

INDIA WEST

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Vinod Khosla Buys Seattle Seahawks For \$9.6 Billion Deal



India-West News Desk

SEATTLE, WA – Tech billionaire Vinod Khosla has reached an agreement to purchase the NFL's Seattle Seahawks in a deal valued at \$9.6 billion, making it one of the most expensive control sales in sports history.

The Seattle Seahawks announced on July 11 that the Estate of late owner Paul G. Allen had entered into a formal agreement to sell the franchise to an ownership

group led by the Khosla family. Financial terms were not disclosed by the team, and the transaction remains subject to approval by NFL owners.

Khosla's group outbid several rivals, including one led by steel industry executive Aditya Mittal, who has invested \$1 billion to become a minority owner of the NBA's Boston Celtics.

"We are honored to be entrusted as the next stewards of the Seattle

Contd. on P20

Punjab Crime Syndicate Recruited Indian Youth Using Fake US Visas



WASHINGTON, DC-An organized crime syndicate recruited vulnerable young people from India by promising money, power and opportunities to migrate to countries including the United States and Canada, while allegedly paying some recruits as little as Rs 20,000 (approximately \$200) to commit murders, according to a sweeping US federal indictment.

The 44-page indictment, provides a rare look into what US prosecutors describe as the recruitment

Contd. on P10

Past Differences Aside, Musk Pours Millions Into Ramaswamy Campaign



CINCINNATI, OH – In the wake of their brief and tumultuous partnership, Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy appear to have put their public disagreements behind them,

signaling a new chapter of cooperation. Despite a frosty start in late 2024 when President Trump first appointed the pair to lead the highly publicized, and later

highly controversial, Department of Government Efficiency, their relationship is seemingly mended.

The friction peaked just as Trump took office in January 2025, when Ramaswamy abruptly exited the initiative before it could formally launch, leaving Musk in sole control. While speculative media reports at the time suggested Ramaswamy may have been pushed out of the project, the transition marked a clean break that left the effort entirely in Musk's hands.

Now, however, the world's wealthiest person has thrown major financial weight behind his former colleague's political ambitions. According to a campaign finance filing made public on July

Contd. on P14

Usha And JD Vance Welcome Baby Boy, Alec Neel Vance



WASHINGTON, DC-US Vice-President JD Vance and Second Lady Usha Vance announced the birth of their fourth child, making him the first sitting US vice-president in more than 150 years to welcome a baby while in office.

The couple named

Contd. on P15

Shah Rukh Khan's LA Knight Riders Win MLC Championship In Thriller



India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA -Los Angeles Knight Riders (LAKR) scripted history by winning their maiden Major League Cricket (MLC) title, edging Washington Freedom by a dramatic one-run margin in a thrilling final at the Oakland Coliseum, with franchise co-owner Shah Rukh Khan leading the celebrations.

Contd. on P22

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

BAPS Marks America250 With Nationwide Celebrations

India-West News Desk

CHINO HILLS, CA – BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha marked the 250th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Declaration of Independence with nationwide celebrations focused on community service, civic engagement and interfaith dialogue as part of the America250 commemorations.

The events also highlighted the contributions of Indian Americans and other South Asian communities, recognizing the opportunities that have enabled generations of immigrants to preserve their heritage while contributing to healthcare, education, business, public service, technology and the arts in the United States.

BAPS partnered with America250, the national nonpartisan initiative leading the country's Semi quincennial celebrations, and organized mandir events, open houses, volunteer activities and interfaith gatherings across the country.

Mandirs were illuminated in red, white and blue as families and community members took part in patriotic programs reflecting on shared American values.

At the BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham



in Robbinsville, New Jersey, veterans and local residents joined devotees for a flag-hoisting ceremony. In Los Angeles, the BAPS mandir held a flag-raising ceremony with veterans and hosted an open house for the wider community.

In Houston, the mayors of Sugar Land, Missouri City, Pearland and Stafford attended celebrations where the mandir was lit in the national colors and the U.S. national anthem was played.

Many events also featured interfaith discussions, volunteer initiatives and family activities centered on religious freedom, plural-



ism and community service.

BAPS also highlighted a letter written by its spiritual leader, His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, to mark America's 250th anniversary. In the letter, he said the freedoms and opportunities available in the United States had enabled the community to become part of the American story while carrying "a shared responsibility to serve, strengthen, and uplift our country."

The celebrations brought together elected representatives, veterans, faith leaders, non-profit organizations and residents.

Speaking at the Los Angeles event, California State Representative Brian Lorenz said,

"This celebration provides a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the founding ideals and lasting values which shaped the United States of America."

BAPS Charities also incorporated America250 themes into its annual Walk-Run events across North America, supporting local charitable causes through volunteer participation.

The organization said its volunteers, guided by the teachings of His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, remain committed to strengthening communities through service, civic engagement and partnerships that promote harmony and mutual understanding.

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India’s Next Knowledge Bridge

By AMBASSADOR
VINAY KWATRA

For decades, the Indian diaspora has been one of our country’s greatest strengths, serving as a living bridge between India and the world, contributing to innovation ecosystems, shaping global discourse, and strengthening economic and cultural ties.

Today, as India positions itself at the forefront of frontier technologies, knowledge production, and is on an upward ambitious path, a new opportunity presents itself to deepen this partnership: the Prime Minister’s Research Chair Scheme.

This initiative seeks to attract eminent scholars, scientists and innovators of Indian origin who have established distinguished careers in leading universities, research institutions, and industry across the world to India. The scheme provides a structured mechanism for these experts to contribute their knowledge and experience to India’s development by creating prestigious research chairs in India’s premier institutions.

Prime Minister’s Research Chair Scheme is an important pillar in

the larger national vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*. Achieving this vision demands breakthroughs in science and technology, frontier research, innovation-led industries, and the ability to create intellectual property that powers economic prosperity.

The Government of India has consistently emphasized that a developed India must also be a knowledge leader, capable of generating solutions not only for its own citizens but for the world. The Prime Minister’s Research Chair Scheme directly contributes to this ambition. By encouraging interdisciplinary research and close collaboration between academia, government, and industry, it seeks to ensure that scientific discovery translates into innovation, commercialization, and public policy.

From artificial intelligence, quantum technologies and semiconductors to biotechnology, cli-



mate resilience, advanced manufacturing and healthcare, the research undertaken through these Chairs has the potential to accelerate technological self-reliance, foster innovation, strengthen industrial competitiveness, and create high-quality employment in India. The scheme is therefore an investment in India’s future economic and strategic capabilities.

For our Indian diaspora, participation in this unique initiative offers a never seen before opportunity to contribute to one of the most consequential nation-building projects of our time. Indian-origin scholars have helped shape some of the

defining innovations of the modern age across laboratories, universities, research institutes, and technology companies around the world. The Prime Minister’s Research Chair Scheme creates an institutional bridge to connect this global expertise with India’s rapidly expanding research ecosystem.

It enables the diaspora to become active partners in building the scientific, technological, and intellectual foundations of a developed India. A distinguishing feature of the initiative is also its flexibility. It enables internationally accomplished researchers to engage with Indian institutions through sustained collaborations, mentoring programs, joint research projects, faculty exchanges, doctoral supervision, and the establishment of long-term international research partnerships.

For the Indian diaspora, these features make the scheme uniquely attractive. Researchers can main-

tain their global academic engagements while helping build India’s capacity for the next generation.

There is also a deeper enduring dimension to this effort to capitalize on our shared dreams. The relationship between India and its diaspora has evolved to a consequential partnership being defined by shared ambition. The Prime Minister’s Research Chair Scheme builds on this evolution, offering a platform where intellectual capital becomes the new currency of engagement between India and the world.

The diaspora has always been an integral part of India’s economic progress. This is a moment to step forward once again as co-authors of India’s intellectual future.

Through this medium, I would like to invite all our diaspora members to utilize this opportunity to co-create knowledge ecosystems that connect the best of Indian and global talent. The diaspora’s role in this effort is indispensable, and we look forward to embarking on this journey together as we realize the vision of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to chart the path of *Viksit Bharat 2047*.



JERUSALEM-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s recent remarks about developing alliances with India amid strained relations with the US reveal a structural shift and potential opportunities for deeper defense cooperation between the two countries, according to various media reports. The Jerusalem Post, Israel Hayom and the Times of Israel have all

remarked on it.

Recently, Netanyahu said, “You have to build new alliances and develop new relationships. That’s what I’m doing right now with India,” during an interview on Fox News. The remarks came amid strains in relations between Israel and the US.

According to reporting on the exchange, the American President (Donald Trump) told

As US Ties Strain, Netanyahu Looks To India For New Strategic Alliance

Netanyahu bluntly that patience had run out, that everyone was tired of him, and that Israel owed its very existence to American backing. (US Vice-President) JD Vance had gone further still, publicly casting the United States as Israel’s only real ally, media has said. Netanyahu responded on Fox, by saying Israel has “other friends, like India.”

Netanyahu’s remarks about India went beyond diplomatic niceties and reflected Israel’s efforts to build strategic partnerships beyond its traditional reliance on the US.

“A Prime Minister does not reach for an empty gesture when his strategic legitimacy is being questioned by his own patron. He reaches for the thing he can actually point to.

That is the fuller dimension of the statement: it is less about India as sentiment and more about India as evidence, proof that Israel has begun building an alternative that does not require American permission to exist,” one report said.

Ongoing defense discussions between India and Israel give Netanyahu’s remarks greater significance, particularly as Israel seeks to expand its weapons production capacity.

“Multiple reports over recent weeks describe Rafael Advanced Defense Systems negotiating with Indian private-sector manufacturers to establish a production line for Iron Dome’s Tamir interceptors on Indian soil... it is a proposal to manufacture the actual missile Israel depends on to survive daily

rocket, drone, and cruise-missile fire,” another report said.

It said India’s manufacturing capacity and workforce could help Israel expand defense production at scale.

“It (India) has no interest in dictating Israel’s regional posture in exchange for cooperation, unlike a patron relationship. And it has demonstrated, through decades of maintaining relations simultaneously with Washington, Moscow, the Gulf states, and Tehran, that it can absorb a defence partnership with Israel without being pulled into anyone’s bloc, which means Israel gains a partner without inheriting a new set of political conditions. That combination is genuinely rare,” the report said. (IANS)

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

Freemont Group Wins Best Float Award At July 4 Parade



India-West News Desk

FREMONT, CA – The Festival of Globe, the Federation of Indo-Americans, and the Fremont Hindu Temple & Cultural Center won the Best Float Award at the City of Fremont’s Fourth of July Parade, held as part of celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of American independence.

The award recognized the float for its creativity, presentation and community participation during the annual Independence Day parade, which drew

thousands of residents. Americans4Hindus said the float highlighted themes of liberty, democracy, opportunity, unity, and the American Dream while recognizing the contributions of Indian Americans and Hindu Americans to the country.

The press statement credited hundreds of volunteers for designing, decorating and presenting the float and the leadership of parade chairman K. P. Maheshwari, Ritu Maheshwari and the volunteer team for coordinating the award-winning entry.

Modi Extends Independence Day Wishes To Trump, Americans



NEW DELHI- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 4 congratulated US President Donald Trump and the people of the United States on the 250th anniversary of US Independence, describing the India-US partnership as a force for global good.

