EST!

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BAPS Opens Largest Temple In The US



India-West Staff Reporter

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ - The Swaminarayan Akshardham

temple was inaugurated on October 8. Sitting on a massive 185acre plot in Robbinsville County Contd. on P30



Left: An aerial view of the massive temple complex in New Jersey. Above: Mahant Swami Maharaj at the inauguaral festivities.

Varun Grover Experiences Life So Intensely, He Can Feel Crippled

By NIMMI RAGHUNATHAN

He is a Renaissance man.

Varun Grover writes hit stories (Masaan, Sacred Games). Poetry, that becomes an anthem of protestors (Kagaz Nahi Dikhayenge, for those refusing to cooperate with the government in proving their citizenship). Thrives on observational humor...the online robot wants to know if you are human! There is lyrical beauty (National Award winning Moh Moh Ke Dhaage from the film Dum Laga Ke Haisha). Poet, comedian, lyricist, fiction writer, screenwriter, actor (Qala, Bombay Velvet), creative cook, cat lover, and now, director (All India Rank), Grover is an artist's artist.

The outpouring comes from a fire not seen in his demeanor which is thoughtful and measured. It comes from a place that encompasses a deep caring for society. Contd. on P31



Varun Grover.

Calling It 'Unnecessary,' Governor Gavin Newsom Vetoes Caste Bill



Gavin Newsom.

India-West News Desk

SACRAMENTO, CA – Declaring the bill "unnecessary," California Governor Gavin Newsom's vetoed the bill that has been dividing the Hindu community and was aimed at explicitly outlawing caste discrimination in the state.

The proposed law would have integrated caste into the definition of ancestry, making it illegal to discriminate based on caste under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, Fair Employment and Housing Act, and education discrimination law.

Newsom, in his veto message, stated that caste discrimination was already prohibited under existing civil rights protections, which are broadly interpreted in California. "In California, we believe everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, no matter who they are, where they come from, who they love, or where they live. Contd. on P16

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SAHARA Raises \$800,000 For Victims Of Domestic Violence And Elder Abuse

India-West Staff Reporter

CERRITOS, CA – The South Asian Helpline and Referral Agency held its 32nd annual gala at the Sheraton Cerritos here, on September 24. Over 250 people enjoyed this year's theme of "empowerment through education."

The keynote speaker was Dr. Jose Fierro – the President/Superintendent of Cerritos Community College District.

Over the course of the evening SAHARA raised nearly \$800,000 to go towards its mission of providing support and wrap-around services for victims of Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse.



Major supporters and donors Manu and Rika Shah.



Several in the audience eagerly opened their wallets.



The Sahara team.



From left: Rohini Bedi, James Jones, Krutika Pranav and Representative from Congresswoman Harris' Office.

SAHARA also said over the course of the last year, it has served 2,460 individuals - a 37% increase from the previous year. "We endeavor to make a difference one life at a time by providing wrap-around programs for victims of domestic violence and elder abuse. Many of our clients come to us with nowhere else to go and we provide them a safe place to grow and find true wellness of being," stated Executive Director, James Jones.

Established in 1990, providing services to survivors of all forms of abuse in the South Asian community by providing them with culturally sensitive and linguistically specific services. Since inception SAHARA has provided wrap-around services to over 11,000 members of the community.

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LETTERS

Condemn Terrorist Attack, Let's Bring Peace

Gandhi International Institute for Peace strongly condemns the terrorist attack on civilians, tourists and kidnapping of men, women and children during the Yom Kippur festival in Israel on October 7, 2023. It was a heinous crime against humanity.

It is time to bring back the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi to the modern world to promote world peace. Mahatma Gandhi once stated, "You must be the change, if you wish to see a change in the world."

Even though it is an old geo-political issue that has been going on in the Middle East since 1947, we urge the people of Israel and Palestinian National Authority to restore calmness and find a nonviolent solution by implementing the two-nation theory solution rather than the use of terrorist groups as proxies to kill innocent civilians and disrupt peace and communal harmony in that region.

No nation benefits from a war. A war means death, destruction and devastation and human civilization moves backward. It is time for "Peace Now More Than Ever".

Violence cannot be stopped by violence. It can only be stopped by nonviolent methods to include positive communication, development of trust between two religious and political groups and acceptance of each other by keeping their differences aside. Both groups need to seek diplomatic solutions through the United Nations.

- Raj Kumar, Honolulu, HI

Senator Feinstein's Dedication And Need For Cognitive Testing For Lawmakers

I am writing to express both admiration for Senator Dianne Feinstein's remarkable career and concern about the need for cognitive testing for lawmakers, including members of the judiciary, as they reach advanced ages. While Senator Feinstein's accomplishments over the years are undeniably impressive, her insistence on staying in office, despite questions about her mental acuity, raises a critical issue that deserves attention.

Senator Feinstein has had a long and distinguished career in public service. Her accomplishments, spanning decades, include championing important causes such as gun control, environmental protection, and healthcare reform. Her dedication to the people of California and the United States is unquestionable, and her influence on shaping policy has been significant.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that cognitive abilities can diminish with age, just as physical health can deteriorate. This brings to mind the question of whether there should be a standardized cognitive testing requirement for lawmakers, including members of the judiciary, once they reach a certain age, such as 75.



In various aspects of life, we have regulations in place that require individuals to demonstrate their fitness for certain responsibilities as they age. For instance, rental car companies often refuse to rent vehicles to individuals over a certain age, recognizing the potential risks associated with older drivers. Physicians are required to stay up to date with their knowledge through ongoing testing and certification. Even members of the military are mandated to prove their physical fitness regularly.

Why, then, should we not consider implementing a similar requirement for lawmakers, whose decisions can have far-reaching consequences for our nation? Cognitive testing for elected officials would not be an act of discrimination but rather a way to ensure that those entrusted with making critical decisions for our country remain mentally sharp and capable of fulfilling their roles effectively.

It is crucial to emphasize that this is not about targeting any specific individual, including Senator Feinstein, but about establishing a fair and consistent standard that applies to all lawmakers as they age. This measure would protect both the individuals involved and the integrity of our democracy.

- Jagjit Singh, Los Altos, CA

Presidential Candidates: Quality

Our current system of elections does not draw out the best candidates for public voting. Voters can only judge the candidates for their oratory or looks, not on other qualities or qualifications essentially required for excellence in job performance.

To improve the quality of candidates, we need to adopt prerequisites to qualify a person as a candidate for public voting. Brief hints of areas for the candidates' education, training, experience, and personal and public character are indicated below to trigger the reader's mind for more suggestions.

Details of acceptable ideas may be worked out by analyzing the causes of the past presidents' avoidable mistakes or missed opportunities. Based on these studies, prerequisites may be established and adopted for quality control of the candidates.

Suggested areas:

- 1. Education: Political science; Sociology; Geo-political history of the world; Math; Economics; Budgeting; U.S. History; Various ethnic groups inhabiting the U.S., their religions, and customs; Presidential manners, morals, and social graces.
- 2. Training: One year understudy with the Military Chief of Staff.
- 3. Experience: One term as U.S. Senator and one term as governor of a state.
- 4. Personal & Public Character: Family life relationships; Personal character; Public character, credit rating (Keeping in mind that elected officials have a significant influence on American values and culture. Ignoring this fact has caused a loss of good values that made America so great in so short a time.

- T.S. Khanna, Alamo, CA

How Unions Are Destroying America



America has a free market economy. Many nations look up to America to model their

economy like America's. After India adopted free market model under MP Modi's leadership, its economy is skyrocketing making 7 percent GDP per year. Japan, Vietnam, and South Korea are other nations whose economy is flourishing after they adopted American style free market economy.

