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JOURNAL

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Trump Deportations: Anger In India, US Official Posts, “You Will Be Removed”

India-West News Desk

NEW DELHI – Illegal Indian immigrants deported by the US arrived on February 6 at the Ahmedabad airport here. A US military C-17 Globemaster aircraft carrying deported Indian nationals had landed in Amritsar on February 5, carrying 104 expelled Indian nationals.

The deportations have sparked anger and concern among political leaders and families of the returnees. Punjab NRI Affairs Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal expressed his frustration, urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene. “Modiji calls Trump (former US President Donald Trump) his friend. I request PM Modi ji to speak to Trump to find a solution to this issue,” he stated.

Family members of the deported individuals reacted with a mix of



There were hectic scenes at Ahmedabad airport as the deportees arrived.

relief and anxiety. One relative in Vadodara said, “I don’t know much. My daughter is back. We learned through the media that this was going to happen. I am just happy she is home safely.” Another family member lamented the lack of communication, stating, “No one informed me. My son, daughter-

in-law, and grandchild were there. They never spoke to me on the phone. People are saying they will return, but I don’t know anything.”

Addressing the matter in Parliament, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said it was India’s responsibility to take

Contd. on P27

Chandrika Tandon Wins Grammy

India-West Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, CA – Chennai-born Chandrika Tandon has made history by winning a Grammy Award for Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album at the 67th Annual Grammy Awards. Tandon, a 71-year-old New York-based businesswoman and musician, received the honor for her album Triveni, a unique fusion of ancient mantras and world music. The award was presented during the ceremony held at the Crypto.com Arena here on February 3.



Chandrika Tandon.

This Grammy win marks Tandon’s first victory and second nomination, following her 2010 nod for Om Namo Narayana: Soul Call. This year, she was nominated alongside notable artists including producer Ricky Kej, sitar player Anoushka Shankar, and Indian-origin British artist Radhika Vekaria.

Triveni is a seven-track album that creates a meditative journey aimed at promoting “inner healing.” A collaborative effort with South African flutist Wouter Kellerman and Japanese cellist Eru Matsumoto, the album merges their distinct musical styles, blend-

Contd. on P26

Outrageous: Anti-Indian, Racist Staffer To Be Rehired By Musk

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC - Elon Musk, acting with impunity as a non-elected official, has announced that he would rehire Marko Elez, a former Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) employee, who had been previously fired for posting racist comments. The decision came after Elez resigned on February 6, following revelations of the offensive posts, which were uncovered by The Wall Street Journal.

One of the posts, made in Sep-

tember, stated, “Normalize Indian hate,” while another said, “You could not pay me to marry outside of my ethnicity.” Musk, who runs X, conducted a poll asking whether Elez should be rehired, and 78% of his predictably MAGA respondents voted in favor of bringing him back.

Musk’s decision to rehire Elez followed a supportive statement from Vice President JD Vance, who shared Musk’s post on X, which read, “He will be brought back. To err is human, to forgive divine.” Vance, while express-



Elon Musk.

ing disagreement with some of Elez’s posts, argued, “I don’t think stupid social media activity should ruin a kid’s life,” suggesting that Elez should only be fired if he was truly a “bad dude or a terrible member of the team.”

Vance’s comments have drawn further attention due to his wife, Usha Vance, being of Indian origin. She is the first Indian American Second Lady of the United States.

However, Vance’s support for Musk’s decision was met with criticism from Congressman

Ro Khanna. Khanna questioned whether Elez would apologize for his racist post before being rehired, calling out the lack of accountability for Elez’s actions. “If you are going to rehire someone to represent you & the USA, why not insist he apologize for saying ‘Normalize Indian hate?’” Khanna emphasized.

Vance responded, defending his position by arguing that it is not “racist trolls” who threaten his children but a culture that fails to offer grace to those who make

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DC Mid-Air Collision: 2 Indian Americans Killed

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – Two Indian Americans, Asra Hussain Raza and Vikesh Patel, were among the 67 victims killed in the horrific mid-air collision near Washington, D.C., on January 29. The collision, involving American Airlines Flight 5342 and an Army Black Hawk helicopter, occurred as the aircraft were approaching Ronald Reagan National Airport. The tragic incident is the deadliest aviation disaster in the U.S. since 2001.

Asra Hussain Raza, a 26-year-old Washington, D.C.-based consultant, was on the flight for a work trip related to hospital



Vikesh Patel

Asra Hussain Raza

turnaround projects. The daughter of Indian immigrants, Raza was remembered by her father-in-law,

Dr. Hashim Raza, as someone who always went above and beyond for others. “She was always someone

who went out of her way for others,” he recalled, reflecting on how she would stay on late-night calls to keep him company during emergency room shifts.

Raza, a 2020 graduate of Indiana University with honors, had recently married her college sweetheart, Hamaad Raza, in August 2023. Her husband shared the devastating moment when he learned of the crash, revealing that she had texted him just 20 minutes before the flight’s scheduled landing. “By the time I got to the airport, my life had changed forever,” he said, recounting how emergency vehicles rushed past him as his texts to her went unanswered.

Vikesh Patel, a long-time employee at GE Aerospace, was also

aboard the flight. Larry Culp, CEO of GE Aerospace, confirmed Patel’s death, expressing the company’s grief. “This is a tragedy not only for our industry but also for the GE Aerospace team,” Culp said in a statement.

Patel, who had recently transitioned to the role of MRO Transformational Leader, had worked for GE Aerospace for over a decade in various capacities, including as an engine assembly engineer, production planner, and senior operations manager. He was returning home after work related travel.

The outpouring on social media by fellow staffers and friends remembering and mourning Patel was immediate with many recalling his character and professionalism.

SMAP Los Angeles Announces New 2025 Leadership Team

India-West Staff Reporter

CERRITOS, CA – Shivaji Maharaj Antarrashtriya Parivar (SMAP), Los Angeles chapter, announced its new leadership team for 2025, focused on preserving the legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

The team’s goals include networking, unity, community service, and leadership, with initiatives such as SMAP Youth, SMAP Academy, and the SMAP

Leadership Center, a press release said.

Aparna Hande takes on the role of President, with Ashok Madan as Chairman. Key roles are filled by Bharat Saoji as Executive Vice President, Ashutosh Khisti as Executive Vice President, Jagdish Gaikwad as Vice President of Fundraising, Ramesh Thalli as Vice President of Media and Tech, Kewal Kanda as Vice President of Media, Sandeep Katre as Vice President of Dhol

Tasha, Sonali Bhavne as Vice President of Programs, Sudhir Pisal as Vice President of Cultural Affairs, Shailesh Shetye as Vice President of Logistics, Kamlesh Chauhan as Vice President of Public Relations, Dr. Rohini Joshi as Vice President of Health Services, and Anil Patil as Vice President of Events.

Vilas Jadhav and Vasu Pawar serve as Past Presidents, and Vijay Patil continues as Founder/President of SMAP Global.



Aparna Hande

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COMMENTARY

Threats To Public Data Harm All Americans

By **KARTHICK RAMAKRISHNAN**
AND **AKIL VOHRA**

Recent actions taken by the Trump administration involving the removal and disruption of key federal public datasets have underscored a fundamental truth: Data is so essential, yet its value is not perceived until it is taken away.

Data informs everything we do—from the efficiency of daily business transactions to the effective delivery of various public services. Scientists and policy makers alike rely on public data to understand the causes and consequences of pressing issues, and to produce solutions involving the public and private sectors alike.

And visibility and recognition in data has been a decades-long priority for the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities that we serve. Indeed, as researchers have noted, data disaggregation is a civil rights issue for Asian Americans, ensuring access to critical benefits and protections.

Here are six essential ways that good data is foundational to our country's success:

1. Data Expertise is Critical for America's Economic Success

Data science is quickly growing in popularity across the nation, and statistics has long been a requirement for business, economics, and many other social sciences.

- The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report indicates that Big Data Specialists will see the biggest growth in demand over the next five years.

- The U.S. Department of Labor also notes strong demand and high salaries for data scientists in the coming years.

2. Good Data is Critical for America's Global Competitiveness

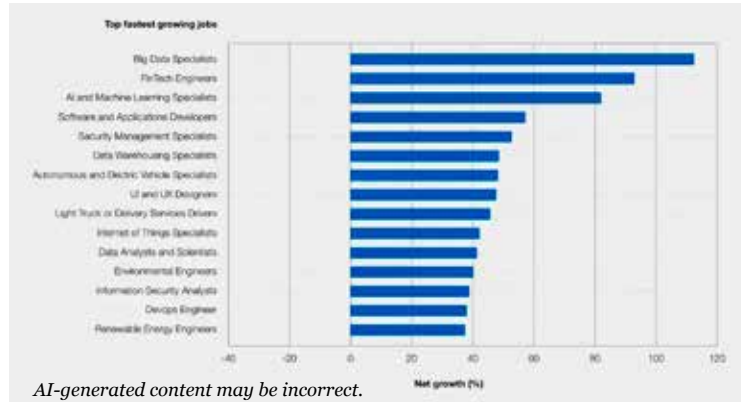
The United States continues to remain one of the most dynamic economies in the world, and "good data" plays a critical role in powering the country's competitiveness.

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce notes that data "has long been a driver of the United States' 21st century economic leadership."

- Population data plays a critical role in informing business decisions, large and small—from stock market trends to the expansion plans of many small businesses.

3. Good Data Ensures Community Health and Well Being

Population health data helps us



AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Source: Future of Jobs Report 2025, World Economic Forum

understand who is disproportionately affected by various diseases, such as Hepatitis B, and how investments and treatments may need to vary across communities.

- The removal of health related data across federal agencies prevents physicians and hospitals from effectively serving their populations.

4. Government Efficiency is Impossible Without Good Data

Reliable and accurate data is critical for improving government efficiency. The removal of population data collections harms the effectiveness of public programs.

- Population data on language needs in rural counties helps emergency rooms run better. Translated documents reduce the likelihood of

costly medical mistakes.

- Data on community health needs helps local governments better plan for staffing specialty care across various neighborhoods.

5. Data is Essential to Track and End Discrimination

Data on race, ethnicity, gender, disability and veteran status are critical to ensuring successful implementation of various anti-discrimination laws, including the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

- Federal agencies should be pushing for improvements in these data collections, including making

them more timely and accessible to the public.

6. Removing Public Data Amounts to Government Censorship

The Trump White House issued an executive order entitled "Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship." The executive order states, "Government censorship of speech is intolerable in a free society." We agree.

- Freedom of speech is critical to government accountability, civic engagement, and journalistic integrity.

- Data is foundational to these values as it enables an informed public discourse. The removal of data from federal government websites amounts to government censorship.

Simply put, good data is fundamental to upholding America's success, its laws and its values. We are less safe as a nation when 8,000+ web pages and population health databases went missing across many federal agencies.

Regardless of one's political ideology, we must fight for the sanctity and integrity of good data.

(Ramakrishnan is founder and executive director of AAPI Data and Vohra is director of policy at AAPI Data. (For more: aapidata.com))

White Supremacists And The Far Right Are The Real Threat To America's Security

By **PETERSCHURMANN**

Donald Trump's continued attacks on immigrants as criminals divert attention and, critically, resources from the very real threat posed by white supremacists and far right violence.