“On behalf of 1.4 billion Indians, I extend my warmest congratulations to President Trump and the people of the United States on the historic 250th anniversary of your Independence,” Modi wrote on X.

Emphasizing the strategic and people-to-people ties between the two nations, he added, “India and the United States share more than a strategic partnership. Our shared belief in democracy, rule of law and the limitless potential of our people make our friendship a force for global good. May the next 250 years bring even greater prosperity, peace and progress for America and take the India-US partnership to new heights.” (IANS)

INS Sudarshini Joins New York Parade



NEW YORK, NY-Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sudarshini sailed into New York Harbour during the Parade of Sail to participate in Sail 250, commemorating the United States’ 250th anniversary, and the US International Naval Review.

The Indian Navy said the arrival of its sail training ship marked India’s participation in the celebrations and reflected the growing maritime partnership between India and the United States.

“Having successfully completed engagements at Norfolk and Baltimore, the presence of India’s iconic three-masted barque in the USA on the Fourth of July showcases the growing India-US naval partnership, maritime goodwill and friendship,” an Indian Navy spokesperson posted on X.

The ship is participating in the SAIL4th 250 New York and SAIL Boston events, reflecting India’s maritime heritage and commitment to strengthening maritime cooperation with the United States.

According to the Ministry of Defense, INS Sudarshini earlier visited the Port of Baltimore as part of its transoceanic expedition, Lokayan 26, underscoring the enduring friendship and cooperation between the Indian and US navies.

Before arriving in New York, INS Sudarshini participated in the Sail250 Virginia celebrations in Norfolk from June 19 to 23.

(IANS)

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CRIME

Murder Charges Against Pasadena Doc Dharmesh Patel, Accused In Tesla Cliff Crash, Dismissed

India-West News Desk

BELMONT, CA – In the case that drew national headlines, attempted murder charges against Pasadena radiologist Dharmesh Patel have been dismissed after he completed a court-approved mental health diversion program, ending the criminal case over a 2023 crash in which prosecutors alleged he deliberately drove his family’s Tesla off a Northern California cliff. Dharmesh Patel Tesla cliff crash case.

Patel, 45, had faced three counts of attempted murder after the January 2023 incident at Devil’s Slide along Pacific Coast Highway. His wife, Neha Patel, and the couple’s two young children were inside the vehicle when it plunged about 250 feet. All four survived.

A San Mateo County judge approved Patel’s entry into California’s mental health diversion program in August 2024, allow-

ing him to undergo treatment instead of continuing through criminal prosecution. As part of the program, Patel received psychiatric care, participated in family therapy and provided the court with regular updates while living with his parents in Belmont.

Following his successful completion of the two-year program, the San Mateo County Superior Court dismissed the charges this week, according to the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office.

District Attorney Stephen Wagstaffe said prosecutors had opposed diversion because they believed the allegations were too serious, arguing Patel had acted with premeditation in attempting to kill his wife, two children and himself.

But once Patel fulfilled all of the court’s requirements, dismissal followed under the terms of the diversion program, leaving prosecutors with no legal basis to object.

Patel remained in custody from the time



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of the crash until he entered the diversion program. During court proceedings, multiple psychologists testified that he was experiencing a psychotic episode caused by major depressive disorder when the crash occurred. The court had previously heard that Patel feared for the future and believed his children could become victims of sex trafficking.

Investigators said Patel’s wife told first responders after the crash that he had intentionally driven the vehicle off the roadway.

Before the incident, Patel worked as a radiologist at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center in Mission Hills.

While the criminal charges were pending, the Medical Board of California obtained a court order preventing him from practicing medicine. He later surrendered his medical license. The board has not indicated whether the dismissal of the criminal charges affects his ability to seek reinstatement.

California created its mental health diversion program in 2018 to allow eligible defendants whose mental illness contributed to an alleged offense to receive treatment rather than prosecution.

The law has faced growing scrutiny in recent years. Last week, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation giving judges broader authority to deny diversion when they determine a defendant poses a risk to public safety.

Had the crash resulted in a death, Patel could have faced a potential sentence of 25 years to life for first-degree murder. Instead, Patel leaves the case without a criminal conviction after completing court-ordered treatment.

CRIME

Motel Manager Arrested In Federal Sex Trafficking Sweep In Los Angeles

India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – A motel manager has been arrested as part of a federal crackdown on an alleged sex trafficking network operating along Los Angeles' Figueroa Corridor, where authorities say members of the Hoover Criminal Gang exploited dozens of women and minors over several years.

Mukeshkumar Rambhai Ahir, 45, manager of the Stadium Inn &

Spa motel in South Los Angeles, is among 10 defendants taken into custody in the case. Federal prosecutors have charged him with financially benefiting from the gang's alleged sex trafficking operation and structuring cash deposits to hide the source of the funds.

According to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California, Ahir deposited \$64,581 between September 2024 and January 2026 that he allegedly knew

came from the gang's trafficking of children and adults. Prosecutors also accuse him of breaking the cash into smaller deposits to avoid federal reporting requirements.

Ahir was arrested during coordinated raids on July 1 targeting alleged traffickers operating along the Figueroa Corridor, a South Los Angeles stretch long associated with prostitution and human trafficking. Authorities described it as the second major joint operation

by federal and local law enforcement in the area since last year.

The arrests are linked to a 65-count superseding indictment unsealed on July 1, which alleges that members and associates of the Hoover Criminal Gang controlled a prostitution and sex trafficking operation in the corridor between February 2021 and June 2026. The indictment identifies 51 alleged victims and adds seven new defendants, including six alleged gang members facing charges that include racketeering conspiracy, child sex trafficking, drug trafficking conspiracy and money laundering.

Investigators allege the group targeted vulnerable girls and young women, including minors, runaways and children in foster care, recruiting them through social media and direct contact. Victims were allegedly lured with promises of a luxurious lifestyle before being subjected to intimidation, violence and coercion. According to prosecutors, victims were forced to turn over all money earned through commercial sex work to their pimps. Those who

resisted allegedly faced beatings, branding, public humiliation and the withholding of food, drugs or affection. The indictment also alleges that traffickers supplied victims with drugs such as oxycodone and amphetamines to create addictions they could later exploit.

The charging document outlines several specific allegations against individual defendants. "Sex trafficking of young women and children ranks among the worst criminal offenses our office prosecutes," First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Essayli said. "We hope today's arrests break the cycle of crime and abuse in one of L.A.'s most notorious human trafficking corridors."

Federal prosecutors emphasized that the indictment contains allegations only. All defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in court. Those convicted of the most serious charges face a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in federal prison and could receive life sentences.



Newborn Death Case Concludes With Sentencing

India-West News Desk

BAKERSFIELD, CA – A Kern County court has sentenced the last defendant in the 2018 killing of a newborn whose body was later found buried in the backyard of a southwest Bakersfield home.

Bakhshinderpal Singh Mann was sentenced to six years in prison after pleading no contest last year for his role in the case. He received credit for time already served. Canadian authorities captured Mann in 2021.

Prosecutors said the baby's grandmother, Beant Kaur Dhillon, drowned the infant in November 2018. Investigators said Dhillon told

them she acted because she believed her unmarried teenage daughter's pregnancy would bring shame to the family. She was sentenced in 2021 to 25 years to life in prison.

The baby's grandfather, Jagsir Singh, was also charged in the case. According to police, Singh said he was not home when the baby was born or killed but learned what had happened afterward. He told investigators he allowed the baby to be buried in the backyard and did not seek medical care for his daughter because he feared his wife would throw him out of the house and that he could be deported.

Singh was charged with aid-



ing a felon, felony child abuse, and conspiracy. He died by suicide in March 2019 before the case was concluded.

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US Accuses Lawrence Bishnoi Of Targeting Indian Americans And Canadians

LOS ANGELES, CA – U.S. prosecutors have accused jailed Indian gangster Lawrence Bishnoi of orchestrating a campaign of violence, intimidation and extortion targeting Indian American and Indian Canadian communities while directing a global criminal enterprise from prison in India.

The allegations are contained in a federal racketeering indictment unsealed July 7 as part of 'Operation Hard Ball,' a multinational crackdown targeting three transnational organized crime groups operating across North America, Europe and elsewhere. The U.S. Justice Department said the coordinated investigation resulted in charges against 37 defendants and the arrest of 24 suspects, with assistance from law enforcement agencies in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia.

A central focus of the U.S. case is the Bishnoi organization's alleged campaign against members of the Indian diaspora.

Announcing the charges in Los Angeles, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bilal A. Essayli said the criminal organizations "engaged in widespread violence, including targeted killings, extortions, and kidnappings," and "preyed in particular on communities in the United States and Canada with ties to India," threatening victims and their family members in India with physical harm and death.

According to prosecutors, the gang used high profile acts of violence to create fear before exploiting that reputation to extort victims. Members allegedly publicized attacks through online videos, social media posts and media interviews while targeting prominent cultural, political and business



figures in India and among the Indian diaspora to maximize publicity and strengthen future extortion efforts.

The indictment cites the June 18, 2023, killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, identified in court documents only as "H.S.N.," in Surrey, British Columbia. Prosecutors allege Bishnoi and alleged North American leader Satinderjeet Singh, also known as Goldy Brar, ordered the assassination.

Court documents also allege the organization claimed responsibility for the shooting outside the Vancouver residence of a prominent Indian actor and singer identified only as "R.G." before later attempting to extort him. Prosecutors further allege the gang claimed responsibility for the 2022 killing of a prominent Indian singer and rapper identified only as "S.S.S."

The indictment also alleges Bishnoi

publicly declared on multiple occasions between 2022 and 2026 his intention to kill a well known Indian actor and television personality identified only as "S.K.," using those threats to promote the criminal enterprise and instill fear. Investigators say gang members identified potential extortion targets through government databases, surveillance and social media before contacting victims through encrypted messaging platforms, including WhatsApp, and invoking previous attacks to pressure them into making payments.

Prosecutors allege Bishnoi directed the criminal network from an Indian prison using contraband mobile phones and internet based communications. Despite being arrested by Indian authorities in 2015, he allegedly continued to oversee murders, extortion, kidnappings, narcotics trafficking, human smuggling and other crimes across

several countries. South Asians & Diaspora

According to the indictment, Bishnoi transformed what began as a student network in Punjab into a transnational organized crime syndicate after leaving campus politics in the early 2010s. Prosecutors allege the organization established networks in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia, with thousands of members and associates worldwide, including hundreds in the United States and Canada.

Investigators allege Bishnoi cultivated the public image of a patriot, nationalist and religious figure while using social media and media interviews to recruit followers in India and abroad. Prosecutors say the organization primarily recruited vulnerable young people in Punjab, promising money, notoriety and protection before sending loyal members to countries including the United States and Canada on student and foreign worker visas, sometimes using fraudulent information.

Authorities also allege the organization maintained a decentralized structure that insulated senior leaders from lower ranking members and threatened violence against members or their relatives in India if they cooperated with law enforcement or attempted to leave the group.

The Justice Department said Operation Hard Ball targeted three transnational organized crime groups accused of racketeering, murder, extortion, kidnapping, firearms trafficking, drug trafficking and other offenses as part of a coordinated international effort to dismantle criminal networks operating across multiple countries. (IANS)

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No Death Penalty For Beheading Suspect

India-West News Desk

DALLAS, TX – Prosecutors in Texas will not seek the death penalty against the man accused of beheading a motel manager in a gruesome killing last year.

Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot has filed a notice stating that the state will not pursue capital punishment against Yordanis Cobos-Martinez, 37, who is charged with the murder of Chandra Nagamallaiah. The filing does not explain the decision. If convicted, Cobos-Martinez would face life imprisonment without the possibility of parole under Texas law.

The indictment accuses him of causing the victim's death by stabbing, cutting, and chopping him. It further alleges that he used multiple weapons, including a machete, knife, axe, and another sharp object, while attempting to rob the motel manager.

The brutality of the killing drew widespread attention after investigators said surveillance footage showed Cobos-Martinez kicking

Nagamallaiah's severed head across the motel parking lot before placing it in a trash can. Nagamallaiah's wife and 18-year-old son reportedly witnessed the attack. Police also said Cobos-Martinez later admitted to killing the motel manager.

Court records show Cobos-Martinez has previously faced criminal charges in Florida, California, and Texas, including vehicle theft, attempted carjacking, and assault-related offenses. In 2018, he was arrested in Harris County on an indecency with a child charge, but the case was later dismissed because of insufficient evidence. He also served a one-year jail sentence on an assault charge related to that case.

Originally from Bengaluru, Nagamallaiah moved to the United States with his family in 2020 and managed the motel where he was killed. Known as "Bob" to friends and family, he was remembered in a GoFundMe campaign as "a loving husband, devoted father, and kind soul who touched the lives of everyone who knew him."

He is survived by his wife, Nisha, and their 18-year-old son, Gaurav.

Jayapal Shares Personal, Difficult Citizenship Journey

WASHINGTON, DC—The Trump administration has announced a final rule ending the long-standing “duration of status” policy for foreign students, exchange visitors, and foreign media representatives, replacing it with fixed periods of admission and requiring federal approval for visa extensions.

The rule is expected to have significant implications for Indian students, who make up the largest international student population in the United States. According to the latest Open Doors Report, there were about 360,000 Indian students enrolled in U.S. institutions during the 2024–25 academic year, accounting for nearly 31 percent of the approximately 1.1 million international students in the country.

Under the new regulation, students seeking additional time to complete their academic programs must obtain approval from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), submitting formal documentation, biometric data, and undergoing background and fraud checks as part of the extension process.

The final rule applies to nonimmigrant visa holders in the F, J, and I classifications and is intended to strengthen immigration oversight,



fers authority over student visa extensions from designated school officials to the federal government. Students requiring additional time to complete their studies must file an Extension of Stay

reduce visa fraud, and enhance national security through regular government vetting, the Department of Homeland Security said.

Under the new regulation, students on F visas and exchange visitors on J visas will be admitted for the length of their specific academic or exchange program, with a maximum stay of four years. DHS said the move replaces a system that has allowed many students to remain in the United States indefinitely by maintaining student status.

DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin said the previous system, in place since 1978, had weakened immigration oversight. He said foreign students had been admitted indefinitely for decades, allowing some to become “forever students” by repeatedly enrolling in courses to avoid leaving the country.

Besides introducing fixed admission periods, the rule trans-

application with USCIS, where they will be subject to biometric screening, background checks, and fraud reviews.

The regulation also reduces the grace period for F-1 students after completing their studies from 60 days to 30 days. During this period, students may prepare to depart the United States, transfer to another educational institution, or apply to change their immigration status.

In addition, the rule places new restrictions on changes to academic programs, although DHS did not provide further details in its announcement. According to DHS, current F, J, and I visa holders already in the United States under the existing duration of status framework will automatically transition to the new system. Their authorized stay will be capped at a maximum of four years from the rule's effective date.



SEATTLE, WA – Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) has shared the deeply personal story behind her path to becoming an American citizen, describing a 17-year immigration journey that shaped her life, her family, and ultimately her political career.

In an essay published by 'The Nation' titled 'How I Became an American,' she recounts immigrating from India as a teenager, navigating multiple visa categories, nearly losing her permanent resident status after the premature birth of her daughter,

and eventually taking the oath of U.S. citizenship after years of uncertainty.

“As with many other immigrants who choose to become Americans, my path to US citizenship was a long and difficult one,” Jayapal wrote.

Born in Chennai, Jayapal said she was raised in India, Indonesia, and Singapore before her parents used their limited savings to send her alone to the United States for college at age 16, believing an American education would provide greater opportunities.

Her journey to citizenship, she
Contd. on P10

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IMMIGRATION

Jayapal Shares Citizenship Journey

Contd. from P9

wrote in 'The Nation', took 17 years and required "several degrees, and an alphabet soup of visas." Marriage to a U.S. citizen eventually led to permanent residency, but an unexpected medical emergency nearly derailed that process.

Jayapal recalled that she and her husband had carefully planned a temporary stay in India while she completed a prestigious fellowship. Those plans changed dramatically when their daughter was born prematurely at just 26½ weeks, weighing only 1 pound, 14 ounces.

"The doctors gave her a 40 percent chance of survival, and I refused to leave her side," she wrote.

Remaining in India to care for her daughter placed her green card status at risk because of the extended absence from the United States. Jayapal said advocacy by the institute sponsoring her fellowship led to an agreement with the U.S. Embassy allowing her to retain permanent residency. The arrangement, however, came at a cost.

"The years I had spent qualifying for citizenship would be erased from the record. I would have to start from scratch," she wrote in 'The Nation.'

Jayapal said she accepted the setback without hesitation because

it allowed her family to remain together until her daughter was healthy enough to travel.

The experience, she wrote, only strengthened her determination to become an American citizen.

"I waited the requisite three years, passed my citizenship tests, and finally received my approval," she wrote.

Jayapal described her naturalization ceremony in Seattle as one of the defining moments of her life. Standing alongside hundreds of immigrants from around the world, she said she experienced both joy and heartbreak as she became an American while formally giving up her Indian citizenship.

"Tears rolled down my cheeks as I felt the mixed emotions of pride in my new American citizenship and sorrow at the renouncing of my Indian citizenship," she wrote.

She said becoming a citizen instilled in her a sense of civic responsibility that eventually led her into public service. Jayapal first became an immigration activist and organizer before serving in the Washington State Senate. She later became the first South Asian American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and now serves as the first naturalized citizen to lead Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee's Immigra-

tion Subcommittee.

The essay also serves as a forceful critique of the Trump administration's immigration policies. Jayapal argues that opportunities similar to those she experienced are now far less accessible for immigrants seeking legal status in the United States.

"The American dream I experienced is out of reach for most people," she wrote, accusing the administration of using government power "to terrorize immigrants and citizens alike."

Jayapal contends that Congress has failed to modernize the nation's immigration system for more than three decades, pointing to the Senate's bipartisan immigration reform bill passed in 2013 that was never taken up by the House. She also criticizes efforts to criminalize immigration and calls for legislation creating a pathway to citizenship while ending for-profit immigrant detention.

Reflecting on her own journey, Jayapal said the stories of refugees, undocumented families, and young immigrants continue to motivate her work in Congress.

"Each of them is a powerful reminder of the responsibility I felt, standing at my naturalization ceremony, waving the American flag, to do everything I could to defend that promise," she wrote.

Fake US Visas

Contd. from P1

model of the Jaggu Bhagwanpuria Organized Crime Group, a transnational criminal organization alleged to have expanded from Punjab into North America, Europe and Oceania.

Filed in the US District Court for the Central District of California, the indictment charges 15 defendants, including alleged gang leader Jaggu Bhagwanpuria and Indian national Nitish Kaushal, who was arrested by the FBI in Vermont this week after being placed on its Most Wanted list.

According to the indictment, the Bhagwanpuria Organized Crime Group originated in Punjab under the leadership of Jaggu Bhagwanpuria. Prosecutors allege he later built an international criminal network after breaking away from the Lawrence Bishnoi organized crime group.

According to prosecutors, the group primarily targeted "vulnerable, disadvantaged populations in India" and deliberately recruited minors because they faced lower criminal penalties if caught committing violent crimes.

The indictment alleges that in certain parts of India, the organization paid recruits "as little as 20,000 rupees, or approximately \$200, to commit murder on behalf of the enterprise."

US prosecutors further allege that recruitment coordinators enticed young people by promising "money, notoriety, power, and the ability to escape India."

According to the indictment, recruiters also targeted individuals who could qualify for student or foreign work visas. Prosecutors allege that members who demonstrated loyalty to the organization were rewarded by being sent to operate in countries including the United States and Canada.

Prosecutors allege the organization eventually built a network of more than 1,000 members and associates worldwide, including more than 100 in the United States.

According to prosecutors, members believed it was "difficult, if not impossible," to leave the organization because those considered disloyal risked violence against themselves or their family members, particularly relatives living in India.

Prosecutors also allege the organization gathered information about victims' relatives in India and threatened family members to force payment of extortion demands.

US authorities contend that the recruitment strategy helped transform what began as a regional criminal group into an international organized crime network operating across multiple continents. (IANS)



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I'd Never Be CEO In India: Indra Nooyi On The American Dream

India-West News Desk

PALO ALTO, CA – Former PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi recently sat down with Condoleezza Rice at Stanford University to reflect on her career, and one message stood out: she does not believe she could have risen to the top of a global company like PepsiCo if she had not built her career in the United States.

Nooyi, who led PepsiCo for 12 years, credited the US for making her success possible. She described it as the “greatest country in the world,” largely because of the way it rewards talent. She said she has always told her daughters that in America, success is not determined by who you are or where you come from. Good mentors, she said, are not focused on gender or background. They simply want the smartest people in the room to succeed.

She also argued that while other countries may develop groundbreaking technologies, the US is often where those ideas are commercialized and transformed into products that change people’s



lives. To Nooyi, that is what true meritocracy looks like: a country where an immigrant can arrive with very little and eventually lead a company that is as “red, white, and blue” as PepsiCo.

The conversation also turned to the cultural differences between the US and India. Nooyi said that someone accustomed to the clean, orderly lifestyle of the United States might find India overwhelming at first. Seeing cows wandering along-

side traffic, she noted, is simply an ordinary part of daily life there.

But she was quick to add that she does not see India’s unpredictability as a weakness. Instead, she described it as something almost addictive. Once people experience and embrace the country’s vibrant, chaotic energy, she said, they often find themselves drawn back. She linked this to what she called the “this too shall pass” mindset, a way of life in which people adapt to ev-

eryday challenges until they barely notice them. She contrasted that resilience with what she described as the more “spoilt” comfort of life in the United States.

Her remarks sparked a strong reaction online after clips of the interview, reported by outlets including Livemint and PTI, began circulating. Many Indians objected to her suggestion that a career like hers would not have been possible in India. Others took issue with her comments about chaos, arguing that presenting it as a virtue risks excusing problems such as poor infrastructure and corruption instead of encouraging change.

CG Srinivasa Urges SoCal Executives To See India As A Strategic Partner



India-West News Desk

IRVINE, CA – Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, Consul General of India in Los Angeles, told a gathering of Southern California executives on June 25 that U.S.-India ties are “the most consequential relationship of the 21st century,” urging the region’s businesses to engage with India not as an emerging market but as a strategic partner shaping the global economy.

