# 

Vol. II, No.11 • March 15, 2024

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## **Lead Detected in Swad Brand Cinnamon Powder**

#### **India-West News Desk**

WASHINGTON, DC - In a public health alert issued on March 6, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has advised consumers against purchasing specific ground cinnamon products available at various retailers, including the Swad brand of Patel Brothers.

The FDA's warning follows the October 2023 recall of cinnamon apple puree and applesauce products, where elevated lead levels were linked to the cinnamon con-

tent, raising concerns about lead toxicity in children. In response to



these concerns, the FDA initiated a targeted survey of ground cin-Contd. on P8

## **LA City Council: Nithya Raman** Headed For Runoff Election In Nov.

#### **India-West News Desk**

LOS ANGELES, CA - Incumbent Nithya Raman will face off against challenger Ethan Weaver in a November runoff election for the 4th District seat on the Los Angeles City Council.

Raman led the primary field with 44.5% of the vote, while Weaver stood at 42.8%, and Levon "Lev" Baronian trailed behind at 12.6%. Per primary rules, since no candidate secured more than 50% of the vote, Raman and Weaver will compete in a runoff on Nov. 5.

Raman, known for her progressive stance, expressed pride in her team's accomplishments over the past three-plus years, highlighting

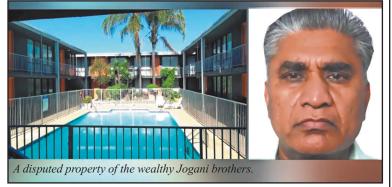


Nithya Raman ran on a progressive platform

efforts to address homelessness, protect renters, improve the environment, and work towards city government reform.

Raman's campaign, which raised about \$438,000 in contributions, received additional support Contd. on P17

## <u>Jogani Real Estate War:</u> Four Siblings Get \$7Billion From Fifth Brother



#### **India-West News Desk**

LOS ANGELES, CA - After two decades of legal wrangling, Haresh Jogani, the defendant in a high-stakes legal battle, has been ordered by a jury to hand over bil-

lions in cash and stakes in more than 17,000 apartments across the San Fernando Valley in Southern California to his four brothers.

The protracted legal saga involved disputes over the ownership Contd. on P9

## Annual Doshi Bridgebuilder Event Focuses On Artificial Intelligence



Dean Crabtree, Navin Doshi, Dr. Fritjof Capra, Prof. Chapple, & Pratima Doshi.

#### India-West **Staff Reporter**

LOS ANGELES, CA -Loyola Marymount University hosted the annual Doshi Bridgebuilder event on February 22. Several hundred people attended throughout the day, which focused on the emergence of Artificial Intelligence as a driving cultural force. Three individuals and one organization shared the honors this year: Physicist Fritjof Capra, meditation leaders Jack Kornfield and Trudy Goodman, and the

Contd. on P10

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 $\mathsf{MARCH}\ 2024-P3$ 



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#### COMMENTARY

#### BY NEERA KUCKREJA SOHONI

In 1945, freeing itself of Dutch colonial rule, Indonesia set up its own independent government headed by President Sukarno (Soekarno). It took barely a year for the Dutch to resume their invasion of Indonesia. By July 1947, the country was under full-blown attack by the Dutch with the Indonesian Prime Minister put under house arrest by the enemy forces.

Nehru, who strongly supported independence for all colonized countries, felt solidarity with the Indonesian cause and took it upon himself to rescue Sukarno. His plan was to send a plane to secretly evacuate President Sukarno's senior political colleagues and bring them to safety outside their troubled country.

A daring stealth mission was planned and executed by an Indian pilot named Biju Patnaik (freedom fighter and a distinguished political leader in Independent India) who had received his pilot's training at the Delhi Flying Club in 1930. Six years later, he had joined the Royal Indian Air Force when he was routinely used to fly freedom fighters and leaders across the country. His performance impressed Nehru who decided to entrust him with the secret mission to rescue the Indonesian leaders.

The top-secret stealth mission was carried out meticulously and successfully, for which both Nehru and the pilot earned the deep appreciation and gratitude of Indonesian people and President Sukarno.

But on March 8 globally celebrated as International Women's Day, it the pilot's wife Gyana Devi, who should grab our infinite attention and is deserving of co-sharing with her husband Indonesia's and our gratitude.

History traditionally celebrates men – pushing women to remain away from the limelight and behind the purdah of anonymity. Unsurprisingly, in this case too, while her husband who piloted and deftly accomplished the dangerous rescue mission got his well-deserved recognition and appreciation, one

## Awaiting Recognition - Aviator Gyana Devi





must pull teeth to get history's annals to highlight his wife's role in the rescue mission.

Trained like her husband as a pilot, she stepped in with very little notice to serve as co-pilot on the daring rescue mission. Anecdotal evidence suggests how they were seated around the dinner table when the green light came for the top-secret mission to commence. Unable to readily identify and induct a co-pilot to accompany him, he sought his wife's presence who readily agreed to co-pilot the mission. Landing in Jakarta on July 21, 1947, the pilot couple flew Vice President Mohammad Hatta and Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir from their jungle hideout in Indonesia, bringing them to safety by flying back to India via Singapore despite a stern Dutch warning to shoot the aircraft. A grateful Indonesia twice decorated Biju Patnaik with its highest civilian honor 'Bhumiputra' for his bravery. But ironically his co-pilot's role remains unwritten in history's pages, especially in the aviation annals.

Who was this woman pilot? What prompted her to take to the skies and cross gender barriers? Adventure-loving and equipped with the fierce traits associated with Punjabi temperament, she was eager to explore uncharted fields. She found science, math, and engineering intriguing and building and other projects in those fields engaging. Eventually, this led her to enroll in flying where she became one of the first women in the country to get a com-

mercial pilot's license. This was in the 1930's. But unsurprisingly in the wikipedic and other online histories of women in aviation, this vintage pilot's entry remains absent.

Tributes to her after her death in India refer to her, in one case, as a woman "who had her own identity" which sounds condescendingly charitable. Happily, reference is made to her being an "underground participator in India's freedom struggle and a personal witness to the history of India. She was also at Biju's side during the evacuation of British families from Rangoon when the Japanese forces advanced on Burma. Thereafter during 1946-49, Gyan frequently visited Indonesia with Biju for providing humanitarian supplies and assistance for Indonesia's rehabilitation. Along with her husband, she worked closely with Nepal's democratic

movement in the early 1950s". In her husband's distinguished career, she must have been an active partner, inspiration, and mentor. The two like many freedom fighters put their own and marital needs behind national priorities prompting her to declare herself as a "Winter wife"!

Current data suggests 15% of the pilots in India are women, which according to India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation, is three times the global average of 5%. More aviator women are stepping in and some are even flying fighter jets. But with women's liberation both globally and in India, their achievement seems less dramatic and less of a gender-ceiling breakthrough than the women of Gyan Patnaik's vintage.

(Sohoni is a published author and freelance writer.)

#### **LETTERS**

## Teenagers And Voting Rights

On March 23, 1971, Congress proposed the 26th Amendment to allow voting rights for teenagers. On July 1st, 1971, 3/4th of the states ratified the proposed 26th Amendment, lowering voting rights from age 21 to 18.

The narrative used as the main argument to lower the voting age was: "if a citizen is old enough to fight in a war, he/she is old enough to vote also".

The narrative sounds logical to the common man without being so. For carrying out orders to fight, a different mindset is required than to make an independent judgment for voting.

When our logic is not in order, the more of it we use, the greater is our cultural ignorance.

Now look at the non-partisan insight of the medical science of the teenage brain.

- It is wired differently than that over the age of 22.
- It is a confounding organ.
- It's quotient of grey matter
   neuron filled responsible for cognitive and emotional functions
   peaks only in age well into the twenties.
- It is short on the white matter (cerebrum) that ensures coordination of various thoughts and emotions within the brain.
- The connection between the frontal lobe and the rest of the brain does not fully form until the age 22 or more. The frontal lobe is the part of the brain with the ability of foreseeing the consequences of one's actions and the difference between good and bad.

The young brain is the brain that gradually ripens into the brain with age.

We recommend that the minimum voting age should be raised to 25 years with certain prerequisites discussed elsewhere.

(This submission is not edited.)

- T.S. Khanna, Alamo, CA

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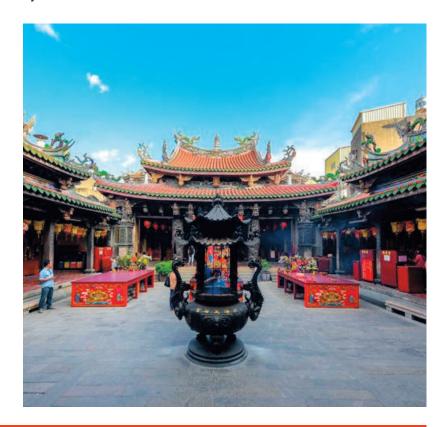
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## SMAP Celebrates Shiv Jayanti In SoCal

#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

LONG BEACH, CA – On February 25, the SMAP Foundation organized Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's Jayanti at the Jordan High School here. The festivities commenced with a spirited performance of the traditional Marathi Dhol Tasha by a group of enthusiastic young men and women, accompanied by a captivating dance from a group of Lezim performers. Following the outdoor celebrations, the Shiv Jayanti festivities moved inside the theater.

Approximately 800 people gathered inside the theater, where SMAP President Ashok Madan welcomed everyone. Vijay Patil, the founder of SMAP Foundation, provided a brief introduction to SMAP, highlighting the organization's 250 celebrations worldwide. He summarized SMAP's mission as promoting unity, leadership, and community services, utilizing Indian national heroes as role models.

The '350 committee' from SMAP presented plans for the grand 3-day Shiv Rajyabhishek event scheduled from June 21 to 23. An announcement was made regarding the publication and release of a coffee table book during the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the Coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Attendees were encouraged to participate in this memorable book by reserving pages for their profiles or business advertisements.