Free market economy works only when owners have freedom to run their companies the way they see fit. That means owners or board of directors decide what salaries they give to their employees based on how much is their profit margin.

American economy had flourished during industrialization in Fifties due to steel, textile, and auto manufacturing. However, steel and textile industries are dead now because of unions. Auto industry is in trouble due to big union called United Auto Workers or UAW. Though there are roughly 400,000 active UAW members, who dictate how big three car companies operate in Detroit.

This year's strike, which the union calls the "Stand Up Strike," is targeting specific plants of Ford, General Motors and Stellantis. Their demands include a 40% wage increase over the life of the contract, restoring the cost-of-living allowance adjustments to counteract inflation, defined benefit pension for all workers, the right to strike over plant closures, a reduced work week and more paid time off, limiting the use of temporary workers & increased benefits to current retirees.

Union leaders have said they will select new target plants to take out on strike in various waves if negotiations continue to fail to land new agreements with the auto companies. The strategy is designed to keep the automakers off-guard and leverage the union's position to secure a better contract than the offers the Detroit automakers have made so far.

If their demand is accepted, it will have ripple effects throughout the industry. Politicians always make hay of UAW strikes to advance their agenda. Biden went to Detroit and supported UAW strike. Trump also went

to Michigan. Though he sympathized with the workers, he warned them that their strike would hurt them in the end.

Amazon, Wal-Mart, and other businesses are also impacted by strikes, which weakens American economy. Wages have more than tripled in the last 25 years. As wages increase, the cost of living also increases. As a result, inflation takes hold, gov-

ernment borrowing increases.

- Girish Modi, Decatur, GA

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Saahas Holds Its First Annual Gala In Cerritos







Audience members pledged support to Saahas's mission.



Navneet Chugh, Board Member, introduced the evening's honorees.

India-West Staff Reporter

CERRITOS, CA - Saahas for Cause marked its inaugural annual gala at the Sheraton Cerritos here, on October 1 with a gathering of more than 350 attendees. Among the prominent figures gracing the event was Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva (D-District 65). Saahas for Cause in its first outing raised an impressive \$230,000 to further its mission of providing support and services for seniors in the community, promoting women's wellness, community well-being, and empowering the wouth

The Founding Executive Director, Payal Sawhney said the

organization's ultimate objective is to "create a community where victims of abuse no longer have to desperately seek shelter. Saahas is committed to establishing a secure interim shelter, ensuring victims find sanctuary. The organization is dedicated to a future where no older adult feels isolated and suffering."

Navneet Chugh, a board member, played a pivotal role in the proceedings, introducing and





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Payal Sawhney, Founding Executive Director addressing the guests.

honoring outstanding individuals whose remarkable contributions were celebrated during the awards ceremony, highlighting their significant impact on the community.

The honorees were Kenny Dewan from AKUA, Nikki Patel from Commercial Bank of California, Abhinav Arora of LT Foods, and Raminder Singh from Helm 360 & CCS Global Teach.

Others at the event included members from the ABC Unified School District, Artesia Chamber, City Councilman Ali Taj, and representatives from County Supervisor Janice Hahn's office.

Established in 2019, over the past year, Saahas said it has assisted 1,210 older adults, provided counseling to 457 women, mentored 73 young individuals, and delivered community health services to 33,500 people.

INDIA WEST OCTOBER 2023 – P7



"Dear Parents, Do Not Fill Out FAFSA & CSS Until You Fully Understand The Very Complicated Rules of Financial Aid and IRS Tax...

How to avoid the deadliest mistakes in applying for college financial aid?



Parents, do you fit in any of the financial situation below:

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- High Income with Normal Assets
- Low Income with High Assets
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Parents, when you fill out FAFSA "as is", for sure, you cannot get college financial aid.

Our Suggestions:

1. If your family income is over \$300,000 and you only have one child or two children four years apart---you should focus on saving taxes by setting up a Family Foundation. 2. For the rest of the families, please don't fill out FAFSA with an "as is" financial situation. You should listen to a financial aid professional's audio to understand the basic rules of Financial Aid, then position your family's net income MAGI & net assets accordingly before filling out FAFSA/CSS.

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Case 2: High Income with Normal Assets

An IT engineer's family had a W-2 income around \$200,000. As most parents, they never thought they would qualify for financial aid, through our FinAid tax planning, they have reduced \$100,000 net AGI income. Each year they receive \$40,000 financial aid and also \$34,000 tax refund.

Case 3: Low Income with High Assets

A business owner with 5 rental properties had filled out FAFSA on their own and their application for finan cial aid was rejected. After getting planning, help and guidance from us, their child received \$30,000 financia l aid from UC's and saved \$120,000 for four years.



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FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL

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Akshaya Patra Raises \$500,000 At SoCal Gala

By BALWEEN KAUR

CERRITOS, CA - The annual gala of the Akshaya Patra SoCal chapter took place on September 23 at the Cerritos Sheraton, here. The event, filled to standing-room-only capacity, featured a talented actor, Omi Vaidya, as well as the Emmy-nominated emcee Rasha Goel. Attendees were also treated to a concert by Sandeep Kulkarni.

The gala successfully raised \$500,000 to combat malnutrition among underprivileged children in India and contribute to the chapter's mission of providing meals to 50,000 children annually.

Rika and Manu Shah, along with their Sarva Mangal Trust, generously donated a matching grant of \$250,000, which was allocated towards the construction of a kitchen in the Mandvi/Mundra area of Gujarat. The Shahs had previously supported the creation of two kitchens with capacities of 50,000 in Bhuj, Gujarat, and 15,000 in Panvel, Maharashtra, along with facilitating the expansion and renovation of the Vizag kitchen.

Earlier the event opened with Chapter Chair Sonnal Ladva welcoming the audience, a prayer dance by Bela Modi and Vaidya who not only delivered a stand-up comedy act but also delighted the audience with scenes from his movies, including the renowned "Three Idiots." Along with Goel, he also actively engaged in fundraising during the event, moving from table to table as attendees pledged their support.

The keynote address was delivered by attorney and social activist Navneet Chugh.

In his thoughtprovoking speech, he reflected on the unique journey of the Indian diaspora in the United States and emphasized the concept of being "the chosen ones" due to their remarkable opportunities and achievements. He underlined the significant progress India has made

since its economic crisis in 1991, with its share of the world GDP increasing to 5%. Chugh also noted persistent challenges, including poverty, lack of rural infrastructure, vouth unemployment, environmental degradation,



Philanthropists Rika and Manu Shah seen here with keynote speaker Navneet Chugh.



Emcee Rasha Goel and actor Omi Vaidya helped enthuse the audience to donate.

luru in 2000, is a prominent organization dedicated to providing hot and nutritious meals to government school children. serving as an incentive for regular attendance. The organization now reaches

The houseful audience learned about the activities of Akshaya Patra. over two million children daily in 25,000+ schools across 15 Indian states and 2 union territories. It places a strong em-

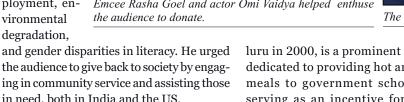
phasis on nutritional quality and dietary

preferences in its meals.



The Akshaya Patra team with event headliners.





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Pratham SoCal Meets, Appoints New Chapter Heads, Raises \$350,000

India-West Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, CA – Pratham-SoCal, a press release said, had been seeking leadership for their chapter for some months. On September 30, former board members and presidents, Navneet Chugh and Dhiren Mehta, called upon the 85-odd attendees of a 'mini-gal' to recommend candidates for this vital role. In a collective decision, Drs. Jayshree and Mahesh Vyas were appointed as Co-Presidents, bringing their expertise and dedication to further advance Pratham-SoCal's mission.

