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JOURNAL

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Anurag Chandra Of Corona Found Guilty Of Murdering Three Teens

RIVERSIDE, CA (IANS) – The man charged with ramming his car into a vehicle resulting in the deaths of three teens who were fleeing after one of them allegedly exposed himself at his house as a prank, has been found guilty.

Anurag Chandra, 45, was convicted in a court here on April 28 on three charges of murder in the deaths of three teens and attempted murder for the three teens who survived after their car was hit by his.

In January 2020, the group of teens were playing a prank and picked Chandra's home in the city of Corona as they thought teens lived there. One of them rang the

Contd. on P2



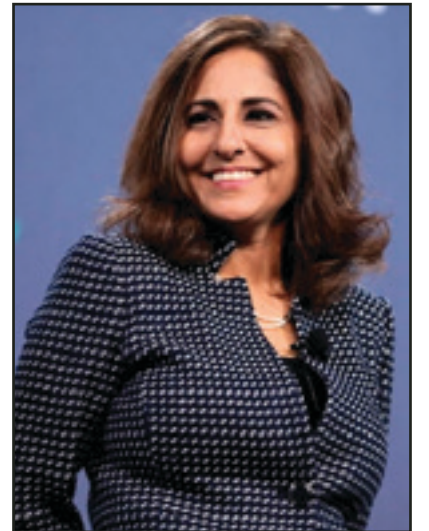
Anurag Chandra

Biden Names Neera Tanden Domestic Policy Advisor

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - President Joe Biden has picked Indian-American Neera Tanden to serve as Assistant to the President and Domestic Policy Advisor, following former Ambassador Susan Rice's exit from that role.

Tanden, who currently serves as Senior Advisor to President Biden and Staff Secretary, will be the first Asian-American to lead any of the three major White House policy councils in history.

"I am pleased to announce that Neera Tanden will continue to drive the formulation and implementation of my domestic policy, from economic mobility and racial equity to



Neera Tanden

health care, immigration and education," Biden said. Tanden

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Amidst Outcry, CA Moves Ahead With Caste Discrimination Bill



India-West News Desk

SACRAMENTO, CA - A bill seeking to ban caste discrimination in California was unanimously passed by the state's Senate Judiciary Committee on April 25, amidst strong opposition from Indian American business and temple organizations.

This will now move the California Caste Bill SB 403 forward to the Senate. If passed, the bill introduced by State Senator Aisha Wahab, the first Muslim and Afghan American elected to the state legislature, would make California

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Mass Shooting In TX: Indian Amongst Victims



Thatikonda Aishwarya Reddy

India-West News Desk

ALLEN, TX - Thatikonda Aishwarya Reddy, 27, of Hyderabad is among those killed in the mass

shooting at a mall here on May 7, which saw eight dead and seven others seriously injured.

According to local media re-

Contd. on P2

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Lecture Explores The Ganges & Human-Environment Realtions Through Time



Speaker Dr. Sudipta Sen at the Yadunandan Center in Long Beach

India-West Staff Reporter

LONG BEACH, CA - The Yadunandan Center for India Studies at California State University, Long Beach, on April 17, held the 23rd annual Solanki Lecture, the longest-running endowed lecture series about the history and culture of South Asia and the South Asian diaspora in the US.

This year's speaker was Dr. Sudipta Sen, Professor of History at UC Davis, winner of the William Jones Memorial Medal from the Asiatic Society, and author of two major works about the history of India's colonial period as well as the popular book Ganges: The Many Past of an Indian River.

Sen gave a fascinating tour of the ecologies of the Ganges delta. Through maps and photographs, accounts of travelers, and scholars, the audience learned how this vast constellation of low-lying jungles, lakes, channels, marshes, swamps, and mangroves has changed over time. He then talked about the lesser-known histories and lifeworlds of the people who have adapted their lives in relation to the species, weather patterns, and ocean tides of the region. His provocative lecture reconceptualized the periodization of climate change in the past while laying out how these populations remain the foremost victims and survivors of the climate change crisis in the present.

COMMUNITY

Anurag Chandra of Corona Found Guilty

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doorbell of the house and pulled down his pants to expose his backside, reports said. Chandra testified in court that he thought that the teen was a sex offender and feared for his 16-year-old daughter and his wife. He said that he followed the teen, who got into a car with the five others and chased them to "express my anger" but not with the intention of hurting them.

According to authorities and the teen driver Sergio Campusano interviewed by NBC, Chandra's Infinity Q50 hit their car from the back, and it hurtled off the road and hit a tree in Temescal Valley, about 100 km from Los Angeles. Daniel Hawkins of Corona, Drake Ruiz of Corona, and Jacob Ivascu of Riverside, all 16, were killed.

Chandra drove at a speed of almost 160 kmph in a 65-mph zone, according to police. The Indian American who admitted to drinking 12 beers before the incident, could face a sentence of life without parole when he is sentenced in July.

The newspaper said that Chandra was the vice president of a company that distributes "essential oils" -- plant extracts used as a scent in aromatherapy.

Mass Shooting In TX: Indian Amongst Victims

Contd. from P1

ports the 27-year-old was shopping with a friend at the Allen Premium Outlets in the northern suburbs of Dallas when the gunman opened fire. Her friend who also sustained injuries is currently in stable condition at the hospital. The assailant, identified as Mauricio Garcia, was later shot dead by a police officer.



Thatikonda was a project manager with a private company in Dallas and lived and worked in McKinney. She had moved to the US from India about five years ago. She was the daughter of Rangareddy district judge T Narsi Reddy. After getting a degree in civil engineering from Osmania University she came to the US to get her graduate degree in construction management from Eastern Michigan University.

Poignant reports from India said the parents were shattered by the news. The victim's mother Aruna had spoken to her a few hours prior to the shooting and her daughter had told her she was going to the mall with her friend. On hearing of the shooting, Aruna had tried to reach her daughter over the phone but did not get any response.

Brian E Harvey, the chief of



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OPINION

Will Abortion Be The Wedge Issue In 2024?

By PETER WHITE

Seventy-five percent of voters say women and their doctors should decide; just nine percent say judges and politicians should decide.

Polls were clear before and after the 2022 midterm election. A large majority of Americans think abortion should be legal. More than any other issue, abortion rights brought people out to vote in the last election.

“The Supreme Court’s decision a few months before the 2022 midterm elections was political suicide,” said Suba Srinivasaraghavan, a field organizer with They See Blue in Virginia.

After the decision, she saw a surge in volunteering forget-out-the-vote initiatives. “More people said, ‘yes’ to field organizers, to not just go out and vote, but also to volunteer, to write cards, knock on doors and to donate to many campaigns,” Srinivasaraghavan said.

“Abortion all of a sudden became front and center for many constituents and candidates alike,” she added.

During a national briefing by Ethnic Media Services, five organizers explained why reproductive rights a top issue in the 2024 Presidential Election would be.

“Voters across the country and across the political spectrum said, ‘Enough is enough.’ And in every state where abortion was on the ballot, voters supported protecting and expanding access,” said Angela Vasquez-Giroux, Pro-Choice America’s Vice President of Communications and Research.

A poll conducted by Impact Research after the midterm election, found that abortion has the power to continue to drive votes in future elections. A majority (52%) of voters are concerned that Republicans will try to ban abortion care, including 74% of Black voters and 53% of non-Democrats who voted Democratic in the midterms. A plurality (48%) said they are less likely to support Republicans if they attempt to ban abortion care.

Lupe Rodriguez, National Executive Director, Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice, noted that abortion care has never been accessible for women of color. “Anti-abortion politicians have been working for decades to make abortion difficult to get, and the continued attacks on abortion access fall hardest on communities of color and people working to make ends meet,” she said.