Artist and choreographer Vinaini Jayasinghe served as the emcee for the night, skillfully ensuring the smooth flow of activities. The evening included traditional lamp lighting, singing of the national anthems of the USA and India, and cultural and patriotic dance performances by groups led by Manisha Sathe, Sonali Bhave, and Paulomi Pandit.

Well known actor Girja Shankar, known for portraying Dhritarashtra in the Mahabharata serial, graced the evening as the Chief Guest.

Dr. Deepinder Singh, the keynote speaker, shared insights about Maharaja Ranjit Singh, emphasizing the great warrior's success as a ruler due to his love for humanity and equal respect for all faiths. Indian military veterans Major Gurjeet Singh and Captain R.D. Singh were honored with plaques, and sponsors and key organizers were acknowledged for their support.

The main event featured a captivating drama depicting the life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, presented by the Los Angeles Film and Theatre Arts. Despite being amateur artists, the participants delivered a mesmerizing performance that had the audience in pin-drop silence. The drama concluded with live singing by Punjabi singer Gagandeep Singh Sidhu and lively Bhangra performances by Blitz Bhangra, prompting the audience to join in the celebration.





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BY REENA RATHORE

In the bustling automotive landscape of the U.S., a new electrifying contender has made its grand entrance – the all-new, all-electric 2024 Kia EV9.

the key concerns for electric vehicle owners.

The EV9, which marks a significant leap in the burgeoning electric vehicle market, particularly in the realm of SUVs, embodies the spirit of a new era in driving – one where performance and environmental responsibility harmonize effortlessly.

With its sleek, futuristic design, cutting-edge features and eco-friendly credentials, the three-row SUV has already garnered a constellation of accolades, underscoring its status as an innovative and engineering marvel. No wonder then it was on TIME magazine's '100 Most InfluentialCompanies of 2023' list in the Innovators category, making it the only automotive company in the U.S. to be recognized.

The EV9 is available in Light, Light Long Range RWD, Wind, Land, and GT-Line trim levels, and is offered in two battery sizes and rear-wheel drive or dual-motor AWD configurations. The base price for the 2024 Kia EV9 is \$54,900 (excluding destination).

The assembly of the much-anticipated car - positioned as the brand's flagship electric SUV - will be completed at the company's facility in West Point, Georgia.

When compared to other cars in its class, the EV9's appeal lies not just in its competitive pricing, but also in its striking exterior design, and impressive driving dynamics. Stand out LED headlamps, optional dual panoramic sunroof and optional bold but lightweight 21 inch alloy wheels add to the impact. Its V2L vehicle-to-load) function enables several devices to be conveniently charged directly from the car.

The interior layout is designed to maximize space and versatility, with ample room for passengers and cargo alike. Further elevating the driving experience are features such as ergonomic seating, a cutting-edge infotainment system featuring panorama display with triple screens, intuitive controls and user-friendly interfaces.

The Connected Car Navigation Cockpit (ccNC) platform introduces a software-defined framework, allowing owners to personalize their driving experience with digital features tailored to their preferences.

From customizable lighting patterns to remote smart parking assist, the EV9 exemplifies the marriage of technology and convenience. One of the most striking features of EV9 is its 800V charging architecture, which enables rapid and hassle-free charging. With a reported extended range of up to over 300 miles on a single charge, it addresses one of the key concerns for electric vehicle owners.

With a reported extended range of up to over 300 miles on a single charge, it addresses one of

According to the company, that translates to ultra-fast charging from 10 percent to 80 percent in under 25 minutes. Starting this year, Kia is also one of seven major automakers uniting to install 30,000 chargers nationwide.

The EV9 will be available in a variety of alluring gloss or factory matte finish paint options.

This newest offering from Kia isn't just about range — it's also about performance. Under the hood, the EV9 is powered by a state-of-the-art electric drivetrain, delivering exhilarating performance and instant torque.

At the forefront of its triumphs is the coveted 2024 North American Utility Vehicle of the Year award by NACTOY.

The journey of accolades began with the 2023 Newsweek Autos Awards, where the EV9 was crowned both 'Best Premium SUV' and 'Best SUV Interior.' From being named Car and Driver's' '10 Best Trucks and SUVs' for 2024' to being honored as the 'Best 3-Row Electric Vehicle 2024' by the Kelley Blue Book Best Buy Awards to winning the 2024 'Women's Worldwide Car of the Year' award, the EV9's universal appeal and ability to resonate with diverse audiences has been widely acknowledged.

Popular Science celebrated EV9's innovative prowess by naming it on its '50 Greatest Innovations of 2023' list.

The Car Connection's dual recognition of the EV9 as the 'Best Car to Buy' and the 'Best Family Car to Buy' in 2024 also underscores its popularity.

Green Car Reports echoed this sentiment by naming the EV9 the 'Best Car to Buy' in 2024, while Edmunds' prestigious Top-Rated Awards bestowed upon the EV9 the titles of 'Best of the Best' and 'Top Rated Electric SUV' for 2024.

In addition, EV9 proudly received 2024 MotorWeek Drivers' Choice Awards in 'Best EV' category and also recognized 'Best Electric 3-Row SUV' by 2024 PARENTS Best Family Cars.

But perhaps the most significant aspect of its launch is Kia's pledge to make electric mobility accessible to all. With a competitive price point and a robust charging infrastructure planned across the country, the EV9 promises to democratize electric vehicles and accelerate the transition to a greener, more sustainable future.









## Bengali Hindus Emphasize Community Strength

#### **BY SANGMIN KIM**

LOS ANGELES, CA – The thunderous and rhythmic beating of the drum echoed out of the small Los Angeles Hindu Temple as the priest, clad in yellow and hints of orange, sat in front of the intricately sculpted statue of Saraswati.

For Bengali Hindus, Saraswati Puja, the Hindu festival celebrated 40 days before the official start of the spring season, puts its focus on worshiping the goddess. Young children, typically 4 and 5 years old, start learning and writing on tree leaves to be blessed with Saraswati's knowledge in a ceremony known as Hate Khari.

Saraswati Puja, also known as Vasant Panchami, is a major celebration for Bengali Hindus. This year, the festival date was February 14, though the Bengali Hindu Association of Los Angeles organized their celebration on February



18. Despite being a smaller community in both Bangladesh and California, Bengalis of all ages filled the temple with vibrant colors and enthusiastic chatter.

Vasant Panchami is a Hindu festival observed by several religious groups in India, including Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains. However, the significance of the festival differs for each group.

Most people in Bangladesh are Muslims, making Bengali Hindus a minority both within the country and in the United States. According to the Joshua Project, 19% of Bengalis are Hindus while 80% are Muslim.

Amio Das, the son of BHA-LA's Senior Adviser Achinto Das, said many Bengali Hindus come to the U.S. to feel more secure in their faith as religious minorities in Ban-

gladesh. "You feel like it's more controlled over here, you feel like you're protected more than in developing countries," Das said. "Anyone can come by your house and burn it down, or make a mess in your temple, or whatever. That happens a lot."

Das also said the small community's faith in Hinduism helped them connect with nearby Indian Hindu communities. "A lot of the time, the bigger-scale events, they're done by Indians, just because they have more people, more manpower, more resources, more assets, just like we have these smaller spaces," Das said. "So we bring our people together as well. We also have our specific people. But for the bigger events, it's everyone together."

Smita Sarker, a senior at the Girls Academic Leadership Academy, said she grew up with Indian Hindus in school. On top of rarely seeing other Bengalis, Sarker said she could relate easily to her Indian friends over the connection of them all being Hindus.

Sarker also said she wanted to continue the growth of this temple and community into adulthood.

"The more I think about it, because it's very newly founded, I want to continue it because they invested a lot of time and money," Sarker said about the temple, which was founded in 2022. "So, it's very important for me to continue this." Dr. Mukherjee said it is the elders' responsibility to connect to the youth and preserve the Hindu identity among the Bengali diaspora living in the U.S. He called the younger generations the legacy who will carry the community forward in the future.

His 15-year-old son, Sujash Mukherjee, learns the responsibilities of being a priest by assisting his work. Dr. Mukherjee said he is trying to set an example; otherwise, he said he wouldn't be authorized to ask other adults in the community to do the same.

"Involving youth and inviting them to be a part of it is a primary responsibility that any temple or religious organizations should have," Dr. Mukherjee said.

## **Cinnamon Powder**

Contd. from p1

namon products from discount retail stores. Samples from six distributors, including Swad at Patel Brothers, revealed elevated lead levels ranging from 2.03 to 3.4 parts per million. The warning also specifically highlights products from La Fiesta, Marcum, MTCI, Supreme Tradition, and El Chilar, sold at various retail outlets.

According to the FDA, product testing has revealed that these ground cinnamon products contain elevated levels of lead, posing potential health risks with prolonged exposure. The agency recommends that consumers immediately discard and refrain from buying these identified ground cinnamon products.

Additionally, the FDA has urged the respective firms to voluntarily recall the affected products.

FDA asked consumers to cease using and dispose of the specified ground cinnamon items listed in the FDA's announcement. "Given the products' extended shelf life, individuals are encouraged to thoroughly check their homes for any of the identified items and discard them accordingly," it said.

Patel Brothers is the largest supermarket chain serving the Indian diaspora, with 51 locations in 20 U.S. states. Headquartered in Chicago, the chain was founded by brothers Mafat and Tulsi Patel and has been operated by three generations of family since its inception, according to Wikipedia. Swad is an original and the main brand for Patel Brothers. Its popular products include ghee, nuts, and spices.



## Headlined By Nandita Das, Maitri Celebrates 33 Years Of Service

#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

PALO ALTO, CA – Maitri marked its 33rd anniversary with a successful gala on March 2, 2024, uniting luminaries, advocates, and philanthropists in an evening resonating with hope, empowerment, and transformation.

