

THE CASBAH

GREY STREET CASBAH & SURROUNDINGS NEWS

Dedicated to the Casbah spirit of Aziz Hassim
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SASTRI COLLEGE ALUMNI MAKE CALL FOR SUPPORT



The Sastri Alumni Association seen at their biennial general meeting with guest of honour, Prof Mazisi Kunene (centre).

Sastri College Alumni Association held its biennial general meeting with a social last week. The guest speaker was Professor Mazisi Kunene of the University of Natal Zulu Department.

An author of two epics and hundreds of poems, Professor Kunene recently returned from the United States where he was Professor of Languages at the University of California. He spent over 36 years in exile after graduating at the non-European section of the Natal University held in Sastri College in 1955.

Mr J.N. Singh who was re-elected chairman of the Alumni, outlined the success of Alumni in obtaining additional land from the Durban City Council so that the college could have more open spaces for the students, who now number over 500 boys and girls, including black students.

He pointed out that the Alumni had insisted that the college be reopened as a secondary school on a non-racial basis

and no-sexist basis in 1993 after being deprived of high school status for 12 years by the Nationalist government. Alumni have use of a staff room and club house at Sastri College and hold their monthly meetings on the third Thursday afternoon of each month.

An appeal was made to ex-Sastri College students to join Alumni especially those who were at the college before shut down in 1982. In future all students leaving at the end of the year will be encouraged to join the association so that new blood could be added to make it a vibrant institution keeping alive the traditions of one of the oldest secondary schools in the Province having been opened in 1930.

Officials elected were J.N. Singh (chairman), I.C. Meer (vice-chairman), D. Moolchund and T.S. Maharajh (joint treasurers) and C.R. Pillay and k. Mistra (joint secretaries) plus an executive committee of 18 members.

TRIO REACH FOR A DREAM IN THE CLOUDS



High-flyers (from left) Deon Pillay, Zeeshan Amod and Junaid Khan before going in search of their dream.

12 YEAR OLD Zeeshan Amod and his friends Junaid Khan (12) and Deon Pillay (15), never dreamt that one day they would experience the thrill of flying an aeroplane.

The three friends who suffer from muscular dystrophy, a life-threatening disease had their dream realised when the Reach for a Dream Foundation arranged a plane trip especially for them along Durban's beachfront over the weekend.

According to the foundation director, Sandy Batho, the foundation deals with children suffering from life threatening medical condition.

"We were approached by the Muscular Dystrophy Association and asked if we could arrange a plane ride for these three boys. And since our aim is to ensure the realisation of dreams for 'terminally ill'

children we decided to go-ahead" she said.

She added that even the cold wind and drizzle couldn't dampen the smiles on the faces of the excited threesome. The foundation which is a non-profit body, was established seven years ago by the Randburg Rotary Club and has help realise the dreams of more than 6 000 children throughout Southern Africa.

"We have found children's dreams to be very simple, yet sometimes very difficult for a parent to arrange. For example, a child wishes to sleep over on a train or to swim with a dolphin or even to see a film show," said Ms Batho.

The foundation relies on fundraising projects and the generosity of the public for financial assistance.



Residents from various Indian Suburbs around Durban protesting against high property rates. Photo: Yunus Bayat.

JOBS OF 3 000 TEACHERS HANGS IN THE BALANCE

Three thousand educators from the former House of delegates could be sacked if the KwaZulu-Natal education budget is not increased.

Urgent talks between the province's education department and the National Ministry of Education are currently underway to resolve the crisis. According to the KZN Education Department spokesman Lampies Cornelius, 3000 teachers from the HoD and a further 1000 from the former House of Assembly might face retrenchment because of an apparent budget deficit.

The KZN Education Department has received R4.9 billion which is R310 million short of its projected expenses of R5.2 billion.

At least 80 percent of this amount is allocated for teacher's salaries. This emerged at last week's sitting of the finance committee in Ulundi, where the education budget was tabled.

However Mr Cornelius indicated that teaching staff were 'desperately' needed in the rural areas of the province, The National Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bhengu had established a committee whereby provincial authorities can present their shortfalls to the Ministry.

"Therefore it must be understood that only if additional funds are made available, no retrenchments would be considered," he said.

Meanwhile according to a spokesman for the KZN Education Ministry, educators should not fear retrenchment as there was a 'shortage of teachers in the province'.

And teacher unions this week said they would strongly resist any forms of retrenchment.

SADTU media officer, Kate Skinner said although the union supported the process of rationalisation, they would however not tolerate retrenchment

"We believe incentives should be offered by the State to encourage teachers in the urban areas to move to less-resourced rural areas. SADTU insists on being fully consulted on any process of restructuring or rationalisation," she said.

The Association of Professional Educators (APEK) said they would address the issue at their mass meeting next week.



The administrators of the 'Grey Street Casbah & Surrounds' FaceBook Group and founders of the 'The Casbah' eNewspaper, Ishaan Blunden (082 561 8730) and Buddy Govender (083 560 1213).

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We also have other related pages on FaceBook that we encourage you to join as well

'Grey Street Hits' – music and music videos from back in the day ...come have a party with us!

'The History of Non-Racial Soccer in South Africa' –

Historical photos etc from the glory days

'Non Racial Sport in South Africa' – Acknowledging non-racial sports and personalities in SA

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Show promoter MK Bobby Naidoo together with his wife Mano Naidoo and Mogie Nadioo garland SP Balasubrahmanyam who is seen with his wife, Savithri on their arrival at the Durban Airport on Sunday.

NEW SHUT-DOWN AT TECHNIKON

All academic activities at Durban's M.L. Sultan Technikon were suspended for two days on Wednesday. It follows new tension on the campus in an on-going controversy.

The decision to suspend the academic activities for the two days come in the wake of differences of interpretation between staff and students regarding the presence on the campus of four senior staff members – Professor A.J. Arkin, Vice-Rector (Academic); L.H.J. Abram, Development and Student Services, S. Naidoo, Registrar and A. Valjee, Director Finance.

The decision was taken by Rector Prof Ramanlal Soni in consultation with the three staff bodies (NEHA-WU, PSU and the Staff Association).

Tension was fuelled by certain staff members refusing to sit on the dais during the Diploma Ceremony at the City Hall on Tuesday.