Donald Trump has ridden the xenophobic political tiger into the White House once again, convincing Americans that immigrants in this country are an existential threat to our safety and the wellbeing of the nation.

It's a politically effective trope that in practice diverts attention and, critically, resources from the very real threat posed by white supremacists and far right violence.

"This is a problem that infects all our society," says Mike German, a former FBI agent who spent years

undercover working to expose far right and white supremacist groups operating within law enforcement. "It is not a matter that pops up once in a while. It is a constant problem."

Despite Trump's continued lambasting of migrants as criminals, rapists and thieves—descriptions used to justify his campaign of mass deportations—data show that as a group, immigrants, legal or otherwise, commit far fewer crimes than American born citizens, and in fact may have an overall mitigating effect on crime.

Violence and terrorism committed by adherents of white supremacist and far right ideologies, on the other hand, have been rising steadily over the past decade, surpassing threats posed by Islamist extremists and other ideologically motivated groups, jeopardizing

public safety and even the foundations of our democracy.

And, says German, the pervasiveness of white supremacist and far right ideologies within local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, including the agency he once worked for, makes this threat all the more pernicious.

The starkest example of that threat is the January 6, 2020, attack on the US Capitol. "Many people were shocked when so many police were involved," notes German. "But there were military officials, and elected representatives also involved," he said, a sign of just how widespread these ideas have become within agencies and offices ostensibly in charge of protecting the public.

One of Trump's first actions in office was to pardon participants in the

January 6 assault, a move German says is an "an acknowledgement that he is not on law enforcement's side." Some 174 police officers were injured and one later died following the attack.

An investigation by Reuters in 2022 painted an alarming portrait of "white supremacist infiltration within law enforcement," as well as ties between officers and instructors, with extremist groups including the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers, both of which are linked to the events of Jan. 6.

German traces a through line from the creation of the Department of Justice in 1870 specifically intended to target racist violence perpetrated by the Ku Klux Klan to the emergence of Jim Crow laws designed to uphold white supremacy.

"People tend to forget that US law

enforcement systems built at this time were meant to enforce white supremacy," he says. "This is why it is so persistent in policing today."

It also explains why important signals warning of possible violence on Jan. 6 were missed or ignored by law enforcement. "For a long time, the FBI had not prioritized investigations of far-right violence. They focused on anarchists, anti-fascists, and even environmentalists. Groups that were far less violent," says German.

Neither the FBI nor the Department of Homeland Security collect data on acts of domestic terrorism committed by white supremacists and the far right, he adds, often ascribing them to "lone wolves" rather than acknowledging "what is a more networked movement."

(Ethnic Media Services)



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COMMUNITY

Prakash Shah Elected GOPIO President As New Leadership Team Sworn In

India-West Staff Reporter

LOS ANGELES, CA – The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) held its election last month, with the new leadership team sworn in on January 31 during a virtual Zoom ceremony. Veteran community leader Prakash Shah of New Jersey was elected president. A longtime GOPIO member, Shah was a Founder Life Member when the organization was established in 1989 and previously served as Chairman of the New Jersey Development Authority.

Joining him in leadership roles are Umesh Chandra, a media and community leader from Brisbane, Australia, as Executive Vice President; Kewal Kanda, a Los Angeles-area community leader, as Vice President; and Jasbir “Nami” Kaur, a former IBM official and New York-based social activist, as Global Ambassador. Also elected were International Coordinators Ishwar Ramlatchman for Africa and Dhiraj Ahuja for South Asia.

Given the international pres-

ence of GOPIO’s officers, the oath ceremony was conducted virtually undertaken during his tenure and expressed gratitude to his team.



and began with a universal prayer. GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham welcomed participants from across the globe and provided a brief history of the organization’s founding and achievements over the past 36 years.

Outgoing President Lal Motwani reflected on the initiatives

Dr. Abraham then administered the Oath of Office to the newly elected officials.

Following the ceremony, the new leadership team outlined their plans for GOPIO, while several GOPIO chapter presidents and community leaders shared congratulatory remarks.

SF Consulate Hosts First Consular Camp In Hawaii

India-West Staff Reporter

ordinated by the IAFC Hawaii Chapter, with contributions from

HONOLULU, HI –The Consulate General of India in San Francisco, in collaboration with VFS Global, held its inaugural “Consular Camp” on January 18. The event, organized in partnership with the Indian-American Friendship Council (IAFC) Hawaii Chapter and the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) temple, aimed to provide essential consular services to the Indian community in the state.

Dr. K. Srikar Reddy, Consul General of India, was given a tour of the temple where the camp was held, by temple official Sundarnanda Das. He encouraged attendees to contact the consulate or VFS staff in San Francisco for assistance with a variety of services, including passport applications, visas and OCI cards. The consular camp saw a large turnout from the Indian community, offering an opportunity for residents to access key consular services closer to home.

The event’s activities were co-



its President Dr. Raj Kumar and members Lynellus J. Boyd (Vice-President), Debbie Young, Ravi Shivaraman, Prof. Marc Jason Gilbert, Shanti Bott, Mark Sammon, and Pradeep Arora from the Gandhi International Institute for Peace (GIIP).

The consul general also visited a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Waikiki, where he paid tribute to the leader by draping a Hawaiian lei and offering flowers.

His visit also included meetings with Hawaii’s Governor Josh Green and State Senator Mike Gabbard at the State Capitol.

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Covered California Reaching Out To Fire Victims

India-West Staff Reporter

SACRAMENTO, CA – Covered California has announced a special-enrollment period for residents of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, where a state of emergency has been declared due to the Palisades and Eaton Fires that have destroyed over 12,000 homes and displaced hundreds of thousands of Californians.

“These fires have caused unprecedented destruction and have upended the lives of so many living in Southern California,” said Covered California Executive Director Jessica Altman. “Everyone who is uninsured and has been affected by these fires, directly or indirectly, will have an extended opportunity to obtain health insurance through Covered California or Medi-Cal over the next two months.”

Californians have 60 days from the date that the state of emer-

gency was declared in their county to sign up for coverage, so this special-enrollment period will last until March 8.

Other resources made available to Californians affected by the fires can be found here:

· Los Angeles County Resources:
<https://recovery.lacounty.gov/resources/>

· State of California Resources:
<https://www.ca.gov/LAfires/>

Special Enrollment Will Continue to Offer Expanded Financial Help for 2025

Those signing up for coverage will be eligible for more financial help than ever before, as Covered California has enhanced its cost-sharing reduction program for 2025. These cost-sharing reductions lessen the cost of accessing health care by lowering out-of-pocket costs when they seek medical care, including eliminat-



of the federal poverty level (which is \$30,120 for a single person and \$62,400 for a family of four), while those under 200 percent of the federal poverty level will continue to have access to higher levels of benefits.

Nearly 90 percent of Covered California’s

ing deductibles in all three Silver cost-sharing reduction plans.

The cost-sharing reduction

program for out-of-pocket costs is available to all Californians with incomes above 200 percent

over 1.8 million enrollees receive financial help. Two-thirds of those enrollees are eligible for health insurance for \$10 or less per month, and nearly half could get a comprehensive Silver plan for that price.

“The rebuilding of these wonderful communities of Los Angeles will be a massive undertaking, but we know Southern Californians are resilient and ready for the challenges ahead,” Altman said. “Rebuilding will take time and persistence, but investing in your mental and physical health is fundamental. As you begin to reconstruct your homes and lives, know that health care is within reach and Covered California is here to help.”

Coming into open enrollment, data from the California Simulation of Insurance Markets (CalSIM), a model created by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, showed that of the 1.3 million uninsured Californians who qualify for subsidies through Covered California or are eligible for Medi-Cal coverage, 356,000 of them reside in Southern California.

Signing Up for Coverage Is Easy
Consumers can learn more about their options by visiting CoveredCA.com, where they can easily find out if they qualify for financial help and see the coverage options in their area. Those interested in learning more about their coverage options can also:

- Get free and confidential assistance over the phone, in a variety of languages, from one of more than 14,000 certified agents and community-based organizations throughout the state that provide free, confidential help in whatever language or dialect consumers prefer.
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COMMUNITY

\$650,000 Raised At Event Headlined By Jay Shetty To Support LA Fire Survivors

India-West News Desk

BEVERLY HILLS, CA – In the wake of the devastating wildfires that have ravaged Southern California, the city’s philanthropic community has come together to provide much-needed relief to those affected. One of impactful effort came from an event spearheaded by Indian Americans Jay Shetty, renowned author and podcast host, and real estate investor Anita Verma-Lallian, on Jan 26.

Held at Hotel Bel-Air, the event attracted 200 high-profile Indian American and philanthropic leaders.

Jay Shetty, who has made Los Angeles his home for nearly seven years, reflected on the deeper lessons found in times of hardship: “In moments of great tragedy and stress, we often look for certainty, try to look for stability... things we can hold onto. Those are very natural things to seek. The spiritual path is not to look for certainty in times of uncertainty. It is to look for service. To look for opportunities to serve and give back, help others, and uplift. Because if we look for certainty, you may never find it.”



Anita Verma-Lallian who recently made headlines after purchasing the former home of ‘Friends’ star Matthew Perry, is the founder of Camelback Productions, the first South Asian-owned film production company in the US. The company posted that the fundraiser had brought in over \$650,000.

The funds raised have been earmarked to support Baby2Baby, a nonprofit organization that has been instrumental in delivering emergency supplies to children and families affected by the fires. Social media posts said




it has already distributed over 6 million emergency supplies, including diapers, food, formula, and water, to support families and children in need.

The event featured appearances from comedians Lilly Singh and Kumail Nanjiani, the latter of whom had previously hosted a separate comedy benefit in LA with all proceeds benefiting the California Fire Founda-

tion’s Wildfire & Disaster Relief Fund.

Attendees were also treated to a silent auction with exclusive items, including tickets to Elton John’s Academy Awards Watch Party, a Beatles-signed guitar, and a 3-carat diamond ring. In a moment of collective healing, Jay Shetty led the guests in a heartfelt meditation during the Hotel Bel-Air ballroom event.



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and will be working with two reputable organizations: World Central Kitchen, which is supplying food and hot meals to those in need and Greater Good Charities, which is providing critical emergency aid to fire victims.


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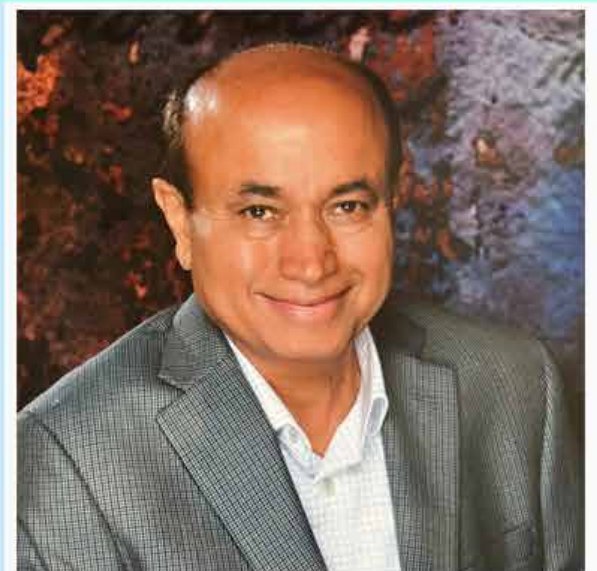
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Fresno City Becomes First In US To Name School After A Sikh



India-West Staff Reporter

FRESNO, CA – Fresno's Central Unified School District has made history by naming a new elementary school after a Sikh. The school board voted 6-1 on January 28 to name the new campus, located at Shields and Brawley avenues, Jaswant Singh Khalra Elementary. When it opens in August 2025, it will be the first public school in North America

named after a person of Sikh descent, a media release said.