The decision was made at an event hosted by the couple at their residence. The event drew a gathering of distinguished guests, all eager to immerse themselves in the inspiring Pratham journey.

The former President of Pratham-USA, Yogi Patel, then shed light on the impactful digital learning initiative, Pradigi, introduced in 2016. Patel emphasized that each Pradigi tablet is a shared educational resource, benefiting not only children but also their families, including parents and grandparents. To date, Pratham has successfully distributed over 40,000 tablets across more than 2,000 villages in India.

The Pradigi program owes its success to the unwavering support of the Sarva Mangal Family Trust, under the dedicated leadership of Manubhai and Rikaben Shah. Manubhai humbly underscored the transformative role



Drs. Jayshree and Mahesh Vyas were appointed as Co-Presidents.

played by Pradigi in accelerating the learning process for school children, particularly during the challenging times of COVID-19, when these tools were the lifeline for continuing education.

With immense pride, Manubhai announced the expansion of the Pradigi program, reaching not only across India but also extending to other nations. He passionately invited the esteemed guests to join hands and contribute as catalysts for a brighter future.

During the fundraising segment, Shah pledged to match donations, and with the incredible support of the attendees

and matching funds, the mini-gala successfully raised an astounding \$350,000 for the noble cause.

Earlier, the evening's pro-

gram commenced with a soulful musical performance by Mahesh Vyas. Rajendra Naik, who also traveled from India with Yogi Patel captivated the audience with his



Earlier, the The well wishers of Pratham SoCal.

Banjo performance, affectionately named "Pratham Tarang." He treated the guests to enchanting renditions of classic movie songs from bygone eras.

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Fiji PM Names Vinod Bhindi Ho<mark>norary Consul In LA</mark>

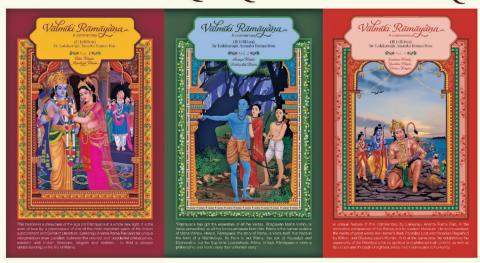
India-West Staff Reporter

ARTESIA, CA - The Prime Minister of Fiji, Sitiveni Rabuka,

the US headlined by his meetings at the United Nations and then Washington, DC, also made a stop

who was on a two-week visit to in Southern California. During his visit here, the PM announced that Vinod Bhindi of Bhindi Jewellers would be the island country's new

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Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka seen here in Artesia, CA, with Vinod Bhindi (L).

Honorary Consul in Los Angeles.

The PM pointed out that the Fijian Diaspora was a "substantial"

one in the area and proudly added, "I am pleased to see our own people doing well wherever they go."

UmaSofia Srivastava Crowned Miss Teen USA



India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY - UmaSofia Srivastava, a Mexican-Indian high school student, has been crowned Miss Teen USA 2023, which saw participation from over 50 young women from across the country, in a live-streamed contest in Nevada state.

The 16-year-old high school Junior at the Academy of St Elizabeth had become the first Mexican-Indian Miss New Jersey Teen USA earlier this year.

"IS THIS REAL??? I am so grateful and honored that I'm the first Mexican-Indian, first New Jersey, vour MISS TEEN USA 2023!!!" Srivastava wrote on social media after winning the coveted title last week.

"This night is truly the best night of my life because I was crowned with the people that have loved and supported me throughout everything cheering for me in the audience."

Srivastava, who speaks English,

Spanish, Hindi and French, hopes to become a UN Ambassador.

She works with the Lotus Petal Foundation to help underprivileged children in India receive a well-rounded education, proper nutrition and healthcare.

A co-founder of the Diversity & Inclusion campaign at her school, Srivastava also participates in Mock Trial and Model United Nations, according to her pageant biography. She has authored and illustrated a book, "The White Jaguar", which she says, is to inspire people of all ages to embrace what makes them unique.

Also a pianist, Srivastava runs her own blog, That's Fan Behavior, where she writes about her experience as a woman of colour and current events.

Miss New York Teen USA Stephanie Skinner was named first runner-up and Miss Pennsylvania Teen USA Maggie Ross was second runner-up in the pageant.

SoCal Golfer Sahith Theegala Hopes His PGA Tour Win Will Spur Indian Youngsters

LOS ANGELES, CA (IANS) - Sahith Theegala cemented his stature as one of golf's rising stars by claiming his maiden PGA Tour triumph at the Fortinet Championship on September 17 and hopes his breakthrough will inspire young Indian athletes to shoot for the stars.

The 25-year-old Theegala, fired a final round of 4-under 68 at Silverado Resort in Napa, California to win by two strokes over Korea's S.H. Kim as he joined fellow Indian American Akshay Bhatia in the winner's club following the latter's triumph at the Barracuda Championship in July.

"I'm very proud of my Indian heritage. I just love seeing other Indians sort of rise to the occasion in sports. Neeraj (Chopra) won a couple of gold medals; I think it was the first gold medal for India in track and field in the Olympics. That's huge for the country," he said.

He added, "I was lucky to play with Shubhankar (Sharma) in a practice round and meet his whole team and his dad and his coach (at The Open Championship). He had a great showing there; I was pulling for him so hard. I think he finished seventh. He's been having a nice little resurgent season."

He revealed, "Anirban (Lahiri) texts me all the time and he's obviously been great for the Indian game, too. Obviously with Akshay (Bhatia) winning and Aaron Rai finishing second at the BMW (PGA Championship in Wentworth on Sunday), so a lot of cool role models to look up to for the Indian people."

Theegala's parents, Muralidhar and Karuna, emigrated to the U.S. during the 1980s where Sahith was born. He developed into an amateur golfer and became a threetime All-American at Pepperdine University.

In his rookie season on the PGA TOUR last year, Theegala sensationally made it all the way to the FedEx Cup Playoffs Finale, the TOUR Championship, limited to the top-30 players, but agonizingly missed the showpiece event by one rung in the Playoffs last month. He hopes his breakthrough on Sunday will put more spotlight on Indian athletes.

"And hopefully, we're breaking some stereotypes about athleticism and competing in sport and all that. It means a lot to me, for sure. There are a lot of things I do in daily life that stem from my culture and my heritage. My parents are the first ones from their family to be in the States. Yeah, means a lot, and I think hopefully this is the start of something good for Indian sports," said Theegala.

He paid tribute to his parents for their encouragement and support through the years while living in California.

"My dad's the reason I'm here today. He introduced me to all sports, most specifically basketball and golf. Just loved watching it on TV with him. All he knew when he came from India was aca-

demics. He and my mom did such a good job of just kind of learning how to almost hybrid parent between this Indian culture and American culture and let me play sports, let me spend a lot of time on sports," said Theegala.

"Put me in basketball club, and my mom drove me to so many practices when my dad was still at work. Just the combined efforts of them to kind of understand that this was my dream and my passion, and then for it to become their dream and their



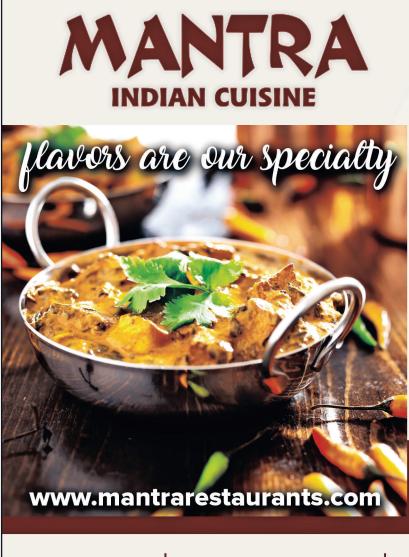
passion, especially my dad.