The gala featured a vibrant display of color, art, music, and dance, leaving attendees inspired. Long-time supporters and new community members, discovering Maitri for the first time, came together to generously support our mission, raising over \$600K despite the challenging global circumstances.

The funds will fortify Maitri's comprehensive services for survivors of domestic violence, aiding them in choosing a nonviolent future and rebuilding their lives without fear. Additionally, Maitri remains committed to awareness-building and prevention efforts within the South Asian community, the organization said in a press release.

The pinnacle of the night was a heartwarming talk by Nandita Das, a renowned actress, director, and advocate for human rights and social justice. Das shared insights and experiences, urging guests to embrace their roles as change agents in creating a more equitable and compassionate world.

A highlight of the evening was a performance by the Ishami Dance Company, whose choreography conveyed a powerful message of



Nandita Das.



 ${\it Maitri\, Board\, Members.} \quad \textit{Photos: Cynthia Pillay and Santhosh Karnewar.}$ 

resilience and unity. Through graceful movements and captivating expressions, the dancers took the audience on a journey of introspection and hope. The gala also featured a silent auction with exclusive items donated by supporters and partners. Guests bid on each item, and the proceeds contribute to Maitri's vital initiatives.

Dr. Geetha Krishnamurthy, President of Maitri, expressed gratitude to gala attendees and invited them to join the movement against domestic violence. Emphasizing collaboration with local schools, businesses, and community organizations, she highlighted the importance of education in preventing future instances of abuse.

As the night concluded, attendees left with renewed determination to champion the values of compassion, equality, and justice.

Maitri, a free, confidential nonprofit in the San Francisco Bay Area, assists South

Asian survivors facing domestic violence, regardless of gender, age, faith, or immigration status. In 33 years, the organization has responded to over 60,000 helpline calls, served almost 8,000 survivors, dispersed over a million dollars in empowerment grants and loans, operated a fully occupied Transitional House for over 25 years, and advocated actively for policy change. For more information: www.maitri.org, and the toll-free helpline is 1-888-862-4874 (1888 8 MAITRI).

#### Jogani Real Estate

Contd. from p1

of a vast real estate portfolio The extensive holdings include complexes in Hollywood, Westlake, Inglewood, Koreatown, Long Beach, and, prominently, the San Fernando Valley.

The conflict began in 2003 when Shashikant Jogani sued his brother Haresh, alleging a breach of an oral agreement that guaranteed a share in the portfolio for all four brothers. Multiple lawsuits followed, culminating in a five-month trial at the Los Angeles Superior Court offices.

The jury found Haresh liable for withholding stakes in the multifamily portfolio, determining that he owes a total of \$2.6 billion in cash damages to three of his brothers. The portfolio, valued at more than \$6 billion, was divided among the five Joganis, with each unit estimated at approximately \$352,900.

Shashikant emerged with the largest share, receiving a 50 percent stake in the portfolio and \$1.8 billion in damages. Chetan Jogani was awarded \$299 million in damages and a 6.5 percent stake, while Rajesh received \$459.8 million in damages and a 10 percent stake. The fifth brother, Shailesh, was granted a 9.5 percent stake.

The possibility of punitive damages looms, as the court is set to decide next week whether additional penalties will be imposed on top of the already awarded amounts.

The Jogani family, known as one of the largest landlords in L.A. County's San Fernando Valley since the 1990s, controls the properties through companies headquartered in L.A., Nevada, and the British Virgin Islands. Online, Haresh has been accused by tenants of running properties infested with roaches and mold.

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## Kiran And Pallavi Patel Backed Osteopathic College Opens In Orlando

#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

ORLANDO, FL— The Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine (OCOM) on March 10 officially opened its doors as Central Florida's newest medical school.

Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine was the vision of Drs. Kiran and Pallavi Patel, co-founders of the school. The region's deficiency in physicians and residency programs motivated them to take a leap of faith by developing an osteopathic medical school.

"As a physician, I've always believed in the transformative power of education. The Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine



is a realization of that belief—an institution designed not only to impart medical knowledge but to instill a sense of duty, empathy, and responsibility in our future physicians. Together, we're cultivating healers who will make a lasting impact on the health and well-being of our communities,"

Patel, himself a cardiologist, said.

DO, FACOI, FACP, Dean & Chief Academic Officer said the college would impact the "Central Florida community, our nation, and our global community."

Located in Winter Garden, FL, about Horizon West, the three-story, 144,000-square-foot facility

cost \$75 million and took the contractor just 18 months to build. BakerBarrios, a Nashville, Tennessee-based architecture firm, did the design.

OCOM has established partnerships with more than 26 hospitals and healthcare systems and a partnership with Kiran Patel Institute for Graduate Medical Education, fostering residency positions

throughout Florida.

It was also announced that on March 9, 2024, the Board of Trustees for OCOM unanimously approved a vote to apply for a name change of OCOM's parent organization to be called the Drs. Kiran & Pallavi Patel Global University. OCOM will retain its name.

Classes for OCOM's inaugural class of 97 students will begin August 5, 2024.

## Doshi Bridgebuilder Event



Audience listens in rapt attention to Dr. Hagelin, Dr. Capra, and Prof. Banerji.

## Indian Veterans Of Southern California Network At Dinner Gala

#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

WINNETKA, CA – Indian veterans under the auspices of Global Initiative of Veterans (GIVE) met on March 2 here, at a dinner gala to network and for an evening of solidarity.

Established in 2016 as a nonprofit charitable organization, GIVE was founded by Major Gurjeet Singh, who now serves as the organization's chairperson. A distinguished veteran of the Indian Army Corps of Engineers, among other things, he served during the tumultuous insur-

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gency in Kashmir in 1989, often risking his own life. At the event, he emphasized the importance of joining GIVE, encouraging veterans and guests to contribute to the community through the organization.

Avneet Kaur, founder of Core Family Office, highlighted GIVE's charitable endeavors, underscoring the significance of their work. This includes sponsoring the education of underprivileged children in India, feeding hundreds of homeless individuals in Los Angeles, providing specialized wheelchairs to the Paraplegic

Center of Veterans in Mohali, Punjab, distributing jackets to the homeless during harsh winters in California, assisting needy veterans with medical treatment.

Capt. David and Capt. Aparna Hande were lauded for exemplifying GIVE's commitment to serving veterans and the community.

At the event, were treated to sumptuous food and live music and dance entertainment.

Membership in GIVE is open to all veterans, their spouses, children, as well as associate members who are supporters and friends of veterans.

inquiry@maximtours.net

Contd. from P1

Center for Human Technology's educator and tech leader Randima Fernando.

The day began with a viewing of The Social Dilemma, the documentary produced by CHT that explains the deleterious effects of social media. James Fredericks, LMU Emeritus Professor of Theological Studies unpacked the pitfalls of AI-mediated information. He lamented its promulgation of mistruth. Misuse of social media creates echo chambers for users that rely not on reality but on algorithmic data. Young people and elders have been particularly susceptible to social media abuse resulting in alarming rates of anxiety and depression.

Awardees were honored at the luncheon. Pratima Doshi gave special recognition to Dean Robbin Crabtree who will complete her ten years of service within the LMU administration this spring.

Following lunch Dr. Fritjof Capra, introduced by Dr. Navin Doshi, summarized his work in the area of systems theory, noting the many interconnections that allow the flourishing of life. Two respondents offered their perspectives on the delicate relationship between human consciousness and machine-driven pseudo-reality: Dr. John Hagelin, President of Maharishi International University in Iowa and a 2017 Doshi Bridgebuilder, and Dr. Debashish Banerji, Haridas Chaudhuri Endowed Chair for Indian Philosophies and Culture and Doshi Professor of Asian Art at the California Institute for Integral Studies in San Francisco.

Randima Fernando, co-founder of CHT, presented a summary of the science behind the extractive technology that drives social media and AI. With stunning graphics and video clips, he explained his concern about the need for mindful discernment in the realm of media consumption.

The last session of the day featured Jack Kornfield, author of several best-selling meditation books including A Path With Heart, and Trudy Goodman, founder of InsightLA, featured in the popular animation Midnight Gospel. Kornfield invited the audience to engage in a mindfulness practice, teaching a skill for bringing one's attention into the present moment in the company of others. Goodman reminded everyone of the precious gift of human life, telling stories of survival and emphasizing the need to cultivate gratitude, appreciation, and remembrance.

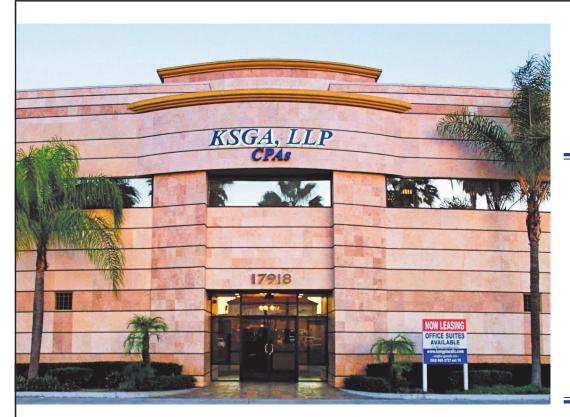
Navin Doshi came to the United States in 1958 to study engineering. He married Pratima in 1965. They built a textile business and started their real estate portfolio in 1972, acquiring multi-family housing units for the next forty years. Their daughter Sonya, a financial analyst, and their son Rahul, a pediatric cardiologist, were also present at this year's event. The Doshi family has pioneered in the field of Indian American philanthropy, endowing chairs and programs at LMU, CIIS, MIU, and IIT Gandhi Nagar. Most recently, they provided funding to establish the Doshi Center for Integrative Medicine with locations in West Los Angeles, Fairfield IA, and Encinitas. www.indiawest.com



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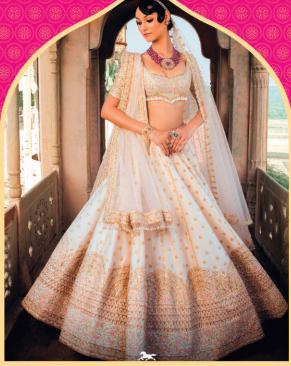
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## **Man Arrested For Smuggling Family Who** Froze On US-Canada Border



#### **India-West News Desk**

CHICAGO, IL - US authorities have arrested Harshkumar Patel, the primary suspect in the tragic human trafficking incident of 2022, where four members of a family from Gujarat, froze to death while being smuggled into the US through Canada. The victims' frozen bodies were found near Emerson, Manitoba.