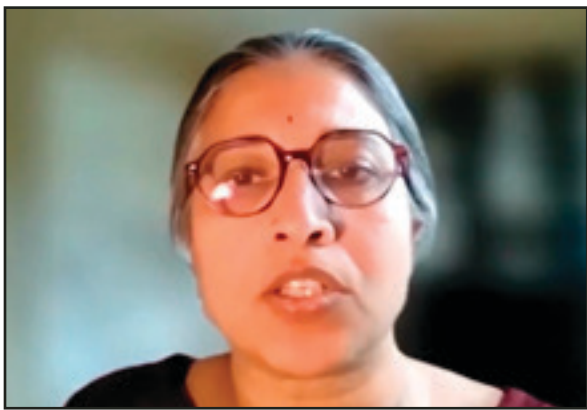
False claims and misinformation about abortions and people who provide them



have many members of the Latina and Latinx community confused about new abortion laws and where to get healthcare, says Lupe Rodriguez, National Executive Director, Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice.

The Latina Institute and the National Partnership for Women & Families released research that found that nearly 6.5 million Latinas – 42 percent of all Latinas ages 15-49 – live in the 26 states that have banned or are likely to ban abortion. They represent the largest group of women of color impacted by current or likely state bans.

The research also found that nearly 3 million Latinas living in these states are economically insecure and don’t have access to the funds they would need to travel to another state for abortion care.



Suba Srinivasaraghavan

“This is upsetting, but not surprising. Abortion bans fall hardest on Latinas and other communities of color who may work multiple jobs that provide no sick days or insurance coverage, and live in underserved communities,” said Rodriguez.

Although abortion is supported by a majority of voters in both major parties, Republican Party officials have distanced themselves from their membership and paid a price. Women organizing for autonomy and the right to choose to say they will pay again in 2024.

“Radical judges and politicians are taking away our fundamental rights to make decisions about if, when, and how we have a family, and we’re not going to take that sitting down. We will fight, organize, and build power, and vote until we can make our own decisions again,” said Yvonne Hsu, a policy chief with the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum.

Hsu said that Asian American women and Pacific Islanders find themselves in a place “where the clocks have literally been turned back against us”.

Abortion restrictions will make accessing abortion care more difficult, and in some cases impossible, for AAPI women, says Yvonne Hsu, Chief Policy and Government Affairs Officer, National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum.

In June 2022, by a 6-3 vote, the Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization which held women do not have a constitutional right to abortion. Since then, state legislatures have enacted abortion bans in 14 states and restricted them in 12 others.

“The Dobbs decision has been yet another blow to AAPI women seeking abortion care by creating a landscape where states have been emboldened to enact their own abortion restrictions or bans,” Hsu said.

Hsu noted that cultural, economic, and logistical barriers for AAPI community members, especially those working in front-line service jobs, make traveling and getting an abortion often difficult, if not impossible.

“These impacts on the AAPI community have fueled NAPAWF’s work galvanizing Asian American women voters in critical states like Florida, Georgia, and Texas,” she said.

Currently, battles continue in several states about access to medication abortions. According to the Guttmacher Institute, a two-drug combination of mifepristone and misoprostol accounted for more than half of all facility-based abortions in 2020.

A Texas lawsuit could stop access to abortion pills nationwide if it succeeds in reversing the FDA’s approval of mifepristone. In North Carolina and West Virginia

Abortion rights advocates have filed lawsuits challenging restrictions on access to abortion pills. “Our partners across the country are faced with ensuring their communities have access to reproductive healthcare including, safe and affordable abortion care, while also responding to other community needs,” said Ebony Baylor, Vice President of Government Affairs, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda.

Baylor said Black women do not live single-issue lives and when thinking about who best represents them, they consider many factors.

Ebony Baylor, VP of Government Affairs, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda, says denying women, especially Black women, access to abortion care will worsen America’s already high maternal mortality rate.

“Our civil and human rights are being attacked from all sides – lack of access to health care, clean water, childcare, social justice, and more are all things Black women think about when facing crucial decisions about their lives, families, and communities,” she said.

Access to the ballot box remains a big issue for Black women voters, says Baylor. “Voter suppression and subversion laws are being introduced by elected leaders in state houses across the country at an alarming rate,” she said.

How significant will reproductive rights be in 2024? Baylor noted that Black voters are not single-issue voters, but abortion rights are going to be an important issue.

“It’s going to be a deciding factor,” she said. (Ethnic Media Services)

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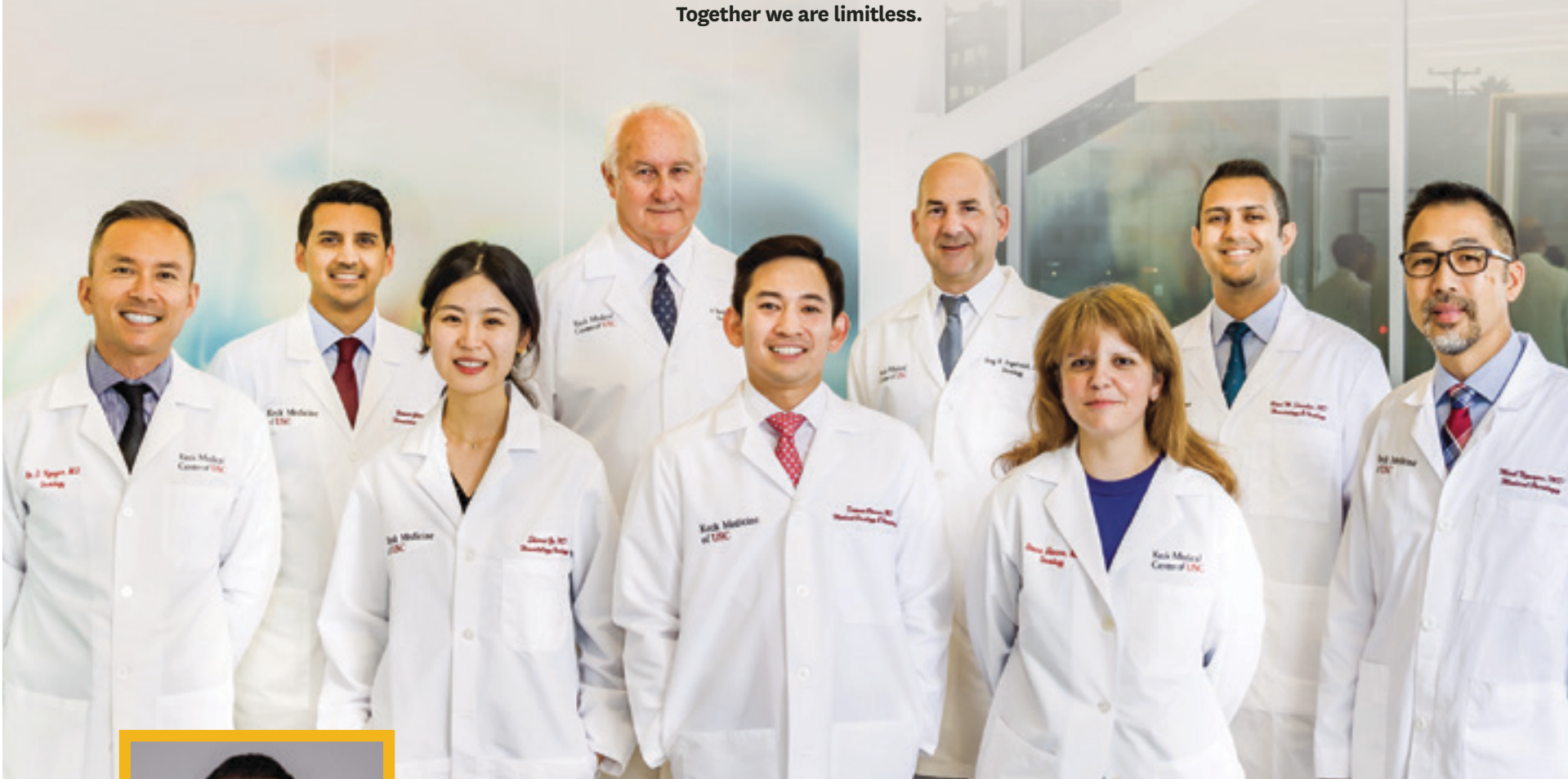
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Vishal Gaur Named Dean Of Cornell’s Management School



Vishal Gaur

NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - Vishal Gaur has been named the Anne and Elmer Lindseth Dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University.