The invitation-only event, “India Is Not Optional,” was organized by the California India Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by the Port of Long Beach. Attendees included executives from defense, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, logistics, and venture capital, along with Port of Long Beach Harbor Commissioner Bonnie Lowenthal and representatives of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

In a fireside chat moderated by Gunjan Bagla, CEO of Amritt Inc. and a Chamber board member, Srinivasa acknowledged recent hiccups in U.S.-India relations but called them normal disagreements between friends, noting that no planned collaboration in defense or aerospace has missed a date in two years. The Bilateral Trade Agreement, he said, is “still in process”, down to “the commas and full stops”, and the \$500 billion trade goal represents two-way trade across defense, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, and services.

He cited India’s roughly 7 per cent annual growth, a 600 million-strong middle class, and the world’s third-largest startup ecosystem, and outlined a proposed “talent corridor” between India and the U.S., with funded exchange programs and R&D support; the first planning meeting is set for next month. Responding to an audience question, he revealed that after the May 2025 clash with Pakistan, India placed drone orders estimated at \$3-5 billion, calling drones “the future” of defense.

The evening also featured local Southern California executives with deep India experience. Marvin Sepe, Senior Vice President of Irvine-based CTC Global, in conversation with Dr. Nitin Bajaj, described how the transmission-conductor maker took its Pune manufacturing plant from decision to operation in just 14 months, with South Asia now its largest market. His advice for India market entrants: bring a differentiated product and invest in local partnerships, because going it alone is “a tough road.”, pointing to experts such as Amritt and to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Dr. Ravindra Verma, founder of the Mobility Infrastructure Group, in a session moderated by Bagla, traced his journey from managing the first LA Metro line to landmark Indian projects including the Delhi Metro and Kolkata’s privately financed toll bridge over the Hooghly river. His firm is now bringing U.S. investment into multimodal logistics parks under India’s PM “Gati Shakti: program, which has cut factory-to-port transit times from 15 days to three or four.

Srinivasa closed the evening by announcing that India’s Deputy Ambassador will tour the southwestern U.S. in the third week of July, and assured attendees that the Consulate stands ready to assist companies exploring the Indian market.

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PERSONAL PROFILE

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IIT Bombay Expands To US With First American Campus

India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – IIT Bombay will establish the first Indian Institute of Technology sub-campus in the United States through a partnership with the State University of New York (SUNY) at Old Westbury. Academic programs are scheduled to begin in 2027.

The sub-campus will operate from SUNY Old Westbury's Long Island campus, becoming the first IIT to offer its own academic programs in the United States.

The partnership was formalized on June 26 with the signing of a Letter of Intent by IIT Bombay Director Professor Shireesh Kedare and SUNY Old Westbury President Dr. Timothy E. Sams. India's Consul General in New York, Binaya S., was present at the signing ceremony. Sams described IIT Bombay as a world-class institution and said the partnership would strengthen teaching, innovation and academic excellence in engineering and physics.

The campus will initially offer certificate programs in artificial intelligence, sustainability and clean technology. IIT Bombay also plans to establish research laboratories before expanding to undergraduate, postgraduate and research degree programs in later phases.

In addition to academic programs, the partnership will include faculty and researcher exchanges, joint research projects, confer-



ences and multidisciplinary collaboration in emerging areas of science and technology.

Kedare said the partnership would allow IIT Bombay to focus on academics instead of the land acquisition and regulatory approvals needed to establish an independent campus. He also noted that SUNY Old Westbury does not currently have an engineering department, making the collaboration beneficial for both institutions. "IIT Bombay will directly conduct its own courses in the US," Kedare said in a statement.

The US campus follows IIT Madras' campus in Zanzibar and IIT Delhi's campus in Abu Dhabi as IITs continue to expand overseas. Rahul Choudaha, principal at Dr Education Research, said the project represents a different approach to international expansion by an Indian institution.

India has 23 IITs, a network of autonomous engineering, technology and research institutions governed by the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961.

Layoffs Push Techies Back To India And Lower Salaries

India-West News Desk

HYDERABAD-As more Indian technology professionals return from the United States amid visa uncertainty, many in India's tech industry say finding a job has become more difficult, even as multinational companies continue expanding their operations in the country.

A survey by Blind, an anonymous community platform for professionals, found that 53 percent of 1,276 verified respondents have witnessed this reverse migration. More than one in three said colleagues or job candidates have already moved back from the US, while another 17 percent know people preparing to return.

The shift comes at a time when Global Capability Centers are growing across India. But according to the survey, many respondents believe these expanding operations are largely hiring professionals returning from the US, rather than creating more opportunities for candidates already based in India.

That perception is reflected in the survey findings. While 26 percent of respondents said job openings have increased over the past year, 51 percent felt opportunities have actually become fewer.

The pattern is most visible at major technology companies that are rapidly expanding their India operations. Among respondents, 57 percent of Amazon employees, 58 percent of Walmart employees and 55 percent of Uber employees said they had seen colleagues or candidates relocate

to India after working in the US.

For many of those returning, however, the move comes with a significant reduction in pay. One respondent who previously worked at a large technology company said salaries offered in India can be as low as one-fifth of US compensation. Another senior technology professional, who requested anonymity, said many workers are accepting lower salaries and benefits to avoid the uncertainty surrounding US work visas.

The survey found that the impact is not uniform across the industry. Professionals in artificial intelligence and machine learning appear to be in a stronger position, with 42 percent saying job opportunities have declined. The figures were higher for other roles, with 52 percent of software engineering professionals, 54 percent of product professionals and 56 percent of those in data and analytics reporting fewer openings than a year ago.

Respondents also expressed mixed views about the long-term impact of the trend. Negative sentiment stood at 39 percent, compared with 21 percent who viewed it positively. The remaining 40 percent were undecided, reflecting uncertainty over whether the return of experienced professionals from the US will strengthen India's technology sector or simply intensify competition for available jobs.

Blind conducted the survey between June 16 and June 25 among 1,276 India-based verified professionals to understand how reverse migration from the US is affecting India's technology job market.

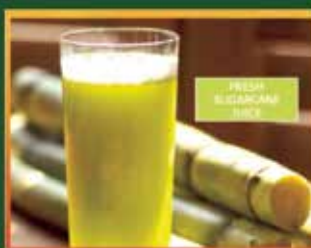
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Raghuram Rajan, Raj Chetty, Asha Sharma Named To US Fed Policy Task Forces



India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – US Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh has appointed former Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan, Harvard economist Raj Chetty and Microsoft Xbox CEO Asha Sharma to lead key task forces that will review the central bank's monetary policy framework and recommend long-term reforms. Finance

Warsh announced the leadership of five task forces on July 10, saying the panels would examine the Federal Reserve's current policy approach and propose transformational changes.

Rajan, who also served as India's chief economic adviser, will co-chair the Balance Sheet Policy task force. The panel has been asked to evaluate the costs, benefits and institutional implications of the Federal Reserve's balance sheet framework.

Currently the Katherine Dusak Miller Distinguished Service Professor of Finance

at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Rajan is widely known for warning global policymakers about risks in the growing subprime mortgage market before the 2008 global financial crisis.

Chetty, the William A. Ackman Professor of Public Economics at Harvard University, will co-lead the Liquidity Dependence task force. The panel will study the Federal Reserve's current balance sheet regime and assess its broader economic implications.

Chetty also serves as director of Harvard's Opportunity Insights, a research center focused on expanding economic opportunity for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Sharma, the chief executive of Microsoft's Xbox division, has been selected to co-chair the Productivity and Employment task force. Her appointment comes shortly after Microsoft announced one of the largest rounds of layoffs in the gaming division in recent years.

Arvind Raman Takes Over At US Standards Agency NIST

India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – Engineer and academic Arvind Raman has been sworn in as the 18th director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, assuming leadership of the federal agency responsible for advancing research and developing standards across a broad range of scientific and technological fields. Raman took the oath of office on June 30 after being confirmed by the US Senate on May 18. He also serves as undersecretary of commerce for standards and technology.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick welcomed Raman to the department, saying his experience conducting and leading innovative research would help strengthen American technology and manufacturing. Raman said he was honored by the appointment and looked forward to expanding NIST's work with industry, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders to accelerate American innovation.

Before joining NIST, Raman was the John A. Edwardson Dean of Engineering at Purdue University, where he was appointed in 2023 after more than two decades on the engineering faculty. He joined the university as an assistant professor in 2000, later became the Robert V. Adams Professor of Engineering, and received several teaching



awards during his academic career.

His research has included atomic force microscopy, human biomechanics, and electronics manufacturing, and he collaborated with NIST researchers on nanotechnology early in his career. As NIST director, Raman will lead the agency's work with industry, academia, and government partners to develop technologies, measurements, and standards that support U.S. innovation. He will also oversee research and development efforts involving artificial intelligence, quantum technology, cybersecurity, semiconductors, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing.

Raman earned a bachelor of technology degree from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Purdue University, and a doctorate in mechanical engineering from University of California, Berkeley.

Dwarkesh Patel And Shama Hyder Named To TIME100 Creators List



India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – AI podcaster Dwarkesh Patel and entrepreneur Shama Hyder have been named to the TIME100 Creators 2026 list, earning recognition for their influence in artificial intelligence and digital marketing.

Patel, 25, was recognized for building one of the most influential platforms for conversations around artificial intelligence through the 'Dwarkesh Podcast.' The San Francisco-based creator is known for his long-form, deeply researched interviews with some of the biggest names in AI, including researcher Andrej Karpathy and Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang. According to TIME, the podcast averages more than 1.8 million listens per episode.

The magazine noted that Patel's views on AI have evolved alongside the rapid advances in the field. While he remains optimistic about the technology's long-term potential, he now describes himself as "moderately bearish in the short term and explosively bullish in the long term," citing AI's current

inability to learn from experience and its reliance on vast amounts of specialized data.

Time also highlighted Patel's ambition to document the defining conversations around AI as the technology continues to reshape industries and society.

Joining him on the list is entrepreneur and digital marketing strategist

Shama Hyder, who has spent more than 15 years helping businesses navigate the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Hyder founded the global B2B marketing and public relations agency Zen Media in 2009 after completing a master's degree focused on social media and emerging platforms. She is also the bestselling author of 'The Zen of Social Media Marketing' and 'Momentum: How to Propel Your Marketing and Transform Your Brand in the Digital Age.'

With more than 673,000 followers on LinkedIn, where she was previously recognized as one of the platform's Top Voices in Marketing & Social Media, Hyder regularly shares insights on branding, marketing and the growing impact of artificial intelligence. She also writes the Substack newsletter 'The Hyder Ground,' which focuses on helping businesses navigate the AI era.

The TIME100 Creators list recognizes digital creators, entrepreneurs and influential voices whose work is shaping conversations, industries and culture around the world.

Five Students Among Finalists In 2026 3M Young Scientist Challenge

India-West News Desk

ST. PAUL, MN – Five Indian American middle school students have been named among the 10 finalists in the 2026 3M Young Scientist Challenge, earning an opportunity to compete for the title of "America's Top Young Scientist" and a \$25,000 grand prize.

The finalists are Aaisha Asif of Sarasota, Florida; Raji Doshi of Farmington, Connecticut; Arika Kundu of Shorewood, Minnesota; Sharvi Mahajan of San Diego, California; and Naboshree Santra of Oviedo, Florida.