Patel was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. He now faces charges related to the 'transportation of illegal aliens and conspiracy to bring and attempt to bring an illegal alien to the US.'

WhatsApp exchanges and financial transactions from Patel have been unveiled, exposing an international human smuggling network originating from Gujarat.

The court hearing is set for Feb. 28, with a potential transfer to Minnesota. Court documents reveal Patel's involvement in an organized human smuggling group. Investigations uncovered Patelb.s communication with Steve Shand, arrested on Jan. 19, 2022, while transporting seven individuals, including the four victims, near the US border. Others identified in the case are Fenil Patel in Canada and Bittu Singh.

Shand, connected to five other similar cases between December 2021 and January 2022, operated under Patel's direction, utilizing various aliases, reports say. Court documents disclosed that Patel provided Shand with route maps for transporting illegal migrants from the Canada-US border.

## **Fremont Man Gets Prison For Securities Fraud Scheme**



#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

OAKLAND, CA - Dileep Kumar Reddy Kamujula has been sentenced to six months in prison and ordered to forfeit \$130,369.28 by a district court.

Kamujula, 37, of Fremont, pleaded guilty to the charge on November 3, 2023. According to his plea agreement, Kamujula admitted that between April 9 and April 30, 2020, he used confidential Twilio customer usage data when purchasing approximately 167 Twilio call options that he sold on May 7 and May 8, 2020. Kamujula obtained confidential information from a relative who worked at Twilio and made a profit of more than \$550,000 on the transactions.

A federal grand jury indicted Kamujula on March 24, 2022, charging him with securities fraud.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Jon S. Tigar also sentenced the defendant to serve three years of supervised release, to begin after the prison term. Judge Tigar ordered the defendant to surrender to begin serving his prison term on April 15, 2024.

## Taken Up Slain Dancer's Case Strongly: Indian Consulate



CHICAGO, IL (IANS) - The Office of the Consulate General of India in Chicago said on March 2 that it is extending all possible help to relatives and deceased of Amarnath Ghosh, the Kuchipudi dancer from Kolkata, who was shot dead in St. Louis.

"Consulate is extending all help to relatives of deceased Amarnath Ghosh, Taken up the case strongly with St Louis police and the University for investigation of the reprehensible gun attack," the Consulate posted adding, "We are following up forensic investigation with police & providing support".

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- Guru Nanak Dev Ji



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Children's Jathas from Southern CA Gurudwaras,
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and Saropa Presentations

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## Cop Who Struck And Killed Jaahnavi Let Go

**India-West News Desk** 

SEATTLE, WA - In the tragic incident of January 23, where 23-year-old Jaahnavi Kandula was

fatally struck by a Seattle police vehicle, Officer Kevin Dave, who was driving and responding to a drug overdose call at a speed of 74 mph has been absolved of all responsibility.

Despite the severity of the incident, the King County Prosecutor's Office announced on February 21 that Officer Dave will not face criminal charges due to a lack of sufficient evidence under Washington State law.

Jaahnavi, a master's student at Northeastern University's Seattle campus, was thrown 100 feet upon impact. The court's decision not to pursue criminal charges has raised concerns about accountability in cases involving law enforcement officers. In a statement, King County Prosecuting Attorney Leesa Manion acknowledged the heartbreaking impact of Jaahnavi's death and expressed the office's responsibility to review all available

evidence.

The appalling comments made by Officer Daniel Auderer, captured on video, along with Officer Dave has drawn strong condem-



nation. Auderer's insensitive remarks included saying, "But she is dead" and laughing while on the phone. "She was 26 anyway," Auderer said in the video. "She had limited value."

Officer Auderer, Vice President of the Seattle Police Officers' Guild, faced disciplinary action for his insensitive comments and was reassigned to a non-operational position. His disciplinary hearing is scheduled for March 4.

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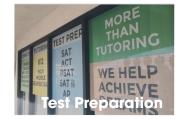
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## L.A. Rams Hire Ex-Eagles Defense Coach Sean Desai



#### **India-West News Desk**

LOS ANGELES, CA - In a swift turnaround from his stint with the Philadelphia Eagles, former defensive coordinator Sean Desai has secured a fresh start in Los Angeles. Desai, who spent less than a year with the Eagles, faced challenges and criticisms during his tenure, leading to a change in coaching responsibilities.

Sports Illustrated reports that the 40-yearold coach will be joining Sean McVay's staff with the Los Angeles Rams in a senior defensive role.

Desai's coaching career took a positive turn during the 2021 season with the Chicago Bears, where his defensive unit ranked sixth in total yards allowed and an impressive third against the pass. Following this successful

season, Desai transitioned to the Eagles, hired to replace Jonathan Gannon after a Super Bowl run and top-five defensive finish.

However, Desai's time in Philadelphia did not unfold as expected. Reports surfaced of confusion within his defensive scheme, coupled with a perceived lack of confidence, Sports Illustrated said. These challenges contributed to the Eagles' defense ranking among the league's worst in yards allowed and passing touchdowns.

After a disappointing 2023 season that saw the Eagles drop six of their final seven games, Desai had been relieved of his coaching duties. Desai grew up in Shelton, Connecticut. He attended Boston University to become an orthopedist and graduated in 3 years with a double major in philosophy and political science and a minor in biology.

## Sony Pictures Names Ravi Ahuja As President And COO



#### India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA - Sony Pictures Entertainment has announced the promotion of Ravi Ahuja to the position of President and Chief Operating Officer, effective April 1. Ahuja, currently serving as Chairman, Global Television Studios, and Corporate Development, is set to assume a role that has remained vacant until now, marking a significant development within the entertainment giant.

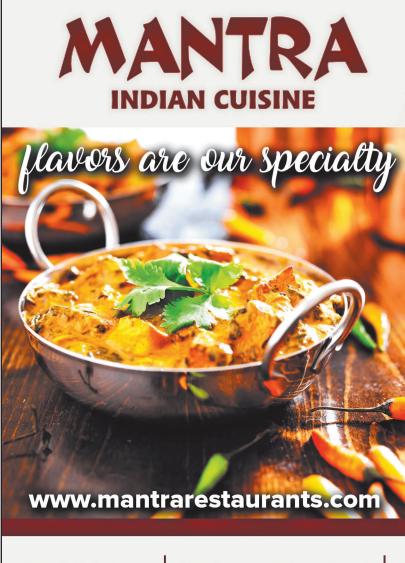
Ahuja, who joined Sony Pictures in March 2021, has played a pivotal role as Chairman of Global Television Studios and Corporate Development. He has overseen Sony Pictures Television's U.S. and international productions, nonfiction, kids, and game shows divisions, as well as the studio's India business. Under his leadership, the studio has successfully executed various mergers and acquisitions, including the acquisitions of Industrial Media, Bad Wolf, and Pixomondo. Additionally, Ahuja orchestrated the sale of GSN Mobile Games to Scopely.

Speculation is rife about Ahuja's promotion being linked to succession planning within Sony Pictures Entertainment. While the company has not officially commented on the matter, industry observers, including Deadline, believe that Ahuja could be a key player in determining the

future leadership after the tenure of Tony Vinciquerra as Chairman and CEO comes to an end in the future years.

Before joining Sony, Ahuja served as President of Business Operations and CFO of Walt Disney Television, where he played a central role in the post-acquisition merger of Disney/ABC Television and Fox Networks. His impressive track record includes overseeing finance, strategy, and business development for various business units at Fox Networks Group.

Ahuja's career spans diverse sectors, including his role as CFO for Virgin Entertainment Group, his tenure at McKinsey & Company, and his experience in investment banking. He holds undergraduate and MBA degrees from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, where he recently joined the Wharton Undergraduate Executive Board. Photo: Sony







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## Darshana Patel, Vinay Kruttiventi Will Figure On CA's November Ballot

#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

SACRAMENTO, CA – Incumbent California Democrats Ami Bera (CA-6) and Ro Khanna (CA-17) coasted to victory in the March 5 primaries for their House seats in Washington. Bera is running for a 7th term and will face off Republican Christine Bish while Khanna wants a 5th term and will run against Christine Chen in the November general elections.

The popular Rep. Eric Swalwell on Tuesday night found that his challenger (CA-14) will be Vinay 'Vin' Kruttiventi. While Swalwell got 61.90% of the vote, the Republican emerged as the closest rival with 19.09% in a district that has a sizeable Indian

American population. The businessman had pitched in \$500,000 of his own money in his campaign.

At the state level, Dr. Darshana Patel, also a Democrat, will face off against Republican Kristie Bruce-Lane for the Assembly seat in District 76.

Many others did not fare as well including Rishi Kumar who was running for Congress, and coming in 7th. From Silicon Valley, Tara Sreekrishnan, running in District 26 for the Assembly seat, also lost.



## Cory Booker Invites Fertility Care Advocate To State Of The Union



#### **India-West Staff Reporter**

NEWARK N.J. – Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) said that his guest at the State of the Union address was Roshni Kamta, a Jersey City native whose breast cancer diagnosis at 22 years old led her to freeze her eggs and inspired her advocacy for wider access to fertility treatments on behalf of breast cancer patients and women of color in healthcare.

