

Then & Now

India **Abroad** India Abroad



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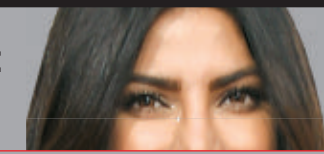
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A 'Golden Globe' of
shining moments



A Weekly Window Into the Indian-American World

India Abroad

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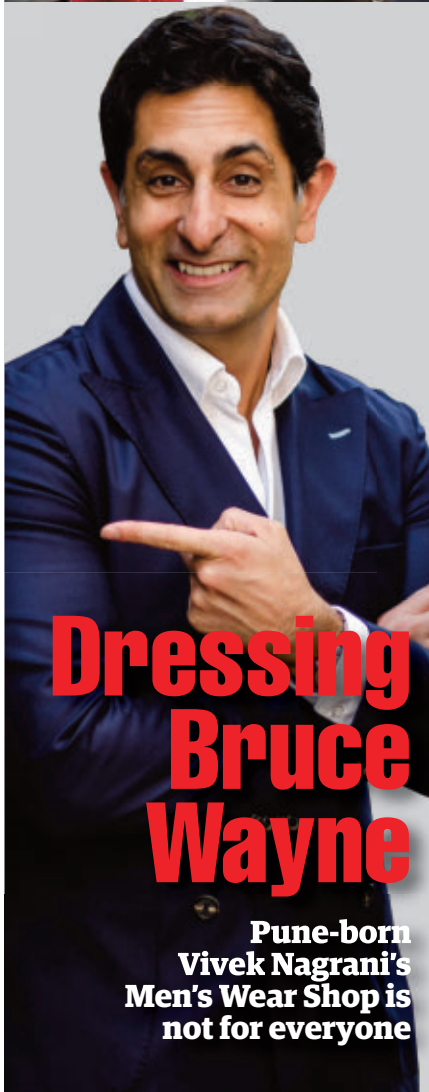
New York, Friday, January 20, 2017

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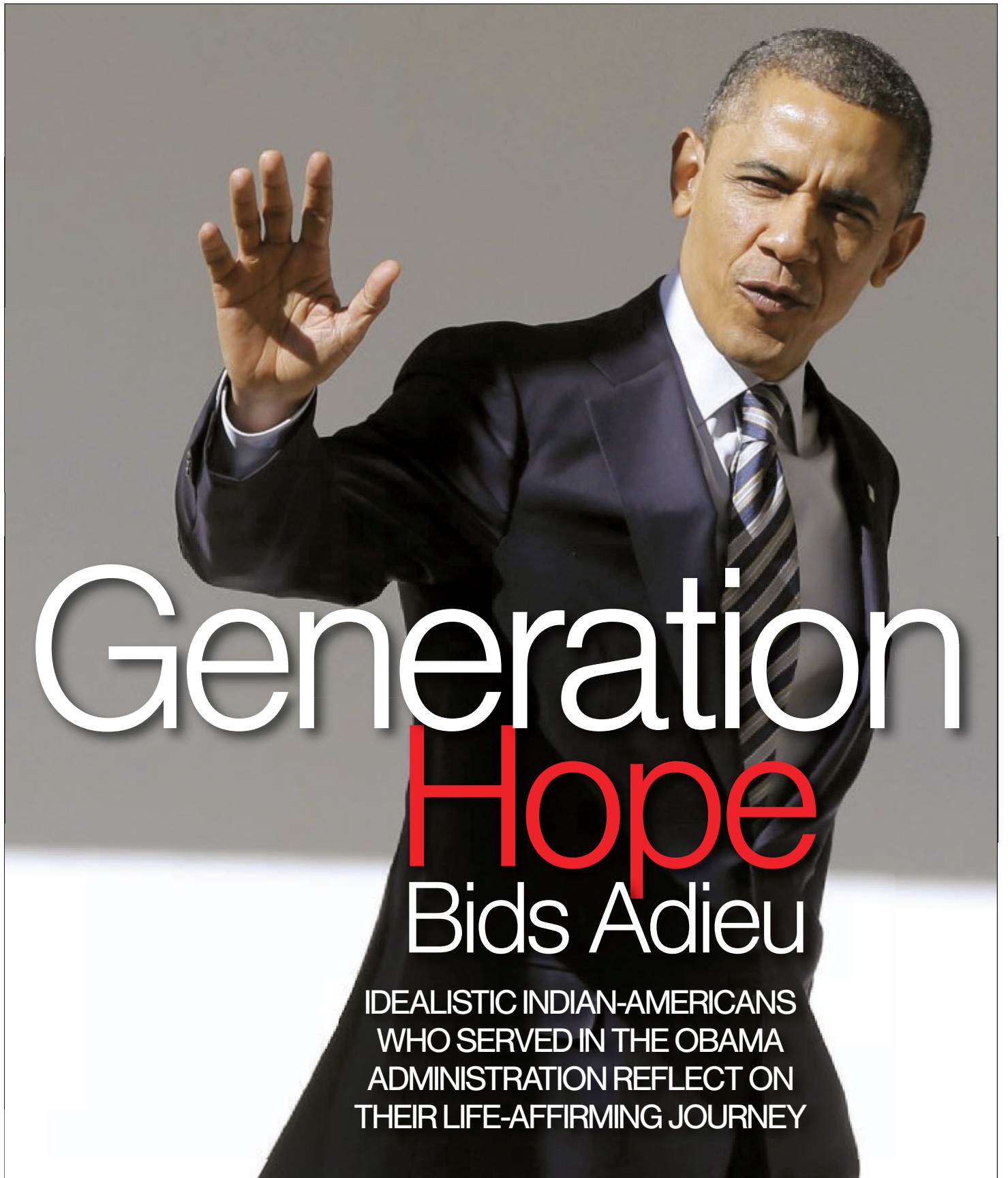
Trump's Pick?

Ashley Tellis poised
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Constitutional Reform Needed

Following a worldwide trend, India elected a populist politician, Narendra Modi, in May 2014. Since his election, India has shifted dangerously to the right.

Modi's latest action was the demonetization of India's currency.

On Nov. 8, he announced, with much fanfare, that all 500 and 1,000 rupee notes would soon cease as legal tender. Over 23 billion notes would soon be rendered worthless. Following that bombshell, Modi declared the old notes would be replaced by new 500 rupee and 2,000 notes. Unfortunately, he provided a very short window to make the exchanges. The alleged reasons for the announcement were to withdraw counterfeit and black money from circulation. Surprisingly, only 2 percent of the population pays any taxes.

Modi's decision to withdraw 86 percent of the cash in circulation plunged the country into chaos. The impact has been extremely painful for businesses that pay their workers or suppliers with cash.

Long lines soon formed outside banks and ATMs. Millions waited for hours to exchange their old notes. Many fainted. A few died. Many were frustrated

to find, when they reached the front of the line, that there was a limited supply of notes on hand. Few working ATMs had been set up. Most ATMs were rapidly depleted of low-denomination notes Rs 100 (\$1.50) rupee notes. People who were lucky enough to get their hands on the new coveted notes found few traders had enough change to execute transactions.

Many of the poor, who don't have bank accounts, were disproportionately affected, unable to store their new cash in safe places. Tens of thousands of laborers, artisans and weavers have lost jobs in many cities such as Agra, Varanasi, Kanpur, Moradabad, Allahabad, Ferozabad and Aligarh. Farmers have been badly impacted unable to sell their perishable fruit and vegetables.

There are lingering suspicions that demonetization had more self-serving interests by the ruling BJP party whose members have got a "heads up" on the currency plan and were able to exchange their old bank notes before the announcement. This would give them considerable clout over opposition Congress Party members, who traditionally use crores of black money when fighting elections.

Although the currency crisis is



AP Photo

the daily topic in much of the country, it barely got discussed in India's parliament. Narendra Modi seems to have been given a free pass from opposition members in the 545-member Lok Sabha and in the 245-seat upper house, the Rajya Sabha. Instead,

both party leaders and their surrogates took to the streets leaking stories of massive corruption.

Meanwhile, India's parliament has come into withering criticism for its poor performance. It only meets 60 days to conduct

the people's business compared to 140 days common to countries Britain or Canada. India's state legislatures have an even worse meeting record - fewer than 30 days. Conversely, Haryana lead the productivity pack passing as many as 14 bills in 90 minutes.

M.R. Madhavan, the president of PRS Legislative Research, a privately funded watchdog in Delhi, exposed some of the more troubling aspects of India's democracy. He revealed that India's anachronistic Constitution permits a far more dangerous concentration of power in the executive and judicial branches than other democracies. Inheriting some of the worst aspects of the Raj where the viceroy was king, the government can pass laws which can sideline the legislative branch. These powers have been grossly abused.

For example, Modi has renewed laws to confiscate property belonging to opposition party members. As a further threat to democracy, the government can sign now foreign treaties without parliamentary approval. These parliamentary rules and perhaps India's Constitution scream for much-needed reform.

Jagjit Singh
Los Altos, CA

Punish Molesters, not the Victims

I was horrified and infuriated to read about the mass molestation of women in Bengaluru by an unruly crowd on New Year's Eve ("Minister Blames Women's Western Dress After Report of Mass Groping," India Abroad; Jan.13, 2017).

But I was even more angry with the response of G. Parameshwara, the home minister of Karnataka state, who adopted the "blame the victim" strategy and, instead of criticizing the criminals, he blamed the harassment on the young women who were dressed in Western clothing, even claiming that "these kind of things do happen." He is obviously in denial. How can we expect him to address the issue when he hasn't even accurately identified the problem?

Men who indulged in the mass molestation must be punished to the full extent of the law, for reasons of fairness, justice, and deterrence, but it would also behoove us to do a root-cause analysis of the larger problem.

While getting drunk may have contributed to the molestation issue, it seems to me that the issue of sexual harassment,

molestation, and even "eve-teasing" is a complex, deep-seated, widespread, multi-dimensional problem rooted in our culture, mores, and ethos.

India is still a male-dominated, patriarchal, misogynistic society that favors men over women and openly discriminates against women.

For example, according to Wikipedia, 65 percent of Indian men believe women should tolerate violence to keep the family together, and that women sometimes deserve to be beaten, while 24 percent of Indian men have committed sexual violence at some point in their lives. It should also be noted that according to a 2016 report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Bengaluru is the third most unsafe city in India after Delhi and Mumbai. Bengaluru also has the second-highest cases of reported dowry deaths after Delhi.

I suspect that there is something wrong with the way many parents raise their children. For example, they teach their daughters how to avoid being raped but they don't teach their sons not to rape.

Also, why can't we teach our sons to treat other people's sisters, wives, mothers, and female relatives with the same respect,



AP Photo/Aliqaz Rahi

honor, and dignity that they expect others to treat their own female relatives?

To me, this calls to mind the famous Golden Rule of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. That is not just a religious doctrine, but a rule grounded in common sense

Pradeep Srivastava
Albany, California

That Letter is Anti-India

Normally one should vet letters before publication, especially when it is published in India Abroad, which many Indians read and accept as gospel truth.

The one by Dahyabhai Patel



AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais

on the naming of the son of Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor is misleading, false, pro-Pakistan and anti-India.

Kindly check the names of the Pakistani missiles (Gajnavi and Ghazni).

The way he has written his letter, it is as if India is a bad country and that Hindus are extremists.

Rajiv Madan

Letter's Author Wrongly Faults Obama

I read the letter of Bharat Desai in your magazine (India Abroad, Jan. 6, 2017).

If I had not looked at the author, I would have surmised it came from Breitbart or Fox minions.

That letter was full of falsehoods and fabrications and basically incomprehensible and he faulted President Obama without providing any evidence.

Now Obama at least is not a sexist, Islamophobe, xenophobe, bully, racist, bigot, liar, misogynist, adulterer, vulgarian, narcissistic ignoramus who praises Vladimir Putin.