"My dad, he just loves sports. He's a competitor, too, although he's never really, really played sports. I think at first it was hard for maybe some of my family and even friends to understand why I was trying to chase playing professional golf. Seems like kind of a pipe dream, but my dad had my back the whole time. He just believed in me from the start and knew this could be a thing."

"It's tough not to get emotional

just thinking about everything he's done. He's always had my back, even though my wrist surgery in 2018 and 2019 thinking I might never play again, He just has my back and keeps on pushing me,"

"He also did such a good job of he was hard on me, but also one of my best friends. Always told me to have fun, the main thing was to just enjoy it because if you don't enjoy it, there's no purpose in doing it, life's too short," said Theegala.









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Nikki Haley Tells Voters: Dump Trump Baggage

EXETER, NH (IANS) - Americans need to stand behind Israel - and that includes former President Donald Trump, Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley said October 12.

"While we have their back now that they've been hit, what's more important is that we have their back when they hit back," Haley said at a New Hampshire town hall sponsored by the USA TODAY Network.

The former ambassador to the United Nations said Hamas must be eliminated and "we need to remember who the true backer of all this is - Iran."

Haley, who served under Trump, also went after her former boss who, at a rally Wednesday, called Hezbollah - an ally of Hamas -"very smart." And Trump said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "let us down" just before the U.S. killed a top Iranian general in 2020.

Haley said such comments are why it's time for a new generation of leaders to "leave the negativity and chaos and the baggage" in the past.

"We can't have someone who is so clouded with the past that they can't see the future," she said to whistles and applause. "Donald Trump was the right president at the right time. I don't think he's

the right president now."

After strong performances in the first two GOP debates, Haley has jumped in the polls, including in a recent USA TODAY/Boston Globe/ Suffolk University survey of likely New Hampshire voters.

She surged ahead of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who lost the standing he once held as the dominant alternative to Trump.

But the 19% of likely New Hampshire voters who backed Haley is still far behind the 49% supporting former President Donald Trump.

Still, Trump has shifted his focus from attacking DeSantis to going after Haley.

'Has what it takes?'

Janet Jenkins, a retired teacher from Southbridge, Mass., drove two hours with her husband to Exeter, N.H., to hear Haley speak.

"I just think she has what it takes," said Jenkins, who has read two of Haley's books. "I like her demeanor, the way she talks."

What both Janet and her husband, Bob, most wanted to hear from Haley was how she thought she could win the nomination.

"Trump is so far ahead," Bob Jenkins said. Haley has recently expanded her operations in both Iowa and New Hampshire.

She stood out from the field with aggressive debate appearances that included criticizing Trump for adding to the national debt and telling entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, "Every time I hear you, I feel a little bit dumber for what you say."

In a party that hasn't unified beyond a position on a national abortion ban, Haley argues the focus should be on areas where Democrats and Republicans can find common ground.

"Stop demonizing this issue," she said. "We have to humanize it." $\,$

She also went after both parties for not addressing major problems facing the country. Minutes into her remarks, she said her party shares some of the blame for the federal debt.

"You don't fix Democratic chaos with Republican chaos," she said later in the town hall. "We need stabil-

ity. We need focus. We need discipline." That message appealed to Dixy Scott, 78, an independent from Raymond, NH who has been



The former Trump administration official Nikki Haley

turned off by Republicans since Trump came on the scene.

"She's given me hope," Scott said

Governor Newsom Vetoes Caste Bill

Contd. from P1

That is why California already prohibits discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics, and state law specifies that these civil rights protections shall be liberally construed," he wrote.

The Coalition of Hindus of North America expressed their satisfaction, stating, "Delighted to see sanity prevail in #California. Thank you @GavinNewsom for vetoing #SB403. A victory for

laws, and a win for those who fought for #justice."

Activists led by Equality Labs had been upbeat throughout the process as the bill moved the process and several stages of discussion before it landed on the Governor's desk. In support of the bill, some supporters had gone on a hunger strike.

Senate Bill 403 was introduced by freshman State Senator Aisha Wahab (D-Hayward), an Afghani-Muslim, in itself a matter of controversy for concerned groups. The bill divided

common sense, for American the South Asian community with those for and against it lobbying and demonstrating and firing off on social media. Assembly member Ash Kalra, a Hindu American had kept silent on the matter but had voted along with the majority in support of the bill even while stating his anguish at how it was tearing the community.

> Seattle became the first city to pass a caste discrimination ordinance earlier this year, and Fresno followed suit last month, becoming the first city in California to do so.

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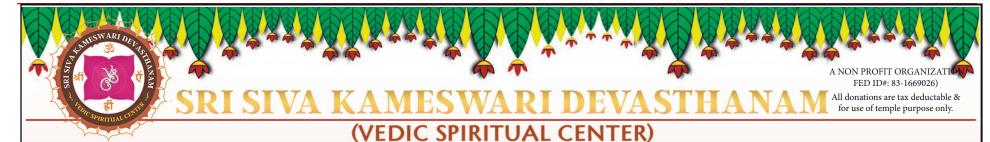
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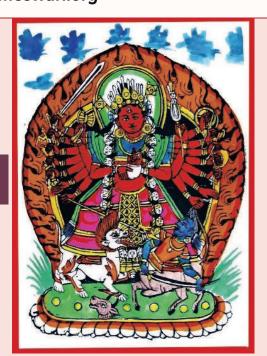
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Oct. 16th - Vidiya Monday	Meenakshi Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM - 9:30 PM	Violin, Vocal, Mridangam
Oct. 17th - Tadiya Tuesday	Mangalagowri Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM – 9:30 PM	Violin, Mridangam
Oct. 18th - Chaviti Wednesday	Varahi Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM – 9:30 PM	Vocal, Mandolin, Mridangam
Oct. 19th - Panchami Thursday	Rajyasyamala Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM – 11:30 PM	Kuchipudi, Vocal, Mridangam, Violin
Oct. 20th - Shasti Friday	Saraswati Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM – 10:30 PM	Violin, Vocal, Mridangam, Dandiya-Raas
Oct. 21st - Saptami Saturday	Mahishasura Mardini Alankaram	7 AM – 09:30 PM	Vocal, Veena, Mridangam, Violin, Flute, Sexophone
Oct.22nd - Astami – Sunday	Kalika Devi Alankaram	7 AM – 09:30 PM	Hari Katha, Vocal, Vioin, Mridangam, Dandiya-Raas
Oct. 23rd - Navami Monday	Sivakameswari Devi Alankaram	9:30 AM – 9:30 PM	Bharatanatyam, Veena, Mridangam

For Detailed programs on each day and timings please scan the code here /or visit our website at www.sivakameswari.org/dasara-navaratri-utsav/



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Indian American Politicians Back Israel, **Strongly Condemn Hamas**

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC - Standing "firmly" with Israel, several Indian American politicians swiftly condemned the unprecedented and unexpected terror attack by the Palestinian Hamas militant group.

Palestinian militants launched the attack on southern Israel on October 7, firing rockets from Gaza as its fighters crossed over the border, killing and wounding thousands. Israel is carrying out retaliatory strikes on the Gaza Strip, controlled by the Hamas, declaring Israel was now "at war".

"Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and the Iranian backers — they hate Israel and they hate America. We can't be distracted. We have to remember that what happened to Israel could happen here in America," former South Carolina Governor and Republican presidential candidate, Nikki Haley, who was a former UN Ambassador, told NBC News.