Each of the five young innovators was selected for developing a solution to a pressing environmental or safety challenge:

Asif, a sixth grader, developed a mussel-inspired, eco-friendly adhesive made from natural proteins and iron-based crosslinkers as an alternative to conventional adhesives that can contribute to pollution.

Doshi, a seventh grader, created a durable algae-aragonite alkalinity system designed to reduce ocean acidification and improve

marine health.

Kundu, a seventh grader, developed LIGNEX, a biosorption-based method that uses agricultural waste, including peanut shells, to remove pesticides from fresh produce.

Mahajan, an eighth grader, created NeuroDrive Alert, an EEG-based machine

learning system designed to predict fatigue and microsleep in real time and improve safety in driving and other high-risk activities.

Santra, a sixth grader, developed biodegradable soil-shade balls that reduce evaporation and help soil retain moisture, offering a potential solution for agriculture in drought-affected regions.

Over the summer, the finalists will work individually with 3M scientist mentors to further develop their projects before gathering at the 3M Innovation Center in St. Paul, Minnesota, for the national finals on Oct. 12-13.

The two-day competition will feature live STEM challenges as well as project presentations before a panel of judges. At its conclusion, one student will be awarded the \$25,000 grand prize and the title of "America's Top Young Scientist."



ELECTIONS

LA City Controller Mejia Endorses Nithya Raman



India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Los Angeles City Controller Kenneth Mejia has endorsed City Councilmember Nithya Raman in the city's mayoral race, describing her as an independent leader committed to transparency, fiscal accountability and government accountability.

Mejia said he had warned in 2023 that the Los Angeles Police Department's \$1 billion labor contract would strain the city's finances and contribute to a fiscal crisis. He argued that the city

is now experiencing the consequences through reduced municipal services and said Raman was among the few elected officials who publicly opposed the agreement.

He said Raman has consistently supported greater oversight of public spending and would welcome independent scrutiny of city programs rather than resist it. Mejia also highlighted her refusal to accept corporate political action committee (PAC) contributions, saying it reflects her commitment to remaining independent of special interests.

Mejia noted that both he and Raman entered public office outside the traditional political establishment. He recalled Raman's 2020 victory over an incumbent City Council member, calling it a sign that voters were willing to challenge the city's political status quo.

The endorsement comes as Raman seeks to unseat incumbent Mayor Karen Bass, with both candidates heading into the final months of a closely contested run-off ahead of the November 3, 2026, general election.

Musk Pours Millions In Ramaswamy Campaign

Contd. from P1

15, Musk donated \$5 million in May to support Ramaswamy's current bid to become the governor of Ohio. This multi-million-dollar contribution is the latest proof of Musk's intense, albeit complicated, engagement in the upcoming mid-term elections, running counter to what some observers, in reports published by The New York Times, describe as his growing disillusionment with mainstream Republican politics over the last two years.

Musk has poured at least \$90 million into this election cycle, securing his spot as one of the country's most dominant political donors. Not all of his high-stakes bets have paid off, however. His most expensive individual gamble of the year was backed by a \$10 million super PAC effort supporting Kentucky Senate candidate Nate Morris, who ultimately withdrew during the primary race. Additionally, America PAC, the political action committee Musk founded, has adopted a quieter strategy since pouring millions into a failed, highly public effort to seat a conservative judge on Wisconsin's Supreme Court last year. Even

with a lower-profile PAC, Musk continues to funnel millions of dollars into various political action committees backing congressional Republicans and Donald Trump's primary super PAC, MAGA Inc.

The \$5 million boost to Ramaswamy's campaign was directed to V-PAC, a pro-Ramaswamy super PAC that has successfully courted some of the nation's most prominent conservative megadonors. Financial disclosures show that the group has drawn \$20 million from Wall Street billionaire Jeff Yass, alongside another \$1 million from activist investor Bill Ackman in June.

These massive war chests will be heavily utilized as Ramaswamy enters a highly competitive November matchup against Democrat Amy Acton, the state's former health director.

Political analysts, as noted in reports by The New York Times, predict this matchup will be one of the most closely watched and hard-fought gubernatorial races in the country. To bolster his chances in a state that has trended solidly red in recent years, Ramaswamy has already injected \$25 million of his own personal fortune into the run.

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Ro Khanna Calls For Probe After Confrontation By Israeli Settlers, Soldiers

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Ro Khanna has accused armed Israeli settlers and Israeli soldiers of detaining him and other American citizens in the West Bank and called for an investigation into the episode.

Khanna (D-CA), told NBC News that settlers carrying M4 rifles stopped his delegation during a three-day visit to the occupied territory.

“They had violent settlers detain American citizens, including an American government official,” Khanna said.

“You had these settlers brandishing M4s, kicking the tires of our van, laughing at us, mocking us, videotaping us.”

Khanna said the settlers held the delegation for about 20 minutes before four Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers arrived. Instead of immediately clearing the road, he alleged, the soldiers continued to block the group.

“We were detained for about 20 minutes, fearful of our lives,” Khanna added.

“Then the IDF comes — four soldiers — they tell our transla-



tor that they’re on the side of the settlers. They further detain us and block us in.”

The delegation then contacted the US Embassy.

Khanna said a US Embassy official identified as David Brownstein intervened and contacted Israeli authorities. The group was allowed to proceed about 75 minutes after the episode began.

The IDF disputed Khanna’s account of its role. In a statement quoted during the NBC News interview, the Israeli military said troops were sent to the spot and cleared

the obstruction.

“IDF troops were dispatched to the scene quickly, dispersed the Israeli civilians, and reopened the blocked road. The IDF soldiers operating in the area did not take part in blocking the road,” the statement said.

Khanna rejected the IDF’s account.

“The IDF is lying,” he said. “What happened was un-

precedented.” The Congressman called on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to order an investigation into the settlers and the four IDF soldiers.

“The Prime Minister needs to open an investigation on these violent settlers,” Khanna said. “They need to be prosecuted.” “Security cameras can see that they were involved in the detention of American citizens. How dare they mistreat people with an American passport that way?” Khanna is now being attacked by pro-Israel politicians and groups. (IANS)

Tom Suozzi Named Vice-Chair Of India Caucus



India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC—Congressman Tom Suozzi has been appointed Democratic Vice-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, a leadership role that reflects his longstanding efforts to strengthen U.S.-India relations, a media statement said.

Suozzi has served on the caucus for years and has worked to deepen ties between Washington and New Delhi through congressional engagement and visits to India. Last year, he became the first sitting member of the U.S. Congress to visit the Kartarpur Corridor. He also

represents a district spanning Long Island and Queens that is home to a large Indian American community, according to a media release.

The appointment was announced by Caucus Chairman Ro Khanna, who cited Suozzi’s longstanding engagement with the Indian American community and his work to strengthen ties between the United States and India.

“I am honored to be named Vice-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans,” Suozzi said. “My district is home to a large and vibrant Indian American community, and I am proud of the longstanding relationships and friendships I have built over many years.”

Usha And JD Vance Welcome Baby Boy

Contd. from P1

their son Alec Neel Vance. He was born on the morning of July 19 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

“We are excited to announce that our baby boy, Alec Neel Vance, was born this morning. Usha and the baby



are happy and healthy, and our kids are overjoyed to meet their little brother,” the couple said in a joint statement.

“The incredible military doctors and staff members of Walter Reed Medical Center and the White House Medical Unit have been a blessing. We are deeply thankful for all they have done for our family,” they said.

Alec is the couple’s fourth child and their third son. The Vances also have two sons, Ewan, 9, and Vivek, 6, and a daughter, Mirabel, 4. They have largely kept their children out of the public eye.

Their previous child was born in December 2021, when JD Vance was campaigning for a US Senate seat from Ohio. The couple announced in January that they were expecting another son.

The birth also marked a rare event in American political history. The last US vice-president known to have had a child while serving in office was Schuyler Colfax, whose son, Schuyler Colfax III, was born in 1870.

Born Usha Bala Chilukuri, the Second Lady is the daughter of Indian immigrants and was raised in California. Her family traces its roots to South India. (IANS)

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US-India Trade Gap Stands At \$4.1 Billion

WASHINGTON, DC – The United States recorded a \$4.1 billion goods trade deficit with India in May, according to official data released on July 7, as America's overall trade deficit widened sharply amid falling exports and rising imports.

The latest data from the US Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis showed the overall US goods and services trade deficit rose by \$23 billion, or 42.2 per cent, to \$77.6 billion in May from a revised \$54.6 billion in April. Exports fell by \$10.5 billion to \$317.7 billion, while imports increased by \$12.5 billion to \$395.3 billion.

Among major trading partners, India was one of the countries with which the United States recorded a goods trade deficit. The largest deficits were with Vietnam (\$20.6 billion), Mexico (\$20.1 billion), Taiwan (\$19.4 billion), China (\$14.5 billion), the European Union (\$9.3 billion), Canada (\$7 billion), Germany (\$5.7 billion), Malaysia (\$4.7 billion), South Korea (\$4.4 billion) and India (\$4.1 billion).

The report said the increase in the overall US trade gap reflected a \$23.6 billion rise in the goods deficit to \$106.5 billion, partly offset by a \$0.6 billion increase in the services surplus to \$28.9 billion.

The US goods and services deficit declined by \$203.9 billion, or 40.6 per cent, from the same period in 2025. Exports increased by \$164.7 billion, or 11.7 per cent, while imports decreased by \$39.2 billion, or 2.1 per cent. (IANS)



SBI To India: Stay Patient, Test Washington's Resolve On Trade

at a stage when Washington's position is clearer and India's value as a market, technology partner, defense buyer and Indo-Pacific counterweight becomes more visible, the report said.

"India's strategy should be to test the resolve of the US administration and potentially accept a high cost follow through in short run and signal

that India stands its ground for the long game. Dive sideways and test the resolve. India will win," said Dr. Soumya Kanti Ghosh, Group Chief Economic Adviser at the State Bank of India.

The report said the Trump administration is using uncertainty as a bargaining instrument across issues involving NATO, Iran, tariffs, Greenland, China and India.

India, it said, does not have China's concentrated leverage but holds significant advantages, including its market scale, technology talent, pharmaceutical sector, defense procurement, energy options, diaspora influence and strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific.

In game theory terms, the Trump administration is preserving incomplete information about the "type" of bargaining, forcing the other side to decide whether to concede, wait, test or counter-escalate, according to the report.

"The short-run payoff is leverage. The long-run cost is trust depreciation with the US. Interestingly such repeated uncertainties also teaches allies, rivals and markets to discount future signals," the SBI report noted. (IANS)

NEW DELHI- India's best strategy to secure a favorable trade deal with the US is to wear down Washington's opening position without damaging the relationship, keep negotiations going, avoid public escalation and make limited and reversible offers, an SBI Research report said on July 10.

India should wait for the Trump administration's initial demands to encounter US market costs, China-balancing needs and alliance fatigue before bargaining

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New Digital OCI Card System Aims To Eliminate Paperwork

NEW DELHI-Union Home Minister Amit Shah on June 30 launched the e-OCI Card and the FCRA 2.0 Portal in New Delhi, saying the initiatives will make services more convenient for citizens while strengthening monitoring of foreign contributions and enhancing national security.