Gaur, who is the Emerson Professor of Manufacturing Management and professor of operations, technology, and information management, will begin his role on July 1.

Gaur joined the Cornell faculty in 2007 and previously served as associate dean for MBA programs at the Johnson School.

“The Johnson School is a leader in graduate business education and

scholarship. I’m excited to work towards the mission of the school,” Gaur said in a statement.

As associate dean for MBA programs from 2014-19, he launched the Digital Technology Immersion, in which MBA candidates and students earning their M.P.S. in data science or applied statistics develop skills in coding, databases and advanced analytics

and learn to leverage them to tackle challenges faced by leading companies.

He also created the Master of Science in Business Analytics program offered through Cornell, which provides working professionals a hands-on opportunity to learn about data analytics tools essential to analyzing and optimizing business decisions.

A Ph.D. from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, Gaur is an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, and a B. Tech in Computer Science and Engineering from IIT-Delhi.

COMMUNITY

Amidst Outcry, CA Moves Ahead With Caste Discrimination Bill

Contd. from P1

the country’s first state to make caste bias illegal by adding it as a protected category in the state’s anti-discrimination laws.

Over a hundred California Dalits testified before the committee and spoke of bias, exclusion, and violence they’ve experienced at the hands of what they said was meted out to them by caste-privileged co-workers and bosses. In all, between the live testimony and phone calls, a little over 200 people said they support the bill and over 400 said they oppose it.

Equality Labs, the brain behind the anti-caste discrimination resolution in Seattle, WA, has been spearheading a nationwide campaign. Seattle became the first US city to outlaw caste discrimination in February.

Thenmozhi Soundararajan founder of Equality Labs told the media, “Today, I proudly stand in solidarity with my caste-oppressed community members, caste equity movement organizers, and allies to say that caste-oppressed Californians are now one step closer to attaining the protections they deserve and are entitled to.”

The protestors at the hearing were vociferous too. Several



people were on the sidewalks holding signs against the bill. Many referred to what had transpired earlier this month, when the California Civil Rights Department voluntarily dismissed its case alleging caste discrimination against two Cisco engineers, Sundar Iyer and Ramana Kompella. The litigation against the Silicon Valley tech giant remains though. Several Indian business groups and temples issued a joint statement against it.

Asian American Hotel Owners

Association, the largest hotel owner’s association in the US with 20,000 members strongly opposed it. Kalpesh Joshi, a Board Member, said “We believe that it will disproportionately impact Indian hotel and motel owners.”

Vipul Patel, president of Asian American Shop Owners Association, representing over 8,300 stores, said, “We fear that this bill, if passed, will encourage frivolous lawsuits against small businesses, causing many of them to go out of business.” Tejal Shah, convenor of the Hindu Mandir Executives’ Conference, an umbrella organization of Hindu temples in North America, said the organizations and individuals behind the bill have made their disdain for Hindu customs and traditions very clear.

Led by the Coalition of Hindus of North America, over 100 other organizations said the bill targets South Asians, along with other people of color such as those from other regions. “If passed, the bill violates the civil rights of South Asians and other people of color and denies them equal protection and due process,” it said.

Terraces at Laguna Beach



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Luxury Indian Wear Brand Frontier Heritage Expands Footprint, Opens In Bay Area



Frontier Heritage recently expanded its operations by opening a new store in Fremont, CA. Punjabi actress Sonam Bajwa inaugurated the showroom.

By REENA RATHORE

FREMONT, CA- Frontier Heritage, Southern California's leading luxury Indian traditional wear label, recently opened its doors to a new location in Northern California, filling a void in the area that is home to a thriving Indian American community. The 2,000 sq ft store, located in central Fremont at 3171 Mowry Avenue, was inaugurated on March 19 by popular Punjabi actress Sonam Bajwa.

"We are so excited to be in the Bay



Guests are seen at the launch of Frontier Heritage which offers the ability to customize many of the pieces in their collection.

Area. This has been a long project of ours. We have been hoping to expand for many years and finally seeing it come to fruition has been a very rewarding feeling. We are looking forward to serving our clients here," Tanmay Asija, the son of the owners Ravi and Neeta Asija, told India-West.

Their appeal lies in their philosophy of always striving to understand that each customer is unique and thereby crafting custom solutions, said Asija, who also serves as the store's manager.

The brand, known for its bespoke bridal/groom wear, offers a curated selection of ethnic and contemporary styles and unparalleled artistry in a range of silhouettes and varied color options.

Ornate embroideries like zardozi, kundan, mirror work, beads, sequin, pearls, and intricate threadwork form a lot of the collection which features lehengas, sarees, suits, and gowns in rich fabrics like brocade, silk, georgette, and organza for that ultra luxurious look. Intricate jewelry pieces that complement the look also adorn the shelves of the store.

Frontier Heritage has been a family business for generations. It was founded in 1954 in a small town in Punjab by Asija's grandfather that has eventually grown into several boutiques across the globe.

In North America, Frontier Heritage opened its first showroom in Toronto, Canada, in November

2005, and it entered the U.S. market in February 2006 by establishing its second store in Artesia, CA.

Over the years, the brand has learned the art of breaking through the clutter and carving out a niche in the market, also attracting Hollywood A-listers such as actress Halle Berry and Indian American actress/producer Mindy Kaling to their store.

The Bay Area store Asija said, is pulling out all the stops and is taking a somewhat different approach to customer service. "It's a totally different store compared to our other showrooms which are more traditional, bigger in size. Both our L.A. and Toronto stores are 3,500 square feet in size," Asija said. "This one takes a totally different approach to retail. To make it more of a modern and more boutique-y experience, we have created private areas/sections for our clients so that they feel comfortable and that they are getting an exclusive experience when they are shopping."

In the rapidly changing world of fashion and priorities, Frontier Heritage reiterated Asija, uses a one-on-one approach in an effort to find the best outfit for every customer: from choosing the fabric to embroidery design and thread color.

He went on to note that for wedding wear in particular, exclusivity is of paramount importance, with brides wanting a celebratory experience. "They want to feel special in the whole wedding planning and the buying process. Our goal is to make sure that every client, whether they are a bride or not, feel like that they are having a unique experience that is defined for them," Asija added. Asija's parents ran the store for multiple years while he helped them on the side. Expanding their footprint was always on the young entrepreneur's mind who joined the family business in 2020 after finishing his education and working for a couple of years. The brand zeroed in on Fremont because of its accessibility to their local clients and neighboring cities. Designed in-house, the collection comes to life in India. The only outside designer whose creations can be found in the store is renowned Indian designer Seema Gujral.

Milestone Day in the History of Saahas for Cause

By Sheetal S. Ayyatan

Community service, education, cohesion practiced

What a momentous day it was! As a non-profit organization that does a lot of community outreach, every event Saahas for Cause partakes in is discussed and meticulously planned. Hence, when serendipitously April 29th became the chosen day for Saahas for Cause to be part of four diverse events in 3 different counties ranging from South to North California, the staff and volunteers stood ready. As time progressed, the challenge mounted as the upper management was indisposed and unavailable to supervise the events. This was the trial by fire and a test of the organization's preparedness to handle any challenge.

The day began with the Wellness Yoga for Solidarity was held at Bill Barber park at Irvine, in Orange County to foster harmony through awareness about the South Asian culture in the diverse and multi-cultural Southern California.

WELLNESS YOGA FOR SOLIDARITY AT BILL BARBER PARK, IRVINE

Yoga is a gift to the world from South Asia, that has found acceptance in every land. It is also an excellent instrument to bring balance in the mind and body. What better way to spread the message of peace and harmony within the self and for the community than being a part of Mind and body wellness yoga exercises and Laughter yoga. The community reciprocated well to this workshop with well-known yoga instructor Matangi Desai, with over 50 participants in attendance on the sunny day.

It is a well-researched fact that hate stems from the fear of the unknown. This workshop, part of Saahas' I Am Home project, aspires to uproot fear from the minds by creating spaces to interact with the South Asian community and create awareness about their way of life to the multi-cultural society of Southern California.