The district serves a large Punjabi Sikh community, with 1,700 students—10.55% of the total student population—identifying as Punjabi/Southeast Asian, according to The Fresno Bee. Punjabi students are expected to make up 9% of the new school's enrollment, it added.

Jaswant Singh Khalra Elementary will be Central Unified's 15th elementary school, with a capacity

of over 600 students from preschool to sixth grade. The campus will include a multi-purpose building with an outdoor amphitheater, play courts, and modern baseball, softball, and soccer fields.

Calling the vote a "historic moment", Central Unified School District Board of Trustees President Naindeep Singh Chann, in a statement said he was proud to support the naming alongside Trustees Nabil Kherfan, Yesenia Z.

Carillo, Karla Kirk, Jaspreet Singh Sidhu, and Natalie Chavez.

Khalra was a bank director in Amritsar, who in the early 1990s dedicated himself to investigating the disappearances and extrajudicial killings by Punjab police. His daughter, Navkiran Kaur Khalra, is a Fresno State alumna who now works in the Bay Area. In 2017, Fresno honored Khalra's legacy by naming a park after him, located about two miles from the new school.

Popular Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh took to Instagram to celebrate the recognition, calling the move "historic." Dosanjh is set to bring Khalra's story to the big screen in an upcoming biopic Punjab 95, where he will portray the late human rights activist who was abducted and murdered in 1995. It led to the conviction and sentencing of six Punjab police officials later. Punjab 95 is set for an international release on Feb. 7.

SoCal Edison Says Its Equipment Might Have Caused LA Fires

India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Southern California Edison (SCE), a subsidiary of Edison International, is investigating whether its equipment contributed to the ignition of two wildfires in the Los Angeles area.

The wildfires, including the Eaton Fire, began on January 7, causing significant damage, including fatalities and destruction of homes. SCE operates in areas affected by the Eaton Fire, which is under investigation.

SCE stated that recent evidence, such as videos from external parties, suggests a potential connection to its equipment. However, the company emphasized that no definitive signs—such as broken conductors or burn marks—have been found

to indicate its equipment caused the fire.

The company plans to conduct a physical inspection of transmission lines in the Altadena area as part of its investigation, which is expected to take several months.

SCE also provided an update on the Hurst Fire, which started near Tower 6 north of Saddle Ridge Road. The cause of that fire is still under investigation, and the company is cooperating with fire investigators, it said. The Hurst Fire, reported on January 7, was contained by January 16, after burning approximately 799 acres.

SCE, along with other electric utilities, is facing increased scrutiny following these wildfires, which are expected to be the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history.

(with inputs from Reuters)



सेरिटोस शहर

ध्यान दें कि मंगलवार, 4 मार्च, 2025 को होने वाले आम नगरपालिका चुनाव के लिए सभी मतपत्रों की गिनती केंद्रीय मतगणना स्थल पर की जाएगी सूचना एतद्वारा दी गई है कि सेरिटोस शहर के सिटी क्लर्क ने अधिकृत किया है कि सिटी काउंसिल चैंबर, 18125 ब्लूमफील्ड एवेन्यू, सेरिटोस, सीए 90703 को मंगलवार, 4 मार्च, 2025 को होने वाले आम नगरपालिका चुनाव के लिए मतपत्रों की गिनती के लिए केंद्रीय स्थान के रूप में नामित किया गया है। डाक द्वारा डाले गए मतपत्रों की गिनती रात 8:01 बजे से शुरू होगी। डाक द्वारा मतदान के परिणामों को तब तक जारी नहीं किया जाएगा जब तक कि मतदान स्थलों के रात 8:00 बजे बंद होने के बाद तक जारी नहीं किया जाएगा।

/s/ Cynthia Nava, सिटी क्लर्क, सिटी ऑफ़ सेरिटोस



Aneesh Sohoni Named CEO Of Teach For America, Is Passionate About Equity

**India - West
Staff Reporter**

NEW YORK, NY – Teach For America (TFA) has named Indian American Aneesh Sohoni as its next chief executive officer, effective April 15. A Teach For America alumnus and a dedicated ad-

vocate for educational equity, Sohoni will take over from Elisa Villanueva Beard, who has served TFA for 27 years.

Sohoni, a Minneapolis native and the son of Indian immigrants, brings a deeply personal connection to TFA's mission. Growing up in a vibrant immigrant community, he witnessed firsthand the transformative power of education. After graduating college, he joined TFA's Twin Cities corps

in 2009, teaching high school English near his childhood home. His classroom included many Somali, Kenyan, and Ethiopian English learners, an experience that shaped his understanding of the potential in every student and the systemic barriers they face.

Inspired by his students, Sohoni dedicated his career to advancing educational opportunities. He went on to serve as the executive director of TFA Greater Chicago-

Northwest Indiana, where he strengthened partnerships and expanded programs to support student success.

Reflecting on his journey, Sohoni has also credited his family's immigrant story for fueling his commitment to educational equity. "Access to education has the power to unlock a life full of possibility," he said. "At TFA, I saw how students could defy expectations when given the right support and opportunities. That experience continues to inspire me every day."

Sohoni joins TFA at a critical moment as the organization works toward its ambitious 2030 goals, which include improving literacy and math achievement and increasing the number of students who graduate college or are career-ready. "I am inspired by what is possible," Sohoni said.

US Bribery Indictment: Adani Hires Law Firms



India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – Adani Green has hired independent law firms to review a U.S. indictment against founder Gautam Adani and senior executives for allegedly paying \$265 million in bribes to secure power contracts. The company, in a regulatory filing on January 23, emphasized its compliance with applicable laws but did not disclose the law firms' names.

The indictment, filed in November 2024, charges Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani, and Managing Director Vneet S. Jaain with bribery and misleading U.S. investors. The case centers around a 2021 solar energy deal in Andhra Pradesh, awarded under questionable circumstances. Adani Green has denied the bribery allegations, calling them "baseless."

While the company is not named as a defendant, concerns about the charges have led to some partners and investors reassessing their involvement, with TotalEnergies halting further investments in the Adani Group. Adani Green's shares have dropped over 27% since the indictment was made public.

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9:00 pm - Midnight : Rudraabhishekam

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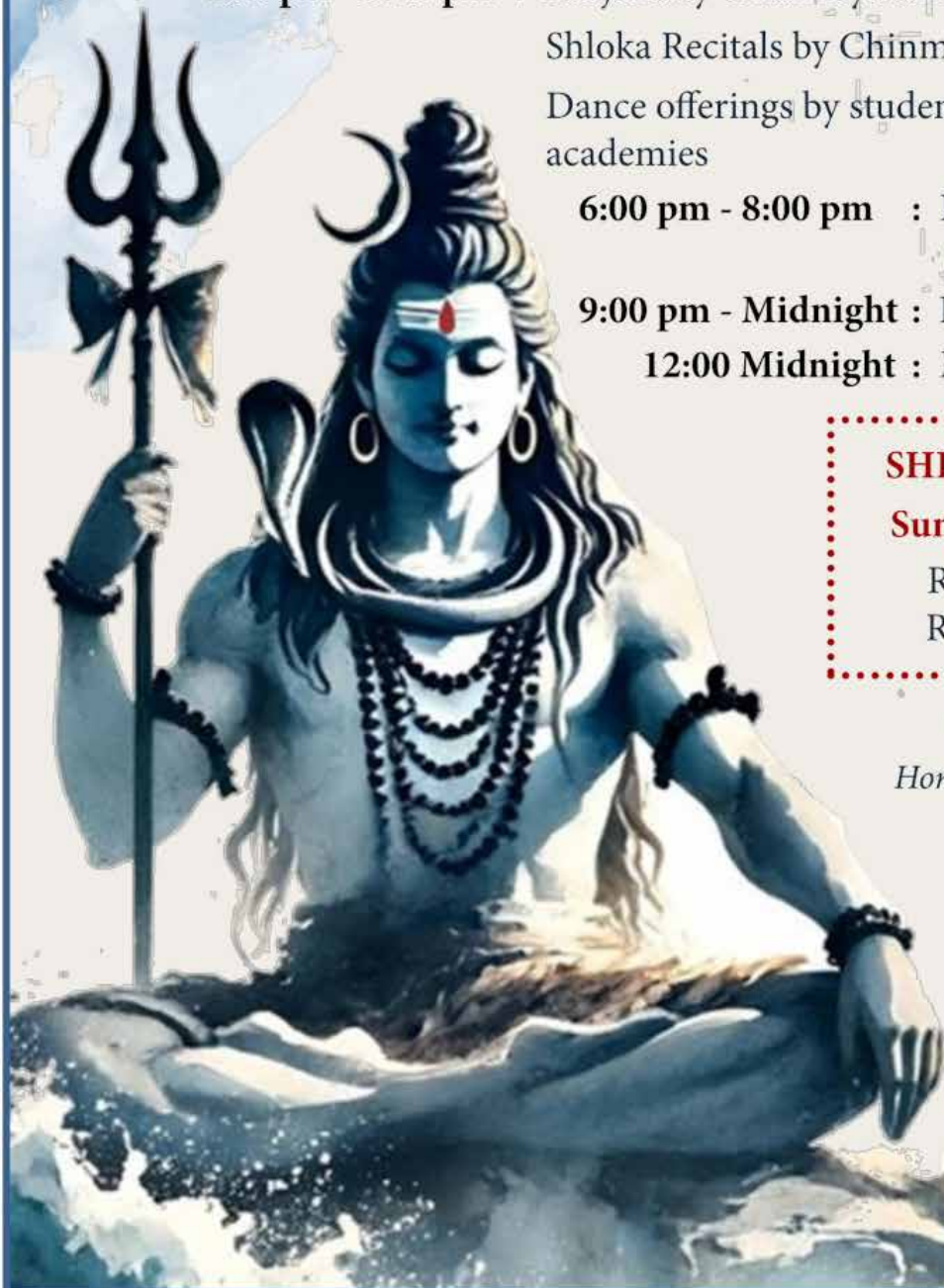
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BUSINESS

Gunjan Kedia Becomes First Woman CEO Of U.S. Bancorp

MINNEAPOLIS, MN – Gunjan Kedia has been named the next chief executive officer of U.S. Bancorp, becoming one of the most influential women in the financial sector. The company announced on January 28 that Kedia, currently president, will take over as CEO following the annual shareholders meeting on April 15. She will also join the Board of Directors.

Kedia, 54, will succeed Andy Cecere, who will transition to executive chairman while continuing to lead the board and supporting Kedia in her new role.

Before U.S. Bancorp, she held global executive roles at State Street Financial and BNY Mellon and worked in leadership positions at McKinsey & Company and PwC.

Recognized as a seven-time honoree on American Banker's Most Powerful Women in Banking and Finance list, Kedia has also been named twice to Barron's 100 Most Influential Women in U.S. Finance list.

