

# News Notes

## A Funny Boy

Take a good look at **Shyam Selvadurai**. *Funny Boy*, the literary debut of the 29-year-old Colombo-born novelist, has been making waves in Canada. The book threads together six related stories that follow the protagonist Arjie from "the idyll of early childhood through the gathering Sinhalese-Tamil tensions to the simultaneous terror and wonder of a youth on the tremulous cusp of his sexuality and a country on the brink of bloody rioting" [Quill and Quire]. Selvadurai's work has appeared in the anthology *Meanwhile in Another Part of the Forest: Gay Stories from Alice Munro to Yukio Mishima* as well as *Khush Khayal*, the Toronto-based gay South Asian magazine. This "funny boy" might become the most "suitable boy" of the year!



Karen Fernandez

## Just Not Cricket

"Ali" received a letter by the **Lahore Cricket Association** expelling him from the team for being a "faggot." This letter was presented as evidence by the 27-year-old Pakistani man in his appeal for asylum in the U.S. He had also been beaten up by the Pakistani police in 1990. He was granted asylum on August 31 by Judge Gabriel Vidella—the first decision of its kind since Attorney General Janet Reno declared that for immigration purposes gays are a "particular social group" that is persecuted in certain countries. *The Washington Blade* quoted "Ali" as saying "I would be a dead man" if he was deported. He now lives in Kansas City with his American lover.

## The Hijra vote

A government decision to allow hijras to choose their gender on voting polls will enable India's 1.2 million hijras to cast their votes for the first time, reported UPI on November 7. "In my 15 years in Delhi, I have never dared approach a polling booth for the fear of being asked awkward questions about my gender," a hijra said. When queried, most hijras wanted to be identified

as women on their identity cards.

## In the Top 50

The December 5 issue of *Time* magazine lists **Urvashi Vaid**, activist and former executive director of the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, among its top 50 Americans under the age of 40 with the potential for becoming tomorrow's leaders.

## A Season of Giving

**Horizons Foundation**, the oldest gay and lesbian foundation in the U.S., awarded a \$750 grant to TriKone to help purchase a computer. **Tinku Ishtiaq**, Development Director of TriKone and one of its founding members, said, "This is the first grant TriKone received from any foundation. It will enable us to move towards having our own publishing facilities." At present, *India Currents*, a California-based monthly magazine, has been donating these resources.

TriKone also received \$1,600 from the **GAPA Community HIV Project (GCHP)** to support the publication of *TriKone Magazine* and *TriKone Calendar* along with projects like setting up a booth at the India Day Parade in California. These funds are part of a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to GCHP's National Program for community organizing among gay Asian Pacific Islander groups in the U.S.

GCHP also funded Ishtiaq's trip to Washington, DC, to share his experiences about forming groups like TriKone with the newly-formed South Asian group **Khush-DC**. ▼

*Tinku Ishtiaq (right) accepting the \$750 grant from Mike Voight of Horizons Foundation*



Bobby Law