Any sensible person following the political scene in the U.S. will know that I did not make these facts up.

Haridas K Varma
Apalachin, N.Y.

Aziz Ansari Hosting NBC's "Saturday Night live"

Indian-American comedian Aziz Ansari will host the NBC comedy sketch show, "Saturday Night Live," on Jan. 21, which would make him the first person of South Asian origin to be its host. Jackie Chan and Lucy Liu are the only two Asians who have previously hosted the show -- not including Fred Armisen and Bruno Mars, who are mixed-race -- and that was more than 15 years ago, reported news portal American Bazaar on Tuesday, Jan. 10.

Last year, the standup comedian-turned-television star won his first Emmy for his Netflix series, "Master of None," after earning four nominations. His nomination for outstanding lead

actor in a comedy series was the first for an Indian-American.

Born in Columbia, South Carolina, to a Tamil Muslim family from Tamil Nadu, Ansari began his career performing stand-up comedy. His mother, Fatima, works in a medical shop and his father, Shoukath, is a gastroenterologist. Ansari is a graduate of the New York University Stern School of Business, where he majored in marketing.

In 2007, he created and starred in the MTV sketch comedy show, "Human Giant," which ran for two seasons. He has also acted in several films, including "Funny People," "I Love You, Man," "Observe and Report," and "30 Minutes or Less."



The Star Who Loves to Kiss

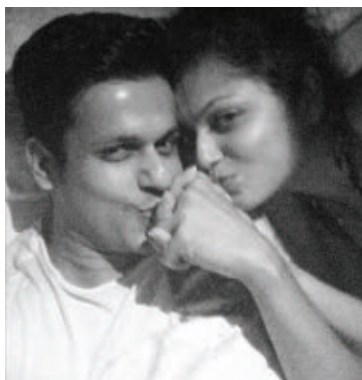
The star of Star Plus soap "Pardes Mein Hai Mera Dil" apparently loves to kiss. Dhimi, who celebrated her 32nd birthday on Jan. 10, posts a number of photos on Instagram kissing her businessman husband Neeraj Khemka.

The "Kissing Queen" is reportedly loves give pecks to her fellow actors, family members and BFFs.

According to a report in india.com, "Drashti started off her career as a supporting actress in hit romantic series Dill Mill Gayye on Star One.

She played the role of Doctor Muskaan Chadda with actresses Shilpa Anand, Sukirti Kandpal and Jennifer Winget in the leading roles.

The sweet-faced girl rose to prominence when she bagged



the lead role of Geet in another Star One show Geet - Hui Sabse Parayi. Drashti Dhami played the protagonist and romantic interest of Gurmeet Chaudhary. Her chemistry with Gurmeet was

appreciated making Drashti, one of the top listed actresses of the Indian television."

Topless Disha Patani in Daboo Ratnani's Calendar



Actress Disha Patani, who made her Bollywood debut in 2016 biopic "M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story," has posed topless for popular photographer Dabboo Ratnani's 2017 calendar. Disha took to Twitter to share a photograph of herself from the photo-shoot.

In the photograph, Disha can be seen sitting with her left leg upfront, while covering her modesty with her hands. In the image, she is only wearing black underwear and boots. "Dabboo Ratnani calendar 2017, Makeup - Jose, Hair - Shanky, Photographer - Daboo Ratnani," she captioned the image. In all, the calendar features 24 celebrities, including Amitabh Bachchan, Shah

Rukh Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Abhishek Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Ranveer Singh, Akshay Kumar, Priyanka Chopra, Vidya Balan, Alia Bhatt, Farhan Akhtar, Arjun Rampal, Varun Dhawan, Siddharth Malhotra, Tiger Shroff, Parineeti Chopra, Sonakshi Sinha, Sunny Leone, Sanjay Dutt, Anushka Sharma, Jacqueline Fernandez, Shraddha Kapoor, Kriti Sanon.

On the film front, Disha is currently gearing up for the release of her forthcoming film "Kung Fu Yoga," which will also star legendary actor Jackie Chan. In the film, which is slated to release on January 28 next year, Disha will be seen playing an archaeologist.

Vin Diesel Muscles into Mumbai with a Maiden in Hand



Arousing reception with traditional 'dhol,' 'tutari' and 'tilak' was accorded to Hollywood star Vin Diesel, who arrived in Mumbai on Jan. 12 on a two-day promotional tour of his film "xXx: Return of Xander Cage." On his maiden trip to India, Diesel says his dream to explore the country has come true.

The American actor was accompanied by his "xXx..." co-star and actress Deepika Padukone and director D.J. Caruso. "So honored to be here in India for the first time. The xXx Global tour has been great and now I and Deepika Padukone are going to share this film with her

country today. As a child, I always dreamed of visiting India... Thank you Paramount for making this dream come true. Xander," Diesel posted on Instagram. Diesel looked excited as he waved out to the media and to the crowd there with much gusto. Dressed in white jeans, a black T-shirt and a pair of shades, he walked out of the airport hand-in-hand with Deepika, who sported an all-black look complete with black stilettos. They smiled for cameras and looked around at the mania which made up for the grand reception they received here with the 'band and baaja.'

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Demonetization Can Lead to a Cash-Free Era

Elimination of black money was a painkiller but not a cure



By Venktesh Shukla

was in India recently to participate in the TiE Global Summit in Delhi. It was significant because it was a first-ever summit organized by TiE Global, unlike the conferences organized by various chapters over the years. It was also significant because of its emphasis: It showcased globally successful entrepreneurs with the hope of inspiring entrepreneurs in India to think big and to think global.

It was hugely successful with enthusiastic participation from entrepreneurs, TiE members from all over the world as well as senior policy makers of the government of India.

The visit also brought me in touch with the demonetization phenomenon sweeping the country. It is the single biggest man-made crisis to hit India, where every single individual is affected.

While the lines in the banks are long and buying behavior of every person is affected, there is surprisingly strong support for demonetization among people with whom I had the opportunity to interact.

There were angry voices among some retired bureaucrats, journalists and a few real estate dealers but the support among average people for this initiative was surprisingly strong, even among those whose business and livelihood was adversely impacted due to cash crunch - small traders, auto and taxi drivers, maid servants, housewives and doctors, among others.

The all-important question is: will demonetization achieve the original objective for which it was launched - to eliminate the curse of black money in the economy?

The answer has to be nuanced - yes, to some extent, but demonetization is going to be a



Indians deposit discontinued notes on the last day in a bank in Gauhati, Dec. 30.

huge positive for the economy anyway in the medium to long term for other reasons.

Let us look at black money first and see why demonetization is only a partial remedy.

All that it has done is bring all the cash circulating in the economy to the formal banking channel. In that sense, for the time being, black money has been

eliminated. But demonetization by itself is no guarantee that black money won't come back. Let us look at how black money gets formed in the first place. It is basically white money whose source cannot be explained and it cannot be circulated through formal

banking channels. If a politician or a bureaucrat exercises his vast discretionary powers one way in lieu of money, that money becomes black money.

If you sold your real estate and got a portion of the money from the buyer in cash, that becomes black money. If a company has to give donations to a political party in cash, it has to cook the books to siphon cash from the formal channels in order to do so.

Demonetization does not address any of these sources of generation of black money. If the gov-



ernment were to do nothing beyond demonetization to address the fundamental cause of black money generation, it will prove to be only a painkiller and not a cure.

Regardless of its impact on black money, this demonetization step has long-term positives for the economy.

The infusion of so much liquidity back in the banking system will improve the balance sheets of banks that were reeling

under the weight of bad loans given to crony capitalists over the last decade. It should also bring down the interest rate for loans which will further spur the economy.

This exercise also brings a large number of individuals under the tax net who were not paying taxes so far. Perhaps the government can fund its infrastructure investment with this additional tax money which, in turn, will spur the economy.

The biggest benefit, of course, will be the transition from cash economy to a digital economy. According to one estimate, only 2% of the economy is cashless today. The hope is that the shock of demonetization will nudge more people and transactions to become cashless - through such electronic wallets as Paytm, debit and credit cards as well as through newly emerging Universal Payment Interface (UPI). This transition to a cashless economy is hugely welcome - it brings transparency, efficiency and kickstarts innovation in the financial industry. As it is, the innovation of UPI - which allows any bank account holder to transfer any amount of money from his account to anyone else who has a bank account with a click on a smartphone - is first of its kind anywhere in the world.

It is revolutionary in its simplicity, security and without cost to any party. This is one innovation that is likely to travel outside India.

After yoga, meditation, karma, vegetarianism and other ideas from India's ancient heritage, India will be exporting another idea hatched locally that is likely to have universal appeal.

Venktesh Shukla is the global chairman of The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) and general partner at the Monta Vista Capital in California. He is the former TiE Silicon Valley president.

**Sweeping crisis
should stir
India to digital
as lasting
financial
transformation**

Narendra Modi's Crackdown on Civil Society

The prime minister repeatedly denounces human rights and environmental activism as “anti-national”



By Rohini Mohan

Among their common traits, illiberal strongmen share a virulent mistrust of civil society. From Vladimir V. Putin's Russia to Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Turkey, illiberal governments regularly use imprisonment, threats and nationalist language to repress nongovernmental organizations. Here in India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is going after their money.

The Lawyers Collective, an advocacy group in New Delhi run by the prominent lawyers Indira Jaising and Anand Grover, has for three decades provided legal assistance to women, nonunion workers, activists and other marginalized groups, often without charge. In December, the Modi government barred it from receiving foreign grants. The political reasons were obvious: The Collective had represented critics of Modi's sectarian record and environmental vision.

Under Indian law, nongovernmental groups that seek foreign donations have to register under the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act, which prohibits the use of overseas funds for “activities detrimental to the national interest.” Although accountability in the non-governmental sector is necessary to control malpractice, the foreign funding law is better known as a tool of political retribution than transparent auditing.

It's not just the Collective that has been punished. The Home Affairs Ministry recently revoked the licenses of around 10,000 other nongovernmental organizations. Even groups whose funding licenses were renewed are worried about the future. “It is activism on thinning ice from now on,” an education activist told me.

The funding law is rooted in

Modi's government has been even more openly hostile to civil society groups

Cold War fears about foreign interference in domestic politics. In 1975, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi raised the specter of the “foreign hand,” suspended civil liberties, arrested political opponents, and censored the press for an almost two-year dictatorial stretch known as the Emergency.

Gandhi, a socialist who leaned toward the Soviet Union, proposed the foreign funding law as a deterrent to political meddling. During a 1976 debate in the Indian Parliament on the law, the

C.I.A. was mentioned dozens of times as lawmakers expressed outrage over “American bossism” and the United States' role in the overthrow of Salvador Allende's government in Chile.

The new law prohibited political parties, the news media and organizations “of a political nature” from receiving foreign contributions. Social, religious and educational organizations with foreign donors were required to obtain a permit.

India has moved away from the paranoid 1970s to a liberal-



Manpreet Romana for The New York Times

ized economy and is embracing the United States and global financial institutions. But the foreign funding law remains a handy weapon whose vague vocabulary (“public interest” and “national interest”) gives the state immense discretionary powers against critics.

In 2010, the Congress Party government made the law more stringent: it now requires licenses to be renewed every five years, and allows the state to suspend permits and freeze groups' accounts for 180 days during any investigation. The Congress government used the law to pressure

civil society groups protesting corruption and a nuclear power plant.

Modi's government has been even more openly hostile to civil society groups. It repeatedly denounces human rights and environmental activism as “anti-national” — a phrase that carries connotations of treason. The patriotic rage is a mask for a more pedestrian motive: punishing pesky critics. In 2016, what is normally a routine license renewal process was used to punish groups that have been critical of Modi or his policies.

The Lawyers Collective has

been prominent among such groups. In 2015, Priya Pillai, a campaigner from Greenpeace India, was traveling to London to testify in the British Parliament about coal mining in central Indian forests by Essar Energy, a corporation registered in Britain. Federal officers pulled Pillai off her flight, arguing that her deposition would have hurt India's “national interest.” Pillai went to court; the Lawyers Collective represented her.