After Kamta received the news that she had stage 2 breast cancer, her oncologist informed her that the chemotherapy she needed to treat her cancer could prevent her from having children in the future. Advised to freeze her eggs promptly before starting cancer treatment, Kamta found herself grap-

pling with the decision of whether to pursue a costly fertility procedure her insurance was not willing to cover.

Kamta applied for and received a grant from The Chick Mission, a non-profit working to ensure that every young woman with a cancer diagnosis has the option to preserve their fertility by providing direct financial support, and educational programs, and by advocating for state policies that require fertility treatment coverage for cancer patients.

"As we witness alarming attacks on IVF and other assisted reproductive technology, particularly in the aftermath of the recent Alabama Supreme Court ruling and the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, it's crucial that we listen to people like Ro-

shni. Recognizing that everyone's path to parenthood is unique and their decision to pursue IVF deeply personal, we must protect and ensure equitable access to fertility treatments. Roshni's story is a testament to the importance of removing barriers to IVF and advancing healthcare policies that prioritize dignity and choice for all," said Booker.

"When diagnosed with breast cancer, I had to advocate for the best care—not only for the medical treatment that would save my life, but also a chance to have a family of my own," Kamta said. "I applaud Senator Booker's efforts to make fertility treatment accessible, despite the many barriers patients must face. I am forever grateful for The Chick Mission's financial support—they made sure I could decide to have children in the future, not cancer."

Kamta, now 27, is a Rutgers University graduate, lives in Jersey City and works in marketing at Inc. Magazine.

In the wake of Alabama's State Supreme Court ruling that frozen embryos created during the IVF process are "children" under state law, Booker cosponsored the Access to Family Building Act, legislation which would establish a statutory right to access IVF for all Americans who need it to start or grow a family.

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## Nithya Raman

Contd from Pl

through over \$400,000 in independent expenditures from groups such as LA Forward, Unite Here Local 11, and California Courage, per mynewsla.com

Key priorities for Raman's campaign included addressing housing and homelessness, governance reform, bolstering renter's rights, and focusing on environmental, transportation, and park issues.

As the chair of the council's Housing and Homeless Committee, Raman has played a vital role in streamlining affordable housing processes, implementing the United to House LA tax measure, and facilitating developer engagement on major projects.

PACs funded by corporate landlords and the police union have spent over a million dollars to flood mailboxes and social feeds with negative ads – hoping they can turn people off from voting.

In contrast, independent-expenditure money flowed into Weaver's campaign from various sources, including the union representing Los Angeles Police Department officers, real estate company Douglas Emmett Management, and the United Firefighters of LA City Local 112, among others, mynewsla.com said. Weaver, who raised approximately \$345,000 in contributions, benefited from over \$708,000 in independent expenditures. The 4th District seat covers areas of Studio City, Sherman Oaks, Van Nuys, Reseda, Los Feliz, Silver Lake, Hollywood, and Encino. Progressive Raman is from Kerala, and has degrees from Harvard and one in Urban Planning from MIT.

## Hindu American Donors, Groups, Politicians

**Pushing For More Clout** 

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) – Niraj Antani, a Republican running for US Congress, is aggressively projecting his Hindu faith. Bhavini Patel, a Democrat running for Congress, is battling allegations of courting Hindu nationalist donors. And Indian-descent donors are pressing the Biden-Harris campaign for a "Hindu page" in its 2024 campaign manifesto.

The "Hindu Vote" appears to have become a factor.

There is no rock-solid count of Hindus in the US because the US Census does not record religious affiliation in its surveys. But there are several estimates.

Pew Research Center said 0.7 percent of Americans were Hindu in 2015 and that their number is projected to grow to 4.8 million by 2050. Harvard Divinity School estimated their number to be 2.5 million in 2018. And some Hindu Americans put the number generously at 5 million, which, they concede, includes Sikhs and Jains.

As crucial as their number is in

US politics, so is their ability to write big donation checks.

Niraj Antani, an Ohio state lawmaker who is running in the Republican primary for a congressional seat, has frequently described himself as Hindu and posted this message on X, to mark the inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya: "As the 1st Hindu American State Senator in Ohio history, today it was my privilege to do Darshan to Lord Ram at @ BAPS Cincinnati Mandir to mark the opening of his Mandir in Ayodhya. As we celebrate this occasion, let us stand for religious freedom around the world. Jai Shri Ram!"

His pinned post on X is an endorsement from the Hindu American PAC.

Bhavini Patel, a Democrat who is seeking to unseat the incumbent Democrat in a congressional race in Pennsylvania, is being attacked by her opponent for courting Hindu nationalist donors, as well as for her unstinting support for Israel.

A fundraising call she hosted

with Mihi Meghani; a co-founder of the Hindu American Foundation was being cited as proof of her courting Hindu groups. Meghani is also the chair of the Hindu American PACs whose endorsement is a pinned post on Antani's X feed.

The Patel campaign has denied these allegations.

The back and forth only demonstrates the growing presence of a Hindu vote in US politics.

"There was always a Hindu vote, which was not recognized publicly," said Ramesh Kapur, a longtime Democratic donor and strategist. "But it is being recognized now and has come to the fore in the context of the 2024 elections."

A bunch of donors are also pressing the Biden-Harris reelection campaign to include a "Hindu Page" in its manifesto,

Niraj Antani

whenever it is announced.

The same group had tried but failed to convince the Biden campaign to feature the same page in its manifesto that ran on the campaign's website as "Joe's Vision". It had sections dedicated to Muslims, Jews, African Americans, and so on. The campaign did issue Biden's agenda for Indian Americans, but this group of Hindu donors was insistent on a "Hindu Page" in "Joe's Vision" especially because of the observances in the section for Muslims.

"Joe Biden has been disappointed by the measures that the government of India has taken with the implementation and aftermath of the National Register of Citizens in Assam and the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act into law," it had said, referring to laws that sought to fast-track citizenship request from non-Muslims fleeing neighboring countries and keeping a national registry of citizens.

Both laws remain unenforced.

These donors are pressing for the page with an offer to provide President Biden the cushion of Hindu American votes to offset the possible boycott of Arab and Muslim votes over the administration's support of Israel's offensive against Hamas in Gaza, especially in the key swing states that tend to determine most presidential races.

A phrase being used frequently in this context is "plug the gap".

Wisconsin, one of the swing states, will be critical. Biden won this state by 20,000 in 2020. It has an estimated 38,400 Hindu Americans and they may be able to cushion the blow from the boycott by the state's 68,000 Muslims to an extent. These numbers come from a document prepared by these donors to make their case.

Hindu Americans are more confident of their ability to help Biden better in Georgia, a state he won by roughly 12,000. The state is home to 172,000 Hindu Americans, who can more than compensate for its 123,000 Muslims.

In Pennsylvania, which Biden

won by 44,000, Hindu Americans number 129,700 to 149,500 Muslim Americans. Hindu Americans are not able to fill the gap completely but, they are arguing, that they can help the campaign fill the gap.

But all this presumes Hindu Americans will turn up and vote and not, as mostly before, stay home. These Hindu Americans feel particularly confident of their clout on account of two key political developments.

One, they believe, they helped Glenn Youngkin, a Republican, win the Governorship of Virginia, and two, convinced Gavin Newsom, the California Governor with widely acknowledged White House aspirations, to veto legislation passed by the California legislatures to add "caste" to the list of prohibited discriminatory practices.

Hindu Americans are mostly of Indian descent but a sizable number of them are also from Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Caribbean, Afghanistan, and American converts such as former congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard's family.

Indian Americans have been a growing political force in the US, but many among them have begun to differentiate themselves as Hindu Americans, a trend that has been helped along by the rise of the BJP in India, especially the immense popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Multiple groups have cropped up with names wrapped around the word "Hindu" — Republican Hindu Coalition, American Hindu Coalition, Hindus 4 America, Hindu American PAC (Political Action Committee).

Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ro Khanna and Pramila Jayapal, the three Indian American members of the House of Representatives are all Hindu, but they have rarely, if ever, flouted their faith to further their politics. And they have now been members of the US Congress since 2017, serving three terms. Shri Thanedar, who joined them in the House in 2023 has been demonstrably bolder. He heads the Hindu Caucus in the House.



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## Resolution Honoring Sikh Americans Passed By WA Senate

India-West Staff Reporter

OLYMPIA, WA – The Washington State Senate passed a resolution on February 21 honoring the contributions of Sikh Americans to the culture and history of the state and the country. The measure was sponsored by Sen. Manka Dhingra (D-Redmond), the first Sikh American elected to a state legislature in American history, who spoke about how Sikh values have inspired her and many others to public service. "Every year, this resolution is a joyful opportunity for the



Sikh community of Washington to gather in Olympia, and for this body to remember the contributions of so many Sikh Americans to our state," said Dhingra. "We are a community that is deeply rooted in the ideas of truth and service to community. And that all that we do is done with humility. This is a religion that was talking about equality among humans back

in the 15th century, especially gender equality." The Senate also recognized members of the Sikh community in attendance, including Hira Singh, Sunny Singh, Puneet Kaur, and staff of the Sikh Coalition and the Washington Sikh Community. The session was opened with a prayer by Sikh youth leader Sharn Kaur of the Khalsa Gurmat Center.

#### Tik Tok In Peril In US, Bipartisan Bill Wants China Out

WASHING-TON, DC (ANI)

– A bipartisan bill introduced by lawmakers in the US House will force China-based Byte-Dance, the parent



Congressmen Mike Gallagher and Raja Krishnamoorthi, the top lawmakers on the House Select

Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, introduced the bill on March 5. It is the latest effort to impose a ban on TikTok over concerns about potential national security threats posed by ByteDance.