At the time of going to Press it was learnt that the Minister of Education Prof Sibusiso Bhengu and Rector Ramanlal Soni were barred by students from entering the Durban City Hall where the Technikon's graduation ceremony was due to take place.

'It was further aggravated on Wednesday morning when it was rumoured that the students were prepared to physically evict the four senior staff members from campus. These factors led to the hardening of attitudes and was further aggravated when unknown person/s called the South African Police onto the campus,' said Prof Soni.

The divergent interpretation of the mediator's agreement, he said regarding the presence of the four senior staff members on campus was dead-locked on Wednesday morning.

Prof Soni said her was, 'deeply perturbed' by this sudden turn of events particularly as the Technikon was to host Minister of Education Professor S.M.E. Bhengu on Wednesday's Diploma Ceremony.

He said examinations will be held according to the revised time-table.

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IDEAL'S



The first old age home in Phoenix was officially opened last weekend largely through the efforts of the local community. The initial phase of the complex cost R300 000 comprising of eight units and has been named the Elim Residential Homes. The completion of the first phase was the realisation of a vision by the late Pastor Langeland Frits John Hansen, philanthropist and founder of the Berea Chapel to which the home is attached. Pic : (L-R) Ronnie Veeran, Mr Collin Hansen (son of the late founder, Pastor Langeland Grist John Hansen), former DPMP Mr Omie Singh and Pastor David Nadasen.

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NEW HOPE FOR RADIO LOTUS



The Radio Lotus team (from left) Serge Naidoo, Zakia Ahmed, Vimla Frank, Amitha Anand, Vikash Mathura, Jagruthi Jantlal-Mathura, Sagren Naidoo and the station manager Fakir Hassan.

Intensive campaigning by members of the 'Save Lotus Committee' has raised hopes about the future of the radio station which has served the Indian community for the past 12 years.

Mr Jace Nair, secretary of the committee, said that already thousands of signatures had been collected for a petition to be submitted to the SABC board and the Independent Broadcasting Authority calling for Radio Lotus to be retained as a public broadcaster.

He said concerned individuals had pledged their support for the campaign and have mobilized structures in the community to support the campaign. "On a recent trip to the Transvaal I was pleasantly surprised at the tremendous support by people and several organisations," said Mr Nair. The campaign headed by

Mr Thulsi 'TS' Maharaj received a boost this week when the ANC National Chairman and Natal Leader, Jacob Zuma pledged his support. Mr Zuma echoed the same sentiments as the campaigners saying that Radio Lotus should be retained as a public broadcaster.

According to Mr Maharaj, Mr Zuma promised to take up the matter with the State President. Meanwhile SABC's chief executive of the radio, Govin Reddy, said the corporation in its submission to the IBA, has made it clear that it was willing to continue with Radio Lotus. However, the campaign was launched a few weeks ago after the SABC recommended to the IBA that it was willing to continue with 11 language-based radio stations and that Radio Lotus was not one of them.



Burnwood Secondary School will be holding their annual Deb's Ball on 11 May at the Durban City Hall at 7pm. Among the participants are (from left) Shaleena Bechan, Prashantha Lachanna, Natasha Domun, Priya Reddy, Rheane Chetty and Deshana Ramdullary. Music for the evening will be provided by Disco Midnite Cruise.



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IDEAL'S

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DURBAN FIRM WINS WORLD CUP PRINTING CONTRACT



The driving force behind Universal Printing Works - The Mehta family (from left) Harish, Yatish, Bharat, Kantilal and Asha.

A long established Durban printing firm has been awarded the prestigious contract of printing the programme for this year's Rugby World Cup to be held in South Africa in April. After months of negotiations, Universal Printers, one of the country's foremost printing companies, has been allocated the R3 million contract.

The family-run business enterprise is headed by Mr Kantilal Mehta and his three sons, Harish, Yatish and Bharat Mehta, Mr Mehta's daughter, Asha has also recently joined the company. "This is by far the biggest sporting event the country has staged and we are proud to be associated with it," Mr Harish Mehta said this week, "Our negotiations began before the election and in October last year we were given the go-ahead for the project."

Mr Mehta said that it was the first time that a major project is undertaken by a South African company. "We have invited rugby unions from all the 16 participating countries as well as major South African personalities and sports writers to contribute to the 68 page publication," said Mehta. He said that with the aid of modern equipment his staff of 400 will work seven days a week and 24 hours a day in order to get the publication out on time. Mr Mehta said that the actual printing of the publication will begin in April and 270 tons of paper will be consumed in the production.

Universal Printers is a diverse group of companies which handles every aspect of printing. It is one of five companies in South Africa able to produce total advertising campaigns. Boasting the largest, most sophisticated equipment and extremely high standards, Universal Printers ranks as a market leader in the industry. Universal has grown phenomenally in recent years, opening branches in Johannesburg and Cape Town with its head office remains in Durban.

From its humble beginnings in 1924, the Universal Group has become a proud family tradition. Mr Mehta's great grandfather, Mr Virjee Mehta arrived from India in 1908. He was employed by Mahatma Gandhi as a compositor on his newspaper, Indian Opinion. After 12 years, Virjee left to establish Bombay Printing Works which was taken over in 1926 by his sons Nautamlal and Kantilal.

Renamed 'Universal Printing Works', the business continued as a successful but small family concern until 1978, when Kantilal's three sons joined the company. Now the company has set its sights on securing the printing rights for this year's local government election to be held in August.