The Collective also represented Teesta Setalvad, who has been campaigning for justice for the victims of sectarian riots in Gujarat in 2002, when Modi was the chief minister of the state. Setalvad has sought to put Modi and other Hindu nationalist politicians on trial for allegedly overseeing or participating in the violence. After Modi's elevation to national office, Setalvad was accused of stealing donations meant for riot victims. In July, her home in Mumbai was raided by federal agents, and a few months later, Setalvad's organizations lost their foreign funding licenses.

Since Modi rose to power, emboldened hard-line Hindu activists have assaulted cow



AP Photo/Channi Anand

Above, People watch Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the nation, on television at a grocery store in Jammu, Dec. 31. Below, Human rights activist Teesta Setalvad, center, talks with survivors of the 2002 Gujarat riots for which she has campaigned to hold Modi criminally responsible.

Continued on page 10

4 Indian-American Scientists Receive Presidential Awards

Honor is nation's highest given to science and engineering professionals

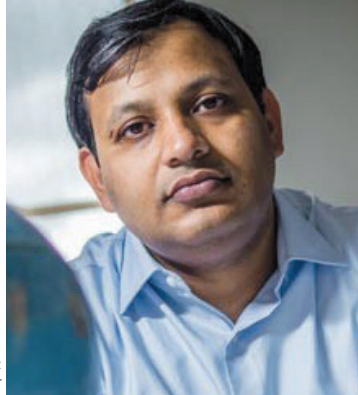
By Aziz Haniffa

On January 10, with ten days left in this tenure, President Barack Obama continued making a flurry of appointments to boards and commissions and also continued honoring early career scientists, technologists and researchers as he has done over the past eight years – and this time around it was a whopping 102, four of whom were Indian Americans.

These honors are touted by the White House as the highest recognition by the US government to these professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers and as an impetus for their being catalytic in keeping the US on the cutting edge of innovation.

The Indian American scientists, recipients of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), first established by President Bill Clinton in 1996, were Pankaj Lal of Montclair State University, Kaushik Chowdhury of Northeastern University, Manish Arora of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and Aradhna Tripathi from University of California, Los Angeles.

The president said, "I congratulate these outstanding scientists and engineers on their impactful work," and added, "These innovators are working to help keep the United States on the cutting edge, showing that federal investments in science lead to advancements that



Pankaj Lal

expand our knowledge of the world around us and contribute to our economy."

According to the White House said, "The Presidential Early Career Awards highlight the key role that the administration places in encouraging and accelerating American innovation to grow our economy and tackle our greatest challenges."

Lal, an alumnus of Delhi School of Economics, is an associate professor in the department of earth and environmental studies at Montclair.

His interdisciplinary research has explored interconnections among society and the environment, and this range has encompassed environmental economics and economic geography, human dimensions of ecosystem management, natural resource conservation and policy and climate change.

Chowdhury, who received his doctorate from the Georgia Institute of Technology, directs the Next Generation Networks and Systems (GENESYS) Lab and



Kaushik Chowdhury



Aradhna Tripathi

has been the recipient of several awards in recent years, including the 'NSF (National Science Foundation) CAREER' award in 2015 and the Office of Naval Research Director of Research Early Career Award in 2016.

Arora, whose is an environmental epidemiologist and exposure biologist, focuses his research of the effects of prenatal and early childhood chemical exposures on life-long health trajectories.

The gist of this research delin-



Manish Arora

eates biomarkers that utilize human deciduous and permanent teeth to reconstruct the timing of exposure to various harmful chemicals and essential nutrients.

In her lab at UCLA, Tripathi uses the chemistry of natural compounds as well as models as tools to understand how the earth works to understand climate change, the oceans, and the transfer of carbon between the biosphere, atmosphere and oceans.

The awards are coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the US president and it said, "Awardees are selected for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to

community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education or community outreach."

Over the years, these Early Career awardees, including at least two dozen Indian Americans among the several 100 honored by Obama, have received their awards at a White House ceremony under the aegis of the Office of Science and Technology.

The President is usually at hand to make some remarks after which these awards are handed out.

But since he's demitting office on January 20, and most of the hierarchy of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, who are

usually political appointees would also be gone, officials said it was likely the awardees would be sent their awards and certificates, unless they are included in a ceremony where the new administration decides to continue with this honors program with a new crop of recipients later in the year.

Last February, Obama honored

six Indian Americans among 106 recipients with the PECASE awards and were honored at a White House ceremony last spring.

They were Milind Kulkarni, an associate professor at the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Purdue University, Kiran Musunuru, assistant professor of stem cell and regenerative biology at Harvard University, Sachin Patel, assistant professor of psychiatry, and molecular physiology and biophysics at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Vikram Shyam, a member of the Turbomachinery and Heat Transfer Branch at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Glenn Research Center. Rahul Mangharam an associate professor in the Department of Electrical and Systems Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania, and Shwetak Patel is an endowed professor in Computer Science and Engineering and Electrical Engineering at the University of Washington, where he directs his research group, the Ubicomp Lab.

"These innovators are working to help keep the United States on the cutting edge..."

Indian-American Dentist Part of \$8.5M Medicaid Fraud Settlement in Texas

Former employee who filed whistleblower complaint will receive \$1.5M

By Ritu Jha

ATexas dentist of Indian origin is one of a group of 21 pediatric dental practitioners who have agreed to pay \$8.5 million to resolve allegations of false Medicaid claims for pediatric services. The settlement was announced Monday, Jan. 9 by U.S. Attorney John Parker of the Northern District of Texas.

Under the court settlement, Akhil Reddy of Carrollton, Texas, has agreed

to pay \$250,000 as part owner of MB2 Dental Solutions, a dental management services company serving practices in six states.

Reddy, four partners and the MB2 marketing chief were charged with submitting false claims to the Texas, New Mexico and Louisiana Medicaid programs between 2009 and 2014 for services not medically necessary.

The settlement also resolves allegations that MB2 paid kickbacks to Medicaid

beneficiaries and their families, marketers, and marketing entities, in violation of the Anti-Kickback Statute, and that MB2 and its affiliated dental practices used erroneous Medicaid provider numbers misrepresenting the dentists performing the pediatric procedures.

In 2012, a former MB2 employee, Veronica Garcia, filed a whistleblower complaint, under the False Claims Act, describing these practices. Garcia will receive

\$1.521 million from the settlement. Medicaid is funded jointly by the states and the federal government.

The State of Texas paid for part of the Medicaid claims at issue and will receive approximately half of the settlement amount.

"Providers who waste taxpayer dollars by billing for services that were not provided, or were otherwise improper, will be held accountable," Parker said in a press statement.

American College of Rheumatologists Elects First Indian-American President

Dr. Sharad Lakhanpal of Texas is former AAPI president

By Aziz Haniffa

The American College of Rheumatology, the world's largest association of rheumatology specialists, has appointed Dr. Sharad Lakhanpal, of Dallas, Texas, as president. Lakhanpal becomes the first Indian-American and non-US born president of the international group, the world's largest association of rheumatologists.

He was installed at the annual meeting in Washington D.C., attended by almost 17,000 people from over 100 countries. A former president of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, he becomes the ACR's 80th president. The senior partner of a group practice, Lakhanpal is also a clinical professor of internal medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Lakhanpal received his medical education at King George's Medical College, University of Lucknow, and after a stint in the United Kingdom where he did internal medicine training at the National Health Service, immi-



grated to the U.S. in 1960. He completed his residency in internal medicine at the Memorial Hospital, University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Massachusetts and then was on a fellowship for his rheumatology training at the Mayo Clinic and Mayo Medical School in Rochester, Minnesota.

He said he will use his presidency to help colleagues meet the challenges ahead in their practices. "The practice of medicine is forever evolving, but the current times are specially trying," he said. He said he viewed the present challenges as "potential opportunities to improve the delivery of health-care for our patients." He said the implementation of the Medicare Access and CHIP Authorization Act (MACRA) and Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) will be front and center for members.

He noted that the last two decades have seen massive changes in care for patients with rheumatic diseases. "We do not see waiting rooms full of patients in wheelchairs anymore. The research and subsequent development of new treatments for rheumatic diseases has been remarkable."

He said he expected ACR membership to expand on its on-line education platform and increase its role with international colleagues, particularly with the start of an ACR-IRA International Fellowship Exchange Program with the Indian Rheumatology Association. Young rheumatologists from India will come to the

U.S. each year for four to six weeks of training and, similarly, two from the U.S. will do the same in India. "It's definitely pretty ambitious agenda, but I am so fortunate to be supported by a committed and totally dedicated group of highly qualified volunteers and staff," he said.

International group is the world's largest association of rheumatology specialists

Federation of Indian Associations in NY, NJ and Connecticut Welcome New Leaders

By George Joseph

Promising to take the Federation of Indian Associations in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut to the next level, community activist Andy Bhatia took charge as president of the FIA, which organizes the largest India Day Parade in New York City. His new team will include Srujal Parikh, executive vice president; Alok Kumar, vice president; Chhavi Dharayan, secretary; Jatin Patel, joint secretary; Himanshu Bhatia, treasurer and Anand Patel, immediate past president.

"The signature events of the FIA, including the India Day Parade, India Day Banquet and the Dance Pe Chance will be organized to attract more people with new features," Bhatia said. He said a college fair and a fundraising event in April are also being planned. His agenda also includes expanding the programs of the FIA to Connecticut and in Queens and on Long Island.

Bhatia is a veteran of FIA events, having helped organize the India Day Parade and Diwali



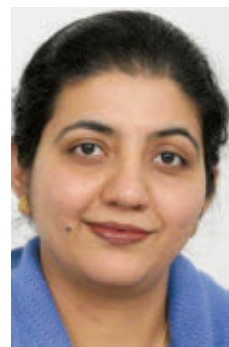
Andy Bhatia



Srujal Parikh



Alok Kumar



Chhavi Dharayan



Jatin Patel



Himanshu Bhatia

Festival in New York City and Diwali Mela in Jackson Heights.

He is credited with conceptualizing and launching the "Know India Seminars" in the U.S. and Canada, which helped more than 6,000 American travel agents become India tourism specialists. He was also instrumental in the launching a bi-monthly India Travel newsletter and the Traveler's India magazine. A member of several travel trade associations, he serves the travel

industry as a consultant.

Parikh has served the FIA's executive committee for more than five years. He is a co-founder of South Asian Community Outreach, co-founder and president of National School of Cricket U.S.A, a trustee of Indian Officers Society at NYPD and former vice president of the Edison Cricket Club, which has legends like Sunil Gavaskar as honorary members. He was instrumental as a team leader in coordinating

FIA is organizer of NYC's largest India Day Parade

the first South Asian celebration of America's Independence Day in Edison Township by South Asian Community Outreach. He also served as a co-chairman of Dushera Festival in Edison Township.

Kumar, a native of Darbhanga, Bihar, has also been involved with Bihar Jharkhand Association of North America and South Asian Community Outreach. Kumar, who has a master's degree in computer science, is a young entrepreneur who acquired IT companies such as Acme Technology Group, United Business Solutions, & Spino.

Dharayan has been working

with the FIA since 2011 in various capacities and served as secretary in 2016 as well. She was co-chairwoman of Dance Pe Chance, to celebrate India's Republic Day, in 2012, 2015 and 2016 and will chair it again this year.

Patel has been with the FIA community since 2013. He holds a master's degree in engineering and has a background in Information Technology and Business. He is a veteran IT professional.

Himanshu Bhatia, a businessman, has a commitment to social causes and philanthropy. He has a master's degree in engineering from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

Hindu Chaplain Delivers Invocation for New North Carolina Governor

Madhu Sharma has served Duke University since 2011

By Aziz Haniffa

Delivering the invocation, Duke University's Hindu chaplain Madhu Sharma joined clergy colleagues in welcoming North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper during an interfaith prayer service for his recent inauguration.