Saahas staff Dr. Aditi Mathur and Minal Mehta at Yoga Event



Yoga teacher Matangi Desai demonstrating yogasana to the attendees

असतो मा सद्गमया। Lead us from the of ignorance to knowledge,
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमया। lead us from darkness to light,
मृत्योर्मा मृतं गमय ॥ peace, peace, peace

SUKH SHANTI WORKSHOPS ON DEPRESSION & INTERGENERATIONAL CONVERSATIONS



Guftaju- Intergenerational Conversations panelists: (L to R) Host- Kalika Gupta, Panelists- Dr. Seema Arora, Kiran Kamboj, Sunil Agrawal, Nisha Gaur, Kunal Wahi, Tej Patel.

In another corner of Southern California, our mental health advocates geared up for a day long engagement with the community in Northridge. The first workshop spoke about the often ignored but common issue of depression. Incidentally, owing to a recent loss of a community member, many were grieving. Our group of advocates were able to speak with them about the process of grief, how it looks different than depression and how they can work through their emotions. Community members later reached out for more

one-on-one conversation.

Later in the afternoon, the team held a panel discussion on intergenerational issues faced by the immigrant parent and their children who are brought up in USA. The goal of this series of conversations is to normalize discussions around intergenerational problems, find solutions as a community and to promote harmony in family through dialogue and bicultural parenting. This series has been receiving rave reviews and request for more such interactions from the community.

POSTER PRESENTATION & WORKSHOPS AT 7TH ANNUAL SOUTH ASIAN MENTAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM HELD ON APRIL 29 AND APRIL 30

300 miles away in Northern California, 6 Saahas youth and 2 staff members were gearing up for a day-long session at South Asian Mental Health Consortium in Hayward, where Saahas was presenting research posters on the various studies being conducted by the youth and staff members. Saahas presented three posters in-person on research studies- The effect of Covid-19 on High School student stress, Experiences of bias and discrimination towards the South Asian community and Deconstructing Stigma Surrounding Mental Health Conditions. Saahas youth was also part of Virtual panel discussion Critical Conversations on April 30th.

In their poster presentations

and panel discussion, Saahas youth talked about the academic pressures on 2nd generation immigrants, model minority myth, cultural divide and language barriers they have with their own families, stigma of mental health in the South Asian community, and how to navigate life with one foot in American culture and other in Indian culture.

To sum up the successful Saturday in the words of Saahas' Founding Executive Director Payal Sawhney "This is my dream come true, where the organization is functioning like a well-oiled machine on a critical day with all project and event leads performing optimally taking all the challenges head-on"



Saahas staff and interns who presented posters



Dr. Nisha Parekh and Zeel Ahir conducting the workshop I, me and my negative thoughts.

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India Community Center's Inaugural Bridal And Handicraft Extravaganza Draws Hundreds

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A professionally choreographed fashion show displaying the season's buzziest trends in bridal trousseau was part of the show. Seen above: Toral Chopra of TC Urban Couture.

By REENA RATHORE

MILPITAS, CA - On April 23, the India Community Center here was buzzing with excitement, as hundreds of attendees - many of them brides-to-be and their families - turned out for its "South Asian Bridal Show and Handicraft Fair" to explore some exciting and convenient options and ideas needed to plan their big day or simply browse for Indian art and handicrafts.

the non-profit plans to make this an annual feature, adding that the future editions will be more interactive and entertaining.

The day-long expo seemed to take the stress out of wedding planning, with varied vendors, each with a wealth of experience and expertise, sharing their insights along with displaying their wares.

For the exhibitors, it offered a chance to connect face-to-face with future customers, helping improve their business prospects.



Indian American celebrity designer Shekhar Rahate of Shekhar Rahate Haute Couture was among those who showcased their collection.

At the inaugural event, about 30 vendors came together to put on a showcase for the visitors, providing myriad options from wedding dresses and jewelry to mehndi and photography services, décor ideas, floral displays, event planning, and catering. Also available on-site were unique handcrafted items like intricately designed candles and hand-drawn art.

The purpose-driven event was meant to "engage" the community as well as provide innovative and appealing solutions for a wedding which, for many families, is a cultural experience, said ICC's CEO Raj Desai.

"This event is meant to support the community that has been supporting the ICC for 20 years," he told India-West. "As we host many weddings/birthdays/events here, we thought that all the vendors and clients that support these programs at ICC, why not give them a venue to display all of their products and services."

The entire day saw a steady stream of people coming to check out the show. Seeing such an overwhelming response, he said

Wedding professionals were all too happy to showcase their products and skill sets at the event.

"This is a great opportunity, right in the heart of the city," Ridhima, owner

of Traditional Couture, which specializes in Indo-Western and traditional outfits, told India-West. "The footfall today has been great. I design outfits for all ceremonies of a wedding. My work keeps me close to my roots and that's what I love about it. I have gotten a lot of requests today for custom wedding outfits, giving me an idea of what people's tastes are. Not just to-be brides, but also to-be mothers-in-law have also been coming to my booth and I'm hopeful that a lot of it would convert into bookings."

Hosting an event of this scale requires intense planning, Desai concurred, sharing that it took about three months to bring their goal to fruition.

"At the end of the day, it is a huge commitment not just for ICC but for our vendors, models, and people who drove from places like Los Angeles to be here with their goods. It is a huge effort," he told India-West. "We've learned some from hosting this event and as we go into doing it again in the future, we will make it bigger in scale and plan it in such a way that engages

Contd. on P14

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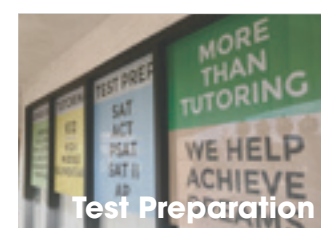


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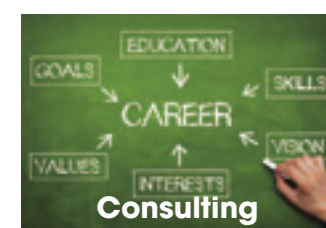


