

# INDIA WEST

Vol. I, No.08 • December 16, 2022

JOURNAL

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## Janavi's Immersive, Aquarium-Like Art Installed At Houston Airport

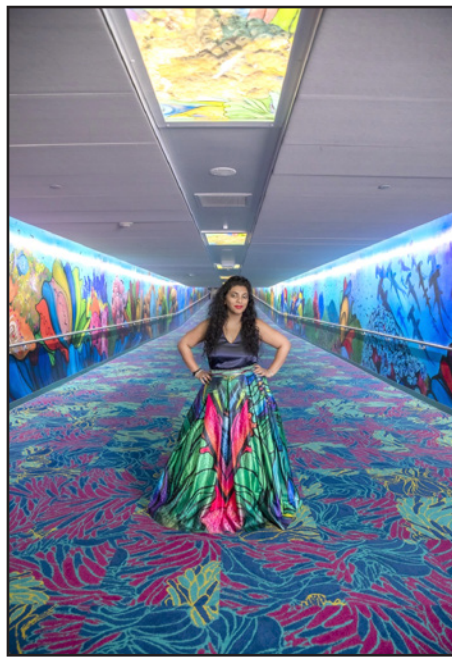
### India-West News Desk

HOUSTON, TX – There is a tunnel that connects the two international terminals at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport. But as of November 30, it no longer is just a cemented, carpeted, corridor that passengers rush through.

It is now a showpiece.

Janavi Mahimtura Folmsbee, an Indian American contemporary and marine conservation artist's work has been installed there, transforming the dull hallway into an immersive marine experience.

Inspired by her deep-sea dives at the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, off the Texas Coast, the art installation has been endorsed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Sanctuary in Galveston. The project was commissioned by the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, on behalf of the Houston Airport System, through the city's Civic Art Program and the Houston Arts Alliance. *Contd. on P6*



The Houston-based contemporary and marine conservation artist is now the only South Asian artist to be included in the Houston Airport System art collection.

## India Discontinues Suvidha Forms For International Passengers



Travelling has become easier, said international passengers after India discontinued the Air Suvidha form.

effect, the Indian government has said. The requirement of the form, which many Indian American travelers found out about the hard way – after getting to the airport – has been viewed with some irritation by passengers.

A notice from

the Indian civil aviation ministry said, "In the light of sustained declining COVID-19 trajectory and significant advances being made in COVID-19 vaccination coverage both globally as well as in India, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued revised 'Guidelines for International Arrivals'. The ministry, however, said it was preferred that

*Contd. on P24*

### India-West News Desk

LOS ANGELES, CA – Indian Americans will have one less form and requirement to fill out when making travel plans to India. The self-declaration forms for Covid vaccination that had to be filled in by incoming international passengers on the Air Suvidha portal will no longer be necessary, with immediate

## Pichai Gets Padma Bhushan in CA

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (IANS) - Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai once again reiterated that India is an integral part of him, and he was fortunate to grow up in a family in a country that cherished learning and knowledge.

"India is a part of me. I carry it with me wherever I go. I was fortunate to grow up in a family that cherished learning and knowledge, with parents who sacrificed a lot to make sure I had opportunities to explore my interests," Pichai said in a blog post.

He expressed his thoughts after re-

*Contd. on P28*

## 'RRR' Lands Two Golden Globe Noms



The chart-busting song 'Naatu Naatu' from 'RRR' has already won the Los Angeles Film Critics Association award.

LOS ANGELES, CA (IANS) - S.S. Rajamouli's epic period drama has earned a Golden Globes nomination for Best Picture, Non-English Language, category and is up against serious competition: "All Quiet on the Western Front" (Germany), "Argentina, 1985" (Argentina), "Close" (Belgium) and "Decision to Leave", the South Korean romantic mystery that won for its celebrated helmer, Park Chan-wok, the Best Director award at this year's Cannes Film Festival.

For "RRR", it is the penultimate shot at the Oscars, where it is being billed as a potential award-winner either for Rajamouli in the Best Director category or for the movie in the Best Foreign Film section.

The chart-topping "RRR" song, 'Naatu Naatu' (pictured on Ram Charan and Jr NTR), is in contention for the trophy in the Best Original Song, Motion Picture, category as well, up against Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga and Rihanna among others.



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# SoCal’s Bela Bajaria On Forbes’ Powerful Women List

LOS ANGELES, CA (IANS) – US Vice President Kamala Harris has been ranked number three on Forbes’ 19th annual list of ‘World’s 100 Most Powerful Women’ of 2022 which was topped by European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen “for her leadership during the Ukraine war, as well as her handling of the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Bela Bajaria, head of Global TV at Netflix, is another Indian American on the list who is ranked at number 71. Bajaria is responsible for hits including ‘Bridgerton’, ‘The Queen’s Gambit’, ‘Lupin’ and ‘Cobra Kai’. Before joining Netflix in 2016, Bajaria was president of Universal Television, where she made history as the first woman of color to oversee

a studio. London-born Bajaria was named to TIME’s 100 Most Influential People list in 2022.

Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is at number 36 on the list highlighting “innovators and instigators who are leading on the world stage to redefine traditional power structures”.

Besides Sitharaman, other Indians on the list include, HCL Corporation CEO Roshni Nadar Malhotra -- the youngest Indian woman on the list; Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw; Madhabi Puri Buch, the first female chair of the Securities and Exchange Board of India; Soma Mondal, the first woman to chair the state-run Steel Authority of India; and Nykaa founder Falguni Nayar.



# Sunil Kumar Named President Of Tufts University

MEDFORD, MA (IANS) - Indian American academician Sunil Kumar has been appointed the next president of Tufts University -- the first person of color to occupy the position. Kumar, Provost, and Senior Vice President for academic affairs at Johns Hopkins University succeeds President Anthony P. Monaco on July 1, 2023.

Currently, at Johns Hopkins, Kumar oversees the academic mission of the university’s nine schools, and has focused on increasing interdisciplinary research and education, enhancing the student experi-



Professor Sunil Kumar

ence, and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

“It would not have been possible for me as a son of a police officer to do anything else. And therefore, affordability is not a theoretical concept for me. I hope I represent an example of somebody who benefited from an institution opening its doors wide,” Kumar said in a video posted on the Tufts website. “And I would like even more people to have the same opportunity. Diversity and inclusion are indispensable values,” he added.

His academic career began by teaching at the

Stanford Graduate School of Business, where he was later the Fred H. Merrill Professor of Operations, Information and Technology.

He was named Dean of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. In 2016,

Kumar, whose father was a police officer, was born and raised in India, graduating in 1990 with a bachelor’s in engineering from Mangalore University. He received a master’s degree in 1992 in computer science and automation from the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. Kumar received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1996.



## Jigar Shah & Rashmi Shah

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LETTERS

The Richest Nation in the World Exploits Migrant Workers

FIFA, the sponsoring agency for world soccer, has a long history of corruption. Inexplicably, they chose Qatar to host the world soccer games which should have been automatically disqualified because of its soaring high temperatures. This is yet another chapter illustrating how one nation with incredible wealth could mistreat migrant workers with such callousness and inhumanity.

Qatar is the richest country in the world, which is almost entirely dependent for its very existence on imported labor.

It has a population of around 380,000 with another 90% of imported labor.

Following Qatar's nomination to host the 2022 world soccer games, it went on a recruitment frenzy hiring to do the back-breaking work from predominantly south Asian countries, Nepal, India, and Pakistan. Work began in 2010.

Workers were forced to borrow high recruitment fees for the right to work. Passports were confiscated on arrival leaving laborers with no rights. Many complained of being forced to work under brutal conditions. Their complaints were ignored.

Their assigned tasks: Build 9 new stadiums, a new airport, 100 new hotels, and a new metro system. The price tag, \$100 billion. The housing facilities were inadequate with workers packed eight to a room. The kitchens were non-functional. The beds were crawling with bugs. 15- men shared 2 bathrooms. The bathrooms overflowed with sewage.

False sirens were activated to circumvent inspections. Water was given sparingly in the form of crushed ice. Many fainted, and others died. Qatar officials claimed that migrants were treated humanely and worked in safe environments.

Minky Worden of Human Rights Watch describes how millions of migrant workers from the world's poorest countries have faced deadly and forced labor conditions working on less than \$2 a day.

The construction was carried out under enormous suffering. Over 6500 migrants died. No compensation was given to the grieving families. FIFA's callous response was, "don't quibble, let's dribble."

- Jagjit Singh, Los Altos, CA



Minky Worden

Trump Factor in Election

Democracy is a good form of governance since it allows freedom to citizens and a free market economy – two major factors in a happy life. However, democracy does not work as it should because of the never-ending election cycles of electing corrupt politicians.

Interestingly, the whole world is always paying attention to American elections which are held every two years but do not care about elections in other countries. Domestically, Americans are bombarded with constant negative TV ads every hour of the day, seven days a week. In fact, politicians running for office have spent \$153 billion on campaign ads. That money could have been put to better use to support poor and needy people.

America just completed its midterm election cycle, in which Republicans barely edged in the House and the control of the Senate is undecided until 4 run-offs are conducted next month. Donald Trump had endorsed 33 Republicans, who had joined



John Fetterman

him in declaring the 2020 election was stolen, out of which 16 had lost. In a PA TV talk show host, Dr. Oz lost to Fetterman who had suffered a stroke a few months ago and still has problems with speech.

On the other hand, Trump's potential rival Florida Governor Ron DeSantis got reelected.

Trump is gearing up for the 2024 run. He will not muster enough votes in the primaries because of his big lies and bad mouth. Both the Republican party and America will be big losers if Trump somehow survives the primaries. In that case, the presidential election will be a rematch between Trump and Biden, in which Biden will win in a landslide.

It is also possible that Trump's bid for the White House will be derailed because so many investigations are going on. I am sick of the media publishing Trump's rants and lies, just as it publishes constant reports on British royals and Russia's Putin. That's why I stopped voting a long time ago.

- Girish Modi, Decatur, GA

OPINION

Priorities And Challenges Before India As G-20 Chair

NEW DELHI - India assumed the Presidency of the powerful grouping from Indonesia on December 1. The G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the U.K., the U.S., and the European Union.

India's tenure as the G-20 chair comes at a time when the world order is facing an increasing threat of global recession looming large and intensifying energy and food shortages causing unprecedented inflationary pressure and making cost of living unaffordable in both advanced and developing nations while Russia-Ukraine war continues unabated. The world is looking up to India to find decisive but conciliatory solutions to all these problems.

The task becomes further difficult due to uncertainty regarding China's role in the global order and Indo-Pacific region including South China Sea and South Asia as it is aspiring to become a global power. It is not only because of the resurgence of Covid pandemic in China but also the lack of its synch with international laws and conventions and

apparently irreconcilable differences with the Western countries on human rights of the ethnic minorities and democratic movements in Hong Kong and Taiwan. India has its own issues with China despite the latter being the biggest trade partner of India, albeit with a much-skewed trade balance.