"This is not just an attack on Israel this was an attack on America. Finish them @Netanyahu (Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu). They should have hell to pay for what they have just done," Haley wrote on X.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi was also issued a statement, "I'm horrified by the images coming out of Israel after unprovoked attacks by Iran-

backed Hamas terrorist," he said. The United States unequivocally stands with the people of Israel against this gruesome terror attack, and strongly support its right to defend itself."

Ro Khanna called the crimes carried out by Hamas against Israeli women and children "inhuman" and "appalling". "My heart breaks for the victims, and I stand in solidarity with the people of Israel at this dark moment," Congressman Khanna wrote on X.

Rep. Ami Bera while condemning the "terrorist attack by Hamas that has killed innocent Israeli citizens across southern Israel," recalled, his visit to the area in June, saying he, "was moved by the hospitality and resilience of the people who are now under violent attack. I also had the chance to see the Northern Border where Israel faces an additional threat from Hezbollah. It is more important than ever that the United States stands with Israel and her right to defend her sovereignty."

Congressman Shri Thanedar said in a statement, "The calculated aggression targeting innocent civilians is heartbreaking and cannot be tolerated. America stands firmly with Israel." He urged the Congress to rally behind Israel until the threat is addressed and security is restored.



Republican presidential aspirant Vivek Ramaswamy said that the US should use the attacks in Israel as a wake-up call and strengthen its borders. "Key lesson for America to learn from the attack on Israel: we cannot be complacent about defending 'our own' borders. If it can happen there, it can happen here. Our own border is near-completely porous right now," he wrote, adding that the northern border of the US is "wide-open for invasion."

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Ramaswamy Wants Haley Disqualified From Running, She Questions His Credentials

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC - Vivek Ramaswamy has strongly expressed his belief that Nikki Haley, his rival for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, should be disqualified from running for the presidency. This fiery statement came in the wake of a heated exchange between the two candidates, with Haley comparing Ramaswamy's comments on the Israel-Hamas conflict to those of the far-left "Squad" in Congress.

Their ongoing verbal clashes have been a prominent feature of their campaign trail, featuring prominently in the first two Republican presidential nomination debates, Fox News reported. Despite this, Haley has experienced a boost in her poll numbers, both in early state surveys and nationally, recently doubling her support in a Fox News national poll released just this week.

Ramaswamy, speaking to reporters before addressing the New Hampshire GOP's First-inthe-Nation Leadership Summit, accused Haley of having "personal conflicts of interest," seemingly alluding to her husband's connections to the defense industry, Fox said. He asserted that Nikki Haley's foreign policy experience was reflected in her substantial financial gains, amounting to \$8 million, labeling it distasteful, particularly in a political climate where the White House has been accused of monetizing connections and foreign policy. Ramaswamy expressed his apprehension



Archive photo of Ambassador Nikki Haley and U.S. Mission to the UN.

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about a president who might lead the nation into World War III.

Notably, the Haley campaign did not offer a response to Ramaswamy's latest critique. However, during her visit to the Statehouse in Concord to register her name on New Hampshire's GOP presidential primary ballot, she made her views clear. Haley remarked that "Ramaswamy sounds like the Squad" and stated that there was no place for either the Squad or Ramaswamy in discussions concerning international conflicts, Fox said.

Haley is not the only 2024 GOP White House candidate critical of Ramaswamy. Former Vice President Mike Pence and Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina have also taken issue with his recent comments, which questioned the motivations of certain Republicans advocating for a robust Israeli response following a surprise attack by Hamas on Israel. This attack, the deadliest on the Jewish state in decades, has significantly influenced the 2024 presidential race and highlighted the growing divide within the GOP between the "America First" anti-interventionist faction and the more traditional conservative wing that has long supported the United States' global policing role, Fox noted.

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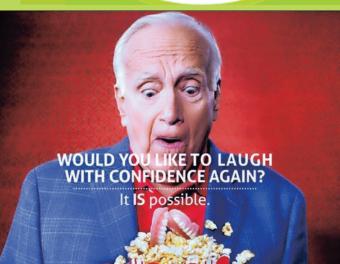
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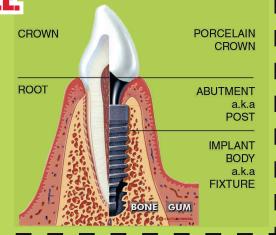
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For Asians Its Policy Over Identity Politics, Indian Americans Say Climate Change, Inflation Top Issues

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) – Nearly all registered Asian American voters — 97 per cent — say a candidate's policy positions are more important than their race or ethnicity when deciding whom to vote for, says a new survey.

At the same time, a 68 per cent majority of Asian registered voters say it is extremely or very important to have a national leader who can advance the concerns of the US Asian community, according to the Pew Research Center survey conducted from July 5, 2022 to January 27, 2023. The findings

assume relevance as the 2024 US presidential election approaches with two candidates of Indian ancestry, Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy, running for the Republican nomination.

The survey — conducted among 7,006 Asian adults living in the US — said Asian Americans continue to be underrepresented among elected officials in the country compared with their share of the country's population.

As of the beginning of the 118th Congress, 16 House members and two senators claim Asian ancestry. Asian registered voters tend to prefer the Democratic Party -62 per cent are Democrats or lean Democratic, while 34 per cent are Republicans leaners.

Issues Asian American voters care most about: About four in 10 registered Asian American voters, or 41 per cent, say inflation is the most important issue facing their local community — by far the most common issue cited during this extended survey period, which ended in January. Economic inequality (16 per cent) is the second-most mentioned issue, followed by violent



crime (11 per cent) and racism (9 per cent).

These concerns follow reports of violence against Asian Americans during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Japanese registered voters (28 per cent) are more likely than Chinese (15 per cent) and Indian (13 per cent) voters to view economic inequality as the biggest issue facing their community.

Among Indian registered voters, 15 per cent say climate change is the most important issue facing their community. This is higher than the share saying the same among Filipino (7 per cent), Chinese (6 per cent), Japanese (6 per cent) and Vietnamese (5 per cent) voters.

Asian American voters' views differ by political party:

The survey noted that Asian Republican voters are more likely than their Democratic counterparts to view inflation as the most important issue facing the community they live in. Even so, it is the most cited top issue for both groups.

Asian Democratic voters are more than twice as likely as Republicans to say economic inequality is the biggest issue facing their community. Economic inequality is the second-most cited issue among Asian Democratic voters. Among Asian Republican voters, violent crime is the second-most cited issue. In addition, Asian registered voters born in the US are slightly more likely than immigrants to view economic inequality as the most important issue facing their community. However, the importance of issues varies less by nativity than by party among Asian Americans.