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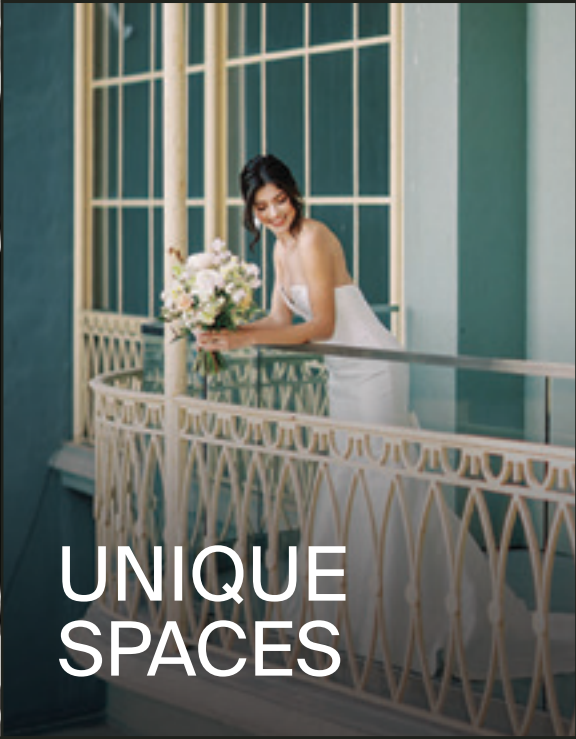
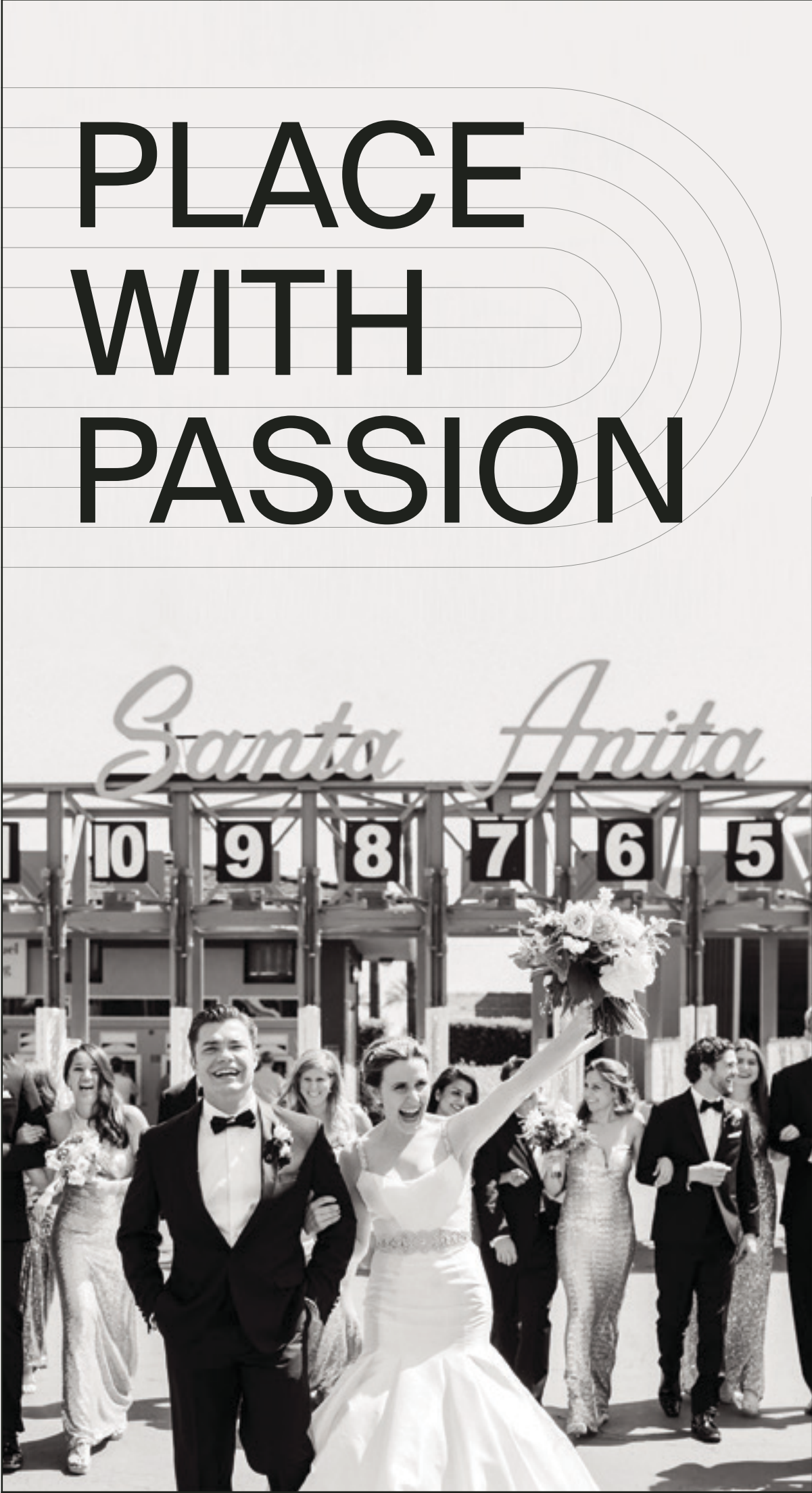
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ICC's Inaugural Bridal & Handicraft Extravaganza Draws Hundreds



Tanmohi Luxury Jewelry by Mruduta Mervana presented at the event.



Nawaabz Boutique by Maneesha Dayal was also part of the fashion show.

Contd. from P10
everybody in a meaningful way.”
One such vendor was Radha, owner of Radha Jewelry, who moved out of the San Francisco Bay Area several years ago and wanted to touch base with the community.
“I came here because I really wanted to get to know the com-

munity. I used to live in the Bay Area and I really wanted to get back into that groove where I left off 20 years ago. I have a wide variety of 92.5 silver collections and people are looking for customized jewelry for their wedding outfits.”

While anxiously waiting for the fashion show that opened in a majestic way, attendees strolled through the lined-up stalls, sampling delicacies, looking for the trendiest wedding attire and décor, and some even hoping to land good bargains.

The professionally choreographed show, displaying the season’s buzziest trends in bridal trousseau, with intermittent dance and music performances, was the most entertaining portion of the event. Divya Mowar choreographed the show.

A variety of live music filled the air and basking in applause from the crowd, young dancers gave some heavy-duty performances. The fashion, music, and dance extravaganza lasted close to two hours.

Indian American celebrity fashion designer Shekhar Rahate of Shekhar Rahate Haute Couture was among those who showcased their collection. Renowned for dressing up Hollywood celebs at the Oscars, the Golden Globes, and Emmys, Rahate specifically designed a collection for this event that featured dreamy gowns with flower appliques, and tulle, lace, and sheer detailing.

“I have a great relationship with the India Community Center and have been working with them for the last 15 years for different projects and they invited me to present a collection here and I thought let’s do it and take a different experience,” Rahate told India-West. “It was a wonderful experience and it worked really well. I don’t do wedding collections much and only do on-order because I am more into couture and red-carpet designs. If your wedding dress is not different than what is available in the market, that dress is going to die. If there are 10,000 dresses available in the market, your dress has to be the 10,000th.”

The fashion show designers included TC Urban Couture by Toral Chopra, Tanmohi Luxury Jewelry by Mruduta Mervana and Nawaabz Boutique by Maneesha Dayal.



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New York Names Udai Tambar To Racial Advisory Board

NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - New York City Mayor Eric Adams has appointed Indian American Udai Tambar to a newly formed advisory board on the implementation of the Racial Justice Charter Amendments. The 15-member advisory board will help ensure the city continues to lead the nation in innovative, racial

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equity work and carries out the city's newly enshrined charter changes.

"I am excited to partner with the new advisory board to represent NYC's most resilient communities," Tambar said in a statement released by Mayor Adams' office.

Tambar has devoted much of his career to serving the youth, including serving as Chief of Staff and Director of Youth & Children Services for the NYC Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, and as the Executive Director for South Asian Youth Action.

He graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Arts and received a master's in public Affairs from Princeton University.

Tanden WH Policy Advisor

Contd. from P1

was initially nominated by Biden to head the Office of Management and Budget but her nomination was withdrawn earlier this year as it did not seem like she would be confirmed by the Senate.

She served in both the Obama and Clinton administrations, as well as presidential campaigns and think tanks. Most recently, Tanden was the President and CEO of the Center for American Progress and the Center for American Progress Action Fund.

Tanden previously served as senior advisor for health reform

"Our city has come a long way in the fight for racial justice, but there is still much more work to do to end systemic inequity," Mayor Adams said in a statement.

"We are proud to announce the launch of this advisory board, which will help us apply the critical actions needed to these important initiatives. We are fully committed to advancing equity for New Yorkers from all backgrounds and walks of life," he added. The advisory board will bring together 15 diverse leaders with significant experience successfully implementing large-scale change within government and with a proven commitment to racial equity, a release said.

at the Department of Health and Human Services, working on President Barack Obama's health reform team in the White House.

Prior to that, she was the director of domestic policy for the Obama-Biden presidential campaign, and served as policy director for the Hillary Clinton presidential campaign. She was a key architect of the Affordable Care Act and helped drive key domestic policies that became part of Biden's agenda, including clean energy subsidies and sensible gun reform. She received her bachelor of science from UCLA and her law degree from Yale Law School.

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POLITICS

Trump Praises Vivek Ramaswamy Because “He Only Has Nice Things To Say About Me”

WASHINGTON, DC (ANI) - Former US President Donald Trump has praised entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy for doing well in the recent Republican Primary poll, CBS YouGov. The Indian American is making a long-shot bid for the Republican nomination for President running against Trump himself.

Trump was clear in his statement on social media: he likes Ramaswamy as he has only nice things to say about him and all the work carried out by the Trump administration.

“He is tied with Mike Pence and seems to be on his way to catching Ron DeSantimonious. The thing I like about Vivek is that he only has good things to say about “President Trump,” and all that the Trump Administration has so successfully done - This is the reason he is doing so well. In any event, good luck to all of them, they will need it!” he added.