In addition to her financial expertise, she serves on the boards of PBS, the American Red Cross, and Carnegie Mellon Business



School. She holds an MBA from Carnegie Mellon University and a bachelor's degree from the Delhi School of Engineering. Kedia emphasized the bank's commitment to integrity and innovation as she prepares to take the helm.

"U.S. Bancorp is a truly special place that allows us to do meaningful work and build lasting relationships with millions of clients," Kedia said. "We will build on a solid foundation of integrity and doing business the right way to drive growth."

Aravind Srinivas Challenges Elon Musk To Stop His \$500B Fundraising From USAID

India-West News Desk

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Aravind Srinivas, CEO of the AI search engine Perplexity AI, has openly challenged Tesla owner Elon Musk to prevent him from raising \$500 billion from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

"Considering raising \$500B from USAID. Funding secured. Stop me if you can @elonmusk. What is USAID?" Srinivas posted on X (formerly Twitter).

This post came days after both Musk and former President Donald Trump called for the closure of USAID. On February 7, a federal judge temporarily paused the administration's plan to put 2,200 USAID workers on paid leave, adding to the ongoing controversy surrounding the agency's future.

31-year old Srinivas, who co-founded Perplexity AI in 2022, is no stranger to the tech world. An alumnus of IIT-Madras and the University of California, Berkeley, Srinivas previously worked at OpenAI, Google, and DeepMind, before returning to OpenAI as a

research scientist.

Perplexity AI, backed by high-profile investors like Jeff Bezos, has quickly established itself as a leading AI-powered search engine.




Srinivas's challenge to Musk comes as both Musk and Trump criticize USAID, with Trump calling it a "criminal organization" and Musk describing it as being "run by radical lunatics." While protests have occurred in Washington, DC, against the idea of dismantling the agency, Srinivas is using the moment to draw attention to his own ambitious fundraising plans, setting the stage for a high-profile clash with Musk.

In the past, the two have had cordial interactions regarding

immigration and the Chennai born Srinivas getting his green card. Recently he had tweeted, "Excited for Elon and Vivek to make legal immigration better. I would even

push for a higher application fee (eg 2x) in exchange for high quality fast service. Think about immigration to America as you investing in the country. Should be as simple as you uploading documents from a mobile app, Apple Pay, interview scheduled in a week, and results arriving to you in a month."




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Caltech's Anima Anandkumar, Arvind Krishna Of IBM Among TIME's AI Impact Award Winners

India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – Two Indian Americans, Arvind Krishna and Anima Anandkumar, have been recognized among the winners of the 2025 TIME100 AI Impact Awards, which honor global leaders shaping the future of artificial intelligence. The award, introduced in 2022, celebrates individuals who are using AI to revolutionize industries, solve complex problems, and drive meaningful change.

Anima Anandkumar: Pioneering AI for Scientific Discovery

Caltech professor Anima Anandkumar is at the forefront of integrating AI with scientific research, accelerating discoveries across physics, medicine, and climate science. Her work centers on “neural operators,” a revolutionary AI framework that models complex physical systems with unparalleled speed and accuracy.

Anandkumar's breakthroughs include the AI-driven weather model FourCastNet, which generates highly accurate week-long forecasts in seconds—thousands of

times faster than conventional models. The technology has already proven its value in predicting extreme weather events like Hurricane Beryl in 2024.

Her AI-driven simulations extend to nuclear fusion, where she and her team collaborated with the U.K. Atomic Energy Agency to model plasma behavior a million times faster than existing techniques. This innovation helps predict and prevent potentially disastrous disruptions in fusion reactors, bringing the world closer to sustainable clean energy.

Beyond physics, Anandkumar's AI models have made significant contributions to healthcare. In 2023, she helped design a catheter that reduces bacterial contamination a hundredfold, potentially lowering the risk of infections for over a million patients annually.

Arvind Krishna: Steering IBM Toward Specialized AI

IBM CEO Arvind Krishna has positioned the company as a leader in specialized AI, prioritizing efficiency and targeted applications

over the massive, resource-intensive models favored by competitors like OpenAI and Google. Under his leadership, IBM has focused on creating smaller, more cost-effective AI tools tailored to specific industries, allowing businesses to enhance productivity without the need for billion-dollar investments in general-purpose AI models said writer and Billy Perrigo.

Krishna's strategy gained vali-

dation when the Chinese AI lab DeepSeek released an efficient open-source model in early 2025, raising concerns about the long-term profitability of large-scale AI ventures. Around the same time, IBM announced a 10% increase in AI-driven software sales, surpassing market expectations and boosting its stock to an all-time high of \$240 billion.

Beyond AI, Krishna is betting

big on quantum computing, a field IBM has heavily invested in. He predicts that by 2030, quantum breakthroughs will revolutionize industries much like mainframes and personal computers did in the past. If successful, Krishna believes IBM could reclaim its dominance in the tech sector, establishing itself as the go-to leader in quantum and AI-driven solutions.



Anima Anandkumar.

Arvind Krishna.

Photo: TIME

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4 Indian Americans, 1 American Among Padma Awardees 2025



India-West News Desk

On the eve of Republic Day, the Government of India announced the prestigious Padma Awards. These awards, among India’s highest civilian honors, are presented annually in three categories: Padma Vibhushan (exceptional and distinguished service), Padma Bhushan (distinguished service of high order), and Padma Shri (distinguished service in any field).

This year’s Padma honorees include:

Padma Bhushan

Vinod Dham:

Known as the “Father of the Pentium Chip,” Dham was recognized for his groundbreaking contributions to micro-processor technology. A graduate of Delhi College of Engineering and the University of Cincinnati, he is the founding managing partner of Indo-US Venture Partners, fostering innovation and entrepreneurial collaboration between India and the U.S.

From (L): Sethuraman Panchanathan, Ajay V. Bhatt, Nitin Nohria, Vinod Dham. Photo: Indian Eagle.

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Padma Shri

Sethuraman Panchanathan:

Director of the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF), Panchanathan has significantly influenced global research policy in artificial intelligence, computing, and robotics. Under his leadership, the NSF has advanced innovation in STEM. Before his NSF tenure, he was a professor and innovation leader at Arizona State University.

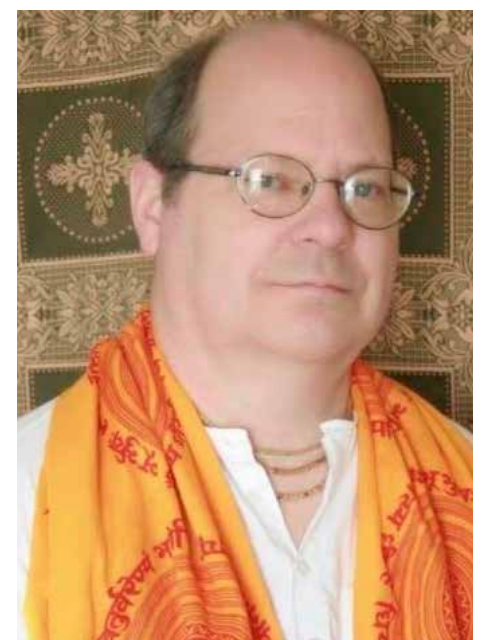
Ajay V. Bhatt:

The computer architect behind the creation of the Universal Serial Bus (USB), Bhatt revolutionized global connectivity. Currently an Intel Senior Fellow, he continues to drive technological advancements in computing and innovation.

Nitin Nohria:

A renowned scholar of leadership and management, Nohria served as the 10th dean of Harvard Business School. He played a pivotal role in fostering collaboration between academia and technology, launching initiatives like the i-lab and Harvard Business School Online. Nohria now serves as Partner and Executive Chairman at Thrive Capital, focusing on internet and software investments.

Stephen Knapp:



The only American among six foreign nationals honored this year, Knapp is a spiritual teacher and author dedicated to preserving and promoting Vedic philosophy. Through his books, such as *The Secret Teachings of the Vedas* and *Facing Death: Welcoming the Afterlife*, Knapp has guided individuals toward higher consciousness and self-realization, spreading awareness about India’s spiritual traditions worldwide.

CA Burglary Ring Targeting Asian Americans Busted; 3 Arrested

India-West News Desk

SAN JOSE, CA – San José Police Chief Paul Joseph announced on January 22, the arrests of three suspects linked to a sophisticated burglary ring that deliberately targeted Asian American households across the Bay Area. The group is believed to be responsible for 78 burglaries since June 2024, with the stolen property valued at approximately \$1 million.



The arrests of Alberto Ibarra Vallejo, 25; Gonzalo Valencia Ramos, 28; and Jaime Martinez Arroyo, 46, followed months of investigation involving multiple law enforcement agencies across Northern and Central California. The suspects were taken into custody on January 16 with assistance from Stockton police SWAT officers. They remain in custody without bail and are set to appear in court on February 3.

hoods in West San José, Cupertino, Saratoga, Campbell, and Mountain View, specifically targeting Asian American households. San José Mayor Matt Mahan described the emotional toll on the community saying, "For roughly six months, our AAPI community in the West San José region has lived in fear as home after home has been broken into and residents have wondered if they were next."

During the raids, authorities recovered 700 stolen items, including wedding rings, luxury watches, jewelry, and family heirlooms. Police also seized five firearms, three of which were confirmed stolen.

The burglars reportedly avoided large items like televisions or electronics, instead opting for high-value goods such as jewelry, cash, high-end purses, and foreign currency items, making them prime targets.

Methodical Targeting of AAPI Households

Police allege that the suspects systematically cased neighbor-

Coordination Among Agencies Led to Arrests

Chief Joseph revealed that frag-

mented investigations initially hindered progress, as different agencies pursued the cases individually. The breakthrough came when a suspect was identified on a doorbell camera by Santa Clara County Sheriff's detectives. This recognition led to a coordinated effort by multiple agencies, including the San José Police Department, to track the suspects and execute search warrants.

"Extensive surveillance and search warrants conducted by San José PD led us to uncover additional suspects involved in this prolific burglary operation," Joseph said.

Authorities continue to investigate the possibility of additional crew members and expect the number of linked burglaries to rise.

Tech Entrepreneur Vishnu Hari Assaulted, Seriously Injured

India-West News Desk

SAN FRANCISCO – The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) is investigating an assault in the Mission District that left tech entrepreneur Vishnu Hari seriously injured.



At approximately 2:08 a.m. on January 18, officers responded to a report of a man bleeding from the head at the intersection of 24th and Bryant Streets. Medics were already on the scene, and the victim, later identified as Vishnu Hari, co-founder of the 3D simulation engine firm Ego, was transported to a local hospital.

Authorities reported that the assault occurred following a dispute with another individual, which escalated when the suspect struck Hari with a metal pipe. The SFPD has not made any arrests, and the investigation is ongoing.

Hari, who has since been discharged from the intensive care unit, stated on social media that he has no memory of the incident. He is recovering from a traumatic brain injury, partial blindness in his right eye, and hearing impairment in his left ear. He also mentioned that his jewelry was taken during the assault, although his phone and wallet were not.

Authorities encourage anyone with information to contact the SFPD at 415-575-4444 or submit tips via text to TIP411, starting the message with "SFPD."

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Elon Recruits UC Berkeley Grad Akash Bobba To DOGE Amid Uproar Over Hiring Of 'Kids'

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – The newly formed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), spearheaded by Elon Musk, has drawn scrutiny for its recruitment choices of six engineers ages 19-24 which includes 22-year-old Akash Bobba.