India is most likely to prioritize global economic recovery through a synchronized response of the G-20 members as soon as possible. In a recent interview, former Deputy National Security Advisor Pankaj Saran and now a member of the National Security Advisory Board said that India's number one priority during its upcoming G20 Presidency should be to restore the economic order that provides stability and creates an atmosphere conducive to the growth of an economy such as itself. He added that another important priority for India during its Presidency would be to address the issues of concern to the developing world such as energy, food, and climate securities, and to see how India's voice and perspective can be infused into the G20.

As India is seen as one of the influential leaders of the global South, another key priority for India would be the issue of reform of multilateral international organizations and institutions as they, in their current state, do not reflect contemporary realities. Already there is an increasing consensus among

many advanced and developing economies on extending permanent seats to emerging economies including India in the UN Security Council and raising quota in the International Monetary Fund reflecting the current political and economic roles and stature. This could be taken to logical fruition.

However, India's Presidency of the G-20 would have to countenance some of the problems which would not find an easy solution. Although developing countries and advanced nations are equally facing the threat of terrorism, the concern on terrorism seems to have fallen off the global agenda as observed in the G-20 in the Bali declaration, which got only a fleeting reference. It would be difficult to bring terrorism into the forefront of the G20 agenda, but nonetheless, this is necessary. Pankaj Saran said: "We have the twin challenges of the Taliban-led Afghanistan and the deep state of Pakistan. Whether and how much we try to bring terrorism into the forefront of the G20 agenda, has to be seen and depends on developments on the ground."

For India as G-20 President, it would be challenging to steer ahead with a balancing act as G20 President with China, a prominent member of the grouping, which has issues with the advanced nations on one hand and with India on the other. India is likely to ensure that G-20 deals and agreements

bring a win-win to all the stakeholders, but China's aspirations to expedite its rise to global power and expressing readiness to embrace even military action to defend its interests poses a challenge. The former Deputy National Security Advisor cautioned in his interview that dealing with China would be a "challenge" for India during its G20 presidency and New Delhi would adopt a "cautious approach" towards Beijing, judging by its deeds and not words. The deft diplomatic handling and honest efforts from both sides where the two countries and other G-20 members have differences would go a long way in finding solutions.

India as President of G-20 would likely give fair consideration to the perspectives of all the stakeholders and it is contrary to India's approach that it imposes its perspectives on others without consensus. Nevertheless, India, as usual, would hold its stance firmly on core national interests including sovereignty, and territorial integrity adhering to the agreements on peace and tranquility at the border, the Russia-Ukraine war and buying Russian oil, etc. China is hoping to accept and deal with India on terms that are equal and as the G20 President. It is hoped that China understands and recognizes that India is a rising economy, it is a rising power, said Saran. (IANS)

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Publisher  
**Navneet Chugh**

Graphic Designer  
**Rishita Dagli**

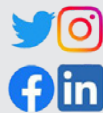
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# San Diego World Affairs Council Honors Legacy Of Prof. Madhavan

India-West Staff Reporter

SAN DIEGO, CA – Professor M.C. Madhavan on December 6, was recognized by the San Diego World Affairs Council (SD-WAC) at a special ceremony for his lifetime of contribution and dedication to the San Diego-based organization.

Madhavan, a Professor of Economics and Asian Studies Emeritus at San Diego State University, served as the President of the Tamil Nadu Foundation and is a founding member and advisor to the Mingei International Museum. Due to his distinguished legacy of support and community work in the international sphere, The Dr. M.C. Madhavan San Diego World Affairs Council Scholarship Endowment was set up in his honor. It will be used annually to recognize

and support a community college student in the San Diego area.

Madhavan remarked of his award, “I am grateful to my close friends and my sons who contributed to this endowment.”

A five Fulbright Awards recipient, Madhavan has held visiting professor appointments at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras; the National Institute of Bank Management, Poona; the Madras School of Economics, Chennai; the University Putra Malaysia; and for the Harvard University’s Fulbright Teaching Program in Ho Chi Minh City and the University of Law and Economics, Phnom Penh. He is also the recipient of numerous awards, including, Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award and Peace Medal by Morehouse College and Martin Luther King International Chapel



From Left: Christine Sheckler, President of SDWAC, Prof. Madhavan, Dave Edick, former President of SDWAC, and US diplomat, Ambassador Reno Harnish.

and KPBS Television – Union Bank Local Hero Award.

Madhavan has held positions in numerous civic organizations, including the Forum of the Arts (San Diego), and the Mayor’s Advisory Committee on Asia Pacific Islanders. He was a visiting scholar at the International Monetary Fund and at the University of Taipei, Taiwan and at Guangzhou Normal University, China.

Madhavan joined SDWAC, a chapter of the national World Affairs Councils of America, as a member in March 1970 and has served in various capacities there over the years.

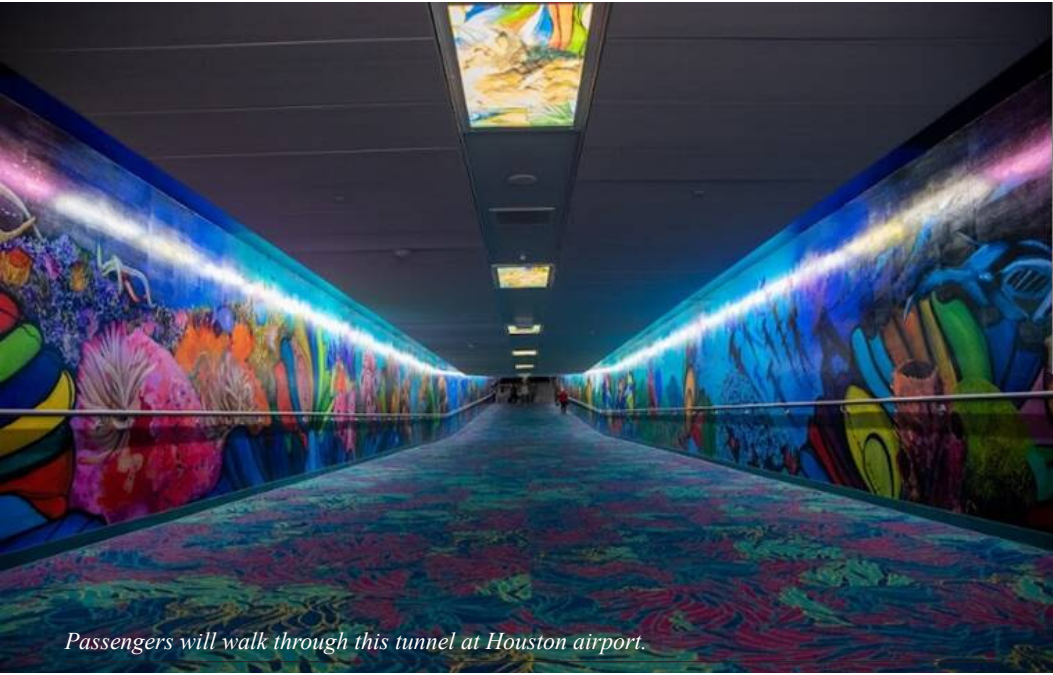
# Janavi’s Aquarium-Like Art Installed At Houston Airport

Contd. from P1

The title pays homage to the constellation Aquarius, the water-bearer. The word “Aquarius” can also be broken down into: “aqua,” representing water and “ri,” inspired by the Hindi word “humari,” which translates to “ours,” and finally “us.” “Taken together, the words signify that water has the power to unite us,” said Mahimtura Folmsbee, “Water is ours -- for all of us!”

This, at a time, when the world is immersed in the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), a framework for diverse stakeholders to co-design and co-deliver solution-oriented research needed for a well-functioning ocean. The tunnel has a

special significance for Mahimtura Folmsbee; it is where she, and countless others, take the flight home to India. “I hope to create a bridge between science and art,” she says. “I want to shine a light on an essential natural resource, marine life, that is in dire need of our help, now more than ever.” Alw ays, drawn to water, Folmsbee’s early life was in Mumbai, a city lapped by the waters of the Indian Ocean, and the place she returned to after studying art in Chicago, IL. She moved later to Houston, where she now lives, and continues to work on marine conservation-related art.



Passengers will walk through this tunnel at Houston airport.

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# SAHARA Gala Focuses On Domestic Violence, Empowerment Of Women



Left: \$100,000 was given by Manu and Rika Shah of MSI and the Sarva Mangal Family Trust. Right: The Tarsadia Foundation was a generous benefactor.



A panel of South Asian speakers discussed the empowerment of women.

India-West Staff Reporter

CERRITOS, CA - The 31st annual gala of SAHARA held here at the Cerritos Sheraton on November 12, drew close to 300 guests in a show of support for valiant survivors of domestic violence and elder abuse in the South Asian Southern California community. So profound was the impact of SAHARA’s assistance and support to these victims that many in the audience were moved to tears by the stories shared by three survivors.

A passionate discussion by an esteemed panel of speakers featuring Dr. Sanchita Banerjee Saxena (BRAC USA), Vandana Tilak (Jupiter 360), Fiza Shah (Developments in Literacy), Sharon An-

gel (author, activist), and moderated by Nimmi Raghunathan (Editor-in-Chief India West) on ‘Empowering Women,’ was the highlight of the evening.

The room bustled with fervor as the pledge drive began. Manu and Rika Shah of MSI and the Sarva Mangal Family Trust, urged everyone present to donate generously to the Affordable Housing Initiative, which would help provide a safe pathway to self-sustainability and renewed independence for those victims who have regained confidence, learned life skills through services provided by SAHARA, and are eager to forge ahead.

The evening ended on a high note with SAHARA’s angels pledging over \$850,000



The board members of SAHARA

with the largest benefactors Manu and Rika Shah and the Tarsadia Foundation, leading compassionate donors.

The Executive Director of SAHARA, Dr. Himesh Lakhani, drew applause as he told the audience of the organization’s successes in providing safe shelter housing, access and referrals to trauma-informed

care, therapy, job opportunities, access to health care, public benefit, immigration, and legal assistance along with daily living essentials.

Just this year alone, he said, SAHARA was able to attend to almost 3,000 helpline calls, offer over 3,670 shelter bed nights, provide 377 clients with healthcare and citizenship services, almost 770 elder clients with social services and participate in over 125 awareness and outreach activities with the community.

SAHARA’s President, Dr. Rubina Najeeb, in her speech, spoke of the organization’s future vision, which includes proper integration of survivors in the community by implementing crucial initiatives, including affordable housing; educational partnerships with colleges and institutions and workforce development to provide access to the job market.

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# TiE SoCal Conducts Flagship Annual TiEcon

India-West Staff Reporter

CERRITOS, CA - TiEcon Southwest 2022, TiE SoCal's annual entrepreneurial conference held at the Sheraton hotel here, on November 13 brought a large number

The sold out event saw over 300 attendees and over 30 exhibitors. TiEcon Southwest 2022 featured several sessions with 15 speakers covering a wide range of topics, including "The Unsold Mindset," "Future Trends in Blockchain,"



of industry experts, Angels, VCs, entrepreneurs and startup founders together, to network and learn from thought leaders on various topics.

'Opportunities for Entrepreneurs in 2023 and beyond', 'State of Chapter Address.'

The opening session of the day,



"The Unsold Mindset" featured Colin Coggins and Garrett Brown, Adjunct Professors of Entrepreneurship University of Southern

California sharing secrets to becoming a great salesperson. Their book "The Unsold Mindset" hits bookshelves in February 2023.