BEAUTY PAGEANT TO AID HOSPICE

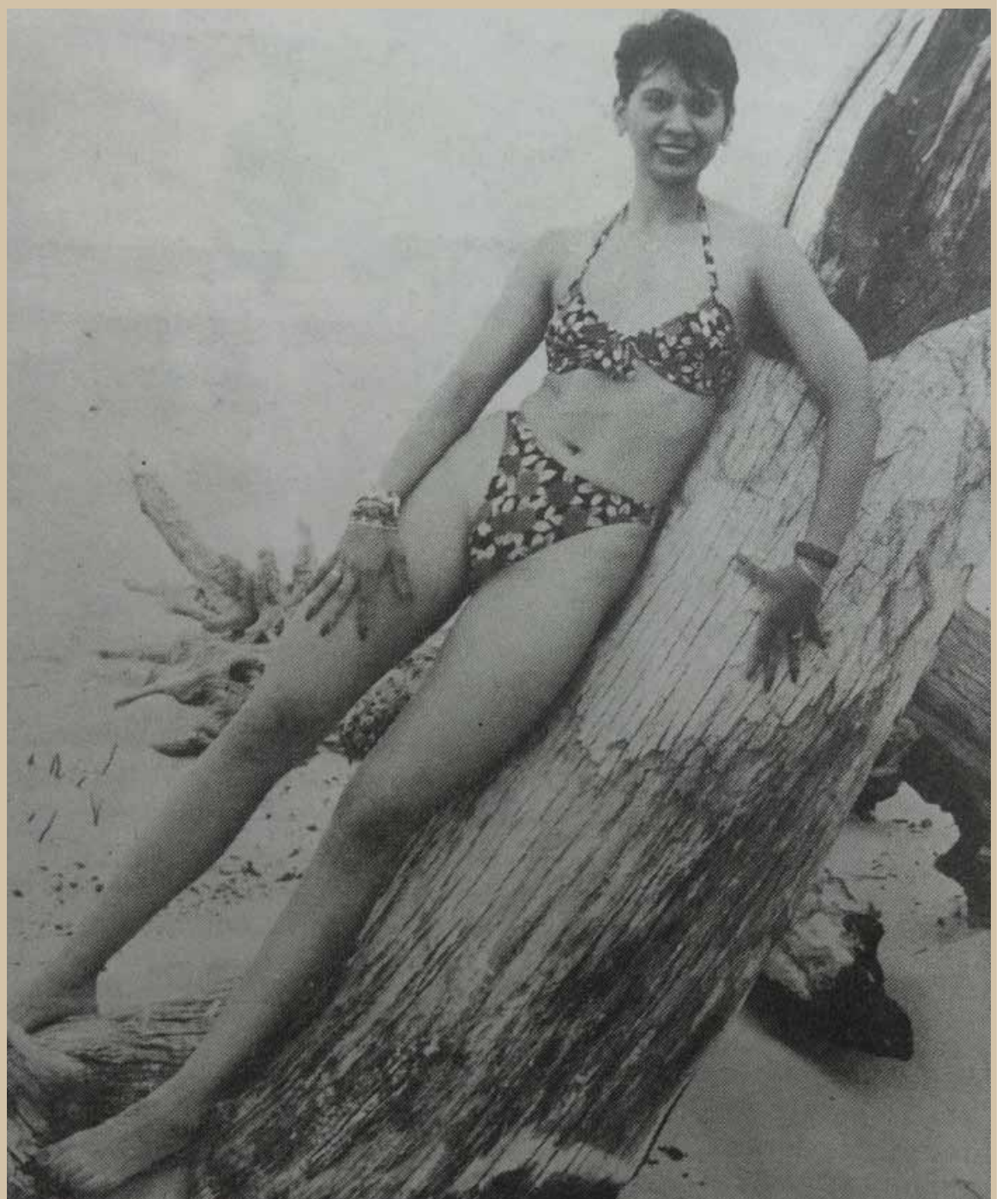


The Chatsworth Regional Hospice has embarked on a major project to host a Miss Chatsworth 1995 Pageant as part of its on-going fundraising drive.

This will be the first time that a pageant of this scale will be held in the area according to Hospice spokesperson, Mr Sagren Moodley. The objective is to host much needed funds for the hospice. "We at hospice provide comfort, love and compassion to our cancer patients and assist them to lead a more comfortable life dur-

ing the terminal stages of their illness," said Mr Moodley.

Contestants will be judged in various categories, including active wear, eastern wear, evening wear and question and answer. "During the weeks leading up to the pageant the finalist will do a fashion show at the Chatsworth centre, to meet the public, do a photo shoot and more importantly visit welfare organisation in Chatsworth, highlighting these organisations and their roles, said Mr Moodley.



Silverglens fitness queen Visha Dhanesh who having completed her honours degree in physical education at the University of Durban Westville, has embarked on a career of fitness, holding regular aerobics classes in Chatsworth, Westville and Central Durban.

SOCIAL SCENE



Phoenix has a new venue in the Rainbow Restaurant and nightclub which opened under new management the previous weekend. Seen at the opening were (from left) Sam Prakash, Mandla Sithole, Richard Naidoo, Suren Naidu, Basil Naidu, Calee Shange and Shirish Soni.



The long weekend provided a great opportunity for relaxation and enjoyment, and the entertainment was abuzz with activity. Selwyn and Sandy Gounden and Sharon and Sumesh Gounden enjoyed an evening out at Eiffles.



Seen toasting the success of the New Rainbow were (from left) Ben Naidoo, Sagaren Naidoo, Nirosh Naidoo, Sylvie Pillay, Divia Moodley, Brian Pillay and Nantha Moodley.



Also at Eiffles were Melissa Thomas and Vinay (left) and Vinary Jainath and Sarika Rampersad.



Pretty Michelle Hammond (centre) representing Dimes United won the coveted Sol Namara Easter Queen contest hosted by CADFA at the weekend. She is seen above receiving her crown from sponsor Yegee Naidoo flanked by her princesses Shobnam Singh of Glenchester F.C. (left) and Visha Rampersadh of Desai Vedanta Sunset F.C. (right).



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M. L. Sultan Springfield College Graduation Ceremonies



M. L. Sultan's top diplomates were from left: Roderick Terrence Christy, National Higher Diploma: Chemical Engineering; Serisha Devi Nundall, National Diploma: Analytical Chemistry; Avishan Goorun, National Diploma: Civil Engineering and Vasigan Sigamoney Munien, National Diploma: Electrical Engineering.



Sundhrambal Govender received the Higher Education Diploma: Senior Primary. She is flanked by her proud parents Sid and Dinky Govender.



Journalist with The Leader Maleni Naidoo received her National Diploma in Journalism. She is seen flanked by her parents, Roy and Rani Naidoo.

Durban Westville Graduation



Rajeshree Ramguthy (B.Comm) Photographed with parents, Shardanandh and Anitha Ramguthy after being capped.



Mahendra Mithry, who obtained his B.Sc. degree, seen with parents Prem and Meena Mithry.



Mr Kishen Jagoo, who was awarded the B.Proc. degree, seen with his wife, Nirvana.