The Jan. 6 communal worship at the First Baptist Church in Raleigh, an African-American congregation, drew a large number of Indian-Americans, including state Sen. Jay Chaudhuri (D-Wake), the first Asian-American elected to the state legislature, North Carolina Pro Tem Mayor Steve Rao and Morrisville City Council member Satish Garimella.

"It is such an honor for Madhu to have been invited to participate in the governor's inauguration," said Christy Lohr Sapp, associate dean for religious life at Duke. "It is wonderful that she was able to represent the community - both Duke and the broader Hindu and interfaith communities - in this way."

For his part, Cooper, the state's former attorney general, is no stranger to the Indian-American community. He and his family have attended the annual Indian Independence Day



Madhu Sharma delivering the invocation

celebrations at the Hindu Society of North Carolina temple.

The Democrat said he was pleased to have Sharma participate in the service. "It was important for our prayer service to represent a variety of

faith traditions," he said. "Celebrating our state's diversity of worship is just one way we can work toward building a better North Carolina for all."

Duke is one of a handful of U.S. universities with a Hindu

chaplain. Sharma, who has been the school's chaplain since 2011, said she was humbled by the chance to deliver the invocation at Cooper's ceremony.

"Over the years, I have been

invited to give invocations at many interfaith events and to speak at many churches," she said. "But this experience of offering prayers and blessings at the interfaith prayer service as part of Governor Roy Cooper's inaugural ceremony was clearly a tremendous honor and truly a humbling experience. It is recognition of the contributions the Indian-American community has made in North Carolina and in the U.S. It is also a testament to Governor Cooper's great vision in being the governor for each and every North Carolinian."

Garimella, who was born in India, recalled his town council swearing-in with Gangadhar Sharma, founder of the Hindu Society of North Carolina, officiating. "To witness his daughter, Madhu Sharma, do the interfaith prayers for the governor was very symbolic for Hindus and creating awareness of the growing American Hindu population in North Carolina," he said.

Sharma is also a volunteer campus Hindu minister at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina and president of the Triangle Interfaith Alliance in Raleigh. She is a former board member of the Hindu Society of North Carolina.

Narendra Modi's Crackdown on Civil Society

Continued from page 7

traders and people suspected of eating beef, claiming to defend Hindu beliefs. In July, vigilantes stripped and flogged four Dalit, or lower-caste, men in Gujarat for skinning a cow. Many Dalits earn their livelihood from skinning dead animals and selling their hides to leather traders.

The assault prompted protests by Dalits and damaged Modi's image among the group, about a sixth of the country's population. A Dalit rights organization, Navsarjan Trust, played a leading role in the protests. On Dec. 15, the federal government canceled the foreign funding license of the Trust. Indian newspapers quoted unnamed officials claiming that intelligence agencies have described seven civil society groups, including the Trust, as "working against public interest" and painting the Modi government as anti-Dalit abroad.

Some of these groups are seeking redress in Indian courts,



Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairman of the Hurriyat (M) party, leading a protest last month against the reported move of the government to issue domicile certificates to West Pakistan refugees.

which have largely been fair. But legal battles exact a cost: With bank accounts frozen for months during investigations, bills for rent, electricity and lawyers mount. People's Watch, a human rights group, was unable to pay salaries for 23 months. Many Greenpeace India employees took pay cuts in 2014. As court duels

drag on, campaigns lag, research comes to a standstill and years of community mobilization dissipate.

Yet neither Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party nor the Congress Party has had any qualms about accepting campaign funding from foreign businesses. In May 2014, a New Delhi court held both the

B.J.P. and the Congress Party guilty of receiving donations from a London-listed company in violation of the foreign funding law.

Modi's government found a way of legally transforming its donors from foreign companies to Indian ones. It amended the law to change the definition of a for-

eign business, retroactively making a wider range of companies permissible campaign donors. While the civil society groups working with the poorest Indians are being choked, India's political parties found many more avenues to receive more money. Civil society groups do try hard to raise funds within the country, but Indian philanthropists remain tightfisted when it comes to issues like land or labor rights, health care access, quality of education, or resource exploitation by corporations.

"Our rich guys will feed poor kids but won't question governments," a fund-raising manager in New Delhi explained.

By yanking foreign funding licenses, the Indian government is doing just what it accuses civil society organizations of: working against public interest.

- The New York Times

Rohini Mohan is the author of "The Seasons of Trouble: Life Amid the Ruins of Sri Lanka's Civil War."



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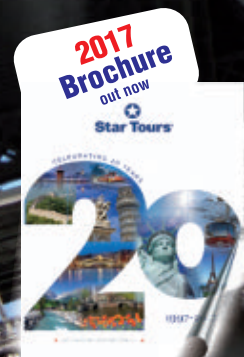
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The Right to Serve Faith and Country

Updated U.S. Army rules accommodate Sikh-American turbans, other articles of faith



Richard Perry / The New York Times

Above, U.S. Army Major Kamal Kalsi, a Sikh who is head of emergency medicine at Ft. Brag, at home in Riverdale, N.J., June 7, 2013. Below, Capt. Simratpal Singh, who says the Army's granting of a permanent accommodation for a turban and a religious beard means that he can finally fit "two parts of my world together," at his home in Auburn, Washington, Dec. 10, 2015.

By Aziz Haniffa

The U.S. Army last week updated its rules allowing for religious accommodation in the military that would facilitate service by observant Sikh-Americans, Muslim-Americans and other minorities.

The new rules, signed by Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning, allow for such accommodations to be approved at the brigade level instead of requiring the secretary's approval. The approval would be considered enduring and applicable to most positions within the U.S. Army.

The updated rules direct brigade commanders to accommodate unshorn beards, unshorn hair, turbans and Muslim hijabs as signs of faith unless the requestor's religious belief is not sincere or the Army identifies a valid, specific hazard. These accommodations must be granted across all duty positions except in certain limited circumstances. The Army intends to conduct additional testing for the use of protective equipment by bearded soldiers.

"While we still seek a permanent policy change that enables all religious minorities to freely serve without exception, we are pleased with the progress that this new policy represents for religious tolerance and diversity by our nation's largest employer," said Harsimran Kaur, legal director of the Sikh Coalition. The coalition has been in the forefront of advocating for the religious rights of Sikh-

Americans to maintain their articles of faith during military service.

"The Sikh articles of faith have always been consistent with the best of American values and we're pleased that the burden no longer rests with Sikh soldiers to prove this through a lengthy administrative process," said Amandeep Sidhu, partner at McDermott Will & Emery. Sidhu has been the point person in leading the legal fight on behalf of Sikh-Americans in the armed forces, including filing lawsuits that led to ruling against the Army contention that its prohibitions have been governed by safety and security reasons.

Since 1981, Army rules have compelled Sikh-American soldiers to choose between service to faith or country with a ban on religious symbols such as facial hair and turbans that do not fit into uniform standards of appearance. Last year, the U.S. Army increased the number of individual long-term religious accommodations to nine, after lawsuits were filed on behalf of four Sikh-American soldiers, including the decorated combat veteran Capt. Simratpal Singh. Singh became the first Sikh-American soldier to be granted the accommodation while on active duty, as a result of the lawsuit.

One of the leading activists on behalf of Sikh-Americans and other minorities in the U.S. military is Maj. Kamaljeet Singh Kalsi, another high-profile Sikh-American soldier. "My turban and beard represent my commit-



Ruth Fremson/The New York Times

ment to pluralism and equality," he said. "This policy change underscores the military's commitment to these values and is a sign of meaningful progress that will ensure the strength of our democracy." In 2009, an exemption to the Army rule permitted the Riverdale, New Jersey man to wear a turban, beard and unshorn hair while on active duty. He is believed to be the first Sikh soldier since 1981 to be granted that exemption.

"Military experts have always questioned why the U.S. military has restricted Sikhs from serving," said Eric Baxter, senior counsel at Becket Law, which acted as co-counsel on Singh's behalf. "Our Army will be stronger and our nation safer with Sikhs serving alongside their fellow Americans."

Approval now rests at brigade level instead of the Army secretary's office

Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-N.Y.) called the Army rules "major progress." Crowley has introduced legislation and resolutions and garnered support of his colleagues on behalf of Sikh-Americans and other minority soldiers. "It's not just for the Sikh-American community but for our nation's military," he said. "Sikh-Americans love this country and want a fair chance to serve in our country on equal footing."

Before the recent changes, Sikh-Americans and others had to be granted a limited accommodation, or permission, to serve in the military while maintaining their articles of faith. Such accommodations were neither permanent nor guaranteed, and had to be renewed after virtually every assignment. Service

members had also been required to remove their articles of faith while their accommodation request was pending, subjecting them to the difficult position of choosing between their faith and their job.

In 2014, Crowley and Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) led more than 100 members of Congress in a bipartisan letter to the Department of Defense urging the U.S. Armed Forces to update their appearance regulations to allow Sikh Americans to serve presumptively while abiding by their articles of faith. Last year, the Army released a policy that provides for career-long accommodations for Sikh-Americans. The revisions announced last week "build on that progress by defining the scope and implementation of service by Sikh-Americans," Crowley said. Crowley and his colleagues had argued in their letters that Sikhs have served in the Army since World War I, and they are presumptively permitted to serve in the armed forces of Canada, India, and the United Kingdom, among others. They also noted that a number have won accolades for their service, including the Bronze Star.

The National Sikh Campaign, a think tank that studies messaging and communications strategies that promote a better understanding of the Sikh community in the U.S., also welcomed the new rules. Dr. Rajwant Singh, co-founder and senior adviser to the NSC, said the rules represent "values at the heart of the American ethic."

By Shilpi Paul

In 2008, Harin Contractor saw a “skinny guy with a funny name” take the helm at the White House, and felt drawn to join in a movement.

“Obama was the first politician I really connected with,” said Contractor. “The way he talked about community and diaspora – he got it.”

After years working as a consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton, Contractor was appointed by President Barack Obama to be an economic policy advisor at the Department of Labor in 2012.

He was part of a wave. Obama brought a record number of Indian-Americans into the fold at every level of government, from Rajiv Shah as the head of USAID and Aneesh Chopra as the country’s first chief technology officer, to the dozens of staffers buzzing around the White House working on technology initiatives, speechwriting, and national security.

“No matter how many temples or mandirs I visited, people would always say ‘Oh, do you know x, y or z? They work for Obama, too!’” said Contractor. “I would venture to guess there might be two or three degrees of separation between every Indian-American in this country and the administration. It was really moving – so many of us are doing this.”

Aneesh Raman, the first Indian-American presidential speechwriter, was one of those who found himself considering government work because of Obama. Raman left his career as a CNN reporter to join the Obama campaign in 2008.

“The draw of Obama was impossible for me to ignore,” he said. “It was a crazy move, to leave journalism for a campaign, because it is seen as something you can never come back from, but working for Obama became a clarifying moment of patriotism for me.