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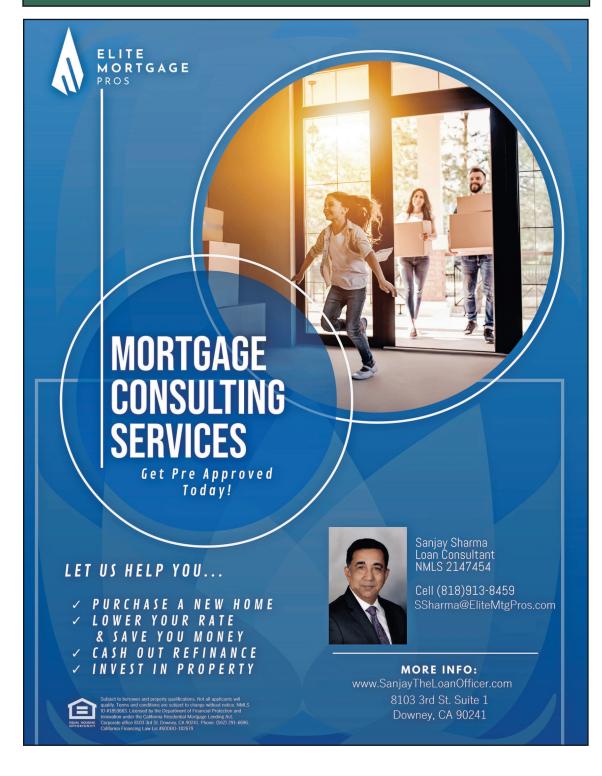
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Musk's X Will Have To Reimburse Parag Agrawal, Vijaya Gadde Legal Fees



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (IANS) – Former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal, former policy lead Vijaya Gadde and other executives have won \$1.1 million in legal fees from Elon Musk-run X Corp.

Reports said on October 4 that Delaware Chancery Court Judge Kathleen St. J. McCormick ruled in favor of Agrawal and the team as Twitter "violated its duties to cover legal expenses generated by their work for the company."

Indian-origin Twitter CEO Agrawal, ex-legal head Gadde, and former chief financial officer Ned Segal sued Musk-run Twitter in April this year over unpaid legal bills of more than \$1 million.

In October last year, Musk informed Agrawal, Gadde, and Segal that their employment with the company was terminated as he took control of the micro-blogging platform. According to the lawsuit,

the trio alleged that Twitter must pay them more than \$1 million for legal fees they incurred while at the company to respond to queries by the Department of Justice and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in several hearings.

Agrawal and Segal were named as defendants in the Securities Class Action in September while both were still working at Twitter.

Gadde was named as a defendant in the Securities Class Action in February this year, when plaintiffs in that action filed an Amended Class Action Complaint, according to the lawsuit.

According to reports, these three top executives had an exit package of around \$90-100 million when they left Twitter. Agrawal was set to receive the largest payout at around \$40 million, largely due "to the entirety of his shares vesting upon his firing".

Sam Altman Backs Startup Of Two Teens



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (IANS) – ChatGPT developer OpenAI's CEO Sam Altman has invested in an artificial intelligence (AI) startup, founded by two teenagers Aryan Sharma and Ayush Pathak.

The startup Induced AI, founded this year, has raised \$2.3 million in its seed-funding round led by Altman and VC firm Peak XV, along with "an incredible set of investors".

"We let anyone create virtual AI workers that can automate the execution of workflows on a browser in the cloud with human-like reasoning," Sharma said on Oct. 4.

Induced AI allows automation of workflows that require real-time reasoning or dynamic judgment (filtering leads, cross-referencing documents, memory. etc.) — things that are hard and painful to set up with traditional browser automation/RPA.

Automation of browser tasks has so far been restricted to deterministic and ruleset-based workflows that are run on old RPA (Robotic Process Automation) software.

"Our automated workflows run on a purpose-built browser environment that is designed especially for autonomous navigation. Web interactions, authentication, reasoning, memory — all are embedded in this underlying browser layer," informed Sharma. Induced AI is also part of AI Grant's Batch 2.

Sally Grimes Named CEO Of Beverage Giant, Maker Of Johnnie Walker

India-West News Desk

CHICAGO, IL Diageo, the beverage giant that makes Guinness and Johnnie Walker has appointed Sally Grimes as Chief Executive Officer, North America, effective October 1.

North America is Diageo's largest market and since fiscal 19, has grown 41%, in terms of net sales on a constant basis. Diageo said in its announcement that Grimes with her 25 years experience in the food and beverage sector, "is a proven leader in consumer goods and is well-known as a world-class innovator and brand builder.

She was most recently the Chief Executive Officer at Clif Bar & Company, the leading maker of organic energy bars in North America.

Previously, as Group President of the Prepared Foods segment of Tyson Foods, America's largest food company, she ran a \$10bn, 25,000-person organization, reporting to the Global CEO. Grimes's early career began in banking, followed by multiple positions within large consumer goods companies, from Kraft Foods to Newell Brands.

She has been named Fast Com-



pany's "Top 100 Most Creative People in Business" and Fortune's "Most Powerful Women to Watch." Grimes, the company said, "is an experienced non-executive director, having worked on a number of boards, including on the board of Beyond Meat, Inc., Continental Grain Company and Silver Oak Winery."

Grimes, whose name is Shobana goes by the name Sally, who was a good friend of her mother. Born to immigrant parents, Grimes was raised in Illinois where her parents worked. She is now married Steve Grimes, the CEO of Retail Properties of America and together they have a daughter and son.

She received an undergraduate degree from Valparaiso University and an MBA from The University of Chicago Booth School of Business.



India Exploring Mineral Pact With US

NEW DELHI, (IANS) - India said it is working towards formulating a holistic policy for critical minerals and has sought input from stakeholders on it.

According to sources aware of the development, in a meeting of the inter-ministerial group (IMG) on critical minerals, discussed entering a MoU with the US on critical minerals sourcing, sources aware of the development said.

It was decided in the meeting that all stake holding ministries must give their inputs for formulating a policy on critical minerals. In June, India released a list of 30 critical minerals, which are considered essential for economic development and national security.

The 30 minerals listed as critical by the government include Antimony, Beryllium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Molybdenum, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphorous, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Vanadium, Zirconium, Selenium and Cadmium.

Mines Ministry officials have said that to reduce carbon emissions, the country needs to urgently relook at its mineral requirements for energy transition and net-zero commitments.



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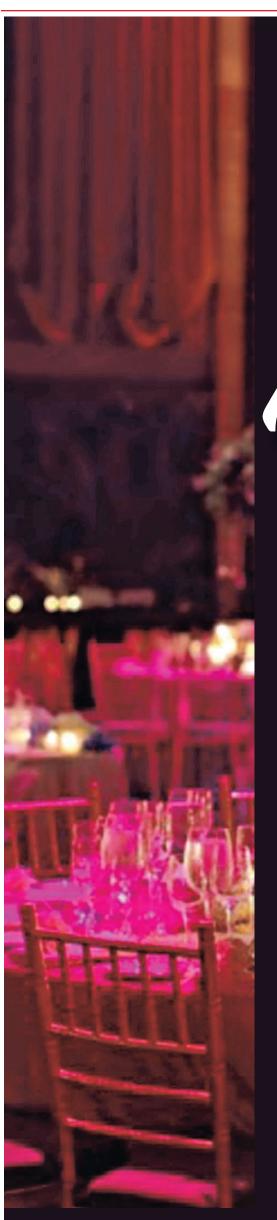
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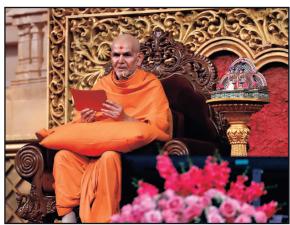
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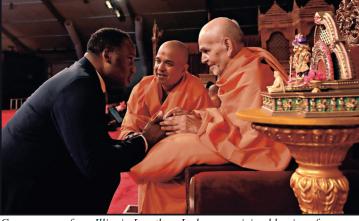


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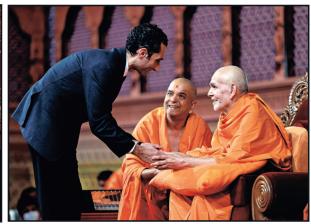
Pramukh Swami Maharaj's Vision For Akshardham Celebrated



His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj



Congressman from Illinois Jonathan Jackson receiving blessings from Mahant Swami Maharai



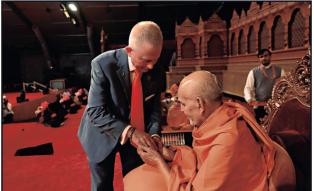
Yousif Ahmed, Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain greeting the spiritual leaders.