The "Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act" defines ByteDance and TikTok as foreign adversary-controlled applications. The bill also creates a broader framework that would enable the US President to designate other foreign adversary-controlled applications. The US House Energy and Commerce Committee



said it will consider the bill.

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, chair, said, "I commend Select Committee on the CCP Chair Mike Gallagher and Ranking Member Raja Krishnamoorthi for their leadership on this bipartisan bill and look forward to advancing the bill this week."

Under the scope of the bill, foreign adversaries include China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran. The bill will give more than five months to ByteDance after the law goes into effect to divest TikTok. If ByteDance does not divest from TikTok, it would become illegal to distribute it through an app store or web hosting platform in the US.

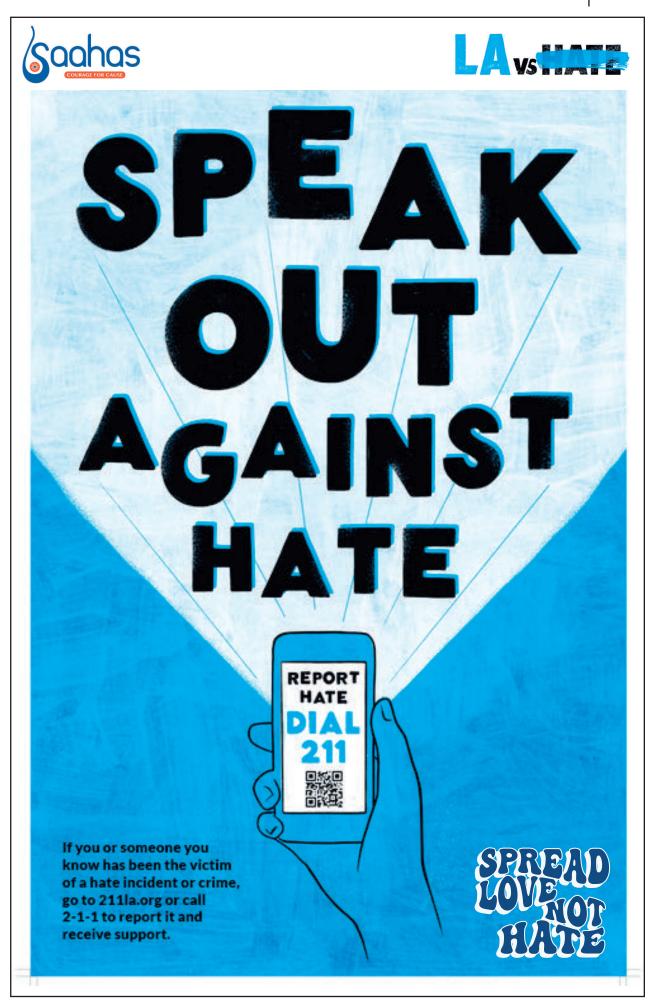
There are still concerns about banning the app due to its popularity with US users and concerns based on the loopholes users could use to gain access to TikTok even if it were effectively banned. In 2023, a Republican-backed bill tried to impose an outright ban on TikTok. However, the ban faced a pushback from Democratic lawmakers who stressed that the effort was rushed and could hinder free speech rights.

## Nikki Haley Quits Race, Does Not Endorse Trump

CHARLESTON, SC (ANI) – Republican presidential candidate, Nikki Haley has formally announced an end to her Republican presidential candidate campaign. "The time



has now come to suspend my campaign. I said I wanted Americans to have their voices heard. I have done that. I have no regrets," she said on March 6."Alth ough I will no longer be a candidate, I will not stop using my voice for the things I believe in," she said while speaking here. Haley said, "In all likelihood, Donald Trump will be the Republican nominee when our party convention meets in July. I congratulate him and wish him well. I wish anyone well who would be America's president. Our country is too precious to let our differences divide us. It is now up to Donald Trump to earn the votes of those in our party and beyond it who did not support him. And I hope he does that." She did not endorse him. While Trump rolled to victory in 14 of the 15 GOP contests on Super Tuesday, she foiled a possible clean sweep by winning in Vermont. Soon after Haley suspended her campaign, Trump posted on social media that the former South Carolina governor had been "trounced" on March 5 and invited her supporters to join his political movement. "Much of her money came from Radical Left Democrats, as did many of her voters, almost 50%, according to the polls," Trump posted. Across the Republican primaries on Super March 5, Haley won just 43 of the Republican delegates, while Trump won 764. Meanwhile, President Joe Biden emerged the Democratic winner from Super Tuesday having amassed huge delegate hauls in California, Texas, and beyond, moving closer to a rematch for the White House in November.



 $\mathsf{MARCH}\,2024-P21$ 

## Doshi Family Bridgebuilder Award & Artificial Intelligence Symposium

Good afternoon friends,

First I would like to thank my good friends Robin and Chris and LMU for organizing this event as they do every year. I believe LMU is indeed an institution where freedom of thought has been practiced diligently.

It gives me great pleasure to offer this year's Bridge-builder award to Dr. Fritjof Capra, someone I have admired since the 1970s, when his remarkable book The Tao of Physics became an international bestseller and reached my hands.



Dean Crabtree, Jack Kornfield, Dr. Doshi, Trudy Goodman, Prof. Chapple, and Mrs. Doshi.

It was Fritjof that connected the dots and was the first comprehensive presentation of the closeness of the quantum view and Eastern views of reality. During his conversations with Warner Heisenberg, one of the founding fathers of quantum mechanics, he articulates the fundamental interdependence of all phenomena and the intrinsically dynamic nature of reality.

Please note that Heisenberg was among the first few physicists who made the connection of quantum physics with the metaphysics of Vedanta based upon his conversation with Rabindranath Tagore in India.

Fritjof expanded the connection of the eastern traditions with quantum physics through yogic experience with a focus on the metaphysical image of dancing Shiva that is Nataraja. This is an image of a dynamic but unified cosmos contrasting with the classical western image of a clockwork universe disconnected from event probability.

A few words about the contrast between the Eastern and Western traditions observed by the Indian philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan: the Eastern traditions exhibit complete independence and freedom of the human mind and show endless diversity of hues. They are never a dogmatic creed, but a vast complex but subtly unified mass of spiritual thought which lead to ultimate realization. However the East and the West are not so sharply divided as the alarmists would want us believe.

In the mystic traditions of the different religions, there is remarkable unity of spirit. Specifically, Hinduism is not a sect but a fellowship of all who accept the law of right and earnestly seek for the truth.





Dean Crabtree, Dr. Doshi, BB award winner Dr. Fritjof Capra, Prof. Chapple, and Mrs. Doshi



MIU pres. Dr. Hagelin, Dr. Capra, and Prof. Banerji

I believe Fritjof has essentially communicated these thoughts through his writings. Fritjof, a holistic thinker, I suspect, also has a well-developed view about AI, that I am sure is based upon braiding quantum physics with the eastern tradition of oneness where the primacy of the intuitive mind associated with love and compassion rules over all other human faculties including the intellect as expressed by the great Indian philosopher Radhakrishnan and Ervin Schrodinger, another great quantum physicist. AI after all is a creation of the human mind. Can there be guard rails to ensure that it is applied for the good of humanity? I am indeed looking forward to hearing the dialog among three great minds, Fritjof, John and Debashish.

THANK YOU

#### **India-West News Desk**

CHICAGO, IL – 'Chicago,' the monthly magazine published by Tribune Publishing naming the most influential Chicagoans has put Indian American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi in its POLITICS

Raja Krishnamoorthi

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

## Raja On List Of Most Powerful Chicagoans

'Power 50' list. Ranked at 24, Raja is the highest-ranked individual of South Asian descent. In other words, it ranks him as the "most powerful" South Asian in the Greater Chicago Area.

"The heavy hitters in our Power 50," the maga-

zine said, "know how to use their influence to make things happen in Chicago and beyond," while putting J.B. Pritzker, the Illinois Governor at number one and his sister, the former secretary of commerce Penny Pritzker at number 12. rishnamoorthi, who represents the northwest suburbs, it said, had "used his former

perch as chairman of a House Oversight subcommittee to investigate everything from the Washington Commanders to the baby formula shortage, has \$14.4 million in his campaign coffers—more than three times as much as any other congressional representative from Illinois, and the third-highest total in the entire Congress."

It quoted a political consultant as saying, "Raja is a huge player across the country." In 2022, Krishnamoorthi donated \$460,000 to Democratic candidates and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, but he is said to be stockpiling his campaign cash to run for the Senate in 2026 if Dick Durbin retires.

#### Minita Sanghvi Gets Democratic Nom, Could Become First Gay Woman In NY Senate



**India-West Staff Reporter** 

NEW YORK, NY
- Minita Sanghvi
officially secured
the Democratic
nomination for New
York's 44th State
Senate district on
February 26.

Saratoga County Democratic Committee and Schenectady County Democratic Committee have both endorsed her.

**Endorsing Sangh**vi, Saratoga County Democratic Committee Chairwoman Martha Devaney praised her as a committed advocate and proven problem solver. Devaney highlighted Sanghvi's multifaceted background, including her roles as a dedicated parent, respected educator, and effective public servant, as evidence of her capacity to deliver results transcending partisan lines.

Frank Salamone, Chair of the Schenectady County Democratic Committee, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing Sanghvi's successful track record as Saratoga Springs Commissioner of Finance.

Salamone lauded her fiscal responsibility and highlighted key city improvements under her leadership, including the establishment of a third fire station, a 24/7 homeless shelter, and essential infrastructure enhancements.

The 44th State Senate district, encompassing Saratoga County, Niskayuna, and the City of Schenectady, currently under Republican incumbent Jim Tedisco who has held the office for four decades, has witnessed a shifting political landscape. While traditionally Republican, a surge in registered Democrats, outnumbering Republicans by nearly 6,000, signals changing demographics.