COMMENTS FROM OUR FACEBOOK GROUP

Can we name some of the local dance bands of the 60s/70s/80s.

Anu Mehta: DUKES COMBO

Gloria Abrahams: Kreme, The Cresendos, (and I'am not old eh Ishaan) lol

Savy Naidoo: Raiders.

Ash Govan: CC beat/shayannes/

Conley Tissong: The Wildthings , Destructive Earth

Pooventhran Moodley: RED ROOSTERS !!!

Sunny Singh: Raiders, Los Pepitos,
Debra Phillips: The Flames - Sydenham Durban; Pacific Express

Sunny Singh: Riverside Sanathan Dramatic Company, Flash Entertainers.....

Kausalee Naidoo: stepping stones,houseband for matinees way back when my uncle held matinee sessions at his dancing school in Fountain Lane.

Kausalee Naidoo: cresendos, had band practise in our flat in Scala.houseband of Island Hotel.

Devan Pillay: Jets, Footsteps, Vampires, Magnets, Surfers, Chains, Blue Jewels, Raiders, list goes on.
Logan K Naidoo: Do you remember the EL RICAS?

Logan K Naidoo: Not forgetting the SHYANNES or the BLUE RICKS,SAMS LATIN KINGS,STORMS

Ishaan Blunden: The Intermezzos, San Remos, Santiagos, Five Pennies, Rhythm Blue-birds, Songbirds, Calypsos, The Masterkeys.

Heather Ballim: Brenda and the Big Dudes (Brenda Fassie)....Mango Groove (Claire Johnston)....Bubblegum (Yvonne Chaka Chaka)....HotLine (P J Powers)....Savuka (John-ny Clegg)....LadySmith Black Mambazo....Four Jacks and a Jill....Rabbitt (Trevor Rab-in)....The Bats (Eddie Eksteen)....Harari (Sipho 'Hotstix' Mabuse)....SuperSoul (Lucky Dube)....

Ben Veeran: Los Pepitos. Pottie Veeran ...imo.

Venice Van Der Ross: The Rockets. ...Cape Town , The Strangers JHB

Venice Van Der Ross: The Sillouhettes also Jhb (not sure if I spelt their name correctly) Lead singer was Dougie September

Envernathan Enver Govender: There was a band called the Sideburns. Practiced in Canon ave and Villa Road

Brian George: Rebels(Admiral Hotel) The Dolphins " (Island Hotel), The Big Beat" All musicians were blind. A group from Cape town.

Jean Manning: The Insects, the Big Four, the Wild Ones, the Sheyanes, first three from Wentworth and from Cape Town the Invaders. I hired these bands at the Moon Hotel when I was a promoter in the 70s ,mainly in the afternoons from 2-6. They were very popular afternoon sessions for the teenagers, good all days.

Venessa Moodley: The group that Margaret Singana sang with. Jonathan Butler also came to Town.

Juanita Jenny N: My dad Victor Nundoo, formed and played the double base for the Five Pennies

Lance Saunders: Yes I remember your Dad a good musician. Five pennies was the first dance band I played with at the Himalaya for 6 mths. I was 18 at the time & then I left to join the Shyannes. Tony Harris was the saxophonist & leader of the band

Juanita Jenny N: I don't remember you, probably my sister Merle will, I do remember Tony Harris and Danny Pillay....wow small world

Lance Saunders That where I learnt to play all the dance & Latin music

Juanita Jenny N: Nice to know, now they are all playing underground music, and making a name for themselves....Not sure about Tony & Danny...

Lance Saunders: They are all gone. My uncle Henry Paul used to play the double bass for Blue Ricks for over 20 yrs & so did my cousin Lionel Peter who played the piano for a couple of years with them

Juanita Jenny N: My dad was with the Blue Ricks, and branched off to form the Five Pennies....I was still very little when all this transpired...when my dad the the music industry, he worked and a Clerk, and that was the end of his music career...

Shirley Lazarus: My beloved friend Albert joyce played in nd the savoy s in eighties s

Ishaan Blunden: Vivienne Kensley. A great singer from the old day who play with many bands

Ishaan Blunden: The Flames

Suzanne Parusnath: Thanks Ishaan Blunden for the nostalgia, and wonderful to see Lance Saunders , family friend and member of the former muso of the Shayannes on this page ...My Mom, Vivienne Kensley toured Africa with the Golden City Dixies, The African Follies, also sang with the Dukes combo, The Shyannes, Kreme, The Pacific Express and manny many more bands throughout South Africa...bringing back wonderful memories...

Ishaan Blunden: In Formation

Sergio Jacobs: What about Melody Supreme?
Anthea Roman: Vivienne Kensley! A LEGEND of note!...And my other mother! An honour and a privilege to have had this Precious lady in my life

Mahomed Gany: Raiders, los pepitos, vampires, stepping stone, crescendos, Schyennes, el remos, gay cavaliers. Many more . Raj music produced all these bands and artist . Eddie watts Sydney Caine . Many Indian bands the famous Rabin Heera an excellent clarinet player; also dukes combo recorded a Hindi album entitled easy organized produced by Raj music very good album Hindi tunes Latin styl

Urmilla Grimes: Vivienne Kensley, a great singer - brings back such precious memories of my late nephew , Arlen David. At our last family get together at the Ocean Terminal(1992),he asked her to sing the song, Hey. It was beautiful. She was with the Dukes Combo then. Less than 8 months later my nephew tragically died. That song and Vivienne singing it means a lot to me.

Boops Ramsing: Blue Jewels, Blue Ricks, The Dolphins, Sams Latin Kings.
Ishaan Blunden: Ok guys tune into Lotus Fm at 7pm. Yashika Ramautar

Leila Ally: Wow! What a song!...sweet memories!...loving the show!

Urmilla Grimes: Ishaan , the song was called "Hey".

Cheryl Bissessor Bhana: Any way I can listen to a recorded version of the TALKBACK show?..Im in New Zealand.

Suzanne Parusnath: Hi Urmilla Grimes...read ur post on the time my mom sang at ur family gathering...i have a recording of that song of which we made into a dvd of my mom's life in pictures which was created for mom's memorial service. .. will pass it on to Ishaan Blunden to share with the group and tag u...thanks for sharing as mom"s music and life touched many people.