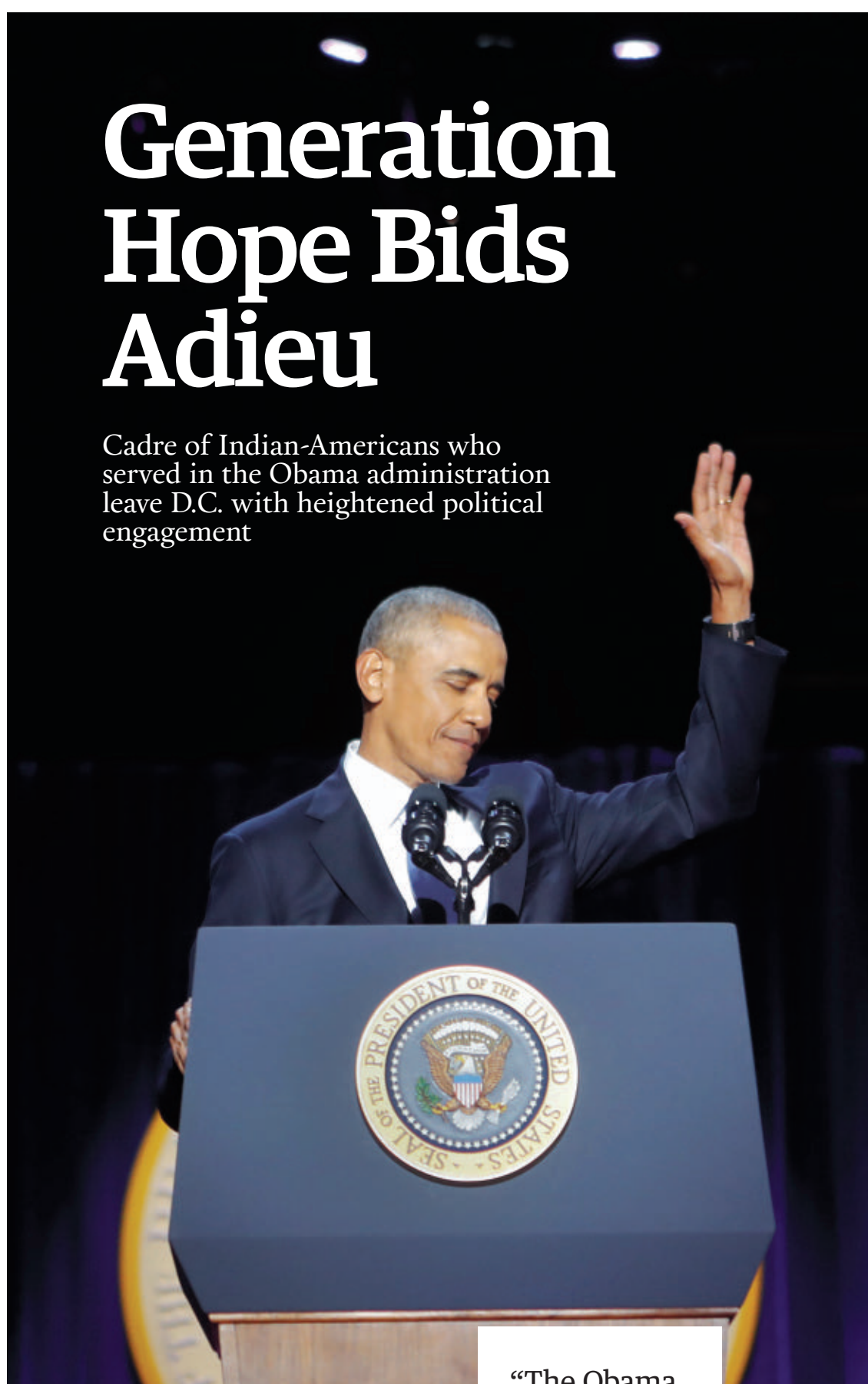
The American story is an immigrant story, and the idea of community and looking out for one another, bringing others up as we rise, expanding opportunities to more Americans – that’s at the core of how Obama thinks. That resonated pretty deeply.”

Obama brought a community of Indian-Americans into the political world, Raman believes, who will leave with a sustained sense of political engagement.

Just a decade ago, that was not the case. The workings of the federal government were invisible to many in the Indian-American community, and jobs were passed along within networks that did not include the immigrant group. Organizations like the Washington Leadership Program, created to help Indian-American students find internships within the federal govern-

Generation Hope Bids Adieu

Cadre of Indian-Americans who served in the Obama administration leave D.C. with heightened political engagement



ment, brought a handful of people behind the curtain each year, but growth was slow and everyone in the small community knew each other.

Under Obama, growth has been exponential, groups within groups have formed, and partisan divides have emerged – a sign that of community maturity, thinks Contractor.

Ten years ago, an internship brought Smita Satiani into the world of Washington politics with a position in the office of Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.) The child of Pakistani and Indian immigrants, Satiani stepped into D.C. with her head on her shoulders, but no guidance forthcoming from her parents.

“They didn’t understand the highly connected political

world,” said Satiani. “You felt like you had to forge your own path and make your own way.”

Satiani drifted away from the government, but after stints at the Clinton Foundation and the social entrepreneurship non-profit Ashoka, Satiani was hired at Obama’s White House as the deputy director of the Presidential Innovations Fellows program.

“The president made the U.S. government a more accessible place for me personally,” said Satiani.

“The Obama Presidency was a political awakening for second-generation Indian Americans to get off the sidelines and actually do something”

In her role, Satiani recruited technologists, scientists and designers into federal agencies to bring sometimes-clunky government systems into the future and to mine tech hubs throughout the country, in Silicon Valley, Austin and Cambridge, for modern perspectives and solutions. The program, she said, attracted many people into the government for the first time.

“We recruited people who were working on technology and

engineering at the ground level,” said Satiani. “It was a really diverse group of people, and hopefully it will be a place where Indian Americans can contribute. D.C. isn’t just a black hole of insider connections—it’s a place where you can go and contribute your skills.”

To Satiani, Obama drew in a diverse staff not just because of his rhetoric and personal history, but also because of more practical policy initiatives.

“For example, one of our programs focused on racial and ethnic differences in health, and bringing that science back into care,” said Satiani.

“He also revived the White Houses’ Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, a forum, created by President Clinton and then dismantled, that increased AAPI access to federal resources. He created spaces to talk about cultural differences and how they impact policy making. I think the focus on celebrating and addressing difference is very unique to President Obama.”

So, in President Donald Trump’s new world, what happens? What happens to the new generation of Indian-American political staffers and activists who came on board to work alongside Obama. Where does their energy go now?

For now at least, the energy is moving outside of the government. The post-Obama world is already experiencing a boost in civic engagement from minorities and progressive groups in the private sector, non-profit sector and in living rooms around the country.

“We have to fight on,” said Raman. “The lesson I took is that progress is not inevitable – it has to be fought for, and even when it’s won, it can be reversed and you have to fight for it again. Hopefully now there’s a greater realism about what it takes to affect change. We are really in a defining moment in American history in how we respond to Trump, probably more definitional than when Obama took office.”

Working for Obama was sometimes maddening, said Raman: “There was an impenetrable wall of obstruction. It was frustrating to write speech after speech about a commonsense, bipartisan proposal that didn’t have a chance of going to a vote in the House.”

Seeing Trump win was painful, said Raman, but filled him with a renewed desire to work on issues outside of the realm of the government. Raman is now at an educational technology startup called Raise.me, which focuses on getting lower income high school students into college, into careers and into the middle class.

“Since leaving the administra-

Continued on page 14

Generation Hope Bids Adieu

Continued from page 13

tion, it's clear to me that my entire life will be about impact. Where can I have the biggest impact on the most people?" he said.

"For those who feel deflated by the Trump Presidency, it's important to find a cause, and to continue affecting change in whatever way they can."

Satiani has also moved out of the government, to the Google X offices in Silicon Valley, working on mysterious and wide-ranging "moonshot" programs.

"Now, outside work is even more important," said Satiani. "At Google X, we are trying to solve big problems that maybe the government can't or shouldn't solve. It's our responsibility now. The problems aren't going away, we just need to find different ways to solve them."

Additionally, Satiani has faith in the checks and balances built into our democratic system. When she was in the White House, she said, she and her colleagues felt an urgent drive to make progressive initiatives a permanent, foundational part of the way the government works.

"The system makes creating programs challenging, and makes dismantling programs that have bipartisan support even more difficult," said Satiani.

For example, the health care initiative Satiani described, which focuses on ethnic differences, is part of the Precision Medical Initiative, which is funded by the 21st Century Cure Act, a

bill that passed in December 2016 with near-unanimous support in the House and the Senate.

"These are not political

issues," said Satiani. "It makes no sense for Trump to dismantle programs like these."

In addition to an energized

political and activist class, Contractor is also seeing formerly apolitical Indian-Americans come out of the woodwork in response

to the rise in white nationalist rhetoric.

Unable to hide behind the shield of a "model minority" label in a country where discussions about a racially homogeneous white America have hit mainstream platforms, Indian-Americans who had been living quietly successful lives throughout the country are starting to gather and ask tough questions.

"They didn't realize the impact it would have on them personally until it actually happened," said Contractor. "As kids growing up in the 80s, we faced discrimination from people who didn't understand what brown people were about – we all hated that, but we didn't think our kids would have to face it."

In addition to pleased Indian-American business owners who believe Trump will roll back regulations and help their business interests, Contractor has been hearing murmurs of nervousness from Indian-American communities.

"People are starting to reach out and ask what they can do, how they can get involved and how they can make sure their families are taken care of," said Contractor.

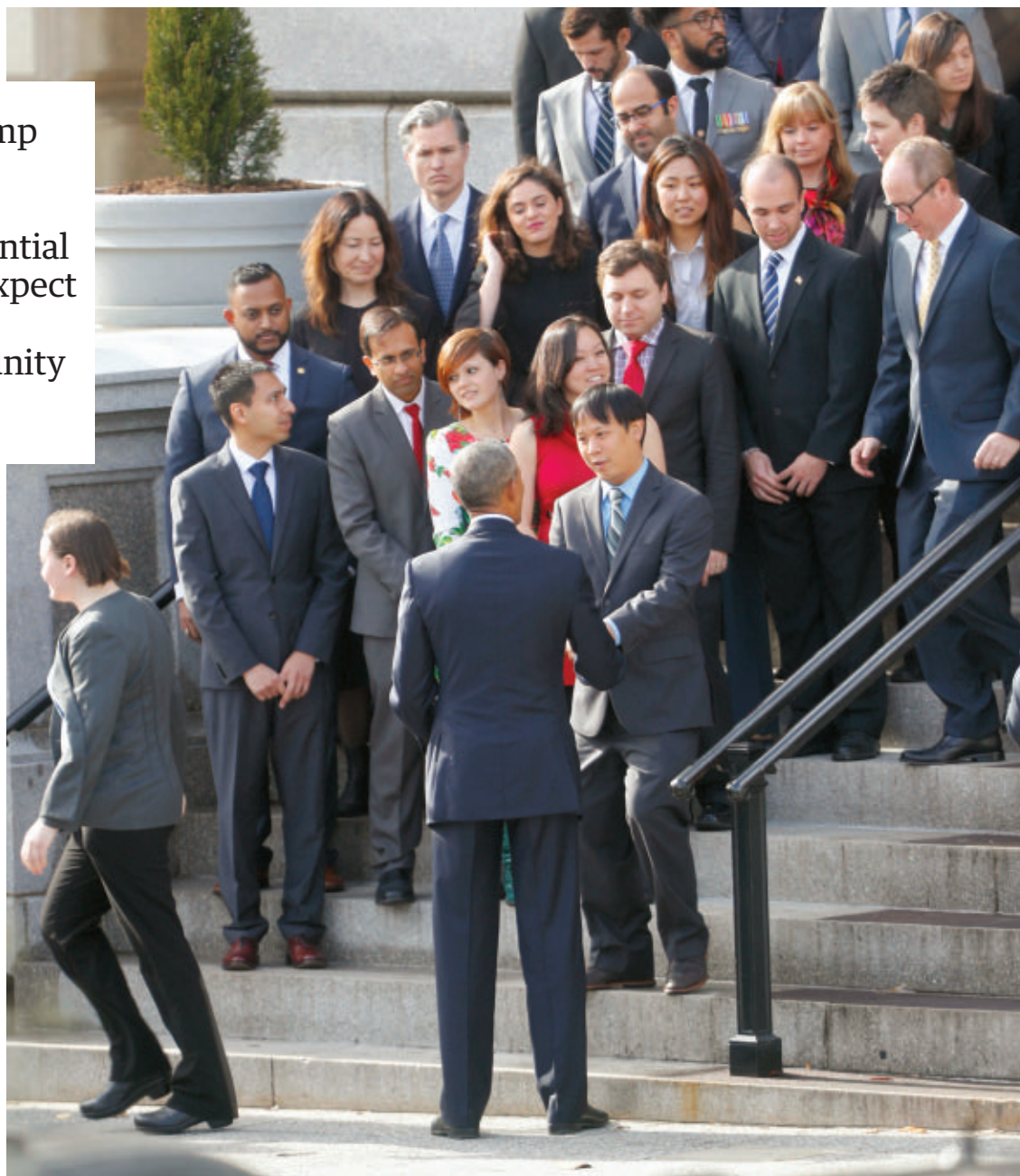
"In Atlanta for instance, a group of about 30 wealthy second-generation folks are getting together and having conversations about what they can do. Should they donate to the Republican Senator and lobby him to check Trump on any extreme measures? Does it mean they start supporting Democratic grassroots movements that will watch out for their social interests? That's something I never thought I'd see, but it's a small silver lining."