Bobba, a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, has an impressive technical background despite his age. He previously interned at Meta, focusing on AI, worked at Palantir in data analytics, and contributed to Bridgewater Associates in financial modeling. His problem-solving skills gained attention when a former classmate, Charis Zhang, shared on X that Bobba once rewrote an entire project's codebase overnight after it was accidentally deleted, helping his team secure first place in their class.

SECURITY

Despite his technical expertise, Bobba's role—along with five other young engineers, including a 19-year-old—has raised concerns. According to Wired, at least four members of the team, including Bobba, have received top-level security clearances despite having no



prior government experience. Critics argue that placing individuals with limited knowledge of federal operations in positions with access to sensitive data poses a national security risk.

DOGE's mission is to streamline federal operations, eliminate bureaucratic inefficiencies, and cut billions in government spending, but the department's structure and leadership choices have already caused internal friction. Reports on X suggest that some gov-

ernment agencies resist Musk's team, with allegations that certain DOGE personnel attempted to access classified information at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). This reportedly led to security officials being placed on leave.

As controversy swirls around DOGE's unconventional hires, questions remain about oversight, security protocols, and the extent of Musk's influence within the administration.

Racist Staffer To Be Rehired By Musk

Contd. from P1

mistakes. He explained, "They will develop views that they later think are wrong or even gross. I made mistakes as a kid, and thank God I grew up in a culture that encouraged me to grow and learn and feel remorse when I screwed up and offer grace when others did."

In his reply, Khanna reiterated his concerns, stating that grace should not be extended without acknowledgment of wrongdoing. He stressed the importance of an apology before Elez could be trusted with a position of responsibility, particularly given the impact of his offensive remarks on Indian American communities.

The debate over Elez's rehiring drew in Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, who expressed his outrage. "There should be no place for racism and hate in our government, within the Department of Government Efficiency, or any other agency, office, or entity," Krishnamoorthi said. "It is appalling that the Vice President of the United States and one of the president's most prominent advisors would rally behind the rehiring of someone who rightly resigned his post upon the revelation of his authorship of social media comments as bigoted as

'Normalize Indian Hate.'

Krishnamoorthi continued, emphasizing that true forgiveness requires genuine remorse. "Elon Musk and the Vice President each invoked the need for forgiveness, but true forgiveness can only come when it is sought, when remorse is shown, and when the genuine desire to make amends is demonstrated." He expressed concern that Elez's supporters were too quick to dismiss his hateful remarks as the actions of a "kid," despite Elez's significant position in government.

"The Trump Administration and DOGE should hold themselves to a higher standard," Krishnamoorthi added, "and so should our entire nation."

In response to questions about the controversy, President Donald Trump was asked about the posts made by Elez and whether he agreed with Vance's opinion that Elez should be rehired. Trump responded, "Well, I don't know about the particular thing," during a press conference at the White House with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba. He added, "But if the vice president said that — did you say that? — I'm with the vice president."



Saahas Hosts Annual Gala:

Celebrating Impact and Honoring Leaders



Saahas for Cause hosted its 2nd Annual Gala on November 10th, 2025. It was an evening to remember, an evening filled with inspiring honorees and a showcase of Saahas's community impact to more than 400 supporters that attended.

Honorees: The night's honorees included:

- **Smriti Mundhra** – Academy Award-nominated Director, Filmmaker and Founder of Meralta Films
- **Anupam Satyasheel** – CEO, Occams Advisory
- **Deepak Chopra** – Founder, Chairman, CEO & President, OSI Systems Inc.
- **Sanjib Sahoo** – EVP & Chief Digital Officer, Ingram Micro

Community Impact:

This year's Gala featured a documentary produced by Reshma Dordi, CEO of ShowBiz India offering a powerful glimpse into the lives Saahas has touched and the change it continues to drive in the community. Over the past year, Saahas for Cause has made a remarkable difference in the lives of thousands, assisted 2,219 older adults, counseled 1,288 women, mentored 78 youth, provided community health services to 3,295 individuals and reached 4,564 individuals through outreach initiatives

Funding the future:

Through the generosity of the evening, Saahas was blessed to have received community support, which will directly support its quad-partite mission of providing vital services in

- Senior Support,
- Family and Women's Wellness,
- Community Research & Wellness, and
- Youth Empowerment.



As she closed out the event, Saahas's Founding Executive Director Ms. Payal Sawhney, set forth her vision wherein:

- Older adults experience a strong sense of community and belonging, ensuring they are never left feeling isolated or neglected.
- Survivors of abuse no longer struggle to find safety, as Saahas actively works toward establishing a secure interim housing facility to provide them with support and stability.
- South Asians of all ages are afforded spaces by Saahas to engage and connect to their roots and grow to contribute to their adopted new homeland of these United States.
- Young South Asians emerge as leaders and changemakers, confidently embracing the richness of their dual cultural heritage while shaping a brighter future.

More about Saahas for Cause:

Founded in 2019 by a dedicated group of South Asians, Saahas for Cause stands as a symbol of resilience, empowerment, and advocacy for those navigating the challenges of settling into a new homeland. Grounded in evidence-based research, its programs—designed by experts and clinicians—are tailored to meet the unique needs of the South Asian community, ensuring their well-being and success. Saahas is majorly funded by a portfolio of grant awards from the local, state, and federal administrations. In a short span of 5+ years Saahas has established itself in as a SoCal Desi Community's beacon and lighthouse with judgement for none but light for all. For more information on their day-to-day offerings please sign up for their newsletter by emailing them at info@saahasforcause.org

Sarva Mangal Family Trust / Shah Happiness Foundation



ANEKANT COMMUNITY CENTER

Humanitarian Services in Southern California & Around the World

by Rhea Mehta (board member) & Dr. Nitin Shah (board member & founding President)

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		 Nilesh Shah	 Rhea Mehta

Anekant Community Center (ACC), founded in 2005, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to global humanitarian services, focusing on healthcare, education, nutrition, and disaster relief. Striving to be a multi-service, multi-ethnic resource center, ACC supports underserved communities in Southern California and beyond. It has led fundraisers to provide direct aid for global natural disasters and has promoted Indian culture through events like East meets West (Kathak vs. Jazz), Ustad Nishat Khan's sitar concert, Hasya Kavi Sammelan, and more. ACC also empowers young adults to launch nonprofit initiatives. Managed by a nine-member Board of Directors and many volunteers, ACC operates without paid employees. Key supporters Sarva Mangal Family Trust (SMFT) and Shah Happiness Foundation (SHF) have played a crucial role in contributing to ACC's global humanitarian efforts.



2024 Anaheim Health Fair

ACC's medical missions began locally with free health fairs at the Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) in 2005. The city of Anaheim invited ACC to start a health fair in 2007, soon becoming ACC's largest event each year. Now hosting 6 to 8 annual health fairs, ACC offers crucial medical services, including vital sign measurements, blood tests, EKGs, PAP Smears, mammograms, chiropractor consultations, acupuncture, on-site dental procedures, vision screenings, free eyeglasses, and citizenship application assistance. The Nalini Shah Cancer Fund, established in 2008, promotes cancer awareness, education, prevention, and early detection, also organizing camps in Gujarat, India. During COVID-19, ACC provided food with the United Sikh Mission and the Joy of Sharing Foundation; gave Chromebooks to students; and sent oxygen concentrators to India with SMFT, Pratham, and JAINA.



Recognition of Anaheim Health Fair by Congress

Sarva Mangal Family Trust / Shah Happiness Foundation



Darshana Shah, Sachi Jain, Prafulla Shah, Jayana Shah, Smita Doshi

The Tender Care Community Outreach Program (TCCOP), a subsidiary of ACC since 2008, is a volunteer network providing support, assistance, and educational services to local people facing challenges. They offer meals for the homeless, tutor students, give groceries to families in need, fulfill Christmas wish lists, visit patients, and conduct career-prep seminars. At Valadez Middle School in Placentia, TCCOP has donated school supplies, food, blankets, technological devices, eyeglasses, and essential kits.



Globally, ACC has conducted hundreds of missions, impacting hundreds of thousands of lives in 27 countries across 5 continents:

- I. Asia – Hundreds of medical missions in 7 Indian states & 1 in Nepal. Fundraised after natural disasters in India, Japan, Philippines, Nepal, Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Iran, & Syria.
- II. North America – New Orleans, Canada, Los Angeles, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Jamaica
- III. Europe – Türkiye, Albania
- IV. Africa – Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Morocco, Libya, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda
- V. Oceania – Fiji

In 2024, vision screening and eyeglass distribution missions were conducted in 10 countries, benefiting 165,150 people. ACC addressed vision impairments and anemia, focusing on young girls and women.

ACC prioritizes assisting patients without access to critical healthcare, ensuring a sustainable impact. In 2024, over 5,500 surgeries were performed worldwide, including hernia repairs, hysterectomies, cyst and tumor removals, and cataract surgeries.



Surgery on a child in Ndola, Zambia

1. India

Specifically in India, ACC has led numerous missions. Two recent missions in Chandigarh and Gorakhpur provided medical screenings, specialty consultations, vision screenings, free eyeglasses, anemia testing, and pain management with physical therapy.



Medical consultation by Dr. Sood, who's volunteered in many countries

ACC also holds annual 3-day surgical camps at Kalidas Hospital in Vyara, offering essential procedures like hernia repair, hydrocele, cyst and lump removal, and hysterectomies. Since 2007, over 3,100 free surgeries have been performed. In 2024, 219 operations were performed.



Sarva Mangal Family Trust / Shah Happiness Foundation



2. Vision Screenings in Africa

ACC has led vision and anemia screening in Cameroon, Nigeria, Zambia, Kenya, and Uganda. In just Ghana, Cameroon, and Nigeria, 70,854 children/ staff benefited, with 599 young girls receiving anemia screenings.

	Ghana	Cameroon	Nigeria
No. of Children/Staff Screened	18,844	14,337	37,673
Nos. Referred/Seen by Optometrists	4,055	997	10,717 (Approx.)
Nos. of Eyeglasses Given	1,401	507	3791 (Approx.)



3. Jamaica

Since 2014, along with the Drs Kiran & Pallavi Patel Family Foundation and the MBS Ministry, Florida, ACC has conducted 8 cataract surgery missions in Jamaica. In 2024, 611 cataract surgeries were performed in 3 days.



Girl born blind who had eye surgeries in 2015 & 2017 - she can now see well & is able to properly attend school

4. Ghana

ACC has conducted 6 medical, dental, and surgical missions, along with health education campaigns, curing 9000 cataracts and performing over 1000 general, pediatric, plastic, and gynecological surgeries.



Cataract surgeries in Ghana



Pediatric surgery case in Ghana

5. Zambia

With an anonymous donor, Tarsadia Foundation, and Dr. Bharat Bhatt's family, ACC has organized annual healthcare missions (medical and dental) in Zambia since 2013. Orthopedic, pediatric, and ENT surgeries have been performed on hundreds of patients.