Ramaswamy has said his was not just a political campaign, “but a cultural movement.”

“Faith, patriotism, and hard work have disappeared. Wokeism, climateism, and gender ideology have replaced them. We hunger for purpose yet cannot answer what it means to be an American. We long for that answer,” he added.

In a CBS News/YouGov survey of likely Republican primary voters, Ramaswamy was slightly ahead of Nikki Haley.



Vivek Ramaswamy addressing a group of potential voters.



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S. Asians Back Biden - Harris Re-Election Bid

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – Politicians and groups, including South Asian ones, reacted quickly to the April 25 announcement of President Joe Biden officially announcing his intention to seek a second term, with Vice-President Kamala Harris as his running mate.

Biden, at 80, is already the oldest President in US history and he will be 86 at the end of his second term. His age has raised questions about his suitability for President even among Democratic voters. But they have been rallying to his side since he has decided to seek a second term.

Shekar Narasimhan, Chairman and Founder, of the AAPI Victory Fund tweeted, Over 40% of Americans are 60+ years old and we celebrate medical advances that increase longevity. We also idolize geniuses like Warren Buffet (92), Charlie Munger (99) and Bill Gates (67). I am all in for #Biden-Harris2024. #MAGACult please under-estimate @JoeBiden again.”

Biden has positioned himself as a defender of democracy.

South Asians for America announced it was mobilizing to re-elect Biden, “in the wake of a historic and transformative first term.” Neha Dewan, National Director, said, “We are looking strategically at the new Democratic Presidential primary calendar and will be investing in grassroots organizing in key states in preparation for 2024.” Stating the reasons for backing the incumbents, she said, “from the most significant climate change bill in modern history through the Inflation Reduction Act, to the Administration’s executive order protecting reproductive rights and legislation strengthening common sense gun safety. These issues are top of mind for AAPI groups, and they affect our South Asian communities deeply.”

Senate Confirms Radha Iyengar

WASHINGTON, DC (ANI) - The US Senate confirmed Joe Biden appointee Radha Iyengar Plumb as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. The vote was 68-30 in her favor. She is currently serving as Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and was nominated for the top



Radha Iyengar

Pentagon position in June 2022. Prior to her appointment as Chief of Staff, she was the Director of Research and Insights for Trust & Safety at Google and had previously served as Global Head of Policy Analysis at Facebook. Before her Silicon Valley work, Plumb was a senior economist at the RAND Corporation where she focused on improving the measurement and evaluation of readiness and security efforts across the Department of Defense. In that capacity, she served as lead author on a number of critical reports including assessing the implications of open executive actions on sexual assault in the military. She also served as a policy advisor and Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, and as a civilian in Afghanistan conducting measurement and assessment work to support the Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team for the Commander, ISAF. Plumb received her PhD in economics from Princeton University. At the outset of her career, she was an assistant professor at the London School of Economics and a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Scholar at Harvard.

service for Transgender Service members and review of security and suitability screening efforts.

In that capacity, she served as lead author on a number of critical reports including assessing the implications of open service for Transgender Service members and review of security and suitability screening efforts.

She has also served as the director of personnel and readiness at the National Security Council where she was instrumental in

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In MD First-Ever Handbook On Hindu Patients Released

India-West Staff Reporter

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Coinciding with the celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, The Health Care Providers' Handbook on Hindu Patients was released on May 1. This is the first such handbook in the nation providing detailed information specifically for Hindu and Jain patients.

The guidebook aims to inform health care providers of religious beliefs and traditions practiced by Hindus, as well as the dietary needs of Jain patients. It covers a broad range of topics including prayer, maternity services, diet, traditional medicines and remedies, end-of-life issues, care

for the elderly, as well as County and state resources.

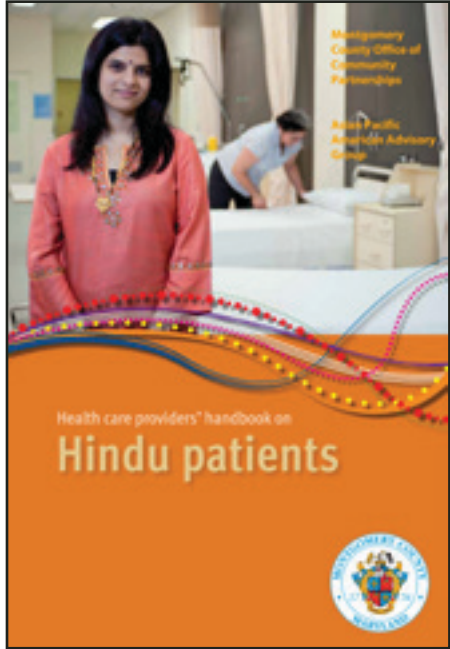
The endeavor is led by the advisory group's co-chair, Ishani Chowdhury, who single-handedly launched the effort several years ago. The project found a partner when the newly-formed Health Subcommittee formed by Gov. Wes Moore's Commission on South Asian American Affairs took interest, a press release said.

Adapted for the state of Maryland from a guidebook developed by Queensland Health, Government of Australia, the 24-page Health Care Providers' Handbook on Hindu Patients draws insight from a diverse Hindu advisory committee and contains information not often addressed, such as as-

trological beliefs, abortion, home visits and medicines containing animal by-products.

"As a Hindu, I believe this will have two important impacts," said Maryland Delegate Kumar Barve, who represents Maryland's 17th District. "First, it will help to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers and assure better health outcomes. Secondly, and perhaps more important, this is a significant acknowledgment of our important place in Maryland."

"While the Hindu and Jain population is not limited to those of South Asian descent, this is, however, the first book of its kind dedicated to addressing issues of a community has grown steadily over the last decade," said Sharad Doshi, a commis-



sioner on the state's South Asian American Affairs board who provided guidance on Jain adherents. "This is especially important for Jains, whose health care needs are not always adequately addressed." TWork has also begun on developing Handbooks for Sikh and Muslim patients, slated for release later this year, the release said.

Sikhism Included In VA School Curriculum



NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - After Utah and Mississippi, Virginia became the 17th state in the US to include the Sikh faith, in its school curriculum.

The Virginia State Board of Education on April 20 voted in favor of new History and Social Science Standards of Learning, which for the first time ever includes Sikhism. The new standards will give more than a million students in Virginia the opportunity to learn about the Sikh community.

"After more than two years of engagement alongside the local sangat, this change will help to ensure that Sikhi can be taught in classrooms across the Commonwealth of Virginia," said Harman Singh, Senior Education Manager, Sikh Coalition.

"Inclusive and accurate standards are an important first step to combat bigotry and to reduce bullying, and they benefit all students by increasing cultural competency," Singh said in a statement.

The Sikh Coalition, which has been working since March 2021 to include information about Sikhism, Sikh practices, and traditions in schools, said that the social studies standards come with serious and well-documented flaws, and there are many communities that are not represented as they should be.

Texas Leads In Indian Investments In US

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - Investments by Indian companies in the US have almost doubled since 2020, says a seventh edition of an annual report put together by the Confederation of Indian Industry.

The number of Indian companies in the US went up by only 8, from 155 to 163, but the cumulative investments grew from \$22 billion in 2020 to \$40 billion in 2023.

Total US investments in India stood at \$59.1 billion. The state of Texas led the table with the largest chunk of Indian investments - \$9.8 billion; followed by Georgia with \$7.5 billion; New

Jersey with \$4.2 billion; New York \$2.1 billion; and Massachusetts \$1.4 billion.

These Indian companies, which include Mahindra, Tata Sons and Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, and Welspun, are located across all 50 states and Washington DC and Puerto Rico and have made tangible investments in 40 states.

Together they employ over 425,000 people.



Musk Settles Defamation Suit Brought By Student

FREMONT, CA (IANS) - Tesla CEO Elon Musk has agreed to pay \$10,000 to settle a defamation case brought against him by Randeep Hothi.

Hothi is a doctoral student in Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of



Randeep Hothi.

Michigan but lives in Northern California according to several reports, had filed a defamation case against Musk in 2020, alleging that the billionaire businessman falsely accused him of actively harassing and "almost killing" Tesla employees.