President Biden's decisive victory over Donald Trump in the 2020 election within the district further underscores this trend.

Sanghvi's potential election would mark historic milestones, making her the first openly gay woman and woman of color to represent New York's 44th State Senate District, as well as the first openly gay woman in the New York Senate.

"I'm running for State Senate because we deserve better," said Sanghvi upon announcing her candidacy in January. Emphasizing her status as a parent, business educator, and dedicated public servant, Sanghvi vowed to prioritize community needs over partisan politics. She underscored her track record of collaborative leadership and tangible accomplishments, underscoring her commitment to fiscal responsibility and responsive governance.

Born in India, Sanghvi immigrated to the US in 2001, holding degrees in accounting and an MBA. She taught business at Skidmore College for nearly a decade before winning the election as Saratoga Springs Finance Commissioner in 2021. Sanghvi emphasized her achievements in delivering fiscally responsible results, prioritizing public safety, and enhancing residents' quality of life

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This publication was supported by funding awarded by Cal OES XD22 02 1316 through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

## **Governor Gavin Newsom Names Three To State Offices**

**India-West News Desk** 

SACRAMENTO, CA - California Governor Gavin Newsom on February 20 named Naginder Dhillon, of Sacramento, to the office of Deputy Director of Program Support in the Division of Rehabilitative Programs at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, where she has been Associate Director since 2019. Dhillon earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from the University of California, Davis. This position does not require Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$166,008. Dhillon is a Democrat.

Earlier, on February 16, Newsom appointed Hemant Dhingra, of Clovis, to the Medical Board of California. Dhingra has been Chief of Medical Staff at the Saint Agnes Medical Center of Fresno since 2023, where he was Founding Program Director of Internal Medicine. He has been President of the Nephrology Group since 2014. Dhingra is a member of the American Society of Nephrology and the California Medical Association. He earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from the Mount Sinai School of Medi
Hemant Dhingra.







Nisha Devi Rodrigo



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cine and completed his Fellowship in Nephrology at Texas Tech University. This position requires Senate confirmation, and the compensation is \$100 per diem. Dhingra is a Democrat.

Newsom also named Nisha Devi Rodrigo, of San Francisco, to the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls. Rodrigo is the Founder of Kala Wellness and an Eastern Medicine Practitioner with the United Nations since 2018. Rodrigo did Communications for MP Graham Allen in the House of Commons in the UK Parliament from 2000 to 2001. She was a Hansard Scholar at

the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2000. Rodrigo did Communications in the White House Counsel's Office from 1999 to 2000. She is a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness and Mental Well-Being and of the Yoga Alliance Board of Directors. Rodrigo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Loyola Marymount University and has studied Eastern Medicine Modalities since 2001. This position requires Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$100 per diem. Rodrigo is a Democrat.





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## Post Congressional Review Path Clear For Drone Sales To India

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - The decks are clear now for India to take the next steps in acquiring 31 MQ-9B Sky Guardian armed drones with ammunition with the lapse on Friday of the 30 days for Con-

gressional review of the deal.

These armed drones are meant for intelligence gathering, surveillance, reconnaissance, and for land, air, and sea warfare. India has two of these drones - MQ-9A - companylease-and-operation basis from the manufacturers, General

Atomics.

The entire package of drones with ammunition that India has sought will cost an estimated \$3.99 billion.

The drones will come with 161 embedded global positioning and inertial navigation systems; 35 L3 Rio Grande Communications Intelligence Sensor Suites; 170 AGM-114R Hellfire missiles; 16 M36E9 Hellfire Captive Air Training Missiles; 310 GBU-39B/B Laser Small Diameter Bombs; and eight GBU-39B/B LSDB Guided



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"The Congressional review period will conclude at the end of the 30th calendar day after notification and the posting of the media announcement," said a US official.

The announcement came on February 1.

A wrinkle in the deal had emerged before the notification period when Ben Cardin, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is a key Congressional body for clearing foreign military sales, linked his support for the deal to assurance from the Biden administration that India would cooperate in the murder-forhire case involving the alleged to murder a Khalistan activist. He subsequently announced his support for the deal shortly after Congress was notified.

General Atomics says that the Sky Guardian "is designed to fly over the horizon via satellite for up to 40-plus hours in all types of weather and safely integrate into civil airspace, enabling joint forces and civil authorities to deliver real-time situational awareness anywhere in the world-day or night". And apart from his combat capabilities, "it can be used for humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, search and rescue, law enforcement and border enforcement".



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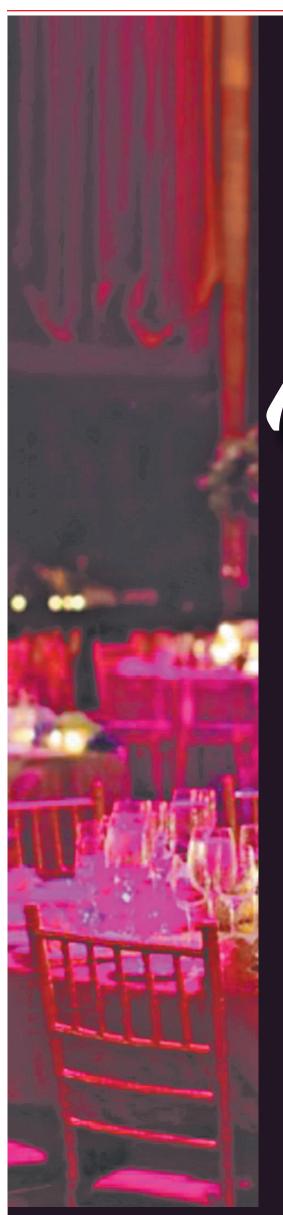
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## Kal Penn To Star In Film About **Anna Nicole Smith**

#### **India-West News Desk**

LOS ANGELES, CA - Actor Kal Penn has been cast in the lead role as Dr. Sandeep Kapoor in the upcoming film "Trust Me, I'm a Doctor." The movie will delve into the final days of Anna Nicole Smith's life, nearly three weeks after the 17th anniversary of her tragic death.

Based on Dr. Sandeep Kapoor's 2017 book of the same name, the film follows the pain medication doctor as his life takes a tumultuous turn during the wrongful death trials of the former Playboy centerfold. The narrative unfolds against the backdrop of Anna Nicole's accidental drug overdose, attributed to a combination of chloral hydrate and other prescription drugs. Thane Economou is



set to direct the film, having also written the script. Kal Penn will also serve as an executive producer. Filming is slated to commence in Toronto this spring, and the casting for the role of Anna Nicole is currently in progress.

This marks the second recent movie centered on Anna Nicole Smith, with "Hurricana" having recently wrapped production.

## Father And Farmer, Ranjit Attends Oscars

LOS ANGELES, CA (IANS) When Ranjit, who was till then looking after his rice fields in one corner of Jharkhand, decided to stand up against his village and fight for his daughter after she was gang-raped in 2017, he was told, "You can't kill a tiger by yourself.'

Recounting this conversation towards the end of New Delhi-born Indian Canadian filmmaker Nisha Pahuja's Oscar-nominated documentary feature, 'To Kill A Tiger', Ranjit

says with steely determination, "But I replied, 'I'll show you how to kill a tiger all by yourself.' And so, I did.'

'To Kill A Tiger' may have lost out, as was predicted, to '20 Days in Mariupol', but



Ranjit had the time of his life that he had never imagined. Dressed in the regulation black tuxedo and bow tie, he was there at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles for the 96th Academy Awards, soaking in the glitz and glamour of the most-anticipated event in global cinema.

He may never be able to get over the trauma of his daughter's rape, but for Ranjit, it was the final vindication of his lonely battle against the odds piled up by an insensitive system. His daughter, who's now 20 years old, also has moved far away from her past as she nurtures the dream of becoming a policewoman fighting to protect women like her.

For Pahuja, whose previous documentary, 'The World Before Her', was nominated for an Emmy, it took eight years of hard work to put together 'To Kill A Tiger'.

The documentary, which the Indian government has reportedly not looked at too favorably, has won her 19 awards (not the Oscar, sadly), besides being picked up by Netflix and getting the support of the leading lights of the global Indian diaspora — Dev Patel, Mindy Kailing, poet Rupi Kaur, Dr Atul Gawande and Priyanka Chopra Jonas.

Pahuja and Ranjit can, for now, let their hair down and party after the curtains come down on the Oscars. But they both know too well that their story is getting repeated every hour across the country. The tiger is still at large — and difficult to kill.

In the words of TV actor Sahil Salathia, who attended an exclusive screening prior to the Oscars, at the Netflix headquarters here, and Instagrammed about it: "Ranjit ji is an Indian farmer who supported his daughter (right till the end!) who was traumatized by life and society. We need more role models like him in India.'

Highlighting what Ranjit, who is all set to attend the Oscars gala at LA's Dolby Theater, was up against, Sahil wrote: "It is not easy knowing that three men in Jharkhand gang raped your 13-year-old daughter and the village thinks why not just get her married to one of the rapists, why take it to the court and involve the legal system ... gaon ka naam kharab hoga ... thu-thu hogi ... waise bhi ladki bahar kyub thi?! ... ladke jawaan hain ... naadaani ho gayi ... samaaj mein rehna hai ya nahi?!"

Writing about Pahuja, Sahil noted: "You are exactly the filmmaker the world needs! The impact of your documentary is intensely high. I am anyway a very sensitive man and I take immense pride in that. I was crying like a 13-year-old ... picking 13 as a reference because the victim was 13 too when this horrific incident happened."