Mangal, Gunjan Bagla and Rohit Kohli who discussed the 'Opportunities for Entrepreneurs in 2023 and beyond' which included a vari-



The women-led panel featuring Yiwen Li, Monisha Coelho, Kalika Gupta, and Maryam Mahdavian discussed the 'Future Trends in Blockchain.' The panel discussed real applications of Blockchain, regulations around this technology, and what it would take to get it to the mainstream.

Scott Fox, founder of Orange County OC Startup Council and Jerry Heikens, executive director of TiE SoCal lead the networking workshop "Networking with purpose". The audience walked away with real tools and tips like knowing your audience, setting your goals, etc. to apply in various situations in the future.

The evening panel comprised Navneet Chugh, John Keisler, Vishal Lakhina, Vandana (Ana)

ety of topics like fields to watch out for, key investment areas, opportunities for young college kids, etc.

TiE Socal "State of the Chapter" with an update on all activities and events from the year was presented by the TiE SoCal President Ashish Saboo. He reflected on the tremendous growth in the membership base, programs, angel investing and various other initiatives. Various program leaders provided their program updates as well.

TiESocal charter member Balaji Rao was specially recognized for being a true connector and ambassador of TiE in the SoCal region. TiE SoCal Charter Member Gaurav Kumar presented a copy of his book "Sales Lessons from Golf."

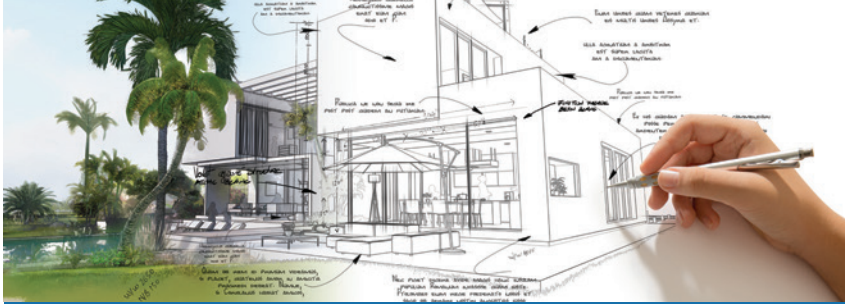
The event ended with dinner and entertainment.

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# Art Event In Irvine Creates Awareness Of South Asian Heritage

India-West Staff Reporter

IRVINE, CA - Saahas for Cause on October 29, held an art event at the Irvine Hindu temple with members of the community in its effort to create awareness of

South Asian culture. The ‘Stop The Hate’ project also aimed at inspiring security and resilience amongst South Asians in the face of discrimination and hate incidents.

Participants painted tiles with symbols and patterns associated

with India – the lotus, elephant, peacock feather, and South Asian male and female faces. The event drew almost 100 people who included both South Asians and those from other communities. The youngest artist was a 5-year-



old boy and the oldest was around 80. From adding bindis to the faces to decorating the elephants as seen during the Dussheera festival, the painted art was an expression of harmony and creativity. Organizers said the tiles would be

given to an Orange County city to create a mural, so the South Asian heritage is visible.

The artists who guided the endeavor were Prerana Kulkarni and Alekhya Sukand. Sahas used the opportunity to talk about its services including its wellness program for seniors, language empowerment program and for victims of domestic violence.

## Parents Striving For Treatment Of Rare Disease Impacting Only Asians



The Kakkar family.

By NEHARIKA SALHOTRA

LOS ANGELES, CA - Cure ADSSL1 is a CA based non-profit organization striving to find a cure for ADSSL1 Myopathy which is a rare neuromuscular disease caused by mutation in the ADSSL1 gene. The impact of this genetic disease on the patients is debilitating with loss of mobility in the legs and arms. As the disease progresses it impacts the heart, lungs, and swallowing muscles leading to the patient becoming dependent on the ventilator and feeding tube.

This organization is run by parents, Naveen and Priyanka Kakkar, whose endeavors come from a very personal and sincere place as both of their children were diagnosed with this rare disease.

Given that there are fewer than 100 currently diagnosed patients of this disease worldwide, and being restricted to the Asian population, pharmaceutical companies have little to no incentive to pursue a cure for ADSSL1 as it falls below their “profitability margin”. So, these parents are taking it upon themselves to directly support and fund researchers in developing a cure.

The team is currently aiming to fund a drug repurposing study in 2023 and get to clinical trials of gene replacement therapy for ADSSL1 by end of 2024. To do so they must raise \$500,000 by March 2023 to fund the pre-clinical stages of research work. Myopathy caused by ADSSL1 gene mutation was first discovered in 2016 in Korea. There is no current treatment available for

this disease and many patients are misdiagnosed with other muscular diseases. However, experts have concluded that given the small size of the ADSSL1 gene that causes this disease, the most ideal cure would be gene replacement therapy.

Cure ADSSL1 and its team of experts has a framework and approach developed in collaboration with the Beggs Lab at Boston Children’s Hospital and a non-profit biotech Cure Rare Disease that seeks to develop the ADSSL1 gene therapy. The organization seeks to raise \$3.5 million in support of the development of this gene therapy.

A rare disease like this can put an enormous burden on patients and their families to manage the symptoms of the disease. Knowing that currently there is no existing treatment further adds a significant level of fear and anxiety to their daily lives. Since Priyanka and Naveen started Cure ADSSL1 in early 2022, many patients and their families from all over the world have reached out to them and set their hopes on Cure ADSSL1 - the only organization worldwide that is working on developing a treatment for this disease. You can learn more about their story at [www.cure-adssl1.org/our-story.html](http://www.cure-adssl1.org/our-story.html)

Cure ADSSL1 is a non-profit that relies on the support of its community’s belief to succeed in its goal for all those facing this disease across the globe. For more information: [Priyanka@cure-adssl1.org](mailto:Priyanka@cure-adssl1.org), or [www.facebook.com/CureADSSL1](http://www.facebook.com/CureADSSL1)

Support them at <https://cure-adssl1-2022.raisedy.com/>

# Ramesh ‘Sunny’ Balwani Of Theranos Sent To Prison



Ramesh Balwani and Elizabeth Holmes in better days.

NEW YORK, NY(IANS) - Ramesh “Sunny” Balwani, head of the blood-testing company Theranos, has been sentenced to almost 13 years in prison after being found guilty of defrauding investors and endangering patients.

Balwani will have to surrender on March 15, 2023 for 155 months, or just under 13 years, in prison.

Last month, Elizabeth Holmes, the founder of Theranos and Balwani’s business partner, was sentenced to 135 months, or over 11 years, in prison. Holmes was convicted for persuading investors that she had developed a revolutionary medical device before the company flamed out after an investigation.

Balwani in July this year was found guilty in a separate trial of 10 counts of wire fraud and two counts of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Unlike Holmes, Balwani was found to have misled both investors and patients.

According to the US Department of

Justice, Balwani, 57, was employed at Theranos from September 2009 through July 2016.

While employed with Theranos, Balwani worked for the company in several capacities, including as a member of the company’s board of directors, as its president, and as its chief operating officer. At trial, the government submitted evidence that while at Theranos, Balwani conspired to commit wire fraud against investors between 2010 and 2015, conspired to commit wire fraud between 2013 and 2016 against patients who paid for Theranos’ blood testing services, and that he committed wire fraud against investors and patients.

Evidence showed that Balwani represented to investors that Theranos would generate over \$100 million in revenues and break even in 2014 and that Theranos expected to generate approximately \$1 billion in revenues in 2015. “In truth, Theranos resorted to using conventional machines bought from third parties to perform much of Theranos’s blood testing and Balwani knew Theranos would generate only negligible or modest revenues in 2014 and 2015,” according to the Justice Department.

# Insanity Plea By Suspect Of Purdue Student Killer

NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - The judge overseeing the case of a student, suspected of murdering his Indian American roommate at Purdue University, has been asked by prosecutors to re-evaluate whether the suspect is fit to stand trial.

Ji Min Sha, a 22-year-old cybersecurity major from South Korea, stabbed Varun Manish Chheda, a Data Science student, inside their first-floor McCutcheon Hall room on October 5. Prosecutors filed their motion last week requesting the Tippecanoe circuit court to vacate its November 14 order that appointed medical professionals to evaluate Sha, The Journal & Courier reported.

The move came after Sha’s attorney Kyle Cray requested the court to appoint psychiatrists, psychologists, or physicians to evaluate whether Sha is competent enough to stand trial, and his sanity at the time of the alleged murder.

Acting upon the request, the judge assigned two medical professionals to determine Sha’s state of sanity at the time of the alleged murder.

Prosecutors argued in their motion that since Sha’s defense failed to provide evidence of incompetency, there was “no ‘reasonable grounds’ (to) have been established to justify appointing doctors to evaluate for competency, the Journal & Courier reported stated.

They also argued that both the doctors did not meet the court’s requirement of being “disinterested” parties.

According to legal experts, compe-



Murdered student Varun Chheda.

tency, or fitness to stand trial refers to a defendant’s ability to understand and rationally participate in legal proceedings to defend himself.

Those found unfit to stand trial are excluded from facing criminal prosecution and the trial is postponed until the person is deemed competent, according to Indiana law.

Prosecutors alleged that Sha stabbed Chheda several times in the head and neck with a folding knife that officers found on the floor near the chair where the 20-year-old’s body was discovered. Sha faces one count of murder for stabbing and is currently being held at the Tippecanoe County Jail.

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# Saahas Stories



## Episode 1

### Sticking up for yourself and your identity



Earlier this year, a South Asian elementary schooler in Orange County experienced a hate incident when her classmate poured water on her head to make fun of her for wearing a hijab. The girl pleaded with her mom not to go back to school, but her mom told her to go and stick up for herself. The girl shared her story with the principal, the classmate was reported, and a school-wide intervention was even held to address the issue and affirm that hate is not tolerated in the school. Since then, no such incident has been reported. We applaud the young girl for sticking up for herself. By protecting her own identity, she is protecting all of ours. And if she can defend her identities, we can too!

We are here for you!



If you would like to report a hate incident or act of discrimination, you can email us at [info@saahasforcause.org](mailto:info@saahasforcause.org) or call us at 562-526-2508

*Saahas Stories* **#STOPTHEHATE**



# In Layoff Season, TCS Says It Is Going To Create 1,200 New Jobs In IL

NAPERVILLE, IL (IANS) - Amid the lay-off season, tech major TCS has announced plans to create 1,200 new jobs in the US by the end of 2024.

The Indian company will create these jobs in IL, along with accelerating its STEM outreach efforts in local schools to cover 25 per cent more students and teachers.

"I am thrilled that TCS will be expanding their footprint in the Land of Lincoln - with over a thousand jobs being added over the next two years," said Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker.

"With their STEM Education Initiatives, the next generation of Illinoisans will be prepared for the innovative jobs of the future - jobs that will transform our state into the premier tech hub in the nation," he added.

More than 3,000 Illinoisans currently work for TCS - including 1,100 who were hired within the last five years.