Following lengthy and hard-fought litigation, in March 2023, Musk asked Hothi to settle the case. "This case was about taking a stand, not seeking fame or money. I feel vindicated," said Hothi, announcing that he accepted Musk's settlement offer in a statement.

"I brought this case to defend my work, clear my name, and send a message... I believe I've accomplished that, thanks in no small part to Musk, whose own behavior over the last year has highlighted the need to scrutinize his every word and deed."

D. Gill Sperlein, one of Hothi's lawyers, said: "Last year, Musk famously promised that he would never 'settle an unjust case'. Yet, he has asked Hothi to accommodate him. We welcome Musk's belated acknowledgment that this case was just."

Hothi locked horns with Tesla after he created the @skabooshka Twitter account where he fact-checked Musk and his company's published claims regarding the

electric vehicle manufacturer's automation, technology, and production processes.

Beginning in 2018, Hothi, doing the role of a social activist, observed Tesla's production at its Fremont factory. He also documented the construction of Tesla's Model 3 assembly line tent, sharing photos of his Twitter followers.

Musk e-mailed a reporter accusing Hothi of "actively harassing" and "almost kill(ing)" Tesla employees. That remark was later published and amplified to hundreds of thousands of people on Twitter.

Musk's accusations prompted an outpouring of public support for Hothi, including from whistleblowers, researchers, journalists, and critics. In August 2020, represented by Sperlein, Hothi filed a defamation lawsuit.

In January 2021, the trial court rejected Musk's arguments, holding that Hothi "has demonstrated the probability that he can succeed on the merits of his claim" because Musk's remarks were tantamount to an accusation of crime, and thus legally constituted defamation per se. Hothi accepted Musk's settlement offer on April 30, and is expected to request dismissal of the case on May 1, pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement.



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Demographic Dividend: Population Shrinks In South India, North And East Balloons

NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - While the population ages and its growth shrinks in the southern states of India, labor migration from the northern and eastern states will make up for it, and the “demographic dividend” will continue there, according to the UN.

A paper from the UN’s Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “India Overtakes China as the World’s Most Populous Country”, released on April 25, noted the divergences between states.

Explaining the differences within India, the paper said: “Under India’s federal structure, state governments were able to set their own policy priorities, resulting in varied impacts across different parts of the country... In Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where state governments emphasized socio-economic development and women’s empowerment,

fertility declined earlier and at a more rapid pace, falling below the replacement level two decades before the country.

“Those states that invested less in human capital, especially for girls and women, experienced slower reductions in fertility, despite controversial mass sterilization campaigns and other coercive measures in some locations.”

While the overall fertility rate for the country has fallen to 2, which is below the 2.1 replacement rate.

The replacement rate of fertility is the number of children a woman must have to keep the population stabilized and fewer than that would mean a gradual reduction in population, which is happening in China with a 1.2 fertility rate as India has overtaken it to become the most populous country.

They range from 1.4 for Tamil Nadu and West



Sarah Hertog and John Wilmoth brief reporters about India overtaking China as the world's most populous country. (Photo: Arul Louis/IANS)

Bengal to 3 for Bihar among the large states, with Kerala at 1.5, according to the Indian Census Organization’s Sample Registration System report released last year.

But the UN report said that overall, in India, the demographic dividend of a relatively younger and bigger working-age population “is projected to continue increasing both in number and as a proportion of the total population through mid-century”.

The paper said that according to the UN’s latest projections, “India’s population is expected to reach its peak size around 2064 and then to decline gradually” after having passed 1.67 billion in 2050.

John Wilmoth, Director of the Population Division said, “A lot is made out of this demographic dividend, but it’s really only one piece of the puzzle in terms of what contributes to economic growth and what can help countries as they are developing.”

This is the time when countries should focus “on educating their populations and enabling people to participate in the labor force”, he said, as they prepare for a slower population growth and a bigger older population.

Indian Illegals Second Largest Group Crossing English Channel

LONDON, (IANS) - The number of Indians illegally crossing over into the UK across the English Channel has increased sharply in the first three months of the year, making them the second biggest cohort after Afghans, according to the latest Home Office statistics.

Between January 1 and March 31, 2023, the most common nationality arriving via small boat was Afghans (24 percent) followed by Indians (18 percent), the new data revealed. The top five nationalities now illegally crossing the Channel in small boats include Afghanistan, India, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

While the final statistics are due to be published on May 25 this year, a last month’s Home Office data showed 683 Indians arriving in the country on small boats in 2022, as compared to 67 in 2021.

In February this year, Indians allegedly became the third-largest group of migrants entering UK shores illegally after Afghans and Syrians, The Times report said citing home Office sources.



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NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - International student enrollment in the US last year showed a substantial increase with India sending more students compared to China in 2022, says a US immigration report.

According to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's annual report, the number of students from China and India made Asia the most popular continent of origin.

"Comparable to the drop from calendar year 2020 to 2021, China sent fewer students in 2022 compared to 2021 (-24,796), while India sent more students (+64,300)," the report said.

In 2022, California hosted 225,173 international students -- the largest percentage of international students (16.5 percent) of any US state, the report said, adding that all four regions in the country saw an increase in international student records from 2021 to 2022, with respective increases ranging from 8 to 11 percent, the report said.

There were 276,723 active exchange visitors in the country in 2022, compared to 240,479 active exchange visitors in 2021 -- a 15 percent increase.

The total number of Student and Exchange Visitor Information System records for active F-1 and M-1 students was 1,362,157 in the calendar year 2022 -- an increase of 10.1 percent from the calendar year 2021 and the largest number of records since the calendar year 2019.

SEVIS is a web-based system that the Department of Homeland Security uses to maintain and manage information on non-immigrant students whose primary purpose for coming to the US is to study.

The number of international students enrolled at kindergarten through grade 12 (K12) schools increased by 7.8 percent from 2021 to 2022 (+3,887).

No K-12 schools hosted more than 700 international students in the calendar year 2022, like the calendar year 2021.

The report further said that there were 117,301 pre- and post-completion optional practical training students with both an employment authorization document and who reported working for an employer in the calendar year 2022, compared to 115,651 in the calendar year 2021, a 1.4 percent increase.



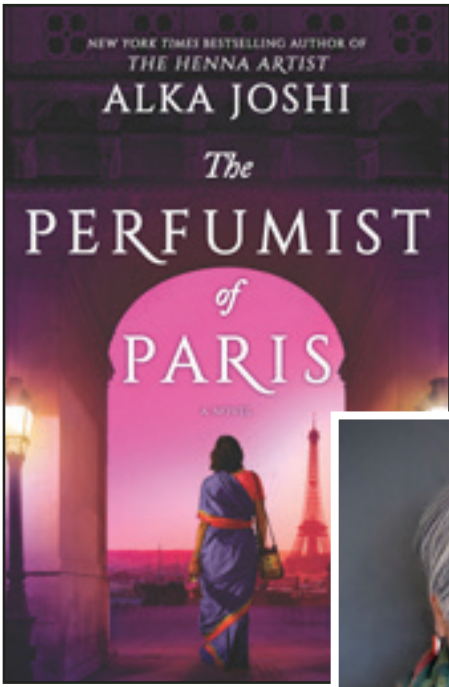
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By **ALKA JOSHI**
Special to India-West

Alka Joshi is the internationally known bestselling author of the Jaipur Trilogy: The Henna Artist, The Secret Keeper of Jaipur, and her latest, The Perfumist of Paris. Her debut novel, The Henna Artist, immediately became a New York Times Bestseller, a Reese Witherspoon Pick, and was LongListed for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize. It has been translated into 29 languages and is currently in development at Netflix as a tv series. Joshi was born in India and came to the U.S. with her family at the age of nine. She has a BA from Stanford University and an MFA from California College of Arts. Here in her own words:



Perfumes! India Has A Huge PR Problem

for my third novel, The Perfumist of Paris, I had no idea that all roads would lead back to India. Neither did my protagonist, Radha. And that made me wonder: Does India have a PR problem?