Mambilima, Zambia: aircraft transports volunteers who serve children & adults - annual mission since 2018

Sarva Mangal Family Trust / Shah Happiness Foundation

For over 20 years, ACC has played a crucial role in global disaster relief, responding to earthquakes, floods, pandemics, cyclones, tsunamis, and wildfires, including the recent Los Angeles wildfires. The organization raises and distributes funds, coordinates relief efforts, and delivers essential supplies to affected communities. Since the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, ACC has made disaster recovery a major priority. ACC has provided aid for numerous disasters, including the 2005 Katrina floods, the 2011 Japan tsunami, the 2013 Philippines typhoon, the 2017 Puerto Rico floods, and COVID-19 relief in 2020 and 2021. During COVID-19, ACC donated over 7,000 Chromebooks in association with SMFT and SHF.



Donation of Chromebooks

Recently, ACC supported the 2023 Türkiye-Syria earthquakes and last year's Nepal floods, with members traveling to affected regions to coordinate aid. In response to the Türkiye-Syria earthquakes, ACC provided prosthetics to those who lost limbs. In Nepal, flood relief efforts included distributing 1,000 blankets and 100 tents with Veerayatan.



Prosthetics provided in the aftermath of Türkiye-Syria earthquakes



Nepal 2024 flood relief & Visioncare mission



This was set in Nepal by Shree Bidada Sarvodaya Trust with funds ACC raised with JCSC, JAINA, and more. The hospital was picked during Dr. Nitin Shah and his wife Kinna's visit after the earthquake's devastation.

ACC's unwavering commitment to service continues to transform lives across the globe. It is continually evolving and will always have plans for the future, bettering itself to improve others' lives globally. Goals for this year include vision screening and eyeglass distribution to 1 million children and adults, providing weekly fresh meals to the homeless, conducting medical missions in new countries (possibilities are in Tanzania, Zanzibar, and Guatemala), and performing 7,500 cataract surgeries. As ACC steps into the future, its mission is clear – extend its impact, uplift those in need, and inspire change that transcends borders. Together, with the support of its volunteers and donors, ACC will illuminate countless lives with hope, healing, and opportunity. ACC believes that: **“True Happiness comes from Serving an Unknown”** (Dr. Nitin Shah). ACC continues to bring happiness to the lives they touch globally!



Three generations; Nitin, Jayden, and Hiten; volunteering at Anaheim Health Fair in 2018

Contact information: Dr. Nitin Shah (nitinshahmd@gmail.com, 562-244-9035), Mrs. Prafulla Shah (prafullashah@hotmail.com), Pramod Shah (pshah24@gmail.com)

POLITICS

3 Indian Americans Named To Trump Admin

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – Three Indian Americans have been appointed to roles in the new Trump administration.

Kush Desai: Deputy Press Secretary

Former journalist and seasoned Republican communicator Kush Desai has been named Deputy Press Secretary. His experience includes serving as Deputy Communications Director for the 2024 Republican National Convention and Communications Director for the party in Iowa. At the Republican National Committee, he held the role of Deputy Battleground States and Pennsylvania Communications Director, where he

helped shape messaging strategies for battleground states, including Pennsylvania. His expertise in political communications positions him as a key player in the White House's media strategy. Desai holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from George Washington University.

Saurabh Sharma: Personnel Office

Bengaluru-born Saurabh Sharma will serve in the Presidential Personnel Office, where he will focus on staffing and appointments. Sharma is the former President of American Moment, a conservative organization dedicated to personnel development. He gained national attention in 2019 when, as a University of Texas at Austin

student activist, he was among ten students invited to the White House as Trump signed an executive order promoting free speech on college campuses. Sharma graduated with a degree in Biochemistry from UT Austin in 2019, and his appointment marks a significant step in his career in public service.

Ricky Gill: Senior Director for South and Central Asia

Gill previously served at the NSC during Trump's first term as Director for Russia and European Energy Security. He also held the role of Senior Advisor in the State



Kush Desai

Saurabh Sharma

Ricky Gill

Department's Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. Following his time in the administration, Gill became Principal and General Counsel at Gill Capital Group and advised TC Energy on European and Asian energy projects, including the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Born in Lodi, California, Gill is

the son of physicians Param and Jasbir Gill. He holds a bachelor's degree from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and a law degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

Always with an eye on Washington, Gill ran twice for Congress from California and lost both times.



Meet Alexis Wilkins, Kash Patel's Girlfriend

India-West News Desk

NASHVILLE, TN – Alexis Wilkins, a country music artist and girlfriend of President Donald Trump's FBI director nominee Kash Patel, garnered attention after attending Patel's Senate confirmation hearing last

week. Seated among Patel's family and friends, Wilkins' presence underscored her ties to conservative circles.

Born in Boston on November 3, 1999, Wilkins spent her early years in England and Switzerland before moving to Arkansas and later Nashville to pursue a music career. She released her first song at just eight years old and debuted as a solo artist in 2020 with *Holdin' On*. Her 2023 EP,

Grit, climbed to #4 on the iTunes chart, while her single *Country Back* reached #2 on the iTunes country rankings.

Wilkins has opened for country stars like Sara Evans and Lee Greenwood, best known for his patriotic anthem *God Bless the USA*. Her music, often infused with patriotic themes, has amassed over a million streams across various platforms.

Beyond music, Wilkins is ac-

tive in conservative causes. She has spoken at events hosted by the Reagan Ranch and the Young America's Foundation and is affiliated with the John Wayne Cancer Foundation. She also serves as a spokesperson for PragerU and hosts the podcast *Between the Headlines on Rumble*.

According to sources, Wilkins and Patel first met at a *ReAwaken America* event in October 2022 and began dating in January 2023.



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Trump Fires Rohit Chopra From Consumer Protection Bureau

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC -Rohit Chopra has been removed as Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), ending his five-year term nearly two years early. He was informed of his dismissal via an email from the White House.

Chopra was appointed by former President Joe Biden to lead the CFPB, an agency he helped establish following the 2008-09 financial crisis. As the bureau's deputy director, he played a pivotal role in highlighting rising student loan debt and advocating for consumer protection reforms.

Major consumer banks including Bank of America and JPMorgan Chase are among companies facing lawsuits from the CFPB. They, alongside tech industry leaders, encouraged Trump to remove Chopra from his role, several media outlets reported.

Before heading the CFPB, Chopra served as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission from 2018 to 2021, after being nominated by then President Donald Trump. At the FTC, he pushed for stricter penalties against repeat offenders, opposed no-money, no-fault fraud settlements, and worked to strengthen the "Made in USA" label and fair competition policies.

Chopra's career in consumer protection dates back to his initial tenure at the CFPB from 2010 to 2015. In 2011, he was designated as the agency's first student loan ombudsman by the Secretary of the Treasury, where he focused on student lending issues.



In a letter following his dismissal, Chopra reflected on his tenure, writing, "It has been an extraordinary privilege to serve as Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation since 2021, as well as to serve as a Commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission from 2018 to 2021. I am grateful to both President Biden and President Trump for nominating me and to the United States Senate for confirming me to these positions."

Before entering public service, Chopra worked at McKinsey & Company, specializing in financial services, healthcare, and consumer technology sectors. He holds a BA from Harvard University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Seattle Consulate Calls Cops As Kshama Sawant Protests Visa Denial, India Blacklisting Her

India-West News Desk

SEATTLE, WA – Indian American politician Kshama Sawant staged a protest outside the Indian consulate here, saying her visa was denied multiple times without explanation. The demonstration led to an altercation, with the Consulate accusing individuals of "unauthorized entry" and calling local authorities to handle the situation without saying too much more.

The Indian Consulate in Seattle, in its social media post on February 6, stated that a "law and order situation" arose when "certain individuals" entered the premises after office hours. "We were compelled to call in relevant local authorities to deal with the situation. Further action is being initiated against the trespassers," the Consulate posted.

Sawant, a former Seattle City Council member and vocal critic of the Indian government, said she was protesting after being repeatedly denied a visa, while her husband, Calvin Priest, was granted an emergency visa to visit her 82-year-old ailing mother in Bengaluru.

"My husband & I are in Seattle Indian consulate. They granted him emergency visa for my mother being very sick. But rejected mine, literally saying my name is on a 'reject list'. And refusing to give explanation why," she posted on her social media handle.

Sawant stated that a consular officer told her she was being denied a visa because she



was on the Indian government's "reject list." She argued that the decision was politically motivated, citing her past actions in Seattle's City Council. Sawant continued her protest, calling it an act of "peaceful civil disobedience" and demanding answers from the Consulate.

In response, the Indian Consulate accused the protesters of refusing to leave and behaving aggressively.

"Despite repeated requests, these individuals refused to leave the Consulate premises and engaged in aggressive and threatening behavior with the Consulate staff," the Consulate stated.

After her decade-long stint with the Seattle City Council, Sawant established Workers Strike Back, which advocates a federal minimum wage of \$25 an hour and unionizing labor in the IT industry.

Saahas for Cause: Supporting South Asian Seniors Through Wellness Programs

As the South Asian immigrant population in the U.S. continues to expand, so does the demand for specialized support services that cater to older adults facing unique cultural, linguistic, and social challenges. Saahas for Cause has stepped forward to bridge this gap through its Senior Wellness Programs, designed by South Asian mental health professionals to create a safe, inclusive, and engaging space where seniors can flourish as they age in **unfamiliar environments**—a concept known as "aging out of place."

Aging out of place refers to situation of seniors' who are aging in unfamiliar environment as they migrate in later part of their life to a new country for many different reasons. It is imperative to create environment that is familiar to these seniors in terms of their culture and language to keep them safe and healthy. For many South Asian elders, this concept is vital as it enables them to stay connected to their cultural roots, social networks, and traditions while maintaining autonomy. However, many seniors struggle with loneliness and isolation due to language barriers, cultural differences, and shifting societal norms that make navigating their surroundings challenging. Saahas for Cause addresses these concerns with multiple initiatives: **Mauj Masti Sehat, Technology Class, Mast Desi, English Language Class, and the E-phone Program. This effort is heavily supported by Saahas's community health worker model.**

These programs provide educational forums, informational series, group activities, and interactive sessions, fostering a welcoming environment where seniors can ask questions, share experiences, and gain knowledge in a culturally sensitive setting while remaining in their communities. By doing so, Saahas for Cause ensures that South Asian seniors can lead **fulfilling lives with dignity, security, and purpose.**

In 2024, Saahas for Cause's Senior Wellness Programs have served over **2,219 seniors**, offering tailored support to help them maintain their independence and well-being. Each session features guest presenters or team members covering vital topics designed to enhance seniors' overall well-being:

Physical Health & Well-being – Specialized exercises to improve mobility, strength, and balance, reducing the risk of injuries and falls.

Mental & Emotional Health – Opportunities for cognitive stimulation, emotional support, and therapy to ensure mental engagement and emotional stability.

Cyber Safety – Education on online scams, fraud prevention, and digital literacy to empower seniors in navigating technology safely and confidently.

Nutrition & Preventative Care – Guidance on healthy eating habits, chronic disease management, and proactive health measures for longevity and wellness.

Creative Activities & Social Connection – Interactive sessions like arts & crafts, music, and group discussions that foster self-expression, relaxation, and



meaningful relationships.

Brain Stimulation – Engaging puzzles, memory games, and problem-solving exercises to maintain cognitive sharpness.

Access to Essential Services – Assistance with healthcare, transportation, and legal matters to ensure seniors receive necessary resources and support.

English Language Class – Assisting seniors in improving their English proficiency, equipping them with the language skills necessary to navigate daily life with confidence.