Naperville is home to one of the 30 TCS facilities in the US where TCS employees help

digitally transform and grow businesses that are cornerstones of the Illinois economy, such as United Airlines and Walgreens Boots Alliance. Suresh Muthuswami, Chairman of North America, TCS, said that the expansion in Illinois is driven by companies "that use these obstacles as an opportunity to transform themselves and capture growth. They are investing to overcome today's challenges and become more resilient for tomorrow".

"TCS is attracting the brightest talent in cloud computing, AI, cybersecurity and other technologies to help them become future-ready enterprises," he added.

TCS has been present in the US for more than 50 years.

Nearly half of the Fortune 500 companies partner with TCS to digitally transform and grow their businesses. The company has hired 512 graduates from Illinois colleges and universities over the past five years, and it is the second-largest recruiter of IT services talent in the country.



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## Crypto Exchange FTX Crash: Nishad Singh Under Scanner



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (IANS) – Indian American Nishad Singh, is being scrutinized for financial practices that caused the collapse of FTX, one of the world's largest cryptocurrency exchanges.

Singh was in the inner circle of FTX's 30-year-old founder, Sam Bankman-Fried.

"Gary Wang (Chief Technology Officer), Nishad and Sam control the code, the exchange's matching engine, and funds," said a person familiar with the matter.

Beleaguered FTX recently admitted that "unauthorized transactions" have drained hundreds of millions of dollars from its wallets, saying the com-

pany has moved many digital assets to a new "cold wallet custodian".

FTX, which has filed for bankruptcy, did not reveal how much it lost in unauthorized transactions, but reports claimed the amount could be as high as \$600 million.

Singh's LinkedIn profile says he attended Crystal Springs Uplands School in CA and graduated summa cum laude from the UC Berkeley in 2017 with a degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science.

Nishad Singh joined Alameda Research, FTX's sister organization which is at the center of the controversy, in December 2017. Before this, he worked as a software engineer at Facebook for close to five months. He moved to FTX in April 2019.

Reuters reported that former FTX CEO Sam Bankman-Fried had secretly transferred \$10 billion of customer funds from FTX to Alameda. Caroline Ellison, CEO of Alameda Research, told employees in a video meeting that she, Sam Bankman-Fried, and two other executives, Nishad Singh and Gary Wang, were aware of the decision to move customer funds.

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# Brown Univ Adds Caste To Non-Discrimination Policy; No Mention Of Hinduism, India

PROVIDENCE, RI (IANS) - The ivy league Brown University has become the latest to act against caste discrimination, joining the California State system, Harvard, and other universities that have targeted the practice.

Brown University avoided any mention of Hinduism or India, and its statement only mentions caste as a practice in South Asia.

The institution announced this month that it was explicitly adding caste to categories like religion, sexual orientation, and color in its institution-wide non-discrimination policy.

The university's Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity, Sylvia Carey-Butler, asserted that as the South Asian population in the US increases, caste discrimination is a growing issue on college and university campuses. "Our nondiscrimination policies exist to ensure we're protecting people and to ensure the University environment is free of hurt and harm," she said. A group of students who helped research the issue said that the addition of caste to the policy "provides a framework for reporting incidents" of discrimination, according to the university.

Carey-Butler said that Brown, with an enrolment of about 10,000, is the first Ivy League university to specifically ban caste discrimination across the board.

Last year, Harvard University's contract with the Graduate Students Union added caste as a "protected category", meaning that its members cannot be discriminated against based on caste status, but it is not a university-wide policy.

Brandeis, a highly regarded university that originated in the Jewish community's struggle against discrimination, likely became in 2019 the first major US university to add caste to its anti-discrimination policy.

In January, the California State University (CSU) system with 23 institutions added caste to its non-discrimination policy under the "race or ethnicity" category and that has been challenged in a federal court by two professors of Indian origin who asserted that anti-discrimination policy itself amounts to discrimination against Indian origin

and Hindu staff and students. Equality Labs in a statement congratulated Brown University for including caste in its anti-discrimination policy and said the anti-caste "movement continues to expand as caste-oppressed students, faculty, and staff stand up and demand an end to caste-based discrimination".



## Chandrika Tandon Thrilled With \$1 Billion Investment In NYU's Tandon School

### India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY - The Tandon School of Engineering, named after Indian American philanthropists Chandrika and Ranjan Tandon at New York University will have a fresh infusion of \$1 billion over the course of the next two decades. The investment, announced by NYU President Andrew Hamilton, aims to improve the ranking of the school as well as help the city itself get recognized as a technology hub.

Chandrika Tandon, who, along with her husband, Ranjan had donated \$100 million to the school in 2015, and was also present at the announcement, tweeted, "Continuing the stunning upward trajectory! So, thrilling!"



The New York Times noted that the investment included \$600 million that was already slated for the school as well as an additional \$400 million in new funds. It said that the investment improved the position of the school

in – the now controversial - U.S. News and World Report ranking from 82 in 2006 to 33 this year.

The university in a statement said it had acquired a 350,000-square-foot building adjacent to the Tandon School and that it aims at recruiting 40 new full-time tenure track faculty, fueling groundbreaking research, and growing and modernizing its Downtown Brooklyn campus. Chandrika was born in Tamil family in Chennai and is the sister of former Pepsi CEO Indra Nooyi. She established Tandon Capital Associates in 1992 and in her storied career also lays claim to musical excellence having been nominated for the Grammy awards.

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## Blind Columbia Univ Prof. Sheena Iyengar Sued For Gender Discrimination



Professor Sheena Iyengar.

### India-West News Desk

NEW YORK, NY - A graduate of Columbia University has charged her former professor and best-selling author, Sheena Iyengar, with gender discrimination.

Elizabeth Blackwell, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology from Columbia University in 2017, says Iyengar, who is blind, assigned her with "demeaning female" tasks like applying her makeup and booking

restaurants for her dates.

Blackwell's lawsuit says that as a research associate with Iyengar, she was given "personal and supportive" jobs since they were "better suited" for the "female gender" but her male peer "encountered none of the obstacles that Ms. Blackwell was forced to overcome," and instead were assigned research duties despite those tasks being unrelated to his job description.

Blackwell, whose contract was terminated by the university, has claimed that after this, she has found it difficult to land a job and that she had to deal with several mental health-related issues such as depression, anxiety, and insomnia. Iyengar is part of the faculty at Columbia Business School and is the author of the best-selling "The Art of Choosing". When Blackwell's contract was terminated in 2019, she had said, "If there was discrimination in this office, it was, it is, the discrimination that I felt as a blind professor who was being perpetually bullied by my employee and does not accommodate the very needs of this position."

## EDUCATION

## UNC Charlotte Allows Sikhs To Wear Kirpan On Campus

CHARLOTTE, NC (IANS) - The University of North Carolina, Charlotte, has updated its 'Weapons on Campus' policy to allow Sikh students to wear a kirpan, on campus.

The move comes about two months after a Sikh student at the university was arrested on campus for wearing the ceremonial dagger.

According to the updated policy, the university will allow students to wear kirpans on campus if the blade length is under 3 inches and is "worn close to the body in a sheath at all times".

The university also said other religious accommodations, including a request to wear a larger kirpan, can be made to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

"The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, with support from Institutional Integrity, also conducted additional awareness training this week with our police department and will continue its work to expand our cultural education and training opportunities for all of campus," a university statement, released this week, read.

In its statement, the university thanked Sikh leaders, including nonprofit organizations -- The Sikh Coalition and the Global Sikh



The matter first came to light when the student uploaded a video on Twitter and said that the police had handcuffed him for refusing to let the officer remove his kirpan. De-

Council -- who provided expertise and perspective to help with the policy change.

"We will continue to use this incident as an opportunity for learning and growth for our community," said the statement, signed by Chancellor Sharon L. Gaber and Chief Diversity Officer Brandon L. Wolfe.

The ruling was effective immediately, the university, which had apologized for the incident, said.

A week after the September 22 incident, the university had shared a list of planned actions, including providing support and resources to the students affected by the event.

It mentioned changing the school's policy and providing additional education and training.

scribing his suffering, the student wrote, "I wasn't going to post this, but I don't think I will receive any support from @unccharlotte. I was told someone called 911 and reported me, and I got cuffed for 'resisting' because I refused to let the officer take my kirpan out of the miyaan."

The video, which was seen by more than 21,00,000 people, amassed 56,000 likes and several comments in support on social media. The amritdhari, or baptized, Sikhs are required to carry five articles of the faith -- kesh (uncut hair), kara (steel bracelet), kanga (small comb), kachera (under-shorts) and a kirpan (resembling a knife or sword).

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# Indian Americans Help Warnock Win in Georgia

India-West News Desk

ATLANTA, GA - The final piece of the US 2022 midterm election fell into place on December 6 night with Democratic incumbent Raphael Warnock narrowly securing his re-election to the Senate giving his party a firm grip on the chamber in two years of divided government

that will kick in next January. Warnock, a pastor, closed the run-off race with 51.4 percent of the votes to Walker's 48.6 percent. South Asians for America (SAFA) was quick to point out it had helped turn out the AAPI vote in an unprecedented manner over the last three weeks to help reelect Warnock. Partnering with the Democratic Party of Georgia, Gwinnett County



Coordinated Campaign Office, and coalition groups nationwide, SAFA said it began organizing immediately after the 2022 midterm elections, launching its first coalition phonebank to Georgia AAPI voters just two days after the midterm elections. SAFA launched a multi-pronged organizing strategy that included a texting campaign, multiple canvass events, lit drops, and postcard campaigns. Several volunteers flew down to GA, SAFA said. "As an organization, we have been laser-focused on building a national movement. This was clearly visible vis-a-vis the impact we have had on the ground in Georgia. After transitioning from South Asians for Biden and founding South Asians for America, I did not anticipate that SAFA, an entirely volunteer-led organization, would grow to become one of the most impactful political organizing forces to mobilize the South Asian community in the United States in only a year and a half. I'm proud of the fact that we have built coalitions in virtually every state, and it is through the strength of those coalitions that we are able to amplify our outreach to South Asian and AAPI communities across the country, including Georgia," said Neha Dewan, National Director, SAFA. Trump, who has announced a third run for the White House, is being blamed for the poor showing by the Republican party, his continued baseless claims of losing in a rigged election, and his backing of candidates of questionable winnability. Midterm polls have been historically brutal for the party in control of the White House. Democrats were helped by a national outrage at a US Supreme Court decision overturning decades of constitutional protection for abortion, which galvanized the party and many independent voters, even in solidly GOP strongholds. (with inputs from IANS)

## Pro-Trumper Harmeet Dhillon Announces Run For GOP Leadership

India-West News Desk

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Harmeet Dhillon, a Sikh American and a former Trump campaign attorney has announced she will challenge Ronna McDaniel to head the Republican National Committee (RNC). She made the announcement official on Fox News's "Tucker Carlson Tonight." With the California lawyer throwing her hat in the ring, the contest for RNC head will be a three-cornered one. MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell had previously announced he would be running on former Trump confidant Stephen Bannon's podcast. Waiting in the wings is NY Congressman Lee Zeldin who has indicated he is considering a run too. The challenge for McDaniel comes after the poor showing of the GOP in the midterm elections where the expected 'red wave' did not happen. Dhillon on Fox, said, "Republicans are tired of losing,

and I think that that we really need to radically reshape our leadership in order to win. We can't keep running elections like we did in the '90s and the 2000s, and we really have to modernize to compete with the Democrats dollar for dollar in the ways they fundraise, the way they deliver their ballots to the ballot boxes." Dhillon served as a legal adviser in Trump's campaign in 2020. When her boss lost to Joe Biden, and he was making unsubstantiated voter fraud claims, she called on the Supreme Court to intervene and asked Trump-nominated Justice Amy Comey Barrett to do her bit. She has been vocal in her right-wing opinions which she airs regularly on Fox News. She has been noticed in California for her conspiratorial theories on the brutal attack on the aged husband of Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Dhillon has previously run for the CA Assembly and CA Senate and lost.