My adventure started in New York City, the perfume capital of America, where I met with Ann Gottlieb, the powerful woman behind Dior's J'Adore and CK Eternity among others. Ann invited me to lunch with master perfumer Carlos Benaim and arranged a tour of the formidable International Flavors and Fragrances (IFF) lab.

At IFF, I also met master perfumer Loc Dong, who has collaborated with Ann to create fragrances like Euphoria and Marc Jacobs. Originally from Vietnam, Luc told me his preference for ingredients originated from the scents found in his native country. Mango. Jasmine. Ginger. Those were the same fragrances I had always loved – scents from my native India. Until that moment, I had never stopped to wonder about the origin of the myriad ingredients blended to create perfume.

I dug out a photo taken when I was five years old: I'm sitting with my mother in the garden of our house in Rajasthan. She is elegant in her cerulean sari, red lipstick, and a garland of jasmine flowers threaded through the braided bun in her hair. The jasmine vine grew along the back fence of our house.

And the scent of sandalwood! This soothing essential oil is the base note of many of the world's most popular fragrances. In Southern India, the slow-growing tree is now protected because of its popularity with perfumers. Its scent is as familiar to me as my mother's jasmine-scented hair.

I flew to Paris, eager to talk to more perfumers about the inspiration for their favorite ingredients. One of the creators at Firmenich, another fragrance powerhouse, had been raised in Morocco. She referenced the scents of her youth – cloves, bergamot, cinnamon – to design her fragrances.

My next stop was Grasse, followed by Lisbon. In each city, I learned more about the many fragrance ingredients that originally came from India, the Middle East and Northern Africa. Ancient texts confirm the use of ingredients like frankincense, myrrh, and vetiver in ceremonies, palaces, and mosques. Not until the fourteenth century did Europeans begin using scents in daily life—primarily to mask body odor created by poor sanitary habits.

The earliest European traders traveled the renowned spice and silk routes of the East. It was in those hot, tropical regions that traders discovered aromatic ingredients like cloves and cinnamon that their European customers would pay dearly for. Case in point: cloves were once so precious that they were traded for gold.

European demand for fragrances grew quickly. Soon enough, plants like tuberose, orange blossom, and lavender were brought from India and the Mediterranean and planted in southeastern France, in the city of Grasse.

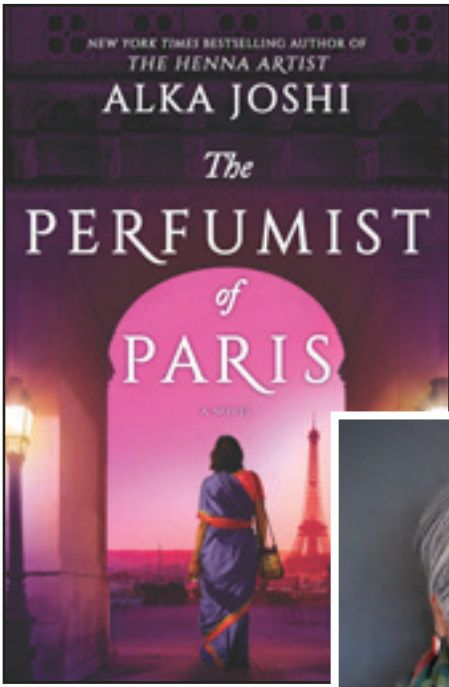
Arabs and Hindus alike had long adorned themselves with intense scents like vanilla, ylang-ylang, and oud long before Europeans discovered them. Why then was I just learning about the olfactory contribution of the East to the West? Why, instead, was France reputed to be the perfume capital of the world when the title rightly belonged to countries further East and South?

The more fragrance information I uncovered, the clearer it became to me that the world's finest fragrances owed their success to what they originally harvested—and still procure—from countries like India, the nation of my birth. Which begged the question: why has India not done more to counteract its oft-displayed reputation as a poverty-stricken, underdeveloped country by promoting the story of the origin of fragrances?

I didn't start out with that goal, but that's precisely what I ended up doing in The Perfumist of Paris. My protagonist took me there. Working for a tony perfume company in 1974 Paris, 32-year-old Radha travels to India in search of the missing ingredient for her fragrance project. And she finds it in the moist and sugary soil that India's monsoons leave behind. The scent is mitti ittir.

If I can write well-researched novels that promote India's gifts to the world, why isn't the Indian government promoting her delights as well? Delights like intricate henna designs, thousands of herbal remedies that have inspired the West's "golden lattes" and "chai teas" and...enticing scents that perfume our bodies, our homes, and our environments.

I would apply for a PR position at India, Inc., but I'm a little busy writing novels.



By **ALKA JOSHI**
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Met Gala: Mindy Kaling, Priyanka Chopra Shine, Mixed Response For Alia

India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – Gorgeous Mindy Kaling turned heads on May 1 at the Met Gala carpet in a silvery-white Jonathan Simkhai dress with a fitted bodice and floor-length fringe in the back. The 43-year-old star, writer,

and producer, in her new, slim look, also sported a Kwiat pear shape and Ashoka cut diamond flower and fringe earrings, and a Fred Leighton, 5.0 ct old mine cut diamond ring. Alia Bhatt made her debut in a white gown made with 100,000 pearls by Prabal Gurung. She said

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Mindy Kaling



Priyanka Chopra



Alia Bhatt

that she wanted to wear something that is 'Made in India'. Alia looked glam in slicked-back hair with a middle parting. Her much-anticipated look drew mixed responses. Predictably her family, fans and friends in Bollywood applauded her but fashion critics yawned her off at an event where Oscar award styling is not the aim. Priyanka Chopra on the other hand, always turns heads.

The 'Desi Girl' arrived on the Met Gala 2023 red carpet with her husband Nick Jonas. The power couple twinned in black as they wore Valentino outfits. It was the trench coat dress's extended train that caught the fashion world's attention. She also sported a 11.6 carat diamond statement piece from Bulgari. It had a Laguna Blu diamond - the largest in Bulgari.

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Diljit Dosanjh Becomes First Punjabi Singer At Coachella

INDIO, CA (ANI) - Diljit Dosanjh became the first Punjabi singer to perform at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival 2023, here. He had American DJ and music producer Diplo, known for 'Lean On' and 'Bubble Butt' among many others dancing to his music. Diljit re-shared a post by Diplo, who alongside his friends was seen dancing to 'Patiala Peg'.

The Punjabi singer performed twice but his second gig made headlines for all the wrong reasons. A section of social media users misunderstood Diljit's

statement that he made during his performance. A few portals on Twitter tweaked his statement and slammed the singer for disrespecting the national flag. Diljit, however, was quick to hit back at the trolls.

"I had said this is my country's flag....If you don't understand Punjabi, then please Google because Coachella is a big music festival that is attended by people across the world. That's why music is for everyone. How to twist the right words, one should learn from you guys."



LONDON, (ANI) – Bollywood's actress Sonam Kapoor, delivered a spoken word performance at King Charles III's Coronation Concert. The star-studded event, which took place a day after the historic coronation held in Westminster Abbey, was held to celebrate the monarch. The actress introduced various choir performers of the Commonwealth.

Introduced as one of the biggest Bollywood celebrities, Sonam began her speech with "Namaste". She said, "Namaste, our Commonwealth is a union. Together we are one-third of the world's people. One-third of the world's ocean. One-quarter of the world's land. Each of our countries is unique, and each of our people is special,

but we choose to stand as one, learning from our history. Blessed by our diversity, driven by our values, and determined to build a more peaceful, sustainable, and prosperous future for everyone, where every voice is heard."

Known to be a fashionista, her dress for the occasion was designed by her favorites Anamika Khanna and Emilia Wickstead. Sonam wrote in the caption, "Historic moments call for fashion moments. I'm honored to mark the unforgettable occasion of the #Coronationconcert by wearing the collaborative vision of two of the most incredible designers from the two countries I'm lucky to call home. @anamikakhanna.in and @emiliawickstead."



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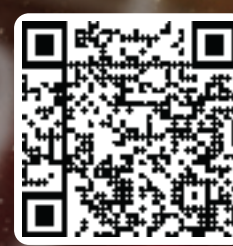
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