By incorporating the principles of aging out of place into its programs, Saahas for Cause enables seniors to continue living in their communities while receiving the support they need. Through these engaging and educational sessions, the organization fosters community cohesion, empowerment, and overall well-being, ensuring that no senior feels isolated, unheard, or unsupported.



The impact of Saahas for Cause's Senior Wellness Programs has been profound. Seniors not only receive help when needed but also gain a platform to share their wisdom, experiences, and stories, reinforcing their sense of purpose and self-worth. By continuing to expand and enhance these initiatives, Saahas for Cause remains committed to ensuring that South Asian seniors can age in place with dignity, fostering a healthier and more connected future for all.



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POLITICS

Thanedar Concerned Over Impact Of Govt. Staff Cuts On Food Safety And Quality Control

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. House Agriculture Committee member Shri Thanedar (MI-D) expressed concerns to Brownfield Ag News about the potential impact of federal employee buyouts on food security. He warned that the rapid loss of experienced USDA staff, including workers, inspectors, and quality control professionals, could undermine the agency’s ability to ensure food safety and availability.

Thanedar stated, “USDA may lose some



very talented, experienced workers who really understand the process and serve as a good quality control. All of this is in danger of being lost.”

An estimated 20,000 federal employees have accepted the administration’s buyout offer, which was extended to 2.3 million federal workers asking for de-

ferred resignations.

Additionally, Thanedar pointed to President Trump’s tariffs and immigration policies as factors that will drive up food prices and strain the labor supply.

Representing the Detroit area, where one in four families rely on nutrition programs, Thanedar reflected on his own experience with hunger and his commitment to addressing food insecurity. “I understand why we cannot have young people, children, going to bed hungry because I did and I don’t wish that upon anybody,” he said.

Rep. Suhas Subramanyam Seeks To Assure Constituents At Town Hall

India-West News Desk

LEESBURG, VA – Representative Suhas Subramanyam (D-VA) took center stage at a packed town hall meeting on February 3, as hundreds of federal employees and concerned residents gathered to voice their fears over the Trump administration’s latest workforce purge.

The meeting focused on the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), a newly created agency led by Elon Musk that has aggressively pushed for federal job cuts and taken unprecedented control over key government offices.

Subramanyam opened the session by acknowledging the overwhelming number of emails, calls, and messages from constituents who fear losing their jobs. He specifically addressed the controversial “fork in the road”



this option, you don’t have to come into work anymore. But there’s no appropriation for this in Congress—there’s no money set aside for these so-called buyouts.” He urged employees to consult legal counsel or their unions before making any decisions.

Beyond job security, the meeting highlighted growing concerns over Musk’s increasing access to government infrastructure and classified information. Subramanyam, a member of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee, admitted that even he was being kept in the dark.

“We’re getting very little information as members of Congress, and it’s totally unacceptable,” he said. “The DOGE committee has spoken with us never, basically.”

emails received by many federal workers, which have been framed as voluntary buyouts but offer little transparency.

“It’s kind of worded as a buyout, but it’s not actually a buyout,” Subramanyam warned. “It’s basically telling you to resign in the next six to eight months. If you take

He encouraged residents to report any developments to his office and vowed to use his platform to push for transparency. Subramanyam also reassured attendees that despite House Democrats lacking a majority, they could still make their voices heard. “What we do have is the ability to speak up, to tell people’s stories, and to use whatever leverage we have. I will hold town halls like this and make those stories public,” he declared.

Reports of DOGE’s extreme measures added to the outrage. One town hall attendee alleged that a top Musk aide, along with his wife and child, had moved into a federal agency’s sixth floor, creating a restricted-access living space. The claim, first reported by The Daily Beast, underscores Musk’s well-documented practice of encouraging employees to sleep at work—a strategy he previously implemented at Twitter and Tesla.

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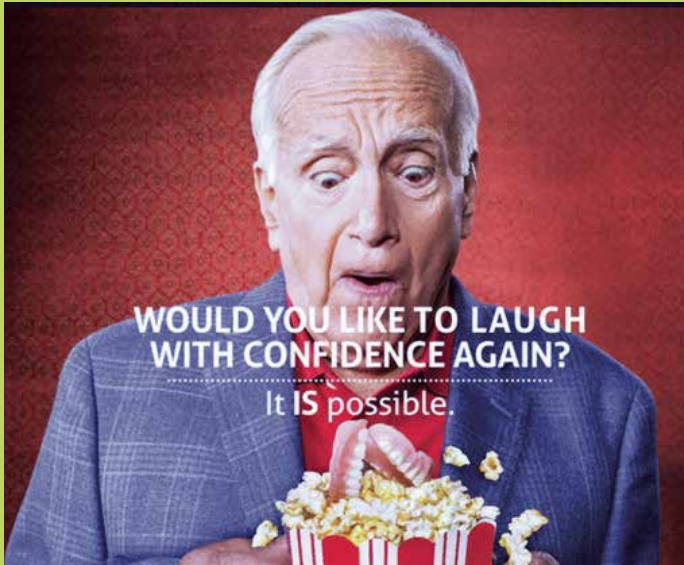
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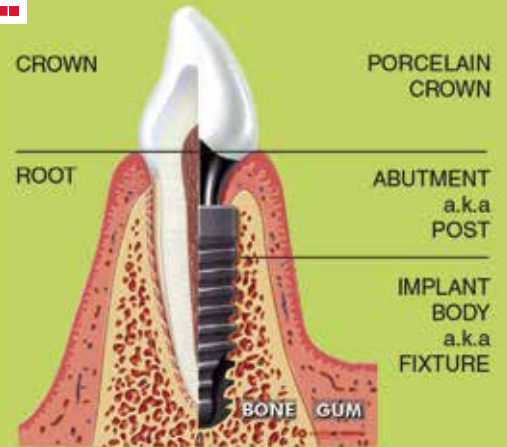


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Indian Students Lead In Flouting U.S. Visa Rules; 7,000 Overstayed In 2023

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – India had the highest number of student visa overstays in the U.S. last year, with 7,000 Indian students staying beyond their permitted time, according to U.S. immigration expert Jessica M. Vaughan. In comparison, Brazil and China, the next highest on the list, each had around 2,000 students overstaying their visas.

Speaking before the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, Vaughan warned that student and exchange visitor visas, especially F-1 (for academic students) and M-1 (for vocational students), have some of the highest overstay rates among all temporary visas.

Vaughan, a policy analyst at the Center



for Immigration Studies, argued that the current system is too lax and allows students to abuse their visa status. She called for stricter enforcement, requiring students to prove they intend to return home after

their studies. She also criticized the “dual intent” policy, which lets student visa holders express interest in staying in the U.S. after graduation.

Programs like Optional Practical Training (OPT) and Curricular Practical Training (CPT), which allow international students to work in the U.S. after completing their education, were also flagged as vulnerable to fraud.

Vaughan recommended tighter controls and stricter standards for schools issuing I-20 forms, which are necessary for student visa applications. Schools with high overstay rates, she said, should lose their

authorization to sponsor foreign students.

Beyond student visas, Vaughan pushed for major reforms to work visa programs, including H-1B visas. She proposed cutting the total number of H-1B visas to 75,000 annually and prioritizing higher-paying employers. She also suggested reducing the visa duration for specialty occupations to two years with limited extensions.

Vaughan rejected claims of a labor shortage, citing unemployed U.S. STEM graduates. She argued that the U.S. should focus on hiring domestic workers before expanding foreign work programs. Her testimony adds to the growing debate on tightening immigration policies and curbing visa overstays, especially among Indian students.

Chandrika Tandon Wins Grammy

Contd. from P1

ing Tandon’s Sanskrit chants with the soothing sounds of flute and cello.

The title Triveni, which refers to the confluence of three rivers in Hindu tradition, symbolizes the fusion of diverse musical traditions.

Reacting to the win, Tandon emphasized the power of music to unite and heal, saying, “Music is love, music ignites the light within all of us, and, even in our darkest days, music spreads joy and laughter.”

Tandon has long been an advocate for the spiritual and healing power of music,

explaining in a past interview with India-West, “To sing well the mind has to be in a very quiet place. The concept of spirituality to me is to be in that space...music has helped me find that quiet space.”

A pioneer in blending Sanskrit chants with Western musical traditions, Tandon’s work has been deeply influenced by her belief that music is a meditative practice. She shared with India-West, “When I sing, I am meditating, deep within myself. When I teach people to sing or am with students, I see God in them. That’s my spirituality.”

Her compositions have been performed at

prestigious venues like the World Cultural Festival and Lincoln Center. As Artist in Residence for the Young People’s Chorus of New York City, Tandon has also received a New York State Council on the Arts grant to compose Sanskrit chants for choral ensembles.

Beyond her musical achievements, Tandon is a prominent philanthropist and business leader. The first South Asian American woman elected partner at McKinsey, she is the founder of Tandon Capital Associates and chairs the Krishnamurthy Tandon Foundation. She also serves as a trustee of NYU and chairs the NYU Tandon School of

Engineering, where she has supported various education initiatives.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Tandon for her Grammy win. He posted, “Congratulations to @chandrikatandon on winning the Grammy for the album Triveni. We take great pride in her accomplishments as an entrepreneur, philanthropist, and, of course, music! It is commendable how she has remained passionate about Indian culture and has been working to popularize it. She is an inspiration for several people. I fondly recall meeting her in New York in 2023.”

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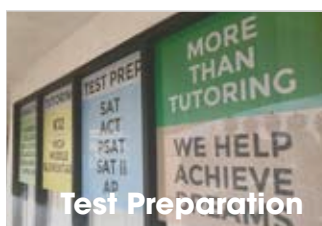


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Trump Deportations

Contd. from P1

back its nationals found residing illegally abroad. He assured lawmakers that the Indian government was actively engaging with US authorities to ensure deportees were treated humanely.

“Deportations by the US are carried out by Immigration and Customs Enforcement following procedures in place since 2012, which include restraints. However, ICE has informed us that women and children are not restrained, and deportees’ basic needs are taken care of,” Jaishankar said in the Rajya Sabha. He emphasized that this process remains unchanged and applies to both chartered civilian and military aircraft.

Meanwhile, the United States Border Patrol Chief, Michael W. Banks, shared a 24-second video on X. His post stated, “Successfully returned illegal aliens



to India, marking the farthest deportation flight yet using military transport. This mission underscores our commitment to enforcing immigration laws.”

Chief Michael W. Banks @USBPCChief · Follow

USBP and partners successfully returned illegal aliens to India, marking the farthest deportation flight yet using military transport. This mission underscores our commitment to enforcing immigration laws and ensuring swift removals.

If you cross illegally, you will be removed.

5:12 PM · Feb 4, 2025

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Accompanying the video was a firm warning: “If you cross illegally, you will be removed.” It is unclear whether this was a video of Indians or a file video showing people in handcuffs.

The use of a US military aircraft for the deportation has drawn criticism from the opposition. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor remarked, “If you’re in the US illegally, the US has the right to deport you. And if your identity as an Indian is confirmed, India has an obligation to accept you. However, it wasn’t good to hear that they were brought back in a military plane, handcuffed, and so on... that was quite unnecessary.”

Amid protests in Parliament over the inhuman manner of deportation, Jaishankar reiterated that restraints were part of US procedures and assured that India was engaging with US authorities to ensure deportees were treated with dignity.