The e-OCI Card introduces a fully digital system for Overseas Citizen of India cardholders and is expected to benefit more than 5 million OCI cardholders by enabling a fully digital process. OCI booklets will no longer need to be reissued when a passport is renewed after the age of 20, although passport details must be updated online whenever a new passport is issued.

The digital OCI card will feature a unique registration number, enable real-time verification and eliminate the risk of

lost or damaged documents.

The e-OCI Card enables applicants to complete the entire OCI process online, from submitting applications and uploading supporting documents to downloading the digital card after approval. Most existing OCI cardholders can also obtain the e-OCI Card digitally without requiring a fresh application or physical verification.

The upgraded FCRA portal digitizes applications, renewals and annual returns, eliminates the physical submission of documents, supports e-Sign authentication and Optical Character Recognition, integrates with PAN, Aadhaar, OCI, NGO Darpan and the ICAI's UDIN system, and is hosted on the Government Cloud 'MeghRaj' to improve data security, compliance monitoring and oversight of foreign contributions. (IANS)

America Linked Military Cases Raise Security Concerns In India



NEW DELHI- Successive reports involving foreign nationals with alleged military backgrounds operating in and around India have raised concerns over border security, cross-border networks and the possible use of the region as a transit route.

The latest incident involves the reported detention of a California resident who claimed to have served in the U.S. Navy while allegedly attempting to cross into Nepal without travel documents. It came four months after the arrest of an American allegedly involved in military training and six Ukrainian nationals.

In another, unconnected incident, the unexplained death of Terrence Arvelle Jackson, a serving officer with the U.S. Army's elite 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne), at a five-star hotel in Dhaka on August 31 last year became the subject of media speculation over his activities in the region.

According to a report in Bangladesh's Weekly Blitz last September, authorities in Dhaka initially suggested that Jackson had died of natural causes.

But "the secrecy surrounding the removal of his body, the confiscation of his belongings by US Embassy officials, and his covert activities in the country suggest a far deeper and more troubling narrative," the report claimed.

Jackson has been described as a military trainer who supervised army exercises at Bangladesh's Saint Martin's Island in the Bay of Bengal. The incidents may be isolated and apparently unconnected, but have raised concerns amid regional uncertainty and volatility. Experts say they underscore the need for tighter vetting, intelligence-sharing and border controls, as well as transparent investigations.

In the latest incident, U.S. national Jordan Brown was detained by India's Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) near Sonauli in Uttar Pradesh while allegedly attempting to cross into Nepal without travel documents. He claimed prior service with the U.S. Navy and Special Forces.

Authorities recovered cash, phones and other items, while Brown could not produce documents to corroborate his claim of military service. He is being investigated under the Foreigners Act, according to reports.

In the March incident, India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) apprehended U.S. citizen Matthew Aaron VanDyke, an alleged military warfare trainer, and six Ukrainian nationals at airports in Kolkata, Delhi and Lucknow.

VanDyke was booked under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) as part of an NIA investigation into alleged links with insurgent groups operating in Myanmar. He is currently in judicial custody at Tihar Jail in New Delhi, with court proceedings in the case ongoing.

VanDyke reportedly gained prominence during the Libyan Civil War in 2011, where he fought alongside rebels and was later imprisoned. He subsequently founded Sons of Liberty International (SOLI), an organization that reportedly provides military training and strategic advice to armed groups in conflict zones.

Investigators claim VanDyke and the Ukrainian nationals used India as a transit route to Myanmar in 2025 and 2026 to deliver drones and train ethnic armed groups. Seized devices reportedly contained photos and videos of drone training sessions. (IANS)

Trump's Policies Push Down US Popularity In India: Pew Report

NEW YORK, NY- Favorable views of the US among Indians have declined since last year amid US President Donald Trump's actions and rhetoric towards India, according to an international survey by the US-based Pew Research Center.

The survey, found that 45 per cent of Indians held a favorable view of the US this year, down from 54 per cent in 2025, while 31 per cent expressed an unfavorable opinion.

Only 18 per cent of Indians approved of Trump's tariff policies, which imposed duties of up to 50 per cent on some Indian

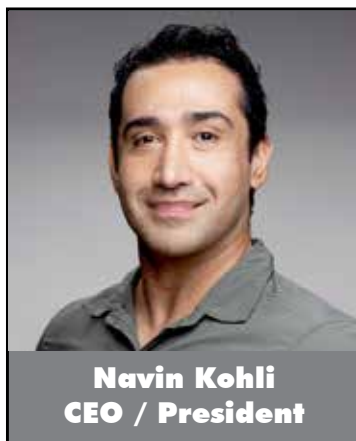
exports before the US Supreme Court blocked them.

Confidence among Indians that Trump would do the right thing in world affairs also fell sharply, from 52 per cent last year to 39 per cent this year, while 36 per cent said they had no confidence in him.

Despite the decline, India's perception of the US remained more favorable than the median across the 36 countries surveyed.

Among Indians, 54 per cent said the US government respected personal freedoms. (IANS)

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6 Tips To Stay Safe This Summer

By Dr. DAMANPREET JAMARAI

Summer brings long days, family vacations, afternoons by the pool and more time outside. But as temperatures rise and families head to the water, it's also a time to be extra mindful about staying safe. From heat-related illness to sun exposure and drowning risks, a few simple precautions can help make sure summer fun stays just that – fun.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe in the sun, especially around water:

- 1. Take Swimming Lessons to Reduce Risk of Drowning:**
According to the latest CDC data, unintentional drowning remains a leading cause of death for young children in the United States. More children ages 1-4 die from drowning than any other cause of death, and drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 5-14. Every year in the United States, there are over 4,000 fatal unintentional drownings – an average of 11 drowning deaths per day.
- 2. Wear a Life Jacket During Water-Based Activities:**
Pool toys, such as noodles or inner tubes, should not be used in lieu of a life jacket as they are not designed to keep swimmers safe. For children, choosing bright-colored swimsuits can also make it easier to spot them in the water.
- 3. Learn and Practice Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR):**
When performed by bystanders during an emergency, CPR can help save lives and improve outcomes for drowning victims. The sooner CPR starts, the better the chance of a positive outcome.
- 4. Prepare for Weather:**
Strong winds and thunderstorms can be dangerous when you are in or around water, so check the forecast before boating or swimming and head to shore right away if storms develop.
- 5. Reapply Sunscreen Every Two Hours to Protect Your Skin if You Remain in the Sun:**
Sunscreen protection levels are categorized using a sun protection factor (SPF) number that rates how well they block UV rays with higher numbers indicating more protection. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and reapply at least every two hours, or more often after swimming or sweating.
- 6. Wear Protective Clothing, a Hat and Sunglasses:**
When possible, wear long-sleeved shirts, pants or skirts that can help protect against UV rays. Clothes made from tightly woven fabric, along with hats that have wide brims to cover the face, ears and back of the neck, provide the best protection.

(The author is Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare Medicare & Retirement of California)



Healing With Ginger

Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is a widely used medicinal plant and culinary spice known for its warm, pungent flavor and therapeutic properties. The underground stem, or rhizome, is the part most commonly used in traditional medicine. In Ayurveda, ginger is often referred to as “Vishwabheshaja”, meaning “universal medicine,” because of its long history of use for supporting digestion, easing respiratory discomfort, and addressing various everyday ailments.

Rich in bioactive compounds such as gingerol, ginger is traditionally valued for its warming properties and is used in fresh and dried forms. Fresh ginger is commonly used in juices and decoctions, while dried ginger powder (shunthi) is used in herbal preparations.



- Indigestion**
Take 1 tsp of crushed ginger rhizome with salt or jaggery twice daily before meals.
- Ear Pain**
Instill ½–1 tsp of fresh, warm ginger juice into the ear. (Do not use if there is ear discharge.)
- Hoarseness of Voice**
Take ¼–½ tsp of dry ginger powder with honey in three divided doses.
- Aches and Pains**
Take 2–4 tsp of a decoction prepared from about ½ tsp of dry ginger rhizome, twice daily.
- Headache**
Apply a warm ginger paste over the forehead up to 3–4 times daily.
- Cold and Cough**
Take ½–1 tsp of dry ginger powder with jaggery, divided into three doses throughout the day.
- Prevention of Recurrent Cold**
Take 2 tsp of a ginger decoction prepared from a piece of ginger every morning to help prevent recurrent episodes of cold.
- Abdominal Pain**
Take 1 tsp of ginger juice mixed with a glass of buttermilk, along with lemon and salt.

(Source: Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (CCRAS), India. The information provided here is based on traditional Ayurvedic practices and is intended for general informational purposes only.)

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Eye On Reducing Waste: New Food Label Law Goes Into Effect In California

India-West News Desk

SACRAMENTO, CA – For years, the confusing maze of more than 50 different date labels stamped on supermarket packaging has left shoppers playing a frustrating guessing game. Unsure whether a product is merely past its peak flavor or genuinely dangerous to consume, many consumers choose the safest bet and toss perfectly good items into the trash. California is tackling this confusion, and the massive environmental toll it takes, with a pioneering food labeling law that officially went into effect July 1.

The new regulations ban the ubiquitous sell by labels, which experts note were only ever intended as an inventory guide for stock clerks rather than a metric for public health. Instead, food manufacturers selling in the Golden State must now transition to just two standardized phrases. A ‘Best if Used By’ label will dictate peak quality, while a ‘Use By’ label will clearly signal product safety.

“Using clear, consistent date labels will help reduce confusion about when food is safe to eat, cut down on unnecessary food waste, and make it easier for consumers to make informed decisions,” Californ-



nia state Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin (D), author of the new law, posted on social media.

This policy shift aims to put a major dent in the estimated 6 million tons of unexpired food thrown away in California each year. According to the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, that amounts to roughly 2.5 billion meals worth of unspoiled food hitting the landfills annually, where organic waste makes up nearly half of the state’s garbage.

The Food and Drug Administration attributes nearly 20% of the nation’s total food waste to consumer confusion over unregulated date stamps, which, outside of infant formula, lack any federal oversight. Organizers at Californians Against Waste point to these

labels as the leading cause of household food waste, noting that the old sell by dates even crippled food banks because donors and patrons assumed the items had expired.

“Consumers get confused and they just default to assuming that whatever date is on the package means ‘don’t eat it and throw it away,’” Kumar Chandran, policy director at ReFED, a nonprofit focused on reducing food waste, told the Associated Press.

By becoming the first state in the nation to standardize these phrases, California has sparked a broader legislative chain reaction. New York lawmakers recently passed a similar measure currently awaiting the governor’s signature, and similar bills have been floated in states like Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and South Carolina. Chandran notes that this coastal momentum is accelerating the push for a singular national standard, especially with a bipartisan bill currently pending in Congress. While the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommended a shift toward ‘Best if Used’ By labeling a decade ago, California’s mandatory approach finally codifies clarity for the consumer.