Urmilla Grimes: Thanks Suzanne, also have the Dukes cd with your mum singing, Hey. Listen to it often.

Lionel Govender: meant to post these pics a while ago: not sure which band this was, possibly Calypso or Masterkeys, need to confirm with my mum. This was a dance band competition. My father played the double bass here.
Lionel Govender: from the band Calypso

Theo Ramlall: First live band I heard play were "The Bees" around '67...Newlands They hummed up quite a tune...!

Urmeela Goberdhan-Maharaj: My husband, Nelson, was bass guitarist for a band called 'Moby Grape' which disbanded. Then he played for 'The Plainsmen' .All based in the Kenville area. Does anyone remember them? I think they did hotel gigs, and I also think that they were not very well known.

Nerinadevi Ellapen: Naaz entainers,-the hi-lites-so many doesn't cum 2 mind rite nw

Praveena Singh: Rebirth/Rebel

Farouk Khan: Danny & The Roadrunners.

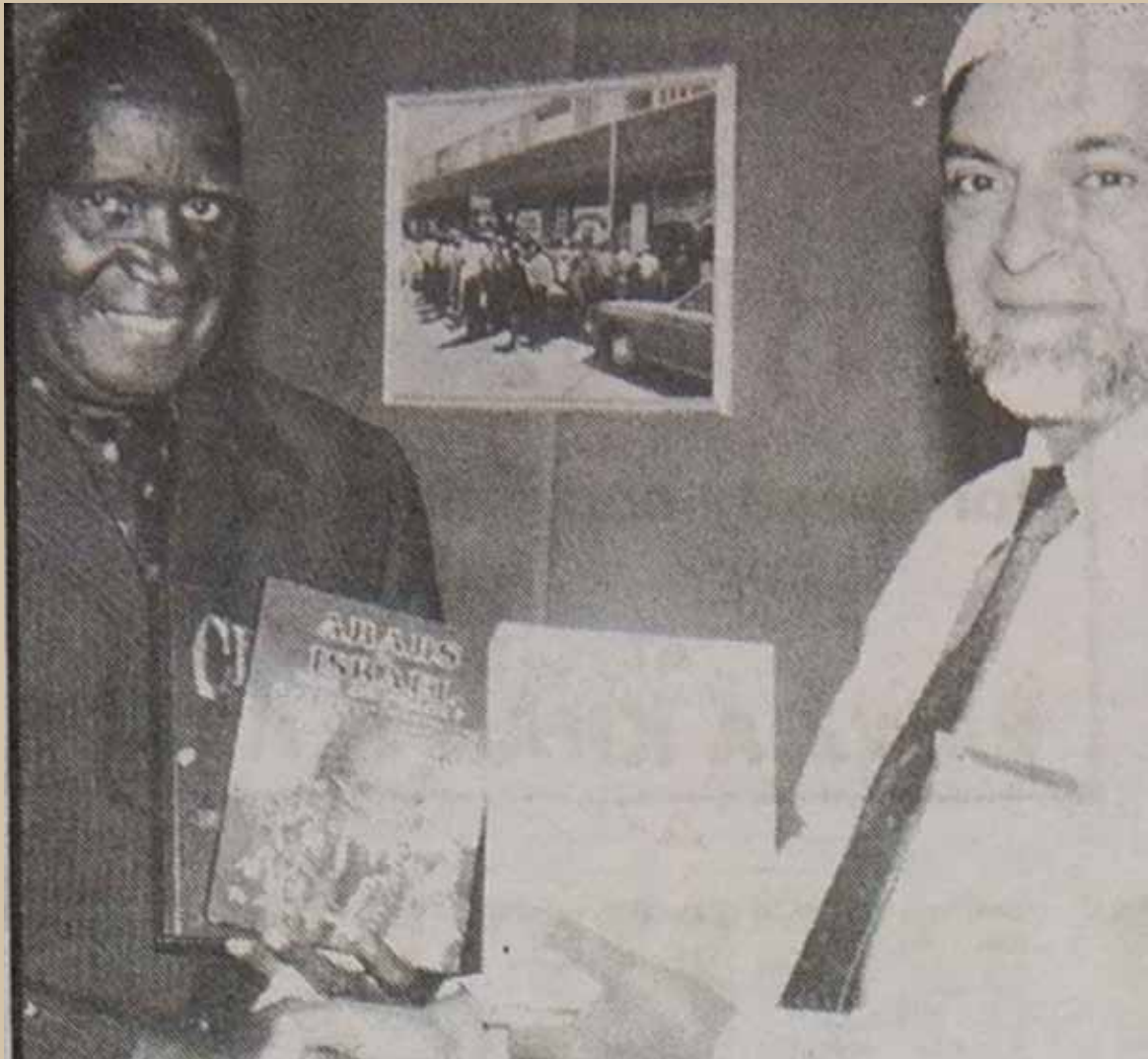
Manny Gounden: Stepping Stones from Alpine Road, Tapers from Aster Place and Storms from Lakspur Road. Mana George and the Gold Medallions

Urmeela Goberdhan-Maharaj: I remember the 'Stepping Stones'. Kamini, their sister, was a friend when I was in High School.

Manny Gounden Kamini: used the stage name Kamen Posey. She lived in Alpine Road in the Ramluckan Mansion called Verdic Villa. It has been sold. The lead guitarist for the Stepping Stones was the Late Gordon and the Late Roy was the drumme

KAUNDA COMES TO GREY STREET

Nirode Bramdaw



Islamic Propagation Centre International office bearer, Cassim Deedat presents copies of Ahmed Deedat’s written works and a copy of the Quran to former Zambian head of state, Dr Kenneth Kaunda.

When former Zambian premier Dr Kenneth Kaunda visited the offices of the Islamic Propagation Centre International (IPCI) last week, the office bearers found themselves wanting, FOR Dr Kaunda was not given to fine delicacies catered for his mid-morning reception, and instead of samosas, chillie bites and pies, Dr Kaunda ate only fruit.

Not aware of his strict diet of fruit and vegetables with juice or water to wash it down, the staff quickly made amends and the many fresh produce street vendors of the Grey Street CBD came in handy to satisfy Dr Kaunda’s unusual diet.

