

A mini AP in Kutch

Andhraites make up the single largest non-local community in India's largest district

VENKATESAN PARTHASARATHY

A theatre in Gujarat's Gandhidham village is showing the Telugu film *Rachcha*. The house is packed. Surprising? Kutch, India's largest district, is home to a large number of people from Andhra Pradesh. At 60,000, Andhraites are the single largest non-local community in the Kutch. Most of these 60,000 Andhraites have migrated to Gujarat from the West Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam.

A majority of the Andhraites here are second generation Telugu-speaking people whose ancestors had emigrated in the 1950s in search of employment. Trivia holds it that since there was no direct route to Kutch back then, they had to make a five- to six-stage journey and finally reached Jamnagar by sea. "From the illiterate popu-



TRADITIONALLY ROOTED In spite of having migrated, the community continues to stay in touch with its culture

lation working in the small scale industries, our people have come a long way," said Mr Abis Jesudas, a local businessman. Primarily engaged in shipping and export sectors, Andhraites in Kutch are a thriving community accounting for a bulk of engineers and workers in the Kandla and Mundra ports.

"We try to preserve our social way of life," said Mr Bokha Srinivas. "There is an Andhra Pradesh Vidyalaya School catering to our people, a Tirupati Balaji temple and Sai Baba temple as well." N.T. Rayudu, who

Theatres play Telugu films and local newspaper vendors supply Telugu newspapers

N.T. RAYUDU MIGRANT

has his roots in West Godavari, said that theatres play latest Telugu films and local newspaper vendors

supply Telugu newspapers. The Andhraites have formed an umbrella organisation - Kutch Andhra Abhuydya Seva Samaj - to look after the social well being of the community. The Samaj organises a weekly *Annadanam* for the poor and also celebrates festivals like Ugadi with pomp.

With no direct rail connectivity, going back to their roots in Andhra Pradesh is a nightmare for most. The Samaj has launched a campaign to petition the authorities concerned to establish a rail link with Andhra Pradesh.

Politically influenced in Maryland

Meet the youngest chair woman elected in the US who hails from Hyderabad



SUKARNA MONDAL

Raheela Ahmed, an 18-year-old Indian American hit the headlines across the globe when she won the Prince George's County (Maryland) Board of Education election defeating the incumbent School Board Chairwoman by nearly 1,000 votes. This young lady hails from Hyderabad and has created history by becoming the youngest person to win the position.

Raheela's father, Shukoor Ahmed, has been a huge influence on her debut into politics. She says about her father, "His political involvement began when I was just five years old when he ran for the State Delegate position in Maryland. He consistently involved my sister and me in his political aspirations, which I believe, influenced me greatly in understanding the significance of government and public policies."

Talking about politicians, she says, "Politicians should be guided by core principles of equality, transparency and justice. They need to be selfless, bring the best in people and stand up to protect the rights of the powerless."

Raheela also has a message to the burqa-clad women who aspire to move ahead in life. "We are all unique individuals and I hope my victory in the primary can open up opportunities for women and minorities. Anyone can break barriers of age, religion, gender and affluence. I hope conservative parents let their girls pursue their dreams, be it public service, sports or business, etc."

But despite her achievement, Raheela doesn't wish to join active politics now. She says, "I am looking to serve on the School Board as a means to give back to my community. I do not want to be a career or generational politician although the political conditions in the US are rapidly changing as Indian Americans and other minorities are playing an active role now."

Winners at the Mecca of education

After 19 years, an Indian team has won this title at Oxford

THOSE WHO ARGUED THE CASE (Left) Ridhi Kabra, Ishita Bharadwaj and Jagdish John, (below) Kunal Singh, B. Dhruv and Sourav Roy



COREENA SUARES

Six young aspiring lawyers from Nalsar university have done India and Hyderabad and India on the global stage by winning the Moot Court Competition 2012 at the Oxford University as well as the International Commercial Arbitration Competition in Austria.

Kunal Singh, B. Dhruv and Sourav Roy won the prestigious Monroe E. Price Media Law Competition at Oxford University by beating competitors from around the world. "We qualified for the moot court after finishing fourth team in the South Asia Competition in Delhi. It's a big thing to compete at the Mecca of education," said Sourav.

This is the second time in 19 years that an Indian team has won the moot court, which is dominated by American, British and German students.

"This competition is no less than a World Cup for students of law. We faced the best teams in the world and the differ-

ence in terms of judging fetched us the title. We were very apprehensive in the beginning but had a very strong gut feeling that we would win," he added.

Meanwhile in Austria, Ishita Bharadwaj, Ridhi Kabra and Jagdish Menezes kept the Nalsar flag flying high at the International Commercial Arbitration Competition. "Initially, it wasn't going our way because we were a small team and faced close to 287 international groups," said Ishita. "In the finals, our team argued for the respondent in the dispute, which concerned international arbitration and sake of goods,"

Ridhi said. Ever since the victory they have been receiving calls from international law firms asking the three to intern with them, added Ridhi.