# In Their Own Diversity, Indian Americans Represent A Vibrant, Diverse America

WASHINGTON, DC - "I especially want to thank the young people of this nation... who voted in record numbers," said President Joe Biden in a briefing with reporters November 9 calling the November 8 mid-term election outcome a "good day for democracy."

The expected red wave had not happened, 2020 election deniers had been stymied in several places and the winning candidates showed a remarkable diversity. Also, on November 8 night 141 women of color, over 50 under the age of 45, and a slew of LGBTQ candidates won races that ranged from state offices to local councils. Exit polling from the Associated Press showed Democrats with a solid lead over Republicans among voters of color. Republicans however did see continued gains among Latinos. Democrats were also heavily favored among younger voters, with important implications for the 2024 presidential race as more young people reach voting age. Within the Indian American community of candidates who won seats in state houses, too, there was diversity - Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians - and almost all Democrats:



Kevin Olickal - Winners include the elder statesman of Indian Americans in politics Kumar Barve, 64, who created waves when he was first elected to the MD legislature and joked that people were still figuring out who he was as his name rhymed with then-Democratic Presidential candidate Al Gore. - Along with Nabeela Syed, Kevin Olickal became the other South Asian to get elected to the IL State Legislature from District 16. At 29, Olickal, the son of immigrants from Kerala, is a part-time law student. - In the blue wave that swept MI, former East Lansing Mayor, Sam Singh has been elected to the State Senate from District 28, and Ranjeev Puri, reelected from District 21. - Dr. Megan Srinivas who chaired Iowa's Biden-Harris Covid Response Council in 2020, was sent by voters in District 30 to the IA legislature. She is the second Asian American woman to serve in this office after Swati Dandekar. - "Thank you, Rochester! I look forward to serving you for another term in the state senate," tweeted State Senator Jeremy Cooney of NY, whose state was stunned with seats flipping GOP. Kevin Thomas, the first Indian American to be elected to the NY State Senate too survived the fallout of GOP redistricting and was reelected. Jennifer Rajkumar swept back into office in a landslide from Assembly District 38. Zohran Mamdani, ran

unopposed and won again from the 36th District. Mamdani is the son of film maker Mira Nair. - The NH legislature will have Latha Mangipudi for a sixth term. Mangipudi has served on various commissions and committees through the years. - Manka Dhingra won a third term to the WA Senate. - Vandana Slatter, is back in the WA House from District 48. The healthcare professional was first elected in 2020. - Ash Kalra, representing CA's 25th District, was re-elected to his fourth term in the Assembly while Jasmeet Kaur Bains, became the first Sikh woman in CA's state house. - Dr. Anita Somani won a seat in OH's Assembly from the 11th District. - Jay Chaudhuri and Mujtaba Mohammed, both incumbents of the NC State Legislature won their re-election bids easily. - Kesha Ram Hinsdale daughter of a Punjabi father and a Jewish American mother retained her VT seat. - Sabi Kumar, in TN, won for the GOP a seat in TN. The Republican doctor, retained the seat from District 66 which he had first won in 2015.

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WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - Putting an end to speculation of entering the House Democratic leadership race, Indian American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal said she will run for re-election as Congressional Progressive Caucus Chair. Jayapal also said that she would be endorsing President Joe Biden running for a second term in 2024.

The first Indian American woman to serve in the US House of Representatives, she was re-elected to her fourth term in Congress during the November 8 midterm polls.

"I am writing with humility, intentionality, and excitement to ask for your support to serve a second term as Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus," the 57-year-old

wrote in a letter to her colleagues.

The leader of the Congressional Progressive Caucus told CNN that as Democrats craft their new leadership slate, she wants to make sure that "progressives are given their seat at the table". She argued that progressives should be delivered in the 2022 mid-terms and with the agenda of the current Congress, and she wants to make sure "that is appreciated and front and center".

The report added that Jayapal helped progressives to negotiate directly with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who had to navigate a narrow House majority, and President Biden. She thus made progressives a powerful force in Congress by leveraging



their positions. Backing Biden for the 2024 presidential race, Jayapal told Politico that the 80-year-old President understands that "progressive issues are popular."

"He was not my first or second choice for President, but I am a convert," Jayapal told Politico on November 21. "I never thought I would say this, but I believe he should run for another term and finish this agenda we laid out," she added. Jayapal's endorsement for Biden stands in opposition to many other Democrats who believe that a fresh face is needed for the 2024 party ticket. Fifty percent of Democratic voters say Biden should be the party nominee in 2024 and deserves re-election, according to a USA Today/Ipsos poll, which was released last week.



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Tulsi Gabbard  
Joins Fox News



NEW YORK, NY (IANS) - A month after leaving the Democratic party, calling it an 'elitist cabal of warmongers', former HI congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard has joined Fox News as a paid contributor.

A Fox News representative confirmed to the Los Angeles Times that Gabbard signed a deal starting this week and will start appearing on its programs next week.

Gabbard, who served in the House from 2013 to the end of 2020, ran an unsuccessful White House campaign in the 2020 Democratic primary. The first Hindu American in Congress, Gabbard has been critical of the Biden administration over its handling of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

During the November 2022 mid-terms, she endorsed and campaigned for Republican politicians, including 2020 election-defying gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake and Senate candidate Blake Masters.

On November 14, she guest-hosted Tucker Carlson Tonight on Fox News. A military veteran, Gabbard has said Russia had "legitimate security concerns" regarding Ukraine becoming a member of NATO.



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DHANURMASA CELEBRATIONS 2022

Thursday, December 15th, 2022 to Friday, January 13th, 2023

6:30AM – 7AM: Daily Suprabhata Seva,  
7AM – 8:30 AM: Thiruvardhana, Archana, Tirupallaichi, Thiruppavai, Sattumurai /  
Gosthi Seva Kaalam, Nivedhana, Mangala harathi, Theertha Prasadam

Every Friday (16th, 23th, 30th December 2022 and 6th, and 13th January 2023)

6PM – 6:30PM: Vishnu Sahasranama Parayana Group Chanting  
6:30PM: Godha Kumkumarchana, Mangala Harathi followed by Dinner Prasad

Thursday, 13th January, 2023  
6:30PM – 8:30PM: Sri Godha Ranganadha Kalyanam Followed by Archana, Aarti, Dinner Prasad

New Year's Eve, New Year and  
Vaikuntha Ekadasi Celebrations

31st Dec 2022 & 1st Jan 2023

PROGRAM DETAILS:  
SATURDAY, 31st DECEMBER, 2022  
9PM – 1AM Abhishekam, Alankaram to all presiding deities, Bhajan, kirtan, and First Archana & First Darshan of the year 2023 and followed by Aarati  
SPONSORSHIP- Abhishekam to all deities – 108\$  
9PM – 12AM Bhajan Sandhya by Pundit Sidharth Pathak and team.  
SUNDAY, 1st JANUARY, 2023  
6:30AM Temple open and Dhanurmasa puja  
9AM – 10PM Archanas (in group) for every 30 mns. Last archana at 9:00 PM  
Sponsor – One Archana 21\$ (Pay at temple)  
12PM – 2PM Lunch prasad  
4PM – 6PM Sri Venkateswara Kalyanam – 116\$  
6:30PM – 8PM Sri Pushpa Yagam (Observing Vaikuntha Ekadashi) – 75\$  
6PM – 9PM Dinner Prashad

Vaikuntha Ekadasi Celebrations 2022

Sunday, 1st January, 06:30 Am to 8:00 AM and 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM:

PROGRAM DETAILS:  
6:30AM – 7AM: Sreevari Suprabhatam  
7AM – 7:30AM: Procession along with Lord Venkateswara, Uttara Dwara Puja and Pravesam  
7:30AM – 8:30AM Sri Devi -Bhoo Devi sameta  
Sri Prasanna Venkateswara Snapana, Tirumanjanam (Abhishekam), Tiruppaavai, Sevakalam, Archana & Mangalasashanam  
6:15PM – 6:30PM Sankalpam for Sri Pushpa Yagam  
6:30PM – 8:30PM Sri Pushpa Yagam (offering 100,000 Flowers) to The Lord Venkateswara and chanting of Vishnu Sahasra Nama in group  
8:30PM – 9:30PM Maha Mangala Aarati, teertha prasada vitarana, followed by Dinner prasad.

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- Holy Matrimony

January 13th, 2023  
@ 06:30 PM



PROGRAM DETAILS:  
6:30 PM Sri Goda Ranga-  
natha Swamy  
Kalyanotsavam  
8:30 PM –Maha Mangala  
Aarti followed  
by dinner prasad  
SPONSORSHIP DETAILS  
Kalyanotsavam: \$116.00

DECEMBER 2022 CALENDAR

DATE	POOJA/EVENT & DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY	TIME	AMOUNT
December 15th - Sunday	Matatrava Ekadashi - Samoohika Satvannaravana Vratam	Puja	6:30 PM	\$54
December 20th - Tuesday	Bhouma Pradosham	Abhishekam	6:15 PM	\$54
December 27th - Tuesday	Skanda Sashti	Abhishekam	6:15 PM	\$54
December 31st - Saturday	New Year's Eve - Sarva Devata Abhishekam - See special fiver for New Year's Eve and New Year's Dav Program	Abhishekam	9:00 PM - 1:00 .AM (next day)	

SPONSORSHIP:

Nitya sankalpam for the whole month & Godhakalyanam: \$301, Only Godha Kalyanam: (Jan 13th): \$116  
Nitya sankalpan per day: \$21, Godha Devi mala samarpanam per day: \$26



## Nikki Haley: Presidential Bid Decision Over Holidays



Nikki Haley (R) is weighing her options.

### India-West News Desk

CLEMSON, SC – At her alma mater here on November 30, the former Governor of South Carolina governor Nikki Haley said she would make a decision on her run for the White House in 2024.

At Clemson University, the Republican, who has been teasing and toying with the idea ever since she left the Trump administration but also pledging she would not run if Donald Trump did, said if she were to run, she would go into it with full commitment.

With many in the GOP seeing

Trump as a drag on the party, including Fox News, it would seem Haley is viewing this as an opportunity and that it wouldn't taint her as a traitor with the base for reneging on her promise to Trump to sit aside if he were in the running.

At Clemson, she avoided blaming him for the poor mid-term showing. In the recent polls, she had campaigned in GA for the Trump-endorsed Herschel Walker against Democrat Raphael Warnock for the Senate seat there, creating a row when she said Warnock needed to be deported.