Visiting South Africa to attend the memorial services of the late Joe Slovo, Dr Kaunda visited the offices of the IPCI before returning back home. “I have come to the IPCI to pay my respects to the Muslim community of South Africa and to the work done by this centre.” Said Dr Kaunda in an exclusive interview with The Leader.

“This centre is one that espouses the message of peace and in Africa it is a message that is growing and one that we are in dire need of. We need to encourage and foster

that approach to life and in Zambia, Islam and its message of peace and brotherhood is a growing phenomenon.” Said Dr Kaunda. Critical of the new government of Zambia who have declared Christianity the national religion, Dr Kaunda made reference to his own term which spanned 37 years when the country was a secular state which encouraged religious freedom.

Asked on the country’s attitude to the entrepreneurial ability of non-resident Indians, which has been the centre of controversy elsewhere on the continent, Dr Kaunda said, “We have never had a problem with any minority in Zambia and welcome any member of the human race, and so long as there are law abiding and responsible individuals, we can only but welcome their input into the country.’

In conclusion, Dr Kaunda said he was heartened at the peaceful transition that has taken place in South Africa with his long-time friends, the African national Congress in government and pointed out that if Nigeria achieved a similar peace, the continent has the ability to become a world force.

SONG LYRIC’s

GLORIA ESTEFAN "Turn The Beat Around"

Turn the beat around
Love to hear percussion
Turn it upside down
Love to hear percussion
Love to hear it

Blow horns you sure sound pretty
Your violins keep movin' to the nitty gritty
But when you hear the scratch of the guitar scratchin'
Tthen you'll know that rhythm carries all the action, so

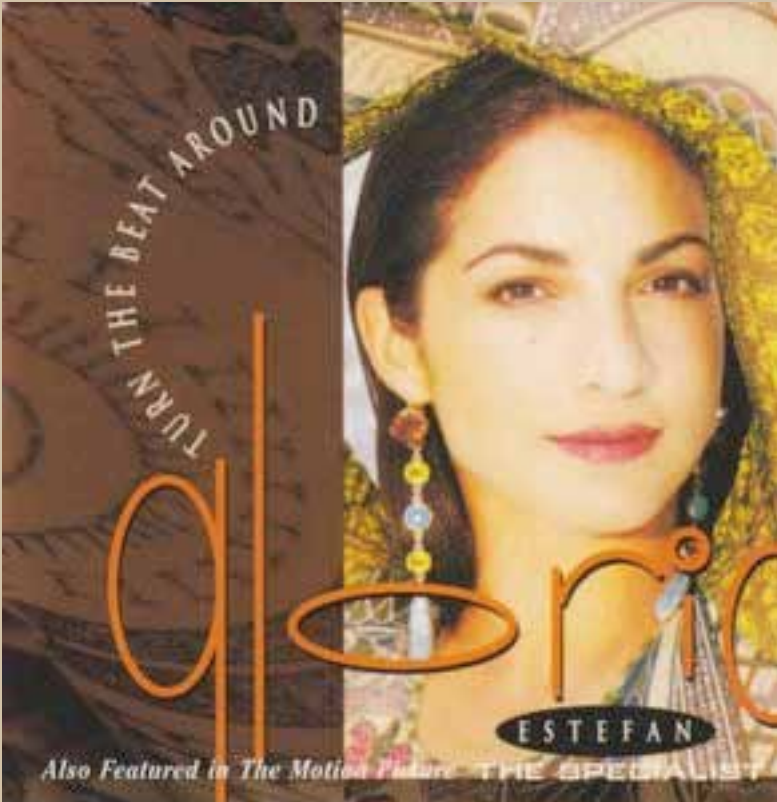
Turn the beat around
Love to hear percussion
Turn it upside down
Love to hear percussion
Love to hear it

Turn the beat around
Love to hear percussion
Turn it upside down
Love to hear percussion
Love to hear it

Flute player play your flute 'cause
I know that you want to get your thing off
But you see I've made up my mind about it
To me it is the rhythm, no doubt about it, woah woah
'Cause when the guitar player starts playing
With the syncopated rhythm, with the scratch, scratch, scratch
Makes me wanna move my body, yeah, yeah, yeah
And when the drummer starts beating that beat
He nails that beat with the syncopated rythm
With the rat, tat, tat, tat, tat, tat, on the drums, hey

Turn the beat around
Love to hear percussion
Turn it upside down
Love to hear percussion
Love to hear it

Turn the beat around
Love to hear percussion
Turn it upside down
Love to hear percussion
Love to hear it



FAMILY HISTORY

Remembering the Rajabs

by Kalim Rajab

A decade or so ago, the death of my grand-uncle Mohamed at 84 served as a curtain call for my extended family to finally break with their past and contemplate the difficult decision of selling our family estate, Salamat. Though beautiful and vast, the family had become too large for even it, and besides times had changed- the dawn of a modern age had emerged to sweep away the charms of the extended family system which had worked so well up until that point.

The estate was called Salamat, but to us it was simply the Big House. Set over 7 acres overlooking Durban, it was a house of fine culture, the most glorious artistic and literary patronage, noble if cautious political bearings and ecumenical community gatherings- where Indians of all backgrounds and religions mixed, indeed all races did, even at the height of apartheid. Visitors- the house always seemed full- would be greeted on arrival by the peacocks perched on the vast verandas, and once inside would sit amongst exquisite qums, Satsuma lamps and cloissane vases. But it was also a home of old-fashioned Indian family values. All these elements meshed to form something quite different from anything Durban had seen before, or since. Above all, it was a home of six brothers and their wives, united in their fealty towards each other and to their parents. The Salamat they created was fashioned in a style which, despite their humble beginnings in South Africa, reflected their aristocratic bearings from the old country. And perhaps more than anything else, it was a cultured pearl which reflected the patrician nature of a single man, my great-uncle Habib.

My paternal family hailed from the province of Uttar Pradesh in North Eastern India. The Rajabs were from the merchant class of Lucknow, and the Buxes, who generously provided the bulk of the daughters needed for marriage into the family, hailed from the Faizabad area. Though it was doubtful whether the two families would have known each other, the two cities were fairly close, roughly a hundred miles apart.

