

S LOCAL DIASPORA



Modern yet cultural at heart: NIRDESH BHIKSHU

*My success lies solely in the happiness of my mother...
so without her happiness and blessings, I am nothing.*



1. Which town are you from? How long did you live there?
I am from Pietermaritzburg in Kwazulu-Natal and lived there for 34 years.
2. Tell us about your siblings and parents.
I am the fourth of five children. I have three sisters and one brother. My dad died at the tender age of 37, leaving my mum a widow at the age of 35.

3. Which school did you attend and where did you further your studies?
I matriculated with an "A" aggregate exemption at Silver Heights Secondary School in Pietermaritzburg. I completed my National Diploma in Public Management and Administration with a Cum Laude pass at the Technikon Natal. I am currently completing a degree through Unisa in African Politics and Development Administration.

4. Tell us about your hobbies, sports, cars, dress (fashion), favourite food, and which city do you love the most in South Africa and why?
Cooking and shopping is definitely my passion...
Ha! Ha! Ha! I admire nice cars, but so long as it can get me from point A to point B, I am satisfied. The job is really demanding and hectic so sport does not feature much on my agenda...a workout at the gym is the closest I get to sport.
Mmmm...now clothes, shoes and jewellery....that's my language! I love fashionable clothing and mostly enjoy wearing

traditional Indian attire...I have lots after 26 visits to India and the one thing I am proud of, is being of INDIAN origin.

That is the same about food...well, I consider myself typically South African Indian where the staple diet is curry and rice or breyani (it doesn't help much for gym junkies though). With the amount of travelling that I do in this job, we rarely get to enjoy home cooked food, so whenever I am at home, I cook up a storm of Indian food. Pietermaritzburg is definitely my favourite city in the country.... because that's where my mum and all my family are....I am old fashioned....so home is where the heart is! But the people of Pietermaritzburg are also warm, friendly and never too busy to stop and say "hello."

5. Tell us about your first holiday and how many countries did you visit to date.
My very first holiday was to India of course! Where else? I have visited almost 47 countries so far. Some of these have had repeated visits as well.
6. What do you like about your career?
The adrenaline rush to meet deadlines is by far the best... but the complexity of being a Chief of Staff in the Ministry of Transport with varied tasks and responsibilities is also an ongoing challenge. You have to keep abreast of everything at the same time and have a memory that is like an Intel processor...I love my job because I get to meet a variety of people with diverse cultures, beliefs and certainly different personalities. Although it is tiring, being on call 24/7 is indeed a remarkable feature of the job...it keeps me on my toes, always keeps me fit and is