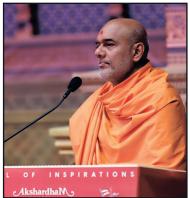
Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji.



Sadguru Brahmeshanandacharya.



U.S. Congressman Jeff Van Drew of New Jersey



Pujya Gnanvatsaldas Swami.

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ - The BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham stands as a beacon of hope, faith, and unity, drawing countless souls towards a path of devotion and righteousness. Pramukh Swami Maharaj's vision for Akshard-

ham in the USA is a testament to his profound spiritual foresight and dedication. From an inner wish to a stunning reality, an evening program dedicated to Pramukh Swami Maharaj's lifelong motto themed "Celebrating In the Joy of Others" honored the creator of BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham on October 6, 2023, in Robbinsville, New Jersey. This heartfelt gathering took place as a prelude to the grand inauguration of Akshardham on October 8,

2023. His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, the present spiritual leader of BAPS, offered personal reflections on the life of Pramukh Swami Maharaj.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj's life was a testament to the trans-

formative power of selfless service and devotion. Many Swamis fondly recalled their experiences with Pramukh Swami Maharaj, highlighting the profound impact he had on their lives and spiritual journeys.

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Delegation Of Ambassadors, Representatives From The UN Visit, Laud New Jersey Akshardham

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ - On October 7, 2023, the BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham hosted a distinguished delegation of ambassadors and representatives from the United Nations ahead of the grand dedication ceremony on October 8, 2023. Coinciding with a week-long celebration, the visit brought together leaders from Cambodia, Eritrea, Grenada, Guyana, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Malawi, Morocco, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Timor Leste, Mongolia, South Africa, Maldives, as well as delegations from Poland, Costa Rica, Brazil, Lebanon, Bhutan, and the UN Office of Counterterrorism.





U N delegates pose for photos at the spectacular temple.









Left: Group photo of United Nations delegates after their visit to the new temple.

Prominent Mayors Gather To Commemorate Community Unity Ahead Of Grand Opening

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ - On October 5, 2023, BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham celebrated the theme "Celebrating Community" in honor of the unity and relationships fostered within various communities across America. This event marked the lead-up to the grand opening of the BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey. The evening witnessed the presence of prominent mayors and state officials nationwide and congregants from around the world. Pujya Chaitanyamurtidas Swami highlighted the shared values between American founding principles and Hindu teachings of unity, emphasizing the collaborative spirit of communities like Robbinsville.



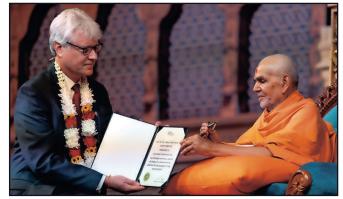
NJ Mayor seeking blessings from Mahant Swami Maharaj.



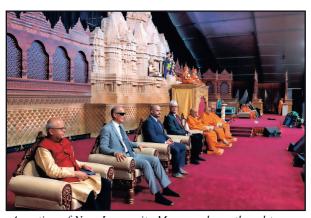




Dignitaries and government officials on the stage during the Mayor's Day celebration.



Mayor John F. Higdon of Matthews, North Carolina presents key to the city to Mahant Swami Maharaj.



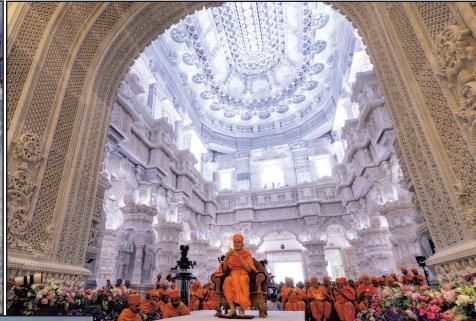
A section of New Jersey city Mayors who gathered to commemorate community unity.



Seen above Robbinsville city Mayor David Fried along with fellow Mayors from other cities.

BAPS Opens Largest Temple In The US





Contd. from P1

of New Jersey, a short distance from Trenton, the temple was built by 12,500 volunteer workers from all over the world. The temple has been in the works since 2011.

This Akshardham is the third for Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha, known as BAPS, – the other two are in Delhi and Gujarat – and was built with 2 million cubic feet of stone. No small feat. The temple itself is a cultural mix with materials sourced from all over the world. It also gives historical nods to American history. Along the temple walls are carvings of historical figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Lincoln.

To withstand cold New Jersey winters (anything between -5-degree C to -20-degree C), the outside of the temple has been built with non-traditional Bulgarian limestone. The inside features of the temple bear tes-

timony to the stones imported from all over the world, ranging from Greece, Italy to India.

A traditional Indian stepwell contains waters from 300 sacred river bodies in India and all river waters from all 50 US states of the union. The grand dedication ceremony saw fireworks illuminate the night sky and hundreds of dancers perform on the steps and grounds of the new temple.

In his blessings, the head of BAPS Mahant Swami Maharaj stated, "It was Pramukh Swami Maharaj's divine wish to construct an Akshardham in North America, where people can come and visit, irrespective of race, creed or religion."

Governor John Carney of Delaware shared his admiration for the message of the evening. "I was struck by what was said by the Swami just before that the temple is a bridge, a bridge from the past to the future, a bridge from India to America, a bridge from one community to the next. It is an incredible place of devotion."

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Varun Grover Experiences Life So Intensely, He Can Feel Crippled.

Contd. from P1

Because of this his eye turns to freedoms, gender fluidity (he intentionally wears nail paint), climate change, inequities in education and economy. With all this, Grover cuts to the chase, wraps it in humor or beautiful words and presents it neatly to us, showing us the complex dilemmas, hidden strengths and vulnerabilities, that make up who we are. And because of this, his deadpan words delivered in standup routines get millions of online hits.

Sensitivity to the world sparked early. He was first published at 10, when heartbroken after reading a poem of a boy who was separated from the sparrow he had tended to, he wrote a short story reuniting them.

Thanks to his father, he grew up surrounded by books and a plethora of Hasya Kavi Sammelans in small town India that informs many of his works, including his new directorial, All India Rank. He has recalled being obese, being bullied in school and finding relief in writing and discovering the beauty of language. He went on to IIT to get his engineering degree and then after the classic left brain right brain duel, got away from a career in corporate India and began writing for TV in Mumbai (The Great Indian Comedy Show).

He also met his wife Raj Kumari, a writer and poet who then lived in Delhi. Drawn by each other's works and world view, they decided to marry which brought forth caste and regional issues – He is a Khatri Punjabi from Haryana, and she is a OBC Teli from Jharkhand. She

became the first ever woman in her family to marry outside her caste and paved the way for independent thinking women.

In California for the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, where All India Rank will be the closing film, Grover spoke with India—West. Excerpts: Q: Your first published

 $short\, story\, was$

about giving a happy ending to the story of a boy and a sparrow. Are happy endings still important to you?

A: Yes. (Chuckling) Except I won't call them 'happy endings' anymore but 'hopeful endings.' The world is so difficult, there is depression and oppression. People come to art for solace and make meaning of the world around them, I want to give hope, positivity, a sense of belonging.

Q: So, when you write you know the ending?

A: I don't know the ending. Sometimes I have multiple endings and struggle to pick which one. For example, Masaan had multiple endings and we even shot another one which had a more definite ending instead of the one that we



Varun Grover with wife Raj and their beloved cats.

kept which was more open ended. All India Rank too had many endings. Many wanted a definite end but here we are. It is a feeling... the closure comes when it comes it comes. So yes, the writing is organic.