## Ami Bera Running To Be Democratic Party Campaign Chief

### India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Ami Bera (D-CA) is running for his party's campaign arm. The upcoming presidential election in 2024 is again being seen as a critical one for democracy and the state of US politics.

Bera has written to party colleagues making his case to be elected chairperson of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee citing his efforts as the head of its frontline program that helped vulnerable party candidates blunting the Republican margin in the midterms.

The committee works to elect party members to the House and its head, who ranks sixth in the party's hierarchy in the House, wields considerable influence.

He noted that the party, in the midterms, had "flipped several Red to Blue seats and we broadened and strengthened our base through historic turnout from young voters."

Bera cast himself as "the best choice" to lead the DCCC and said he would strive to be "a unifying bridge across districts and members, and said, "As a first generation Indian



Congressman Ami Bera.

American, I understand the strength of our diversity.

The Congressman has run nail biting races to get to office and he referred to that,

"I know what it takes to win in a competitive race and how to communicate with a wide constituency," Bera wrote to his peers. "Many of the practices that my office and campaign implemented and honed are now part of the programs that many of you use."

Bera also touted his fundraising ability, noting that he has raised

or donated nearly \$500,000 for Democratic members and candidates this cycle, and helped the DCCC raise \$1.4 million for itself and more than \$3.8 million to use in frontline and Republican-held districts that Democrats sought to flip. This cycle's DCCC chief, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-NY), lost his own reelection bid last week.

Bera's opponent will be Congressman Tony Cárdenas also from CA, who has announced his bid for the DCCC post again after running and losing to Maloney previously.

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# Biden Backs Bill Scrapping Country Limits For Green Cards; Will Help Indians

WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - President Joe Biden has thrown his weight behind legislation to speed up immigration that will help Indians and is expected to come up in the House of Representatives soon and relieve the 90-year waiting period for some.

The proposed legislation, if adopted, would end the country caps, which limit the number of Green Cards or permanent resident status, leading to citizenship that can be issued to each country every year at 20,000, except for some immediate family members and for Mexicans and Canadians.

This will make the employment-based Green Card system merit-based without regard to nationality.

Calling it an effort to ameliorate the “the harsh effects of the immigrant visa backlog”, the President’s Executive Office expressed support for the legislation’s “goal of allowing US employers to focus on hiring immigrants based on merit, not their birthplace, by eliminating the per-country limitation on employment-based immigrant visas (Green Cards)”.

Paving the way for the adoption of the legislation known as EAGLE Act -- short for Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment -- the House Rules Committee on Monday approved sending it to the House for a vote and the House cleared on December 6 the procedure for voting on it.

If it is passed by the House, it will have



President Biden has paved the way for the adoption of the legislation known as EAGLE Act.

to get the approval of the Senate where a similar bill proposed by Republican Kevin Cramer and Democrat John Hickenlooper is pending. In a race against time, the two versions of the bill will have to be reconciled and get final approvals before Congress ends its current session.

Similar legislation was passed by the House in 2019 and another version of it in 2020, but it died when the two chambers did not have time to reconcile the differ-

ences in their versions of the bill before the end of the session.

There are 3,69,000 Indians waiting for Green Cards based on their employment and a total of 7,00,000 including family but cannot get them because of the country caps and are trapped in the limbo of unrealistic waits.

The latest State Department statement on Green Cards shows that applicants from April 2012 were only now eligible to get them.

The waiting time is expected to grow to 90

years as the pipeline swells with more eligible applicants, according to the Cato Institute think-tank, which called it “an impossibly long wait”.

Nearly 2,15,000 people who are waiting for their Green Cards will die before their turn to get them and more than 99 per cent of them will be Indians, it said.

Meanwhile, many countries do not use up their quota, letting their allocations go to waste.

The legislation sponsored by California Democrat Zoe Lofgren and co-sponsored by 83 others from both parties aims to gradually eliminate the country caps over a nine-year transition period.

It will also set aside Green Cards on a priority basis for nurses and physiotherapists to meet an urgent need for them.

Reform of the H1B visa system, which grants temporary work permits for highly qualified workers, would also be reformed under the legislation to make the process more transparent and to

ensure that American citizens have access to the jobs offered to foreigners.

The legislation also seeks to allow those waiting in the visa backlog for two years to file their formal green Card applications while they wait so they can continue working when their temporary work permits expire and change employers or start businesses.

This would also ensure that their children do not lose Green Card eligibility when they turn 21.

# China Military Base At Indian Border: Raja Calls For Expanded US Cooperation

## India-West News Desk

WASHINGTON, DC – In response to a new report that the People’s Liberation Army has constructed a military outpost at

Pangong Tso, a lake extending across the Line of Actual Control between the People’s Republic of China and India, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said

it was, “another disturbing sign of Beijing’s growing regional aggression.”

Raja, (D-IL) said, “As the Chinese Communist Party’s domestic

repression, brutal persecution of Uyghurs, and online misinformation efforts continue to escalate, so too do the signs of its growing international military aggression stretch from India to the Taiwan Strait. In the face

of these belligerent ambitions, it is imperative that the United States maintains and expands our security and intelligence cooperation with allies and partners to send the clear messages that the United States stands with India, Taiwan, and democracies across the region in the face of the Chinese Communist Party’s rising aggression.”

His statement comes in the wake of a report by Politico that China has built a military outpost near its disputed border



Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi

with India, a move, it said signals Beijing’s intentions for a long-term deployment at the global flashpoint. Satellite images obtained by the Center for Strategic and International Studies’ China Power project and shared with NatSec Daily, Politico reported, show China has constructed a garrison to house troops at Pangong Tso. CSIS has said China, “based on the size of the outpost and the level of activity.”

In a detailed blog post, CSIS says China in May 2020 started construction on permanent facilities which is now complete. The buildings. CSIS said are surrounded by trenches and equipment and weapons-storage areas, and the outpost also appears to host a full company of armored personnel carriers. All that could “prove critical in a future skirmish or conflict with India,” it said. It would also help China enforce its crackdowns on Xinjiang and Tibet.

# China Warned US Not to Interfere in Border Relations



WASHINGTON, DC (IANS) - A Pentagon report revealed that China has warned the US not to interfere with Beijing’s relationship with India.

Throughout the 2020-2021 standoff in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh, Chinese officials sought to downplay the severity of the crisis, emphasizing Beijing’s intent to preserve border stability and prevent the standoff from harming other areas of its bilateral relationship with India, the report said.

It further said that China seeks to prevent border tensions from causing India to partner more closely with the US.

Throughout 2021, the People’s Liberation Army sustained the deployment of forces and continued infrastructure build-up along the Line of Actual Control.

Negotiation made minimal

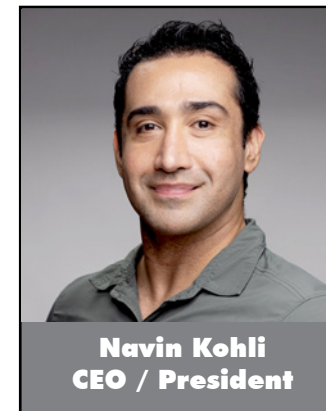
progress as both sides resist losing perceived advantages on the border.

Beginning in May 2020, China and Indian forces faced off in clashes with rocks, batons, and clubs wrapped in barbed wire at multiple locations along the LAC. The resulting standoff triggered the buildup of forces on both sides of the disputed border, said the Pentagon report.

Each country demanded the withdrawal of the other’s forces and a return to pre-standoff conditions, but neither China nor India agreed on those conditions.

China blamed the standoff on Indian infrastructure construction, which it perceived as encroaching on Chinese territory, while New Delhi accused Beijing of launching aggressive incursions into India’s territory.

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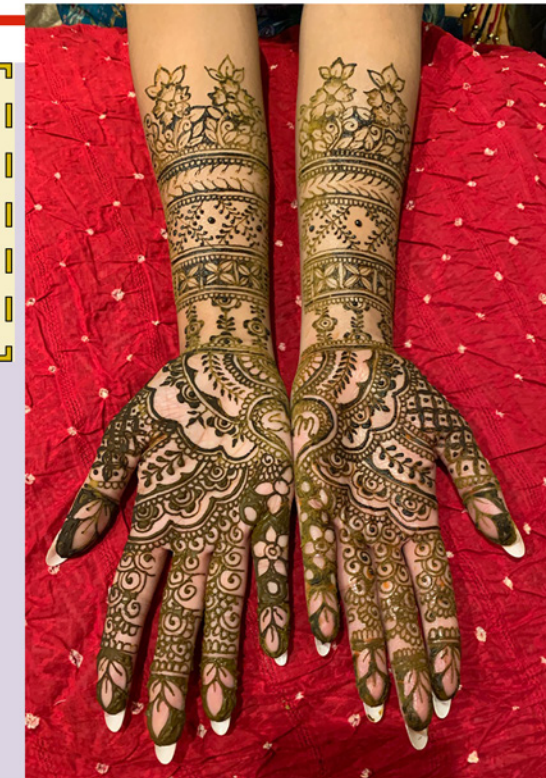
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## Mental Health Support: Surgeon General Vivek Murthy Teams Up With 'Calm'

### India-West Staff Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Calm and U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy are teaming up to help ease end-of-year stress for Americans across the country. As part of the campaign, Murthy has released "Mindfulness Tools," a mindfulness content series with Calm designed to offer mental health support.

The content series - available for free on YouTube and Calm - includes five sessions to support people through real-life experi-



ences and emotions. "Access to mental health support is vital to our overall well-being," said Murthy in a statement. "During my travels across the country as Surgeon General, I've heard firsthand about the mental health struggles

and loneliness that people are facing. While the pandemic brought the issues of stress, anxiety, and loneliness to the forefront, these struggles existed long before COVID-19. Easy-to-use mental health tools and practices can help families address stress and strengthen one of the most powerful sources of healing - our relationships with one another."

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## Actor Dev Joshi To Join SpaceX Moon Mission



MUMBAI, (IANS) - The phrase "To the moon and back" could prove true for actor Dev Joshi, who is known for his work on the television show "Baalveer". Joshi is the youngest among the 7 people who will fly to the moon in 2023 in a SpaceX flight.

The actor was selected from one million applicants from 249 countries for the first civilian mission to

the moon bankrolled by Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa, who bought every seat for the lunar expedition.

The winners were announced on Twitter and the dear Moon website. Dev has been in the entertainment industry since he was three and has done several television series. He has also worked in Gujarati regional cinema with more than 20 movies to his credit. The actor, who started his journey in 2010, has also worked on music albums, stage shows and commercials. He is currently pursuing a Master's in International Affairs and Diplomacy from the United Nations Institute of Training and Research.

## India Discontinues Suvidha Forms

Contd. from P1

the passengers be fully vaccinated. It was also preferable that all precautionary measures for Covid, including the use of masks and social distancing at airports, continue.

The Indian aviation ministry, however, added a statutory warning that the rule could be reinstated if the Covid situation demanded it.

The form on the aviation min-

istry's Air Suvidha portal was mandatory for those traveling to India, including of course Indian Americans. In it, passengers had to declare their vaccination status, including the number of doses received and their dates.