RECIPE

Green Goddess Rice Bowl

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups Royal® Brown Basmati Rice
- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed
- ½ cucumber, sliced
- 1 small bunch kale, shredded
- 4 radishes, thinly sliced
- 1½ cups frozen shelled edamame, thawed
- 1 large avocado, chopped
- 1 cup chopped mixed green herbs, such as parsley, chives, tarragon, cilantro, and basil)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- Cool water, as needed



Preparation

1. Cook the rice according to the package directions.
2. Place the eggs in a large saucepan and cover with cool water. Bring the water to a boil over high heat. Cover the pan, remove it from the heat, and let the eggs stand for 9 minutes. Transfer the eggs to a bowl of ice water and let cool completely.
3. Return the saucepan of water to a boil. Add the asparagus and cook until just tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer the asparagus to the bowl of ice water with the eggs.
4. Meanwhile, combine the avocado, herbs, olive oil, lemon juice, and salt in a blender. With the blender running, gradually add cool water until the dressing is smooth, thick, and pourable.
5. Toss half of the dressing with the cooked rice, then fold in the edamame.
6. Peel the eggs and cut them into quarters.
7. Divide the rice mixture among serving bowls. Top with the asparagus, cucumber, kale, radishes, and eggs. Drizzle with the remaining dressing and serve.

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SPORTS

NJ Transit Overcame ‘Super Bowl Curse’ During World Cup

India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – New Jersey Transit CEO Kris Kolluri said the agency successfully handled transportation for fans attending all eight FIFA World Cup matches at MetLife Stadium, marking a sharp turnaround from the operational failures that plagued the 2014 Super Bowl. “The curse of Super Bowl 2014 is over,” Kolluri said in an interview on July 19 to Politico.

The agency transported thousands of fans to and from MetLife Stadium by train and bus throughout the tournament without any major service disruptions, despite bouts of severe weather that threatened operations

and affected other transit services, Politico reported.

Kolluri, who was appointed CEO of NJ Transit in early 2025 after previously serving as commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation and leading the Gateway Development Commission, credited the agency’s workforce for the successful operation.

“The only reason why this worked is because of an extraordinary team who knew we were the underdog, and



we were not going to let each other down,” Kolluri told reporters. He was joined by members of the team that had spent several years preparing for the tournament.

The smooth execution stood in stark contrast to the 2014 Super Bowl, when severe delays and overcrowding left thousands of football fans stranded after the game, damaging NJ Transit’s reputation for years.

To prepare for the Club World Cup, NJ Transit implemented an extensive operational plan, including keeping about 80 train cars on standby to quickly move trains in and out of the stadium after matches. The agency is still calculating the total cost of providing the enhanced service.

Vinod Khosla To Buy Seattle Seahawks

Contd. from P1

Seahawks. We look forward to building on the winning legacy Paul Allen created and to earning the trust of the Seahawks organization and fans everywhere,” Vinod Khosla said on behalf of the Khosla family.

According to several sports outlets, the deal is valued at approximately \$9.6 billion, placing it among the largest franchise sales ever, behind only the reported \$10 billion acquisition of the NBA’s Los Angeles Lakers by Mark Walter. The Seahawks sale surpasses the previous NFL record of \$6.05 billion paid for the Washington Commanders in 2023.

Sportico reported that Neeru Khosla, co-founder and chair of the CK12 Foundation, will serve as the Seahawks’ controlling owner, while the couple’s son, Neal Khosla,



chief executive of healthcare technology company Curai, is expected to play a leadership role with the franchise.

Vinod Khosla, a co-founder of Sun Micro-

systems and founder of venture capital firm Khosla Ventures, is one of Silicon Valley’s best-known investors. He acquired a minority stake in the San Francisco 49ers last year and would be required to divest that interest if the Seahawks purchase is completed under NFL ownership rules.

The Seahawks have been owned by the estate of Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen since his death in 2018. Allen’s will directed that his sports holdings, including the Seahawks and the NBA’s Portland Trail Blazers, eventually be sold, with the proceeds benefiting charitable causes. His sister, Jody Allen, has overseen both franchises as executor of the estate.

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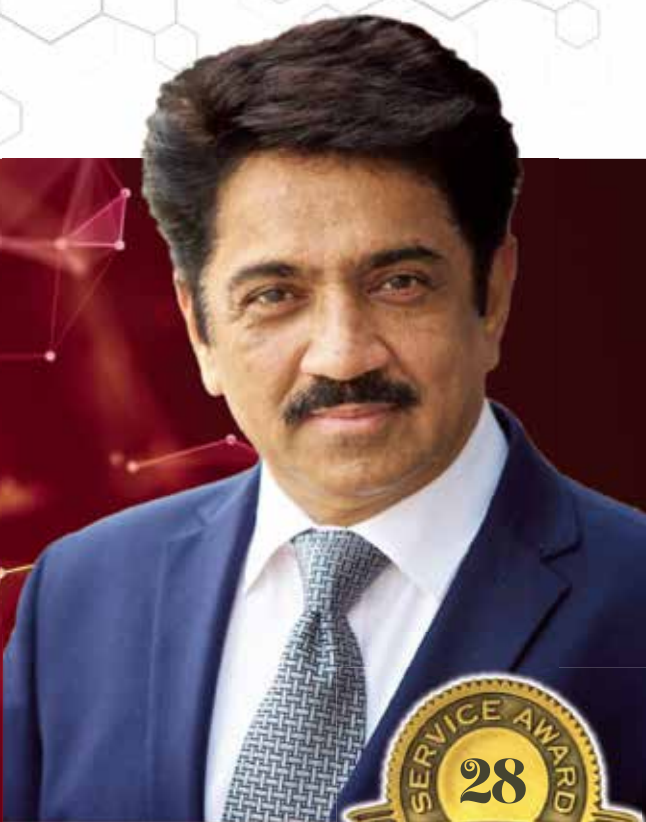
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Suryakumar Yadav Becomes Major League Baseball Ambassador



India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY – Major League Baseball has appointed Indian cricket star Suryakumar Yadav, popularly known as SKY, as an ambassador to lead the league's expansion efforts in India.

Under the partnership, Yadav will work with MLB on fan engagement initiatives, original content and events designed to introduce baseball to more fans across the country.

The collaboration will also see Yadav participate in MLB activities in both India and the United States, including MLB All-Star Week in Philadelphia from July 10 to 14. He is expected to appear in fan engagement programs and original content aimed at connecting Indian audiences with the game.

"One of the best things about sport is that it brings people together, no matter where they're from," Yadav said. "I'm excited to partner with Major League Baseball and be

part of its journey in India. I look forward to learning more about the game myself and helping more fans discover the energy, excitement and culture that make baseball something else."

Yadav is among India's leading cricketers. He was part of the team that won the Men's T20 World Cup in 2024 and later captained India to another title in the tournament's 2026 edition.

"India is home to one of the most vibrant sports cultures in the world, and this partnership allows us to connect with fans in a meaningful way," said Jeremiah Yolkut, MLB's senior vice president of global operations and events. "Suryakumar is one of the most recognized athletes in India, with an ability to connect with millions of fans across the country. Together, we'll introduce more fans to the excitement, energy and culture of baseball while continuing to expand the game's reach throughout the country."

Indian Cyclist Completes 3,500-Mile Ride Across US

WASHINGTON, DC – Rajasthan's cyclist, Nitin Saini, has completed the grueling Trans Am Bike Race, riding across the United States from the Pacific coast to Washington, DC, in 28 days in this year's ultra-endurance event.

Saini began the race in Astoria, Oregon, on June 7 and reached the historic Lincoln Memorial in Washington on July 5 after covering nearly 3,500 miles (about 5,630 km) through 11 US states. The event attracted around 30 cyclists from across the world, including riders from the United States and Europe and two from India.

The Trans Am Bike Race is considered one of the world's toughest unsupported cycling events, with participants carrying their own equipment, arranging their own food and accommodation, and riding across the United States without support crews. After completing the race, Saini described the ride as far more demanding than he had expected.

"When the Trans Am Bike Race started, on the second day itself I realized that this was something else," he said, recalling rapidly changing weather, mountain climbs, heavy rain, gravel roads and long stretches without settlements. Riders encountered temperatures as low as five degrees Celsius and travelled through forests and unpaved roads, making the challenge unlike anything he had experienced before.

Travelling through rural America also left a lasting impression on him.

"I have seen that America's geographical area is so vast," he said, adding that while riding on country roads, he often travelled for kilometers without seeing another person. Small villages with only a handful of



residents, he said, offered a perspective that tourists visiting major cities rarely experience. Saini said people in small American towns recognized India from the Indian jersey he wore during the race.

"They know India very well," he said, adding that many people immediately associated India with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and were eager to ask questions about the country. He said hearing such comments in remote parts of the United States made him feel proud as an Indian.

As a vegetarian, Saini said finding suitable meals during the unsupported race was often difficult. Carrying only essential clothing, tools and supplies on his bicycle, he depended largely on petrol station convenience stores for food and often relied on bread, cheese, nachos, chocolates and biscuits during long stretches where no towns were available.

Reflecting on his motivation, Saini said cycling allowed him to experience countries beyond their famous landmarks. "If you want to explore the world, there cannot be a better way than cycling," he said. (IANS)

LA Knight Riders

Contd. from P1

The Bollywood star posted, "The LAKR stadium. The championship, cricket in America, awesome @SunilPNarine74 @Jaseholder98 @Russell12A and all of the team. Absolutely outstanding. You all said

we are here to win not just participate... and u showed it. Love u all.... Korbo Lorbo Jeetbo," he wrote.

Batting first, LAKR posted 164 all out in 19.4 overs after solid contributions from across the top order. Andre Fletcher set the tone with a brisk 47 off 27 balls, while Colin Munro made 40 from 29 deliveries. Matthew Tromp added a crucial late cameo of 39 off 21 balls to push the total to a competitive score.

Washington Freedom's Ben Dwarshuis was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3/31. Defending 165, LAKR's bowlers produced a disciplined effort under pressure. Sunil Narine starred with a superb spell of 3/13, while captain Jason Holder claimed 3/31 to keep Washington Freedom in check throughout the chase. Shadley van Schalkwyk chipped in with two wickets and held his nerve in the final over as LAKR successfully defended the target.

Obus Pienaar kept Washington Freedom in the contest with a blistering 53 off just 24 balls, but his effort fell just short as the defending finalists finished on 163/9, handing LAKR a memorable one-run victory.

The title triumph capped a remarkable campaign for the Knight Riders, who reached their maiden MLC final before going on to lift the trophy for the first time. Their run to the championship was built on collective performances, timely contributions with both bat and ball, and composure in high-pressure moments.

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ARTS

Through A Lens, CA Photographer Sej Saraiya Traces Cultures

India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – When Atlas of Humanity opened its New York edition last week at One Art Space in Tribeca, it brought with it more than an exhibition. It carried a decade-long attempt to map human cultural diversity through photography, an evolving archive that now spans more than 400 ethnic groups across continents.

Conceived by photographer and curator Martin Vegas for the cultural nonprofit De-Factory, the project is inspired by UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Since its inception, Atlas of Humanity has brought together more than

100 photographers and traveled through cities including Cologne, Birmingham, Sharjah, Tunis, Paris, Milan, London, and New York.

Among the artists featured in the New York edition is California-based visual artist, filmmaker, and author Sej Saraiya, whose work



focuses on Indigenous communities, ancestral traditions, and the environments that shape them.

Saraiya's practice sits at the in-

tersection of documentary photography and cultural preservation. Her images and films are rooted in extended periods of fieldwork, often in remote regions where language, geography, and access separate communities from global visibility. For her, the act of photographing is inseparable from the responsibility of witnessing.

'Exhibitions like these exist because these stories matter. But so does how you tell them,' she said. 'I've spent months living with communities who don't speak my language. That proximity is both a privilege and a responsibility.'