If you go far enough back, we were all peasants once. The swirly haze of collective memory closes in for the years before my great-great grandfather Rajab (his Christian name, soon to become our family surname at the hands of a colonial registering officer) left Lucknow, around 1882. Lucknow, once prized as an Oriental Paris and the centrepiece of the Awadhi kingdom, by that stage had already seen its glorious days passed after having been annexed by the Viceroy Lord Dalhousie, and doubtless its people saw it in the same light. And doubtless the young Rajab who left Lucknow was more impoverished than he felt was his birthright.

Sixty years later though, the Rajabs of my grandfather's age had risen to become a formidable generation. Each of them in their own way were different quivers making up an interesting family bow. The aristocratic Habib, though not the first born, was the acknowledged head of the family and oversaw the family's multiple business interests before fulfilling a calling for public service by becoming an Indian political and community leader of national importance. (Habib was universally known as AM- but that story, as confusing as idiosyncratic as my family itself- is best left for another day). Mohammad was the eldest and became the wise counsel, before stepping into the vacuum of his brother's early death by assuming some of his public office duties in Natal, and the chairmanship of the family's insurance investment. My grandfather Aziz was in many respects the rock which supported the rest of the family's ambitions- a man of genuine warmth and caring who eschewed the limelight, instead preferring the satisfaction of building the original furniture manufacturing and upholstery factories with which my family first came to be associated. Kumroo, or AK, was simply the Godfather- still remembered as a peerless showman, dispensing favour and patronage in his world of cinema, music and entertainment. Under him, our cinemas the Shah Jahan, Isfahan, Shiraz and Naaz and Shahrezade thrived and became great cultural outlets for the community at a time when non-whites were the recipients of precious few cultural amenities. (He would have loved to have lived to have seen

what his greatest prodigy, Anant Singh, made of himself.) Omar was a master craftsman who also had a talent for textiles, eventually leading the family's textile and wholesale clothing companies. Solly, the youngest and most dashing, was one of the first Indian law graduates in the country, and still runs Interiors International, the family interior decorating firm.



The Rajab Brothers: Habib, Mohammad, AK, Omar, Solly and my grandfather Aziz, 1972

But it was in their interests and recreational pursuits which set the brothers apart and for what, I suppose, they are chiefly remembered. Instinctively, they were somehow drawn to the flicker of the poetic, in whatever form. Mohamed, a lifelong student of Orientalism, impressed as an expert on Urdu poetry and ghazals, particularly Iqbal. He also grew to be a fine breeder of canaries in later life. AK was ahead of his time with his love and knowledge of sports cars, high fidelity equipment and photography. Many of the pictures which I still treasure – beautiful, artistic creations deserving of being framed between two book covers- were courtesy of his Hasselblad, and Ranjith Kally was a frequent companion of his in our photo darkroom. Omar understood the allure of the well-cut lapel, and experienced Saville Row when few in the country knew what the street stood for.

And looming largest was Habib, who without the benefit of formal training- or any previous exposure to the world of fine artistry- was a renaissance man. Perhaps it was intuitive to him, to grasp the delicacy of the blue underglaze Ming porcelain, or the courtly majesty of a Kangxi, or the grandeur of an original silk Tabriz. In time, he would come to be acknowledged as something of an authority on Chinese porcelain, to the extent of being invited as a guest to privately examine the Victoria & Albert Museum's porcelain collection, and to address a gathering of valuers at Sotheby's. (To his amusement, he soon discovered that one of his particular 18th century blue and whites was a superior version of the V&A one!) How did he do it, and especially while overseeing a sprawling business group? I don't suppose any one of us will ever know- but my one joy all these decades later is looking through his various books on the subject, each complete with his annotations and thoughts. When I do this, I get a glimpse into the mind of a man I only know from well-wishers' descriptions, and of the passion he somehow had for the subject.

But the love of Persian and Turkish carpets and Indian miniatures wasn't purely an artistic sense alone. It also grew partly out of a perception of slight.

One of my favourite pieces of historical fiction is Tariq Ali's remarkable Islamic Quintet, novels which tell of the fateful relationship between the world of Islam and Western Christendom over the last millennium. Perhaps I am drawn to it because of the tale of their creation, when, at a dinner party in London in the late 1990's, an ill-informed Englishman queried the legacy and achievements of the Islamic world- a spur for Ali

Remembering the Rajabs - continued

Ali to fashion his work. I remember this anecdote because it is precisely the same line of conversation which sparked off the most tangible aspect of my family's cultural expression. It was in the early 1950's, at one of the multiracial dinner parties which still occurred despite the inchoate apartheid laws. In a similar vein to the London dinner comment, the cutting remark questioning the heritage of the Islamic world was made- sparking off a drive to build a home that would show that there were those in the local community who were the equal of their European counterparts. The result was Salamat.

It seems folly to think of now. An estate, built on a hill as a Nasirid Moorish palace, of marble and archways, fountains and animals, rolling lawns and rose gardens, to house a sprawling extended family of around 30. Yet the Rajabs felt slight acutely, perhaps too acutely, and so this, together with the collection of art, was the first of their responses. The other was the Shah Jehan.

Many people still tell me of the sight of the six brothers together, greeting patrons with gifts at the top of the cinema's winding staircase on a Saturday night. We were of course not the first to venture into cinema- AI Kajee founded the Avalon Group, now owned by the Moosa family. But it is not overstretching the truth to say the Shah Jehan was the cultural mainstay of the Durban Indian community for a quarter of a century, from its opening in 1956 until finally being pushed into obsolescence by the arrival of home entertainment and the opening up of previously white-only attractions in Durban in the 1980s.

Ben Hur! Mother India! Do Aankhen Bara Haath! The Godfather! Mohammad Rafi! The Sabri Brothers! Pithikuli Murugadas! Percy Sledge! As a child of a democratic South Africa, and a product of the modern internet age, it's easy to forget the importance a single chain of cinemas and entertainment venues had on the psyche of the Indian community. But the people of my grandfather's and father's generation couldn't swim in the best beaches, were denied access to the greenest parks, theatre venues or even Western films which were deemed too perverse for their child-like minds. Against this, a suite of world class venues, crowned by a 2100 seater looking out onto the largest cinema screen in the Southern hemisphere, was something for the community to be proud of.