India said the decision was taken in line with the government's policy of a graded approach to Covid-19 management.

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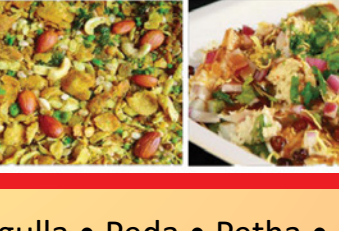

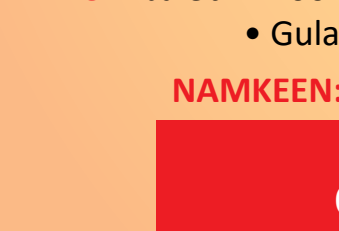
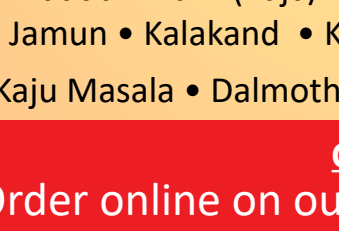


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# US Diplomats In Delhi Are Driving Personalized Auto-Rickshaws

NEW DELHI, (ANI) - Leaving behind their bullet-proof vehicles, four US woman diplomats have taken to the streets of Delhi with their “personalized auto-rickshaws” in their “out-of-the-box” diplomacy style.

Ann L.Mason, Ruth Holmberg, Shareen J Kitterman, and Jennifer Bywater drive their black and pink three-wheelers by driving themselves to work, including ‘official trips’. These diplomats have taken to the common man’s commute not just for fun, but also to set an example.

“From Detroit to my auto rickshaw, I’ve had a lifelong love of vehicles and so everywhere I’ve been there’s been something special about a vehicle but really none more special in my opinion than an autorickshaw. When I was in Pakistan, before coming to India, I was in armored vehicles, and they were big, beautiful vehicles. But I would always look out on the street, and I would see the autorickshaws going by and I always wanted to be in the autorickshaw. So, when I got to India and had the opportunity to buy one, I took it immediately”, said Mason. Her personalized black autorickshaw has a Bluetooth device and a curtain printed with the image of a tiger. She has taken special care to personalize her autorickshaw, nicknamed KITT, in homage to the 1980s show “Knight Rider”.

Kitterman, who also happens to be born in Karnataka, flaunts her pink autorickshaws with flower magnets, said that she was inspired by the Mexican Ambassador



The humble auto rickshaw has supplanted armored cars for a select number of US diplomats in New Delhi.

who too had an auto with a driver. She has also tied colorful tassels to both sides of her auto and stuck flags of the United States and India near the windshield. “When I was in the US planning to come to New Delhi, I’d heard about the Mexican Ambassador. Ten years ago, she had an auto, and she had a driver. That’s when I started thinking about it. When I came here, I saw Ann who had an auto, so when I own an auto, I want to drive it. So, that was my whole goal”, said Kitterman.

“It’s truly an honor to be able to serve my adopted country in the country of my birth. All my experiences growing up in India and

then being an immigrant in US and then naturalizing and becoming a diplomat are all the various experiences that I feel I bring to my personal and professional life. I get involved in many projects because I feel like I can truly form that bridge. I do understand the Indian way of thinking and functioning, and I also understand the American way. So, one of the simple things I’ve done in the embassy is a lot of work notices, management notices used to be published in English only and now we publish both in English and Hindi. I think it’s my way, and our embassy’s way of showing respect for the culture and language of the local staff

as well as in the host country”, added Kitterman.

Discovering the hustle and bustle of the city, Holmberg with her ‘black beauty’, goes to the market and meets people, which she called her way of ‘diplomacy’. “I enjoy driving the auto very much and I love it when other women see that I am driving it and I like that they see this possibility for them as well. For me, diplomacy is not all that high level. Diplomacy is people meeting people, people getting to know each other, and getting a chance to build relationships and that’s what I can do with the auto. I meet people every day. On my way from my work, going to the market. I know the vendors in my area, and I know people in the market. They are all excited to see me at the market with the auto. They come and introduce themselves and with that, I am able to build that one-on-one relationship and I think that is a very important part of diplomacy.”

Explaining the experience of her journey, Bywater said that she got to see the good side of the people on the road who helped her and you need to have fun and be brave enough to think out of the box. “When I got to be in Delhi, I met Ann and after riding in her auto, I decided that I needed this vehicle too. I get to see the local perspective, more of humanity. Some of the people have helped me since I started driving the auto-rickshaw and so I saw the good side of the people in Delhi” said Bywater.

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## Sundar Pichai Gets Padma Bhushan

Contd. from P1  
ceiving the Padma Bhushan, India's highest civilian honor, from India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, in San Francisco.

Pichai, was born in Madurai and grew up in Chennai. Pichai completed schooling in Jawahar Vidyalaya Senior Secondary School in Ashok Nagar, Chennai and completed Class 12 from Vana Vani school at IIT Madras. Pichai completed B. Tech in metallurgical engineering from IIT Kharagpur.

Moving to the US, he attained an MS from Stanford University in materials science and engineering and further attained an MBA from the Wharton School of the Univer-



Sundar Pichai was given the honor by the Indian Ambassador Sandhu. Seen above also Consul General Dr. T.V. Nagendra Prasad.

sity of Pennsylvania. Pichai was selected to become the next CEO of Google on August 10, 2015. He was appointed to the Alphabet Board of Directors in 2017.

In December 2019, Google's co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin stepped down and Pichai also took over as parent company Alphabet's CEO.



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## Pottery Barn Taps Deepika As Its Global Ambassador



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (IANS) - Pottery Barn, a portfolio brand of Williams-Sonoma, Inc. the world's largest digital-first, design-led and sustainable home retailer, announced December 9 a global partnership with India's iconic international celebrity and star, Deepika Padukone.

The actor, entrepreneur, and philanthropist has been signed as a brand ambassador to promote Pottery Barn's international expansion which began with the opening of the company's first retail location in September in Delhi. As a brand ambassador for Pottery Barn, Padukone will also work closely with the brand to co-create a collection.

"I've always been fascinated with spaces and my passion for interior design is no secret!" said Deepika

Padukone. "I am therefore thrilled to be collaborating with global home furnishing leader Pottery Barn and look forward to creating timeless pieces together!"

"We are excited to partner with global icon Deepika Padukone," said Pottery Barn. "Deepika's passion for home design and timeless sense of style resonate with Pottery Barn fans worldwide and through our collaboration launching in 2023, customers will have the opportunity to bring Pottery Barn's coveted designs infused with Deepika's signature style into their own homes." As a global leader in the home furnishings industry, Pottery Barn, headquartered here, is known for sustainability, service and providing quality products that are crafted to last.

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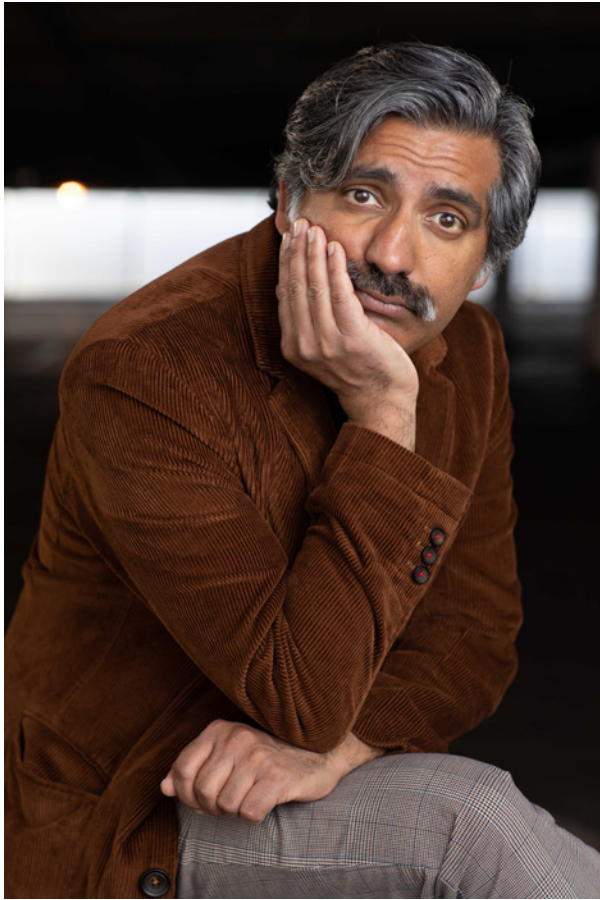


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'Four Samosas' marks Ravi Kapoor's second directorial feature.

By REENA RATHORE

LOS ANGELES, CA - Just like samosas range in shape, size, and ingredients, the characters in Indian American director Ravi Kapoor's new film – named after the delectable snack – take on different forms during its run time and are able to beguile fans at every turn. With an endearing sto-

# 'Four Samosas' of Ravi Kapoor: Equal Parts Of Sweet and Savory

ryline and a strong Indian American ensemble cast, led by Venk Potula, Kapoor is able to follow up his brilliant debut, "Miss India America," with something equally remarkable.

Set in an area called Little India in Artesia, CA, "Four Samosas" begins with wannabe rapper Vinny (Potula) – who employs his rapping skills to make sales pitches for sarees – learning about his ex-girlfriend Rina's (Summer Bishil) wedding. To add insult to injury, she chooses poop-peddling entrepreneur and his arch-nemesis Sanjay, played by Karan Soni of "Deadpool" fame, over him.

Still nursing a broken heart and blaming the heartbreak

for marring his confidence and creativity, Vinny attempts to disrupt Rina's wedding by cobbling together a plan to break into her father's (Tony Mirrcandani) grocery store and steal the jar of "dirty diamonds" meant for her dowry. Helping him in his endeavor is a motley crew comprising malcontent immigrant engineer Paru (Sonal Shah); Anjali, a resourceful newspaper editor but also a

daydreamer (Sharmita Bhattacharya); and Bollywood aspirant Zak (Nirvan Patnaik), who is employed at the local Chaat House.

Will he be able to pull off this heist or will this act bring in more misery?

Kapoor, who was stuck in that typical filmmaker struggle of trying to get that second feature off the ground, eventually realized that he had compromised his voice trying to go bigger and more commercial. And so, he decided it was time to adhere to his creative instincts and to go local.

"I really wanted to make a film that leaned into a hyper theatrical style and that was fun and quirky, something that would express my off-the-wall sensibilities, and doing a heist film like 'Four Samosas' definitely allowed us to tick all of those boxes," Kapoor told India-West.

As the film progresses, the quartet of friends, with their goofy nature, manage to charm their way into the viewer's heart. Kapoor, on his part, has created a seamless mix of genres, moving deftly from the tried-and-tested heist genre to his own brand of humor, with romance elements and Bollywood dance numbers used as a garnish, creating a story that's universal in appeal.

And injecting his own style into genres is what gets him going, Kapoor mentioned, saying that "I'm interested to see how I can subvert the genre expectations and put my

own twist on them."

This Wes Anderson-inspired drama, which was acquired by IFC Films after its debut at Tribeca Film Festival, is relatable and humorous all at once. Even though the premise gives away a fair bit of the story, it doesn't necessarily lessen the impact: You are still signing up for the fun stuff.