Born in India and trained in the United States, Saraiya holds an MFA from the University of Southern California. Her work has been profiled by ELLE as part of conservation photography and



featured by Deadline for her role as founding director of the World Culture Film Festival. She has written for USA Today Magazine and the Hindustan Times, and published academic work in the STEAM Journal at Claremont Graduate University.

She is the author of 'Becoming Still,' a narrative nonfiction book set in Venezuela's Indigenous Pemón territory. Her 2021 short film 'The Curious Woods'

has screened internationally and received more than 30 awards, including honors for Best Environmental Film and Best Director.

Saraiya continues to work across photography and film in Indigenous and ecologically sensitive regions, including Northeast India and the Americas. Her ongoing projects examine how cultural memory is preserved, or erased, within rapidly changing landscapes.

ICCR Launches Online Certification Courses In Indian Arts

India-West News Desk

NEW DELHI – The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), in partnership with Routes 2 Roots, is launching a series of year-long certificate courses in Indian art, music and dance.

The courses cover Bhangra, calligraphy, Madhubani painting, Hindustani classical vocal music, Bollywood dance, tabla, Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Odissi. Classes will be offered at beginner and intermediate levels, with live sessions scheduled throughout the week.

The program builds on an earlier online initiative launched in 2024, which introduced international participants to traditional art forms such as henna design, Rangoli, Madhubani painting and



puppet making. The earlier classes drew 1,441 registrations for henna, 1,094 for Madhubani painting, 794 for puppet making and 727 for Rangoli from 51 countries.

The new courses begin in mid-July, with Madhubani painting

starting July 16, followed by Bollywood dance and Kathak on July 17 and Hindustani classical vocal music on July 18. Tabla and Odissi sessions begin July 20, calligraphy on July 21, and Bhangra and Bharatanatyam on July 22.

Shreyas Navare Brings Presidential History To Life In New Watercolor Collection

India-West News Desk



WASHINGTON, DC – New York based Artist Shreyas Navare is bringing a global perspective to American history with a new series of presidential watercolor caricatures. The collection, a preview of his upcoming book, 'Hail to the Chiefs: Celebrating America at 250,' is being released as part of the buildup to the nation's 250th anniversary.

Formerly the editorial cartoonist for the Hindustan Times, Navare is now a creative entrepreneur and commemorative artist for the U.S. Semiquincentennial. His original artworks are part of the permanent collection at the Library of Congress.

Navare said his goal was to portray every president with equal artistic respect and historical dignity, encouraging people to reflect on the nation's shared history as it approaches its 250th anniversary.

The series aligns with the mission of America250, the nonpartisan organization established by Congress to help commemorate the nation's milestone anniversary. Each watercolor is paired with a notable presidential quotation. Stewart D. McLaurin, president of the White House Historical Association, who wrote the book's foreword, said Navare's work offers a thoughtful look at the American presidency as the country approaches the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The debut collection features George Washington and is available as matted prints, greeting cards, brass bookmarks and framed magnets at The People's House: A White House Experience and the White House Visitor Center gift shop, with online availability planned. Additional presidential designs will be released over time, with proceeds supporting the White House Historical Association's nonprofit mission.



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Matt Damon Wants To Collaborate With Shekhar Kapur

MUMBAI- Hollywood star Matt Damon, who is gearing up for the release of Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey', has expressed his desire to work with acclaimed Indian filmmaker Shekhar Kapur.

Damon is in India with filmmaker Christopher Nolan and actor Tom Holland for the promotion of their upcoming epic fantasy action film. During a press conference in Mumbai, the 55-year-old actor was asked about collaborating with an Indian filmmaker.

Damon said he would like to work with National Award-winning filmmaker Shekhar Kapur. He also

revealed that he had an opportunity to star in Kapur's 2002 epic war drama 'The Four Feathers' but could not take up the film as he was already working on 'The Bourne Identity'. Directed by Kapur, 'The Four Feathers' starred Heath Ledger, Wes Bentley, Djimon Hounsou and Kate Hudson and was based on A.E.W. Mason's 1902 novel of the same name.

Meanwhile, Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey' is an adaptation of Homer's ancient Greek epic and stars Damon as Odysseus, the Greek king of Ithaca, who embarks on a perilous journey home after the Trojan War. (IANS)

LA Restaurant Order Forced Sana Saeed To Train Her Accent

LOS ANGELES, CA-Actress Sana Saeed has opened up about her struggles with accent and communication while studying in Los Angeles in 2016, saying she worked hard to train her accent because she "wanted to be heard."

Now based here, she began her acting career as a child artist in 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai'. Sana posted a video saying, "When I came to LA for the first time in 2016 to study, I remember going to a restaurant and wanting to have water. But it was water back then.



And I remember asking him about five to eight times, I said water, water, water, water, can I have some water? And he would say soda."

"He said, do you want to Coke? And I realized that day that if I ever, ever had to live here, I would have to learn this new language.

It would be very important for me to feel heard and communicate it. And be audible, most importantly. So, I just really wonder why do we shame people for changing their accents? It's, it's not easy. I, I had to do training, I

worked really, really hard to, you know, feel heard."

She added, "And isn't that the most important thing as human beings to feel heard? So, yeah. Just wondering if you've had a similar experience. I just saw a couple of comments on my last post and so many people questioned the accent without really realizing a lot of work gets put in. It's hard work. It's like learning a new language altogether."

In the caption accompanying the video, Sana wrote that she trained her accent so she could be better understood as an actor, stressing that her original accent was never wrong and that no accent is more valid than another. She added that people should not be shamed for changing the way they speak to communicate more effectively. (IANS)

Hasan Minhaj, Ronny Chieng Show To Play At Wynn Las Vegas

India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Hasan Minhaj and comedian-actor Ronny Chieng will make their Encore Theater debut at Wynn Las Vegas this fall with their joint comedy tour.

Wynn Las Vegas said the comedians will perform at 8 p.m. on September 5 and 6, 2026.

Titled 'Hasan Hates Ronny | Ronny Hates Hasan', the live show centers on a mock rivalry between the pair as they trade jokes on subjects including politics, the economy, immigration, food, dating and family life.

Minhaj is a two-time Peabody



Award winner whose credits include the Netflix special 'Homecoming King' and the political satire series 'Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj', which earned both an Emmy Award and a Television Academy Honor.

Chieng, an Emmy Award-winning comedian and actor, is a correspon-

dent on 'The Daily Show'. His acting credits include 'Crazy Rich Asians' and Marvel's 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings'. Wynn Las Vegas also said his Netflix special 'Ronny Chieng: Love to Hate It' was named The New York Times' comedy special of the year for 2024.

Nick Jonas Loves Bollywood Gossip



MUMBAI – Singer-actor Nick Jonas has revealed that one of his favorite aspects of his nearly eight-year marriage to actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas is keeping up with Bollywood gossip.

During an episode of the Jonas Brothers' podcast series, 'Hey Jonas!', featuring Nick Jonas, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Kevin Jonas and Joe Jonas, Nick joked that one of the biggest perks of his marriage has been access to the latest Bollywood happenings.

"So one of the things that I have loved most about these eight years together is all the Bollywood gossip I have got," Nick said.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas, amused by the confession, teased her husband, saying, "That's what you have loved the most about our whole marriage? His whole feed is filled with the

most is filled with the knows about Bollywood breakups before she does. "I don't know when someone's broken up with someone and you are always the one to tell me. It usually happens when I am texting someone and I will be like, 'Hey, give my love to blah, blah, blah.' And he's like, 'No, they've broken up.' And I'm like, 'Oh, so you keep on the gossip.'"

Nick admitted with a laugh, "Oh yeah, I do."

When brothers Kevin Jonas and Joe Jonas pressed him to reveal whose updates he follows, Nick declined to name anyone. "I can't say names. These are friends of ours," he said. The singer also admitted that he quietly follows a few Bollywood gossip accounts. "There's a couple of accounts that I kind of ghost follow, you know? There's some good tea though. There's like all these storylines that you have got to follow," he added. (IANS)



Mindy Kaling Finds A Way To Enjoy Indian Food Despite Her Kids' Picky Palates

India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Mindy Kaling may be known for bringing Indian American stories to Hollywood, but when it comes to her own kitchen, she faces a familiar challenge for many parents: getting children to appreciate the food they grew up with.

During an appearance on Jimmy Kimmel Live!, Kaling revealed that her children are not fans of Indian food, leaving her to seek out her favorite dishes whenever she gets the chance. Business trips, she said, have become a rare opportunity to enjoy South Indian classics such as dosas and idlis without having to negotiate with her kids.

The actor and writer joked that traveling alone allows her to in-

dulge in the cuisine she loves, turning work trips into an unexpected food escape.

Her love for South Indian food also came up during the conversation with actor and longtime collaborator Ike Barinholtz, who was the guest host of the show. Barinholtz pushed back on the idea that Kaling only has fun on projects outside their workplace, sharing that their own writing room recently had a memorable culinary experience.

The duo revealed that while working on their Netflix series 'Running Point,' the writers' room brought in a chef to prepare fresh dosas for the team. Kaling agreed that the experience was "really nice," highlighting how food became part of the creative atmosphere behind the scenes.

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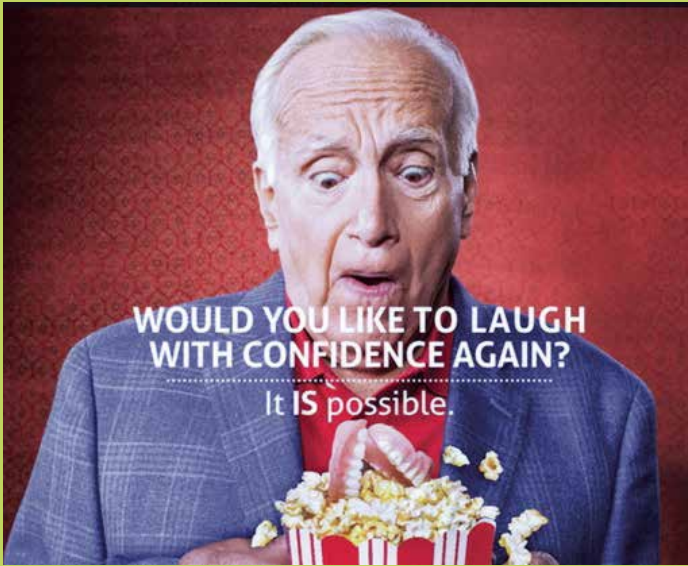
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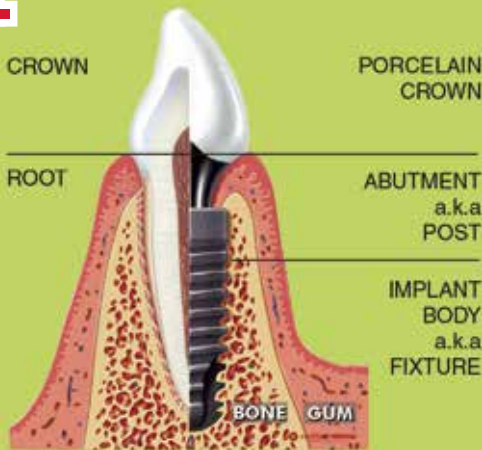
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