the Ministry. Source: <http://pib.nic.in>)

Shashi Tharoor new junior foreign minister

Manish Chand

New Delhi, May 28 A few days ago, Shashi Tharoor, a former UN bureaucrat and a newly elected Congress MP, said he wanted to be involved with the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs. Now his wish has been surpassed as Tharoor begins a new innings as a junior minister in India's foreign ministry.

This is clearly the the high point in the life of the 53-year-old Tharoor, who lost narrowly to South Korea's Ban Ki-moon for the UN top job in 2007, resigned from his position and plunged into the hurly burly of Indian politics barely a few months ago.

The former UN undersecretary-general is expected to effectively complement External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna as a minister of state at a time when India's global stature is growing the and the country's neighbourhood is seething with problems.

Tharoor is also expected to make up for relative inexperience of Preneet Kaur, Congress MP from Patiala and wife of former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh, who has also been named as a junior foreign minister, or minister of state.

In an interview to IANS last week before his name was included in the council of ministers, Tharoor, the first-time Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram, had indicated his interest in being part of foreign affairs committee of parliament and playing a proactive role in it. (Source: <http://overseasindian.in>)

President Obama Congratulates PM

United States President Mr. Barack Obama called Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh today to congratulate him on being sworn in as Prime Minister for a second term. President Obama said that the verdict was a welcome endorsement of the policies pursued by the previous government.

The two leaders discussed cooperation between the two countries in various sectors while stressing the importance of strengthening the Indo- US partnership.(Source: <http://pib.nic.in>)

Fareed Zakaria is India Abroad person of the year 2008

Zubin Mehta gets Lifetime Achievement Award

April 10, 2009

The India Abroad newspaper selected as its person of the year for 2008. Fareed Zakaria has an established reputation as one of the most thoughtful, articulate, nuanced voices on American television a rare voice, what is more, that can take America out of its self-absorption and focus its attention on what is going on in the rest of the world.

The annual India Abroad Person of the Year awards gala was held on March 20 in New York City. Others honored at the banquet were, Sameer Mishra, who won the iconic Scripps National Spelling Bee; Akshay Rajagopal, the 11-year-old from Nebraska who at his very first attempt won the National Geographic Bee; and Shivani Sud, winner of the prestigious Intel Science Talent Search that recognizes the most outstanding young talents. They were named joint winners of the Young Achievers Award. Dr. Manjul Bhargava, one of the youngest tenured math professor at Princeton was honored with Face of the Future award.

The India Abroad Gopal Raju Award for Community Service was shared by Preeta Bansal, now General Counsel and Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of Management and Budget in the Obama administration; Hrishikesh Karthikeyan and Dave Kumar, co-founders of South Asians for Obama; Democratic party strategist and Communications Director for Campaign for America's Future Toby Choudhuri; founder of the Indian American Leadership Initiative Varun Nikore; newly-installed chair of the Indian American Republican Council Dino Teppara; SAFO's National Outreach Director and Director of the Office of Inter-Governmental Affairs in the Obama White House Nick Rathod.

India Abroad honored Zubin Mehta with its Lifetime Achievement Award -- presented to the maestro by previous winners Salman Rushdie, Professor Jagdish Bhagwati and Professor Padma Desai. Also honored was Jhumpa Lahiri -- born Nilanjana Sudeshna -- with the Publisher's Special Award for Excellence. (Source: <http://www.nriol.com>)

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MUTHIAS : STEAMBOILED

Ingredients :

- 1 kg wheat
- 100 grams tuver dal
- 100 grams chana dal
- 100 grams rice
- Mix the above ingredients and grind a coarse atta.

Method :

- For Muthias – vegetables like, cabbage or doodhi or palak or methi leaves etc., can be used. Wash the concerned vegetable and grate the vegetable. In case of leafy vegetables cut the leaves finely. Add masala, salt, red chilli powder, turmeric, ginger, chilli paste, coriander leaves, sugar(curds or line optional) and miz well.
- Take 2 cups of atta. Put 2 tablespoons of oil mix well and add the vegetable and masala and make a dough of semi solid consistency to make a roll. Take a stainless steel sieve and put the rools in it and put it to steam boil. Allow it to cook for 15 to 20 minutes. Take a tooth pick or a knife insert it in the muthia. If no atta sticks to it put the flame off.
- Season it with mustard and asafetida tempering.



Festival:

VAT-SAVITRI

Women (whose husbands are alive) observe Vat Savitri Vrat with the intention of preserving their good fortune. On the day of Jyestha Krishna Trayodashi in the morning, One should brush their teeth and afterwards in the afternoon women should apply paste of sesamum and amala and after that have a clean bath.

After this women should eat the roots of VatVriksha (Banyan tree) along with water. Women who have just delivered a child or woman having a problem with periods (menstruation) can accomplish this vow through a Brahmin who could worship and fulfil the vow. This vow should be observed from Traydashi to Poornima (full moon) or Amavasya.

One should go near the Banyan tree and sip water and pray "I, on this auspicious day of Jyestha, Krishna Trayodashi pray for the health and will being of my children and husband. Never should I ever become a widow and this is the main intention of this vow. In the roots of the Banyan Tree lies Brahma, in the stem/ barks lie Janardan and in the above portion lies Shiva and in totality lies Devi Savitri. O Banyan tree! I water you, which is like elixir of life.

After saying this the Banyan tree should be tied by string and one should offer incense flower and rice and worship Vat Savitri. After this women should circumambulate the tree. After returning home, women should draw a Banyan tree using a paste made of turmeric

and sandalwood. One should sit near the drawing and should pray and take a resolution. One should observe fast for 3 nights and on the fourth day one should offer water to the Moon God and worship Vat Savitri.

One should prepare delicious dishes and offer this to the Goddess. One should offer food to as many Brahmins as possible and then only take food. Finally praying to the goddess one should say, "Goddess Savitri may I accomplish this vow without any hurdles with your blessings.

After worshipping Vat (Banyan tree and Savitri Goddess) one should worship women whose husband is alive with Sindoor (vermilion) Kumkum and betel leaves. To accomplish this vow in totality women's should offer clothes, fruits, Sindoor (Vermilion) kumkum etc in a copper vessel to a Brahmin.

Introduction:

Gujarati Samaj of St. Louis came into existence in 1984 with the efforts of some community leaders to preserve, protect and personify our eastern values, to make our children participate in celebrating our festivals, and to provide platform to all Gujaraties to come together to meet, greet, entertain and celebrate our heritage.

Gujarati Samaj arranges programs to commemorate important Gujarati Festivals and Events, and invites dignitaries and artists from Gujarat and India to perform for the benefit of the members. Many leaders of the Samaj have contributed their time to put the wheels of Samaj to the road of progress. Here is a list of our Presidents whose vision and efforts have helped Samaj to grow and perform well in the interest of its membership. (Source: <http://www.gujaratisamajofstl.org>)