"The first generation came here just to make sure their children were taken care of," said Contractor. "They didn't want to get involved in politics. We, the second generation, are more engrained in American society. We don't have the connections other Americans have, but we feel like we should have a seat at the table and that we are not different. But the rhetoric coming out is showing that we are different—now the lightbulbs are clicking, and people want to do something about it."

And after the Obama catalyst, believes Raman, the community may be in a place to make their voices heard.

"The Obama Presidency was a political awakening for second-generation Indian Americans to get off the sidelines and actually do something," said Raman. "The administration brought so many of us together in one place and created a community; that's going to be the foundation for lasting impact."

As Trump arrives, former presidential aides expect to spur community action



Above, President Barack Obama greets staff members on the steps of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in the White House complex in Washington, Jan. 12. Below, file photo of Dr. Rajiv Shah, administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, in the Situation Room with President Obama.



By Aziz Haniffa

From helping forge a historic nuclear agreement between the U.S. and Iran, to establishing an on-ramp to give immigrant entrepreneurs a foothold in the U.S. economy, the Indian-American members of Team Obama have left their own collective legacy. Like Barack Obama's, it reaches from the efforts to eradicate Ebola in West Africa to the delicate, much broader matter of national security.

Puneet Talwar, who was assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs, served the Obama administration for nearly seven years before leaving in late 2015. He had been a lead negotiator in discussions with Iran that led to the historic nuclear deal with Tehran. Talwar said it was one of many significant global security challenges he faced.

Early on in his tenure, he was charged with reinforcement of the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership, deepening the nations' ties. "Soon after I started my job," he said "we were able to restart a political-military dialogue with India and transform it into a genuine high-level, geo-political conversation on the growing set of issues on which U.S. and Indian interests intersect."

In 2014, he and then-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and, from there, he said the relationship took a "quantum leap forward in U.S.-India relations....and it is likely to be an enduring legacy with profound and positive implications for global peace and security."

Arun Kumar, likewise, has confidence for the future. He will leave his post as assistant secretary of commerce for global markets following the Jan. 20 inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump.

But he said he is sure of one thing: "The U.S.-India commercial relationship has never been stronger than it is now." He said U.S. companies are participating in India's major growth sectors - everything from locomotives to so-called "smart cities." Likewise, he said, Indian companies' investment in the U.S. has grown.

He said a good deal of the progress stems from the launch of the U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue, which was announced during Obama's Republic Day visit to India in 2015. Kumar quoted U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker as describing the initiative as "an enduring mechanism for commercial and strategic engagement on a wide range of issues."



Aneesh Chopra, the first-ever White House Chief Technology Officer, with President Obama.

The Indian-Americans Who Helped Shape the Nation as Team Obama

Departing staffers recall key projects and deals, many of them unprecedented



Puneet Talwar, assistant secretary of state for political-military affairs, briefing President Obama.

Continued on page 16

The Indian-Americans Who Helped Shape the Nation as Team Obama

Continued from page 15

Kumar holds out hope that the Trump administration will continue these initiatives. "This includes the new travel and tourism dialogue, launching the 2017 U.S.-India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year," he said.

He acknowledged there is unfinished business and there are disappointments. "We had wanted to have more intense interactions at the level of Indian states as that is where much of the action is," he said. "We were not able to make as much progress on this front as we wanted to, and hope this will be a focus in 2017." He also regrets the absence of a bilateral investment treaty with India. He was, however, encouraged that both governments' productive work groups would address areas that will grow bilateral trade.

Dr. Rajiv Shah, as administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, had been one of the Obama administration's most senior Indian-Americans. He left in 2015 - but not before joining Obama's delegation to India for Republic Day and attending the Obama-Modi summit in New Delhi.

He recalled that, upon arrival at USAID, he hit the ground running with the Haiti earthquake during his first week, followed by the Pakistan floods, and by the time he concluded his tenure, he'd tackled some basic financial, health and other challenges in the poorest sections of India. He said he is pleased to see a quickly coalescing water and sanitation partnership with companies like Hindustan Lever, Coca Cola, with the goal of reaching 20 million people with improved water and sanitation. Another partnership, he said, was one with financial institutions to make bank accounts accessible for everyone so cash and digital payment could occur. "We also moved to accelerate our partnership in clean energy and build partnerships between Indian and American companies to make affordable energy access real for everybody."

Shah notes internal progress too, Shah said. "I oversaw the largest rebuilding of this agency in its history and I feel very proud of what we accomplished, including the extraordinarily successful fight to eliminate Ebola from West Africa," he said. He also worked, he said, to better manage USAID resources. "When I started, 9 percent of our \$20 plus billion annual budget was spent on innovative results-oriented public-private partner-



Above, Gautam Raghavan, deputy White House liaison for the U.S. Department of Defense, in the background, introducing his parents and husband to President Obama. Left, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Arun M. Kumar with Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker. Below, Nicholas Rathod, special assistant and deputy director for Intergovernmental Affairs briefing President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden.

ships," he said. "When I left, more than 50 percent of our resources was spent in that way."

Nicholas Rathod, who was special assistant to the president and deputy director of Intergovernmental Affairs, takes

special pride in being part of the efforts to help stabilize the economy, and pass reforms affecting Wall Street and health care.

"It also meant so much to me personally to be working in the White House," he said. "I never

took for granted a moment --- each morning I would walk into the west wing for meetings and would stop for a second to think about how amazing it was that I had the privilege to walk into that building--its particularly powerful being the son of immigrants from India....to think in one generation my family went from a small rural village in India to the White House is profound."

Rathod is now executive director of the think tank, State Innovation Exchange that focuses on building progressive power in state capitals around the country. "Our work focuses on training state elected officials to be effective at governing and prepare them for higher office. We also work to get good public policy passed in states around the country."

This is key to continuing the work begun inside the White House, he said. "We will do what we can to protect President Obama's legacy from the states and to fight and draw contrast with what President Trump and



the conservatives will be pushing from Washington D.C."

Aneesh Chopra, who had served as the White House's first chief technology officer until 2012, looks back with pride in how he was able to help harness the power of tech for creative problem-solving at home and overseas. One particular project directly benefitted India: an initiative he calls an unprecedented collaboration on software development with that nation.

"We open-sourced data.gov to help India launch data.gov.in and to gift the underlying software to any country anywhere in the world to join the movement," he said. Perhaps just as personally fulfilling, he said, was the opportunity he got to team up with his mentor, Sam Pitroda, to co-chair the project, called the U.S.-India Open Government Dialogue.

He is equally pleased to have helped launch StartupAmerica, which generated the kinds of policies that could nurture immigrant business owners. "Today," he said, "we've established a clear on-ramp for immigrant entrepreneurs to make it in America."

In many cases, he said, development of apps were key components in his assignments. "We executed an open innovation strategy that allowed us to sponsor challenges and prizes to find new solutions to vexing problems," he said, "including the Jon Bon Jovi-inspired 'Project REACH' challenge which opened up new data sets on available homeless shelter beds and encouraged app developers to make it easy for caregivers to use it when there is need."

There was also an "Apps against Abuse" challenge that gave rise to the "Circle of 6" app which was adopted for use in India.

Gautam Raghavan served the Obama administration in the Office of the White House Liaison at the Department of Defense through 2011. From 2011 until 2014, was Obama's liaison to both the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the White House Office of Public Engagement. He found his White House service to be an opportunity on many levels - including personal and professional.

"As an openly gay Indian-American immigrant," he said, "it is not lost on me that I had the opportunity to serve President Obama because of who I am, not in spite of who I am."

He quoted a saying that he said exists in the Office of Presidential Personnel: "People are policy."

What it means, he said, is "that the people who serve in federal government - their talent, experiences and stories - have a direct impact on the kinds of policy that results."

Tellis Poised for Nomination as Next U.S. Ambassador to India

Presumed front-runner would become second Indian-American to hold U.S. post

By Aziz Haniffa

Ashley J. Tellis, one of the nation's foremost strategic affairs experts and a key protagonist in the negotiations that led to the U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal, could very well be the next U.S. Ambassador to India.

A recent report in the Washington Post said that President-elect Donald Trump is "close to selecting" the Mumbai-born Tellis, setting off a strong wave of speculation. Tellis is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a leading Washington, D.C. think tank. He would succeed Richard Verma, who has said he will depart on Jan. 20, the day Trump is inaugurated.

Tellis, 55, would become the second successive Indian-American to be ensconced in Roosevelt House in New Delhi. Verma, 48, was appointed by outgoing President Barack Obama and created history as the first Indian-American to be a U.S. ambassador to India.

A Jan. 8 opinion piece by Washington Post staffer Josh



Rogin noted that "transition sources said Trump is close to selecting Ashley Tellis, a former White House official and renowned India expert, to be the next U.S. ambassador to India."

Tellis' own silence on the subject, a departure from his usual accessibility, reinforces the spec-

ulation that he is likely front-runner for the post.

Tellis is no stranger to Roosevelt House. He was plucked by then-Ambassador to India Robert Blackwill from the RAND Corporation – often called the Pentagon's own think tank – where he was the South Asia spe-

cialist. He became Blackwill's senior adviser in New Delhi. On his return, Tellis did a stint at the National Security Council in the White House as special assistant to the president and as senior director for strategic planning and Southwest Asia.

He then joined Carnegie, but was seconded for service in the George W., Bush administration and assigned to the State Department.

Working with then-Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, he was a key U.S. player in the U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal and formed

a close working relationship and personal friendship with India's key negotiator Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, now Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign secretary.

Tellis is an alumnus of the University of Bombay who came to the U.S. for graduate studies at the University of Chicago, where

he received his master's and doctorate in political science. He then joined the RAND Corporation where, as South Asia specialist, he also focused on international security, defense and strategic issues in Asia, including China.

In a recent interview with India Abroad, Tellis called India's relationship with Washington

"indeed special because it is so fundamentally multidimensional -- it implicates geopolitics, national security, economics, technology, and inter-societal relations simultaneously, in a manner that is simply unmatched by any of India's other foreign affiliations."

But he's hardly been a fan of Trump. In fact, his name was on a list of 50 Republicans released by Together for America that was launched to lead the Hillary for America campaign's recruitment. Any nomination by Trump would still need confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

Mumbai native still awaits action by Trump, Senate confirmation

In Washington, the Party's Already Getting Started

Inaugural gala honors Asians who will serve in Trump White House

By Ritu Jha

The Indian-American community, mainly supporters of President-elect Donald Trump, are already in a celebratory mood.

On Jan. 19, the eve of the inauguration, the Trump-Pence Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee (APAAC) and the National Committee of Asian American Republicans will be hosting the 58th Presidential Inaugural Gala in honor of Trump as well as Asian Pacific-Americans nominated to serve in the new administration.