Looking back, it is also difficult to get to grips with the politics of the era. Habib would come to be a political leader in the 1970s, first on the President's Economic Advisory Council and later as the head of the South African Indian Council (SAIC). A political heir of AI Kajee and PR Pather, the grand old men of Indian politics, AM may now be viewed as an ameliorate for his attempt to work within the system for change. All three were political patricians, more Nehruvian in their bearing and political strategy than Gandhian- or Trotskyite, as indeed other Indian struggle activists were. That he was willing to seek compromise with the government and accept state aid in matters of education and health; and strengthen Indian economic rights even though these weren't afforded to the African classes, makes him now seem ideologically less pure to his detractors. Much of this criticism is warranted. Though it is easy for the contributions of such men to be dismissed by their critics, the one thing which one can say for Habib was that he undeniably loomed large in the political consciousness of his era and he was driven by a genuine desire to fight for greater Indian

rights and self-determination.

AM died, far too prematurely, at 58, as would AK a decade later. My own grandfather died at a similarly young age, cut down by too much cholesterol and sugar.

While my father Mamoo and my granduncle Solly, among others, remain and thrive in the city, the Rajabs of my generation have now substantially left Durban, a situation not uncommon with many historical Durban families. Some find themselves in Johannesburg, others Canada and London. All of us in some shape or form seek to emulate AM, or AK, or in my case Mohammed, though in truth none of us probably can. And the reality is that they are perhaps not the roles to aspire towards. The world has changed, South Africa has changed, and so too the nature of success. But at least we can look back as a family, proud in the knowledge that this is from where we came.

Kalim Rajab writes for the Daily Maverick, SA's largest online newspaper. His most recent collaboration is on the book "Memory Against Forgetting" which chronicles the photographic work of Ranjith Kally. He was educated at the Universities of Cape Town and Oxford



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ASASA's SWIMMING MEET

The Amateur Swimming Association of South Africa will hold its inter-provincial championships and synchronised swimming competitions from 2 to 8 April at the Kings Park Pool. The other participating provinces are Boland, Western Cape, Southern Transvaal and Eastern Cape.

The opening ceremony will take place at the Kings Park Pool on Sunday April 2. Both swimming and the synchronised swimming competitions commence on Monday, April 3 and ends on Saturday April 8.



Hopeful entrants of the Amateur Swimming Association who will represent Natal at the 1995 interprovincial swimming championship of the Amateur Swimming Association of SA to be held from 1 to 8 April at the Kings Park Pool. They have high hopes of retaining the Interprovincial trophy which they won after a close battle with Western Cape at the championships held in Cape Town last year.

High-flyers Reservoir Hills United



High-flyers Reservoir Hills United are gearing up for the season in fine form and seem set to turn heads as in previous seasons. The team are pictured above with their new Management team, coach – Billy McGillvery (front left) (ex-Tonga Crusaders), assistant coach Wonderboy Mtshali (standing second from left) (ex-Manning Rangers) and manager Anand Moodley (ex Darby United)

TOURNAMENT TRIBUTE TO 'BANDY' MANDAN

Teddyboy Buthelezi of the Umlazi Tennis Association and the founder of the Umlazi Tennis Academy will be staging a Veterans Tournament at the Kings Park Tennis Centre on the 16, 17 and 18 June in memory of the late PR 'Bandy' Mandan

Mr Mandan who was the caretaker of the Jeevan Kara Centre and a great supporter of tennis was killed in a robbery. According to Mr Buthelezi, 'Bandy' as he was popularly known, made a great contribution to the game.

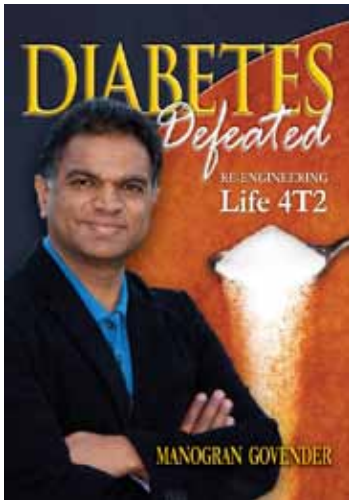
Describing Mr Mandan as a 'people's person', Mr Buthelezi said that he was always willing to lend a helping hand and a 'few tennis tips' as well. Bandy had a dream to see blacks and whites playing tennis together and representing South Africa world-wide', he added.

The Veterans Tournament will cater for the above 45 age group. 'I am also staging this tournament to show veterans that they have not been forgotten because of their age,' Mr Buthelezi said,



Chairman of the Umlazi Tennis Association, Teddyboy Buthelezi has organised a veteran's tournament at the Kings Park Tennis Centre in memory of "Bandy" Mandan. He is seen above with the floating trophy that is up for grabs.

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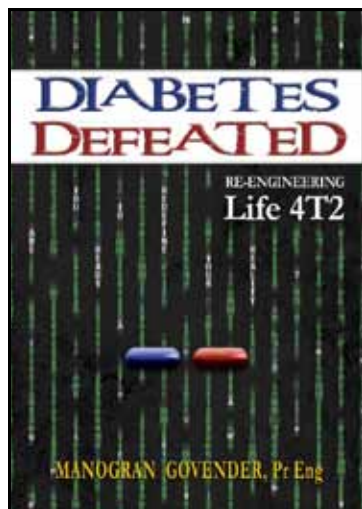
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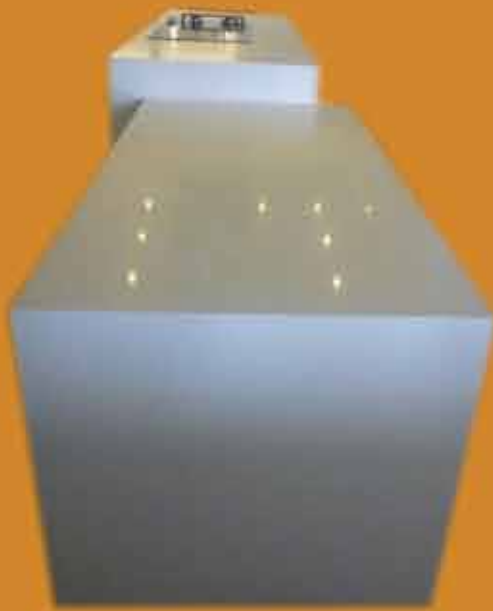




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