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MARCH 2024 - UPCOMING PROGRAMS				
DATE	POOJA/EVENT & DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY	TIME	AMOUNT
Every Monday	Lord Shiva Abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
Every Tuesday	Lord Hanuman Abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
Every Thursday	Shiridi Sai Baba Abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
Every Thursday	Guru Gajanan Maharaj abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
Every Friday	Goddess Siva Kameswari Abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
Every Saturday	Lord Venkateswara Abhishekam	Abhishekam	10:30 AM	\$54
Every Saturday	Navagraha Abhishekam	Abhishekam	11:45 AM	\$54
Every Sunday	Satsang Bhajan Keertan	Satsang	10:30 AM	-
Every Sunday	Rahu Kala Nagaabhishekam	Abhishekam	6:00 PM	\$54
March 16th - Saturday	Guru Gajanan Maharaj Monthly Satsang	Puja & Archana	11:30 AM	\$251
March 22nd - Friday	Pradosham - Shiva Abhishekam	Abhishekam	7:00 PM	\$54
March 23rd - Saturday	Vasavi Kanyaka Parameswari Abhishekam	Abhishekam	5:30 PM	\$54
March 24th - Sunday	Samoohika Satyanarayana Vratam	Puja	10:00 AM	\$54
March 24th - Sunday	Sri Chakra Navavaarana Puja	Puja	5:30 PM	\$116
March 28th - Thursday	Sankata Hara Chaturthi Ganesha Abhishekam	Abhishekam	5:30 PM	\$54
March 31st - Sunday	Monthly Seniors Day	-	10:30 AM	-
March 28th - Thursday	Sankata Hara Chaturthi Ganesha Abhishekam	Abhishekam	5:30 PM	\$54
	APRIL 2024 - UPCOM	IING PROGRA	AMS	
April 6th - Saturday	Ayyappa Padi Puja	Puja	6:00 PM	\$54
April 6th - Saturday	Pradosham - Shiva Abhishekam	Abhishekam	6:30 PM	\$54
April 13th - Saturday	Mataki Chowki	-	6:00 PM	-
April 16th - Tuesday	Sri Ramanavami Sri Sita Rama Kalyanam	-	6:00 PM	-

## Tuesday, April 9th, 2024 | 12:00 AM

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This strategic collaboration marks an important milestone for Hilton, reaffirming the company's commitment to expand in the dynamic Indian market. Recognized for her inspiring journey in the entertainment industry and beyond, Deepika embodies the spirit of modern India and resonates with the aspirations and ethos of the Indian traveler, the company said.

Breaking away from conventional stereotypes and scripting her success story, Deepika's rise in the highly competitive Bollywood and Hollywood entertainment industries, coupled with her philanthropic work mirrors the ethos of the entrepreneurial generation which is shaping contemporary India today. Acknowledged with the Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum for her leadership in raising mental health awareness in 2020 and named the TIME 100 Most Influential People in the World, Deepika's achievements have set her firmly on the world stage.

Deepika said, "I'm proud to be partnering with a global brand like Hilton to share the importance of The Stay for Indians worldwide. My generation works extremely hard, and we want to see value in the experiences that we choose to invest in. What I love about Hilton is that they truly understand the importance of The Stay. A hotel stay can make or break a trip. Having your needs anticipated and looked after even before you step into the hotel lobby lets you know that you're well taken care of. I look forward to creating lasting memories with Hilton and sharing them with the world."

With 25 operating hotels and 17 hotels in the pipeline in India, Hilton has set its sights on the Indian market to triple its estate in the coming years. It's a global partnership with Deepika and the upcoming 'Hilton. For The Stay' campaign rollout cements its commitment to India as part of the company's strategy to increase its brand visibility and strengthen its position in the hospitality market.

## M. Night Shyamalan's Daughter Directing Movie

NEW YORK, NY
– On March 5, the initial trailer for the upcoming thriller film, "The Watchers," was unveiled by New Line and Warner Bros. Although mastermind M. Night Shyamalan produced the movie, it takes a unique turn with his daughter, Ishana Night Shyamalan, assuming the directorial role.

Dakota Fanning stars as Mina in "The

Watchers," a 28-year-old artist stranded in the woodlands of western Ireland. Seeking refuge comes at a cost, as Mina and fellow strangers in the shelter are relentlessly stalked by enigmatic, unseen creatures each night.

The narrative appears to serve as a compelling metaphor for the contemporary Panopticon of widespread surveillance and social media. While the film promises unexpected twists and revelations, the trailer is already replete with eerie visuals, such as a winged skeleton holding a sign that reads, "Point of No Return."

Having graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and creating short films, Ishana's



involvement in her father's Apple TV+ series, "Servant," is noteworthy. She directly penned several episodes, including the action-packed finales for seasons 2 and 3.

Reflecting on her work on "Servant" in 2022, Ishana shared with Entertainment Weekly, "I think as a young filmmaker, everyone experiences this intense fear when embarking on the professional world for the first time." Despite this, her father is confident in her distinct style, stating, "She has slightly more of a fantasy bend than I do. She speaks in bolder colors than I do. The camera is more canted or more grotesque in showing someone scarier," as Night told EW.

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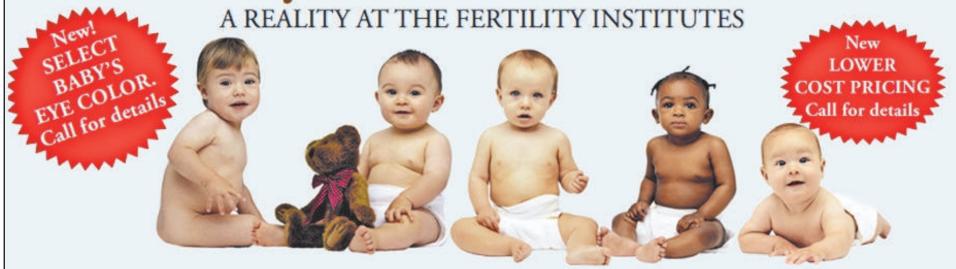
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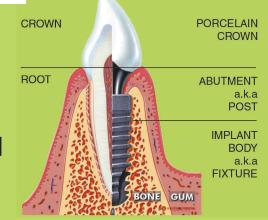
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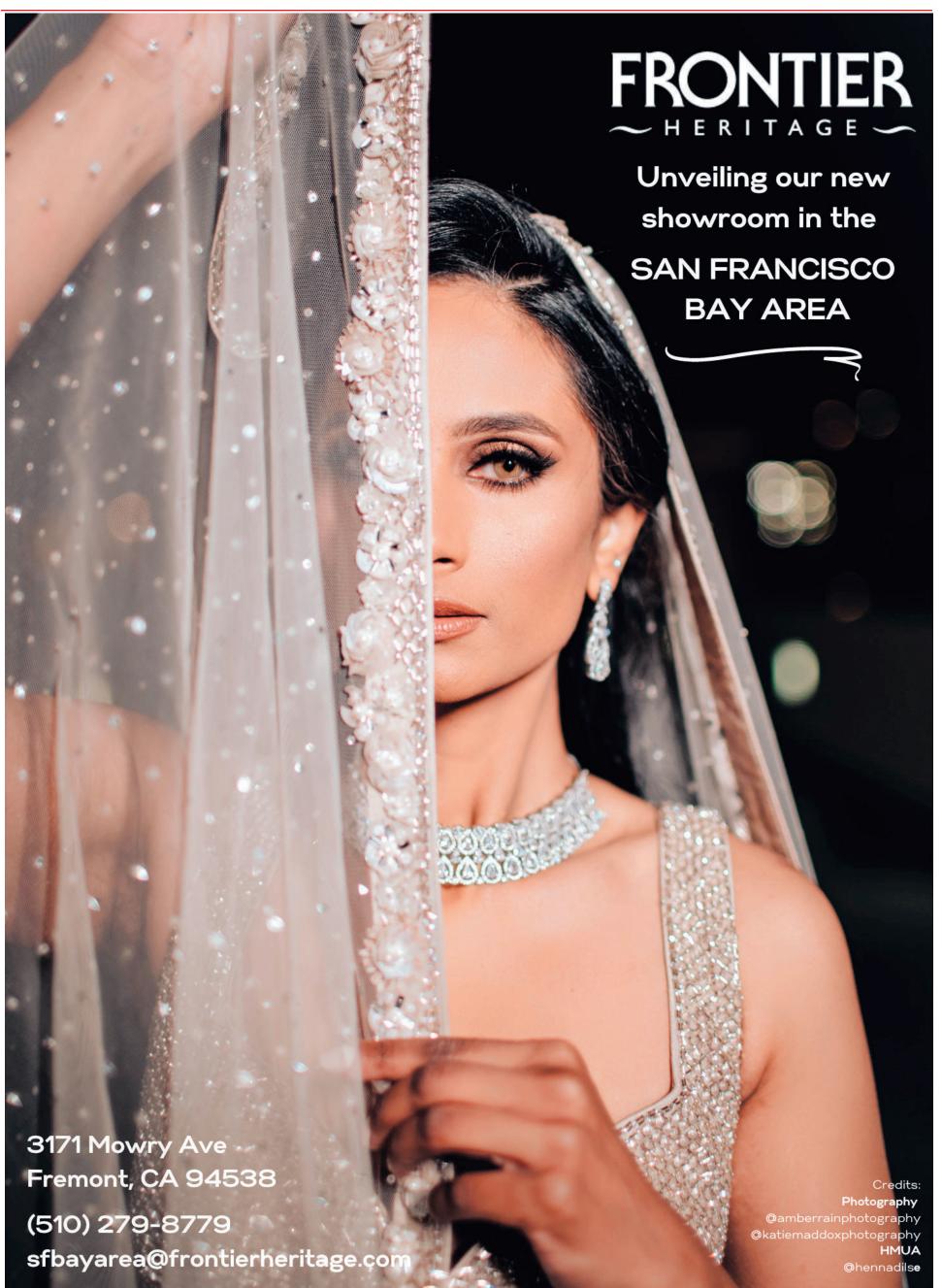
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