APAAC member Puneet Ahluwalia, the gala's finance chairman, hopes for a crowd of 600 at the Mayflower Hotel, where presidential inaugurations have been held 1925.

Ahluwalia said the Indian-American community showed great support for Trump in a number of ways. He said Harsh Sethi, CEO of the Chantilly, bought a large amount of tickets and invited friends.

Another supporter, he said,



was Washington-area Realtor Kamal Brar of Century 21. Ahluwalia said Vivek Lall, CEO of General Atomics, is one of the sponsors of the gala.

"Our Indian American Republican community is excited about the inaugural gala because it is a celebration of the hard work which brought the great result that we sought – a Republican President, and a GOP-majority Senate and the House," said Harry Walia of Florida, a member of APAAC and the policy and strategy chairman for the gala. "So many of us worked tirelessly to achieve this result. Now it is the time to get together and celebrate with each other and our community as a whole."

Walia said the gala is an opportunity for Indian-Americans who are becoming more and more politically active to network with one another.

"The gala is not a rally," he said, "so we are not trying to solicit people to come out in numbers. It is a big party."

Another member of the APAAC, K.V. Kumar of California, said he has reason to celebrate too because he has big hopes for the new president. "India wanted one thing from the last administration and that was...a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and that did not happen." He said he believed Trump would do well for

Mayflower Hotel event expects about 600 attendees

India.

In a statement, APAAC and the National Committee of Asian American Republicans said the inaugural ball will include a celebration and photo opportunity with prominent dignitaries and presidential appointees. Guests will be entertained by the performances from Asian-Pacific American communities.

Capitol Hill Optimistic About Success of Visa Reform Bill Under Trump

Newly reintroduced H-1B visa reform legislation expected to impact Indians in tech sector



Image Credit: Creative Commons "Washington Capitol Hill" by Arend is licensed under CC

By Aziz Haniffa

A Legislation to reform the H-1B visa program is being viewed as having added traction this time around, after the swearing-in of President-elect Donald Trump. The recently reintroduced Protect and Grow American Jobs Act changes eligibility requirements for H-1B visa exemptions, a move that is expected to have an impact on the program's largest beneficiaries: Indians from the tech sector who, during the past few decades, have accounted for about half of the visas issued.

Reps. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.) and Scott Peters (D-Calif.) have said they are sponsoring the measure to plug loopholes that could save American jobs that are now being outsourced. Issa reintroduced the measure, H.R. 170, on Jan. 4.

In a statement released by his office, Issa said, "In order for America to lead again, we need to ensure we can retain the world's best and brightest talent. At the same time, we also need to make sure programs are not abused to allow companies to outsource and hire cheap foreign labor from abroad to replace American workers."

His statement said the bipartisan bill accomplishes both those

goals. "It will ensure that our valuable high-skilled immigration spots are used by companies when the positions cannot be filled by the existing workforce." He called it "an important step to growing our economy and fixing one of the many aspects of our country's broken immigration system."

Peters said the measure's updates to the high-skilled visa system would level the playing field but still ensure that visas are available "for innovators who need them to maintain a competitive workforce."

The bill failed to move forward on Capitol Hill, not even progressing to a hearing in the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, the first step in its legislative journey.

Congressional sources are confident that some action is likely this time around. They acknowledged that in previous years, the technology industry and its lobbyists would use their influence and resources to knock down such bills and convince lawmakers not to support or co-sponsor them, then get the Rules Committee not to schedule a hearing.

The source said that, in the wake of Trump's stand against such outsourcing, this lobby may be on the defensive and lawmakers would be more emboldened

to attach their names to such legislation for political expediency.

A backgrounder provided by Issa's office said the legislation would help close a loophole in the H-1B program being used by these companies to bring in cheaper foreign labor. To counter this, the bill would raise the salary requirement for the positions to \$100,000 a year and eliminate the master's degree exemption. The current annual salary requirement is set at \$60,000. The increase brings the salary more in line with the average American salary for these positions. Issa's office said the legislation was aimed at cutting down on abuse by "removing the profit incentive and ensuring these positions remain available for companies who truly need them."

Both lawmakers also believe the measure would also cut down on abuse by eliminating the master's degree exemption. "Foreign workers seeking H-1B visas have increasingly sought and obtained low-quality certificates to meet the requirements for an exemption just to qualify for H-1B," they said. That, they

Protect and Grow American Jobs Act has bipartisan backing

said, prevented the positions from staying open for high-skilled positions that companies cannot fill domestically. A number of American companies, including Disney, SoCal and Edison have come under fire, particularly from Trump, for allegedly abusing the H-1B visa program to replace American workers with foreign labor.

Vic Goel, managing partner of Goel and Anderson, a Washington, D.C. area law firm that specializes in corporate immigration, said the bill "is narrowly drafted to affect pain on H-1B dependent employers, especially large India-based IT consulting firms....The bill will certainly meet its objective by increasing the cost of doing business for H-1B dependent employers if they are forced to pay employees at least \$100,000 per year to qualify for the exemption." He said it was unclear to him why the master's degree exemption was targeted for elimination.

"I'm not aware of any claim or evidence suggesting that H-1B employers are somehow gaming the system through the hiring of candidates with master's

degrees," he said.

R. Chandrashekhar, president of the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), called the bill discriminatory. "We continue to share our perceptions about the skill shortages that exist, the kind of contribution the IT industry has made to corporate America. We share our deep concern at the discriminatory nature of the proposed provisions," he told BTVi in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Biswal, who made her final visit to India last week as the point person for the subcontinent, acknowledged concern in India over trade in services, including the H-1B and L-1 (intra-company transfer) visa programs under siege in Congress and by the incoming Trump administration. She said the government is aware that American workers are concerned about declining opportunities but did not speculate about the incoming administration's policies. "There have been benefits from globalization and benefits from having Indian investment in the United States and Indian labor in the United States," she said. "And, that has had a tremendous positive impact on the American economy."

Indian, Israeli and U.S. Similarities Celebrated At Hanukkah Event

Indian consulate in Manhattan hosts 15th annual Jewish Festival of Lights ceremony



Nissim Reuben, assistant director at the American Jewish Council's Asia Pacific Institute (far right), and Shimon Mercer-Wood, spokesperson at the Israeli consulate in New York (second from right), join in a rousing song along with members of the Jewish community, Ambassador Riva Das Ganguly, the Indian consul general in New York (fifth from right), and N.J.

By P. Rajendran

Inside the Indian consulate in Manhattan, two menorahs sat untouched and unlit on a table on the ballroom's stage.

"Shouldn't they light the can-

dles?" a woman asked, with a bit of uncertainty.

Her answer came just a short while later as Ambassador Riva Ganguly Das, consul general, was joined by members of the American Jewish Council and others stepping forward to light

each of the 18 candles - nine on each menorah.

To complete the ritual, Nissim Reuben, assistant director of the AJC's Asia Pacific Institute, read an Indian version of the words traditionally uttered during the lighting of the candles for the

Jewish holiday of Hanukkah.

The consulate's celebration was on Jan. 10 - little more than a week after the eight-day festival of lights, which commenced Saturday, Dec. 24, 2016, concluded on Jan. 1. Reuben has helped the consulate hold the Hanukkah

celebration for 15 years.

As candles glowed, Das reminded the gathering of all the Jews who, having been persecuted elsewhere, ultimately found a home in India -- and how India still beckons to many of them, even after most left for Israel after it proclaimed statehood in 1948. She said a large number of Israeli citizens take vacations in India and celebrate Hanukkah on Goa's sunny beaches. There are restaurants, she said, that have menus printed in Hebrew.

Shimon Mercer-Wood, the spokesman at the Israeli consulate who has also worked as a political officer at Israeli embassy in New Delhi, spoke of the centuries-old bond between the Jewish and Indian communities.

New Jersey Assemb. Raj Mukerji (D-Hoboken) said India, the U.S. and Israel all share a devotion to "tolerance, democracy and religious freedom," drawing laughter when he alluded to a shared heritage in "throwing off British colonial rule."

Indeed, said Reuben, who added that he hoped the recently formed Hindu-Jewish Council would further cement ties between the two communities.

7 Indian-Americans Honored at Uttar Pradesh Pravasi Divas

By George Joseph

Seven Indian-Americans, including Rajeev Bhambri, COO of India Abroad, received the UP NRI Samman Award (UP Apravasi Bhartiya Ratna Puraskar) from Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav at Nawab's Lucknow on Jan. 4. The awards were presented as part of the second Uttar Pradesh Pravasi Divas. Constituted by the NRI Department of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, the award honors NRIs' exceptional contributions in their professions.

Drawn from business, social activism and the arts, the other six recipients were Krishna Kumar Pandey, social, spiritual and religious leader; Aditi I. Srivastava, singer and songwriter; Pratibha Shalini Tiwari, entrepreneur and social activist; Vonod Gupta, entrepreneur; Sher Bahadur Singh, professor; Jiten K. Agarwal, founding president and CEO Expedien, Inc.

Bhambri, who moved to the U.S. in the 1980s, joined India Abroad in 1987 and played a major role in making the newspaper the Indian community's voice. He continues to head the



Above, Rajeev Bhambri, COO of India Abroad, receiving the UP NRI Samman Award from Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav.

finance department and is closely involved with the newspaper's publishing and operations. He was also instrumental in launching the Gujarat Times, Sher-E-Punjab and India in New York, a weekly entertainment and lifestyle guide as part of India Abroad group of publications.

Pandey leads religious ceremonies at the Shiva Durga Temple in Sunnyvale, California. He was a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award in 2011, the Hind Rattan Award and Mahatma Gandhi Samman in 2015.

Srivastava promotes the culture and music of Uttar Pradesh through new media, including

YouTube and Facebook. Her second album, "Des-Pardes," promotes the Benaras Gharana style.



Krishna Kumar Pandey



Vinod Gupta



Jiten K. Agarwal

Tiwari is a California entrepreneur and the first woman director of the Asian Pacific Island American Public Affairs Association. She is a founding member of Annapoorna, which feeds the homeless, and founding director of the India Association of Sacramento.

Gupta is the former chief executive and chairman of the InfoGroup. He later created DataBaseUSA.com and LocateAmerica.com. He was a squadron leader in the Indian Air Force.

Singh was principal of Vyas Intercollege in Kalpi, UP, before arriving in the U.S. in 1978. He worked for New York City's Department of Education before starting his own business. He is a member of the International Hindi Association and was on the organizing committee of the World Hindi Sammelan in New York in 2007.

Agarwal is an entrepreneur who has set up several companies with a total revenue of \$450 million. His focus is on new business development, turn-around leadership, startup, innovation and social entrepreneurship.

Tristate Area Community Hosts Reception for New Indian Envoy

Ambassador Sarna spoke of how effective Indians had been in making a difference in the U.S.



The audience stands up for the national anthems of the U.S. and India

By P. Rajendran

There could not have been a more Indian place than the Royal Albert's Palace in Fords, New Jersey, for the local community to welcome newly appointed Indian Ambassador Navtej Sarna, Jan. 12.

The location has statues of elephants with Indian royalty atop them, a four-foot-high golden Ganesh, walls covered with deep gold floral motifs, and a stage flanked by the U.S. and Indian flags, each more than 30 feet tall.

The event began at 6 pm and, fueled by hors d'oeuvres and fuelled by drinks, the conversation got more genial as the evening grew older, and well past the time for the actual reception.

Besides community leaders and business people, there were also a host of Sikhs from various gurdwaras waiting to see Sarna who has also authored books with themes from Sikh history.

The hubbub around a moving cluster of people heralded the arrival of Ambassador Sarna with India's Consul General in New York Riva Das Ganguly.

Sarna, who has worked in the U.S. before, has also held posts as India's ambassador to Israel and its high commissioner in the United Kingdom before taking up his current post.