Q: What is needed to be a writer? Is sensitivity enough?

A: What is most important is understanding your own internal world. Being sensitive to your own feelings, to your own various emotions that happen even in the space of five minutes. The power of observation is a very good tool to have. It enhances the ability to do multiple kinds of writing. If you have this mix, then you can create anything. But the prerequisite is to be in touch with the internal world.

Q: You mention the Mirza Ghalib verse often, 'As if the sound of pen on paper is the whispering of angels in my ears.' Why do you relate to it?

A: A lot of people want to know how a writer writes, every week I get questions. I have thought a lot about it and tried finding the answer. There is no answer. I have really tried a lot. If for instance I think about the writing of a line of Moh, Moh Ke Daage, I can go back to the day, I know the mood and I can give you other specifics, but I can't tell you how the words popped out. I just cannot. That's why I relate to Ghalib's words. It feels poetic, the most complete explanation. The word 'angels' is a stand in for mood, preparation, childhood trauma, or whatever else.



Long hair, ear studs on men has been accepted, Varun Grover makes the case for nail polish being the next by coloring his.

Q: How do you view life? Absurd which lends to comedy or beautiful which makes you string literary words to create beauty?

A: I am the kind of person who swings between extremes. I see every emotion in its extremity. It is a problem. I get overwhelmed and it becomes difficult to function sometimes. I channel all this into my work. If it's stark it goes into cinema, if it's childlike then into books for children. I try to make sense of life this way, it is difficult for me to process it without doing something about it. I see all of life as a muse. It allows me to express, and it doesn't matter if the world gets to hear or see it. For me it almost feels like nausea if I don't write what I feel intensely. My system is cleaned when I write.

Q: Does it get tiring to care so much?

A: Yes, it does. I don't know how not to care. I try! I sometimes feel the world is pointless, but you can't live with that feeling. You must care for yourself also and I don't do enough of it. Comedy gave me hope as a child. I used to watch Movers and Shakers by Shekhar Suman; it made me feel better about the life that we were leading. In UP there would be 16 hours of power cut in summer and in winter there would be 6am coaching classes I would go to. Comedy was a coping tool: life was not just difficult; it was funny too.

Q: You criticize those in power and yet Bollywood is not scared off and works with you.

A: The sense of Bollywood I have...what works commercially is the priority. Luckily for me, some of the stuff has worked commercially and critically and that's what has mattered. We still get messages every week about Masaan. Sacred Games became huge. This has helped me. Second, Bollywood has a lot of liberal minded people who understand the value of art and that art is meant to join, not divide heads and hearts.

Q: How do you come to nuance in your comedy?

A: Through observing the world, I have figured that everyone has many, many sides. That's made

me believe there are nuances to every headline. Even the oppressor may have a tragic backstory. We as artists should not negate that story. What is the point of art if you forget compassion and empathy? That would just make it a political speech.

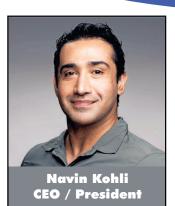
Q: Is there anything you won't joke about?

A: Not really. Everything is fine if my moral compass allows it. Dynamics keep changing across eras, but the heart of the joke must have the right conscience.

Q: What does Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro mean to you? It's your social media header.

A: (Laughing). That film kept changing for me over the years. As a child it was slapstick and about a dead body going around town. In college, it became about corruption. A decade later, it became about human corruption, no one is clean. In the last decade, it has become a film about the bleakness of life, the general dystopia we call human civilization. It makes sense to me at a more ethereal level as a human tragicomedy. And the thing is it was not designed to be all this!

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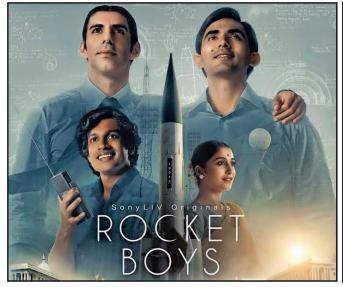
Wife Raj Kumari: my conscience keeper, the one who calms me.
Father Madan Lal Grover:
one of the best storytellers.
Bollywood: entertainment.
Favorite film: Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind.
Books: Portal to a Parallel Universe.
Donald Trump: insufferable.
Best meal: Assamese meal at a

friend's place in Delhi.

Vir Das, Jim Sarbh, Shefali Shah Get International Emmy Noms

LOS ANGELES, CA (IANS) -The International Emmy Awards are coming up soon as the nominees have been announced with India garnering four nods. These nominations include two for 'Rocket Boys', one for 'Delhi Crime - Season 2' and one for 'Vir Das: Landing'.

Jim Sarbh has been nominated in the Best Performance by an Actor category for 'The Rocket Boys', competing against Gustavo Bassani in 'Iosi, El Espía Arrepentido' from Argentina, Martin Freeman in 'The Responder' from the UK, and Jonas Karlsson in 'Nattryttarna' (Riding in Darkness) from





Sweden.

Shefali Shah has been nominated in the Best Performance by an Actress category for her role in the series 'Delhi Crime 2'. In this category, she is competing against Connie Nielsen in 'Drommeren

- Karen Blixen Bliver Til (The Dreamer-Be-

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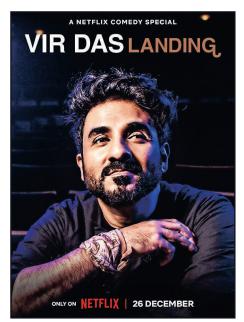
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Nominees come from: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, Qatar, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the UK. All nominees will convene in New York at The International Emmy World Television Festival for Nominee Panels & Presentations and special events, from November 17-19, the weekend before the awards ceremony.

Winners will be announced at the 51st International Emmy Awards Gala in New



coming Karen Blixer)' from Denmark, 'Billie Piper' for 'I Hate Suzie Too' from the UK, and Karla Souza in 'La Caída'/'Dive' from Mexico.

Actor-comedian Vir Das has been given the Emmy nod in the Comedy category for his show 'Vir Das: Landing' where his competition includes: 'Derry Girls - Season 3' from the UK, 'El Encargado' (The Boss) from Argentina, and 'Le Flambeau - Season 2' from France.

In addition, producer Ekta Kapoor is also set to get an Emmy Award for the Directorate Award. The 51st International Emmy Awards will be held in New York on November 20, 2023.

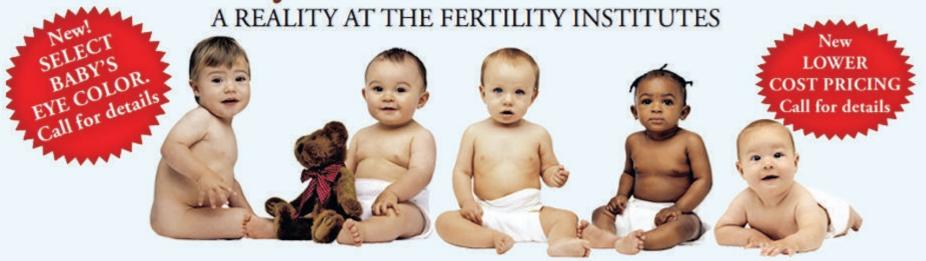
Bruce Paisner, who is the CEO of the International Academy, said in a statement on the official Emmy website: "The International Emmy competition is the pinnacle for recognising excellence in television around the world. We look forward to gathering the international television community in New York City in November to recognise these outstanding programs and performances on our global stage."

York City, on November 20, 2023.

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