Jaishankar also called for stricter action against illegal migration networks while promoting legal travel. “We must crack down on illegal migration while easing visas for genuine travelers. Law enforcement agencies will act against those responsible based on information from deportees,” he added.

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Adanis Shun Wedding Extravagance As Son Jeet Weds In Ahmedabad

India-West News Desk

AHMEDABAD – Jeet Adani, the youngest son of billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani, married Diva Jaimin Shah on February 7 in a private ceremony here. Diva is the daughter of diamond merchant Jaimin Shah. The entire event has drawn praise on social media for its simplicity and been compared to the over-the-top Ambani weddings.

The wedding followed traditional Jain and Gujarati customs. A video shared on social media captured the couple exchanging garlands, with Jeet kissing Diva on the forehead. The heartfelt moment was set to the song Nachdi Phira



from the film Secret Superstar.

Gautam Adani also marked the occasion with a major philanthropic gesture. He donated Rs 10,000 crore to various social causes, including healthcare, education, and skill development. The funds will be directed towards affordable hospitals, medical colleges, K-12 schools, and skill

academies aimed at improving employability.

Ahead of the wedding, Jeet and Diva visited Mitti Cafe, an NGO focused on creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Two days before the wedding, Gautam Adani launched the Mangal Seva initiative, aimed at supporting newlywed women with disabilities. As part of the initiative, 500 such women will receive Rs 10 lakh annually as financial assistance.

Jeet Adani, who serves as Director at Adani Airports, is responsible for overseeing operations at six international airports and the development of a seventh in Navi Mumbai. He is also an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. (with ANI inputs)

India-China Agree On Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Resuming This Year

NEW DELHI (ANI)- Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's visit to China from January 26 to 27 marked a significant step forward in India-China relations, with several key developments underscoring the two countries' commitment to strengthening ties.

One of the major highlights was the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, which is set to take place this summer. The Yatra, a sacred pilgrimage to Mount Kailash in Tibet, had been paused in recent years, and its revival is expected to strengthen cultural and spiritual ties between the two nations.

In another positive development, India and China agreed to hold an early meeting of the India-China Expert Level Mechanism, which will focus on cooperation concerning

trans-border rivers. This collaboration is crucial for managing shared water resources and addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Direct air connectivity between the two nations will also be resumed, facilitating easier travel for people-to-people exchanges and promoting greater business and tourism ties.

As both countries approach the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in



2025, the two sides emphasized the importance of using this occasion to bolster public diplomacy efforts. Misri's visit also saw an agreement to conduct a series of commemorative activities aimed at enhancing mutual awareness, trust, and confidence.

Moreover, both nations agreed to promote and facilitate people-to-people exchanges, including media and think-tank interactions, as part of broader efforts to build stronger bilateral relations.

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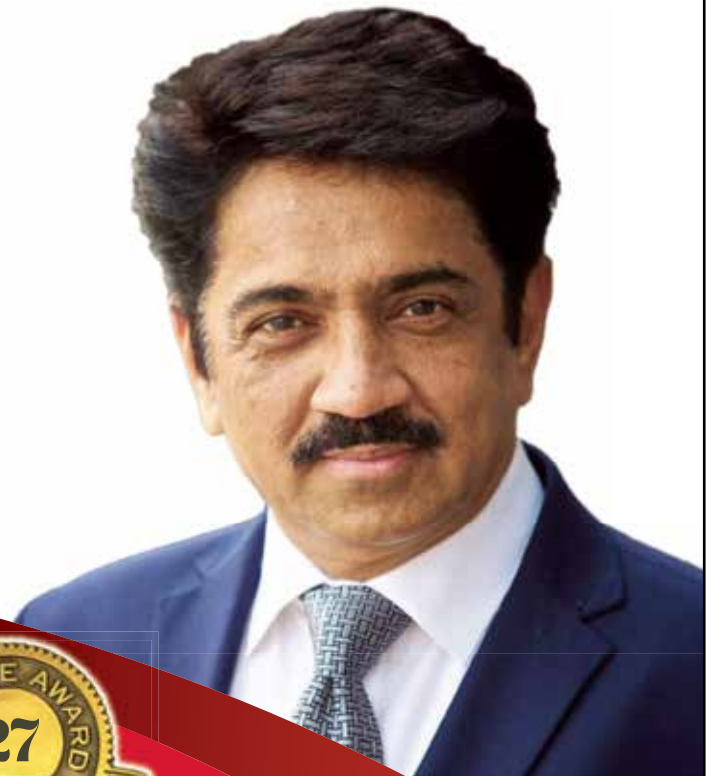
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Usha Vance Is Picture Perfect, Wears Gaurav Gupta

Kate Hudson Dazzles In Sabyasachi Jewelry At Critics Choice Awards

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – As JD Vance was sworn in as the 47th Vice President of the United States on January 20, his wife, Usha Vance was noticeable for her impeccable style throughout the inauguration events.

On the morning of January 20, she wore a custom peony cashmere coat from Oscar de la Renta for the inauguration, paired with a scarf wrap and a tea-length dress. Usha completed her look with Lina boots from Manolo Blahnik. Oscar de la Renta coats typically range from \$3,490 to nearly \$9,000. The entire feminine look was completed with flower earrings.

Later in the evening, at the candlelight dinner at the National Building Museum, she donned a gown from Gaurav Gupta, known for designing outfits for Beyoncé’s Renaissance tour and worn by stars like Deepika Padukone and Priyanka Chopra.

Throughout the inauguration ceremony, Usha’s children – Ewan, Vivek, and Mirabel – were also in attendance. At just three years old, Mirabel was spotted in her mother’s arms, sucking her thumb and curiously observing her father’s oath-taking ceremony, upping the cuteness quotient!



LOS ANGELES, CA(ANI)- Actress Kate Hudson turned heads at the event by accessorizing with statement earrings and The Bengal Tiger ring from designer Sabyasachi’s High Jewelry collection. She paired the intricate jewelry with a striking black silk faille dress by Thom Browne. The backless gown, featuring a silk satin bow detail, added a touch of drama to the red carpet.

While at the event in Santa Monica, Hudson also reflected on the devastating wildfires that had ravaged the Pacific Palisades area, a community she calls home. Her home was spared.

“I grew up in the [Pacific] Palisades,” she told E! News. “It’s something you never imagine you’d experience.”

Despite the destruction, Hudson found hope in the relief efforts initiated by Los Angeles residents. “People who live in Los Angeles, we love Los Angeles, and everyone’s just risen to the occasion. Now we just have to continue to support each other and rebuild,” she said.

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Shyamalan Wins Court Battle Against Charges Of Plagiarism

India-West News Desk

RIVERSIDE, CA – A federal jury delivered a unanimous verdict in favor of M. Night Shyamalan and Apple on January 31, concluding a seven-day copyright trial regarding allegations that the streaming series *Servant* plagiarized elements from the 2013 film *The Truth About Emanuel*.

The lawsuit, filed by Italian-born director Francesca Gregorini, sought up to \$81 million in damages, claiming that Shyamalan, Apple, and others involved in *Servant* had stolen narrative elements from her film without proper credit. Gregorini, who argued that key plot points in *Servant* mirrored those in *Emanuel*, testified that she was advised against filing the lawsuit due to potential career repercussions. Nevertheless, she maintained her decision to stand up against what she viewed as widespread theft in the industry, *Variety* said.

Shyamalan, who co-created *Servant* with Tony Basgallop, strongly denied the accusations. He told the court that he and his team had never seen or heard of *The Truth About Emanuel* prior to the litigation. “This accusation is the exact opposite of everything I do and everything I try to repre-



sent,” Shyamalan stated. “I would have never allowed it. None of the people that I work with would ever do anything like that.”

During his testimony, *Variety* reported, Shyamalan was questioned about specific scenes and elements alleged to have been copied from Gregorini’s film. He argued that certain tropes, such as a character fainting, were not original to her work. “We’ve all seen it hundreds and hundreds of times,” he said, referencing works by Alfred Hitchcock like *Rebecca*, *Notorious*, and *Saboteur*. “It’s just a thing no one owns.”

The jury viewed both *The Truth About Emanuel* and the first three episodes of *Servant* before deliberating. After a full day of discussions,

the jury ruled unanimously that the defendants had not had access to the film, despite its availability at Sundance and on iTunes. This meant they did not need to assess whether the two works were similar.

This decision wraps up a five-year legal battle, which began in 2020 after *Servant* debuted on Apple TV+. Although a federal judge initially dismissed the case, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals revived it in 2022. Apple’s motion for summary judgment was denied in November, leading to the trial’s proceedings.

Servant has since concluded its four-season run, and the trial’s outcome clears Shyamalan and Apple of the copyright infringement charges.

Kal Penn Wants A Hollywood Remake Of Bollywood’s ‘Don’



India-West News Desk

JAIPUR – Indian American actor Kal Penn has expressed interest in remaking Amitabh Bachchan’s 1978 film *Don* for Hollywood, setting it in Brooklyn or Ohio. He shared this idea during a session titled *You Can’t Be Serious* at the Jaipur Literature Festival, held at Hotel Clarks Amer.

Penn, best known for *The Namesake* and the *Harold and Kumar* franchise, spoke about his admiration for Bachchan and the film’s lasting impact. “Who isn’t a huge Amitabh Bachchan fan? The original *Don* is what I would love to remake. It can still be escapist, with the same color palette, just set in Brooklyn or Ohio,” he said.

The 47-year-old actor also reflected on his influences, citing Hollywood icons Tom Hanks and Denzel Washington, along with filmmaker Mira Nair. He credited Nair’s *Mississippi Masala* as an inspiration for his career.

Penn, whose credits include *Bhopal: A Prayer for Rain*, *Designated Survivor*, and *The Big Bang Theory*, also shared his experiences with Indian television. He recalled visiting the sets of *Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah* and spoke about his interest in Hindi serials, particularly *Saath Nibhaana Saathiya*.

“I try to keep up with Hindi by watching serials. I got addicted to *Saath Nibhaana Saathiya*. *Kokila Ben* is formidable, and *Gopi* is obviously a meme now,” he said.

Mindy Kaling’s ‘Running Point’ Brings Lakers-Inspired Drama To Netflix



India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Mindy Kaling is bringing the high-stakes world of professional basketball to Netflix with *Running Point*, a new comedy series inspired by the Los Angeles Lakers’ front office. The 10-episode show, set to premiere on February 27, stars Kate Hudson as Isla Gordon, a woman unexpectedly thrust into leadership when she takes over as president of the fictional Los Angeles Waves after her brother resigns amid scandal.

Created by Kaling, the series explores Isla’s struggle to prove herself in a male-dominated industry, facing skepticism from her family and the sports world.

The storyline reflects the real-life challenges of women in professional sports management, with direct ties to the Lakers organization. Lakers president and co-owner Jeanie Buss and the team’s manager of special projects Linda Rambis serve as executive producers, alongside Kaling, Hudson, and Howard Klein. Jordan Rambis is also a producer.

Produced by Kaling International in association with Warner Bros., *Running Point* features an ensemble cast that includes Brenda Song, Drew Tarver, Scott MacArthur, Fabrizio Guido, Toby Sandeman, Chet Hanks, Jay Ellis, Max Greenfield, Keyla Monterroso Mejia, Roberto Sanchez, Uche Agada, and Dane DiLiegro.

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