In this character-driven tale, there is little room for pretense, be it in acting, set design, or costumes. With several cultural references, the film perfectly encapsulates the Indian American experience without the stereotyping.

Potula, known for starring in shows such as 'Veep' and 'Wild N' Out,' relishes his role and is very convincing as Vinny, who also carries around pain because of his father's neglect.

With an effervescent on-screen persona, Bhattacharya ('Grown-ish') comes into her own with this role.

Shah, who was one of the first Indian American women to appear in a major role on a network comedy, 'Scrubs,' is effective as an IIT graduate who is stuck in a decades-long wait for a green card, while Patnaik's charming presence adds to the weight of the film.

Rounding out the cast are Meera Simhan, Maya Kapoor, Sujata Day, Aly Mawji, Samrat

Contd. on P32

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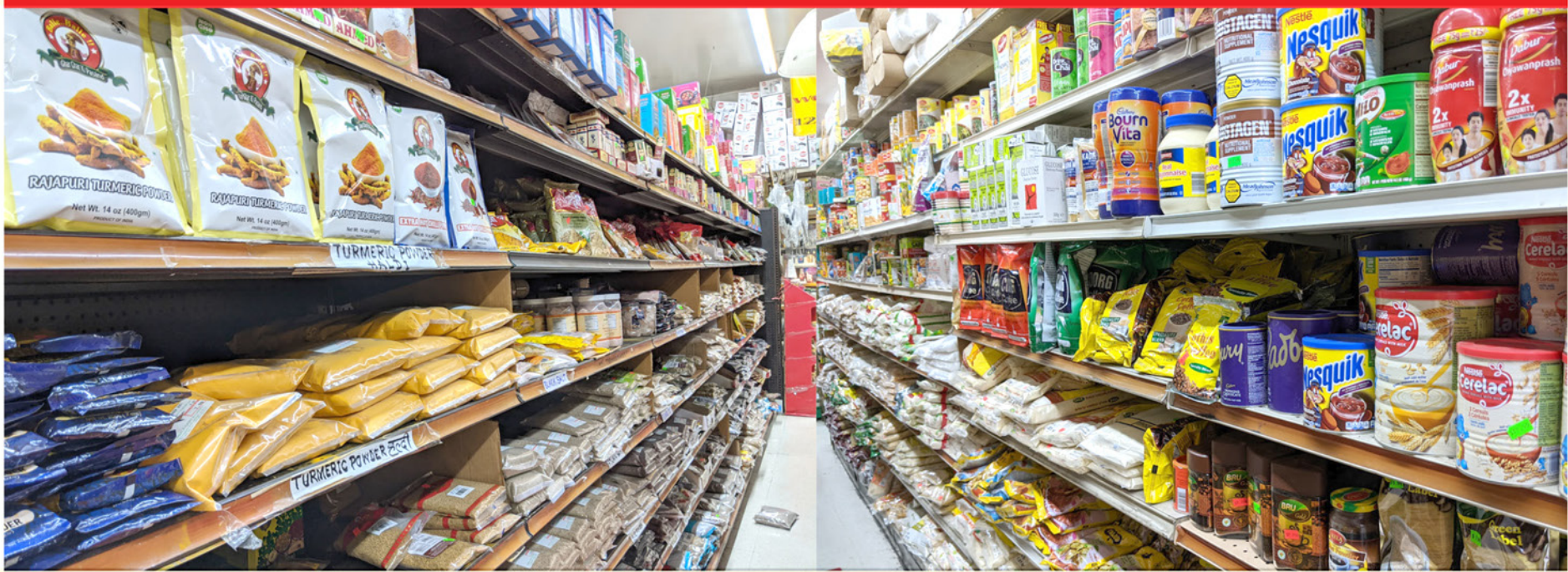
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## 'Four Samosas' of Ravi Kapoor

*Contd. from P30*

Chakrabarti, Poonam Basu, Shivani Thakkar  
and Havish Ravipati.

"Pretty much all the casting was straight offers, no auditions because we knew these actors would nail their parts and bring them to life," Kapoor told *India-West*. "Even though the parts are larger than life, it still required the actors to root them in some kind of emotional reality, especially for Venk playing the lead role of Vinny. At some point, I had started writing the role with Venk in mind thinking that he'd be the perfect lead for this band of misfits and

outsiders, and he didn't disappoint."

The film activates a strong sense of community and belonging by including a number of commercial settings owned by Indian Americans. As Kapoor says, "If there was ever a movie made about a community by a community then this is it."

Set against the backdrop of sari places, curry restaurants, Indian amateur-dramatic groups and South-Asian revolutionaries, “Four Samosas” not only underscores the importance of finding your voice, and your tribe but also celebrates the healing power of performance.

Little India had been on Kapoor's radar for a while and he believes that it is a "love letter" to every Little India out there that reminds Indians of their homeland. "It's always felt like a world unto itself and I wanted to push that even more, so it felt like it was almost existing in its own parallel heightened universe," he remarked.

This Tribeca Film Fest darling has gener-



(L-R): Sonal Shah as Paru, Venk Potula as Vinny, Sharmita Bhattacharya as Anjali and Nirvan Patnaik as Zak in director Ravi Kapoor's new film, "Four Samosas," which will release in theaters and on-demand on December 2. (photos courtesy of IFC Films)

celebrate the strides  
that have been made.

"I think things have really opened up on many fronts, there's a recognition of the value of telling stories from diverse perspectives," he noted. "I do think that when it comes to bigger productions, the purse string holders still have a tendency to want us to tell stories that they are comfortable with like arranged marriage

stories. Not that there's anything wrong with those, but there's also so much more to speak to." Potula also serves as a producer on the project alongside Kapoor while rapper Utkarsh Ambudkar ('Ghosts') and Soni are among the executive producers. Smita Bagla is one of the co-executive producers.

**For Southern California readers:**

Here's a rundown of the locations used in the film: Dhanu and Dev Keray's Pioneer Cash and Carry, called Juneja's, served as the center of the heist. Babu and Varsha Patel's Neema Sari Palace was where Vinny was employed as a salesman. Renu and Ronish's India Threading Salon was Rina's place of work. Krishna Koka's garage became the workshop for Vinny's mom. Yogesh and Pankti's Jay Bharat was the Chaat House everyone frequented for snacks and the workplace of one of the "Samosas," Zak. Other venues featured in the film included Balwinder's Ambala Cash and Carry, the Sanatana Dharma Temple and the ISSO Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Norwalk.

INDIA WEST

## Priyanka: Never Got Equal Pay As Male Actors In Bollywood

LOS ANGELES, CA (ANI) - Priyanka Chopra Jonas says she is finally earning as much as her male costar - not in Bollywood but in Hollywood.

Chopra Jonas that her upcoming series 'Citadel' is the first project where she's ever received equal pay to her male co-stars in an acting career spanning 20 years.

She said in an interview to BBC's 100 Women, "I've never had pay parity in Bollywood. I would get paid about 10% of the salary of my male co-actor. The pay gap is large, substantially large. And so many women still deal with that. I'm sure I will too if I worked with a male co-actor now in Bollywood. My generation of female actors has definitely asked (for equal pay). We've asked, but we've not got it."

Chopra Jonas described other ways in which she dealt with

sexism while working on Bollywood productions, she said, “I thought it was absolutely ok to sit for hours and hours on set, while my male co-actor just took his own time, and decided whenever he wanted to show up on set is when we would shoot”.

"I was called 'black cat' and 'dusky'. I mean, what does 'dusky' even mean in a country where we are literally all brown?" Chopra Jonas continued. "I thought I was not pretty enough, I believed that I would have to work a lot harder, even though I thought I was probably a little bit more talented than my fellow actors who were lighter skinned." The upcoming 'Citadel' on Amazon Prime Video has an ensemble cast led by Chopra Jonas and Richard Madden. The show is marketed as an "action-packed spy series" that takes place worldwide and is intended to serve as the basis for spinoff series in countries such as Mexico, India, and Spain.



# Amit Trivedi Lights Up Times Square

MUMBAI, (IANS) - Music composer Amit Trivedi, who has released his new album 'Jaadu Salona' and has composed tunes for the streaming movie 'Qala', has been featured on the Times Square Billboards in New York. A digital poster of Amit's 'Jaadu Salona' was showcased on Spotify's Times Square Billboard.

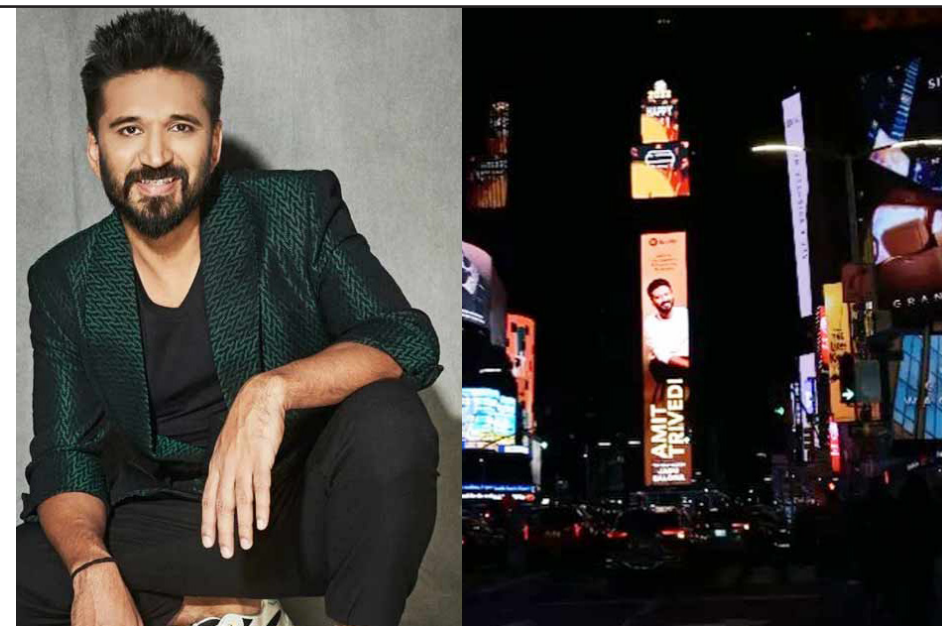
Talking about it, Trivedi said, “A feature on New York’s fabled Times Square Billboards is a dream of every artist. Especially, it’s an opportunity to shine a global spotlight on my first independent album and take it to millions of my listeners everywhere.”

The composer has released the album

under his label AT Azaad, which he founded with a vision to offer creative freedom and compose original music.

"The full album is now streaming on Spotify and other platforms, and I'm absolutely thrilled and overjoyed with the response so far," the composer said.

'Jaadu Salona', which happens to be Amit's first solo album, has an eclectic mix of six songs reflecting the many moods of modern love. The diverse and heartfelt tracks are titled 'Jaadu Salona', 'Nirmohi', 'Shehnaiyan', 'Rahiyo Na', 'Jaan Leke Gayi', and 'Dil Na Tod'. The full album is available to stream across audio streaming platforms.



*Amit Trivedi is the composer behind the brilliant music in the movie 'Qala'.*

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