Thereafter, members of the community got around to welcoming him, with Federation of India Chairman Ramesh Patel including a request to address the issue of the conversion of Indian



Above, Ambassador Navtej Singh Sarna speaking at the event.
Below, artist Manoj Vyas presents Sarna with a painting of himself



There were a host of Sikhs from various gurdwaras waiting to see Sarna

rupees, and H.R. Shah of TV Asia extolling him with poetry.

When Sarna got up to speak, he played down the praise and then spoke of how effective Indians had been in making a difference in the U.S., despite their small numbers.

"We are in very interesting times in the U.S.," he said, adding, "We are confident the India-U.S. relationship is in a very good place.... We solicit your influence to get across the message of India."

He said the Indians' strength lay in knowledge.

Artist Manoj Vyas had painted a portrait of Sarna, which he presented to the ambassador.

Raj Mukherji, an N.J. Assemblyman who came late, came up to speak and, while apologizing for his lateness, said he was attending the swearing-in of Gurbir Grewal, the first South Asian prosecutor in Bergen County.

He also gave a state proclamation to celebrate the role of FIA, and then went on to ask people in the community to get involved in the political process.

"If we don't get a seat at the table, we're on the menu," he joked, if only to make a point.

The evening ended with an Indian dinner.

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He Stirs the Drinks for Celebrity Endorsements

By Katie Benner

An annual charity party here was in full swing, but its host, Rohan Oza, was late. He was cruising toward Los Angeles aboard a private jet with Rick Yorn, who manages pop star Justin Timberlake, and Ben Weiss, the founder of Bai, a maker of low-calorie soft drinks.

Oza, 45, an early investor in Bai, had just helped persuade Dr Pepper Snapple Group to buy the company for \$1.7 billion. The deal created a windfall for him, Weiss and Timberlake, whom Oza had persuaded to invest in and endorse the brand. (“Five calories, naturally sweetened and tastes amazing – what’s not to love?” Timberlake said in an interview.)

When Oza finally arrived at The Children Matter, an event he hosted at his home with Gene Simmons, the Kiss bassist, he was understandably ebullient. Guests who had paid \$2,500 a ticket were mingling with famous people, watching Simmons perform classics like “Rock and Roll All Nite.”

They sipped cocktails mixed with Bai and Wtrmln Wtr, another of Oza’s investments. While he talked Bollywood-themed parties with actress Kristen Wiig, he showed off a refrigerator full of beverages from companies he had backed. Mariel Hemingway watched him point out bottles of Health-Ade Kombucha. He pressed a bottle of Wtrmln Wtr into the hands of Wiig’s companion. He clutched a bottle himself as he stood for photo ops, his shiny black hair rising like the swirl of a kewpie doll.

“I believe in living my brands, not marketing them,” Oza said, offering a can of Bai Bubbles. “I’m not selling Bugattis. These products have got to be fun and engaging and desirable.”

He stopped midthought to high-five singer Ne-Yo, who

“I believe in living my brands, not marketing them”



Rohan Oza at his home in Beverly Hills, Calif., Oct. 25.

Nathaniel Wood/The New York Times

immediately brought up the Dr Pepper deal. “You owe me one, man,” he said. “I’m in.”

Movie stars, singers and athletes have long profited from product endorsements, but A-list names tended to stick with high-end luxury products and giant brands like Coca-Cola (LeBron James, Penélope Cruz) and Pepsi (both Cindy Crawford and, back in the day, Joan Crawford). They were usually just “spokesmodels” or “brand ambassadors.”

But thanks in part to Oza, famous actors, musicians and sports stars now lend not just clout to little-known soft drinks,

snacks and more, but financial and creative involvement. Timberlake, for example, is taking the position of chief flavor officer with Bai “to have a little bit of fun with my title and to show people this isn’t your typical endorsement deal,” he said. “It’s a partnership.”

Oza was the marketing head at a small beverage company called Glacéau and had the idea to make a deal with Curtis Jackson, known professionally as rapper 50 Cent, to promote the company’s Vitaminwater in exchange for a stake in the company instead of cash. Jackson

made an estimated \$50 million to \$100 million when Coca-Cola bought Glacéau for \$4.1 billion in 2007.

By contrast, Glacéau later cut a more traditional deal with football star Tom Brady, reportedly paying him up to \$5 million for a three-year contract to promote its Smartwater drink.

Oza left Glacéau after the sale and has since become a go-to broker between small companies and big celebrities. Through his connections,

Jennifer Aniston invested in Smartwater, Rihanna and Madonna invested in Vita Coco, and Beyoncé invested in Wtrmln Wtr.

A year ago, Oza started the investment firm CAVU Venture Partners with Clayton Christopher, founder of Sweet Leaf Tea, and Brett Thomas, a former hedge fund investor, so they could use outside money to invest in products.

Some celebrities are going beyond investing in a company to creating one, like Jessica Alba and her household products business, Honest Company, and Kate Hudson with her fashion brand, Fabletics, which is owned by the TechStyle Fashion group.

And the film studio STX Entertainment has paid stars less than what is typical and made up for it with a bigger share of the film’s overall profits, essentially incentivizing them to use their power to make a hit.

“Anyone can smack their name on a drink brand, but it’s more beneficial to that star if they can help own and build and incubate a project,” said Sophie Watts, the president of STX.

This realization has helped solidify Oza’s wealth, though his is not a Horatio Alger tale.

Sitting by his pool on a quiet afternoon, over a snack of Chef’s Cut beef jerky (which he stores in bulk in the garage), Oza described how he was born in Zambia to a wealthy Indian family, attending the English prep school Harrow, the University of Nottingham and the University of Michigan business school.

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California Campus Layoffs a Tough Lesson in Indian Labor Outsourcing

Terminated workers sue, charging University of California-San Francisco with discrimination



By Ritu Jha

The scene playing out at the University of California-San Francisco has rattled workers at the college campus, but the underlying issue - the outsourcing of foreign labor - has shaken the broader American and Indian labor pools alike: Eighty employees at the college not only received job termination letters but were told that, as a condition of receiving their severance, they must train their foreign replacements. In a lawsuit against the university, they are charging "discrimination based on national origin," said their attorney Gary Gwilliam.

"We are not against Indians," Gwilliam said, "but they can't just come in and replace Americans with all Indians." The school has a contract with the India-based IT giant HCL, and according to Gwilliam, several IT workers at the school have already lost their jobs, while the remainder were told to have the new HCL workers trained by Feb. 28.

HCL is not a new entity in the United States, especially among tech companies in the private sector. But what was shocking for many, said Gwilliam, was the decision by a public university to

engage in foreign outsourcing seen more commonly in the private sector. "I think outsourcing by a public university is very different from a private company outsourcing," he said. "I think they owe a special obligation to their public employees. They are replacing workers and have outsourced work to India and that concerns me greatly."

According to Laura Kurtzman, senior public information representative for UCSF, the contract with HCL America will result in the loss of 49 IT career positions, or 8 percent of the campus' centralized IT workforce. Another 48 jobs that are either currently vacant or filled by contractors will also be eliminated. All impacted UCSF employees received six months' notice of intention to reorganize, which is greater than the notice requirements under applicable UC policies. Kurtzman said the move will save the school more than \$30 million over a

five-year period while increasing IT capacity and improving cybersecurity. The vast majority of UCSF's IT services will remain in-house, she said. UCSF will continue to grow its IT capabilities and staff levels to support the mission critical areas of research, patient

Workforce problems, involving the H-1B visa is less common in public sector



University of California President Janet Napolitano.

AP Photo/Eric Riedel

care, and education, as well as business operations. IT costs on the university's clinical side nearly tripled between 2011 and 2016, driven by the introduction of the electronic medical record and increased digital connectivity.

She said such a growth rate is not sustainable. Research, especially in priority areas like precision medicine, is also demanding increased IT capacity. Providing patient access and the highest quality care, as well as advancing high-caliber research, are among UCSF's top priorities, and these missions must be carried out in a cost-competitive environment, she said.

The lawsuit, filed last November with the California

Department of Employment and Housing, joins an array of similar litigation involving U.S. employers and Indian outsourcing firms. Infosys paid \$34 million in settlements in 2013 following allegations of systemic visa fraud and abuse of the immigration processes.

Last year, TCS paid \$940 million in fines following a trade secret infringement lawsuit in the U.S. HCL is the fourth-largest India-based IT outsourcing firm and has replaced U.S. workers at Xerox and Disney, and many other locations.

The prospect of a public university opting to source "is shocking....mind-boggling," said Ron Hira, associate professor in the Department of Political

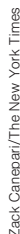
Science at Howard University in Washington, D.C. He said it was particularly baffling in light of the people involved in the university system: "When you have the dean of engineering at U.C. Berkeley like S. Shankar Sastry on the board of HCL, Pradeep Khosla, chancellor of UC San Diego and overall UC president Janet Napolitano, who earns about \$900,000 as the president of the whole UC system and was President Obama's secretary of homeland security and, in 2009, in that capacity she oversaw the H-1B program." Hira, a recognized expert in public policy, has testified on Capitol Hill about H-1B visa issues.

During a congressional hearing in 2009, Napolitano testified that the nation's top obligation was to make sure American workers keep their jobs. "From an enforcement standpoint, my priority is to make sure that there is not fraud occurring within the H-1B program at all," she told Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) during the hearing.

Hira noted that UC, as a public institution, is using tax money to pay foreign workers and forcing the older workers to train their replacements. "How did she get away with that? There is no accountability," he said.

As part of this contract, this [outsourcing] could expand to other campuses. This UCSF [deal] is like a pilot." The San Francisco campus is one of 10 in the University of California system. Hira said that while the \$50

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Even an average billing rate of \$35 an hour translates into



"The outsourcing companies won't be able to file as many H-1Bs as they do now if the bill goes through. And this bill is not going to benefit American workers though they are selling this package as if it will help Americans."

AR Photo/Sein wenig

Hira said he hoped Trump would be aggressive to ensure the program was used as it was intended, “to bring in truly specialized workers,” he said.



Critical Deadlines on Their Minds at 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Diaspora amps up its call for more time to exchange or deposit banned notes

From News Dispatches

- BENGALURU

Having thrown their support behind the government's note ban to curb black money, non-resident Indians and persons of Indian origin amplified their call for an extension of the banned-note exchange or deposit deadline, speaking out at the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebration for a cutoff of Dec. 31.

The deadline had been extended until June 30 to allow NRIs and PIOs to deposit or exchange old Rs 500 and Rs 1,000, following the Nov. 8 demonetization, but many are seeking even more time.

Attending the celebration, Thomas Abraham, an NRI from Dubai, said he backed the call for an extension to be given to the Indian Diaspora. "Those having the banned notes will not come to India just to exchange or deposit them by June," he said.

In his inaugural address to some 1,800 attendees at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebration, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed gratitude for the diaspora's backing.

"I am grateful to all of you for supporting us in this war against the two evils that were weakening the country," black money and corruption, Modi said. Indeed, the moment he raised the demonetization issue during his 40-minute address -- in both English and Hindi -- most of the audience cheered and applauded, hailing the decision he made last year.

Speaking privately, however, an NRI from Oman said the government should allow the diaspora to deposit the banned notes



Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcoming the Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa, at the inauguration of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations in Bengaluru, on Jan. 8. Vice President of Surinam, Michel Ashwin Satyandre Adhin, Governor of Karnataka Vajubhai Vala and Chief Minister of Karnataka Siddaramaiah are also seen on the dias. Below left, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal receives Pravasi Bhartiya Samman from President Pranab Mukherjee. Below right, Dr. Sampat Shivangi receiving the PBD award from Mukherjee. Dr. Bharat Barai and Dr. Mahesh Mehta are two other Indian-Americans to receive the award.



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Critical Deadlines on Their Minds at 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Continued from page 22

at Indian embassies or high commissions and credit them in their bank accounts in case the deadline is not extended after June 30.

Others concurred. "The RBI or overseas branches of state-run banks like SBI [State Bank of India] should be advised to open counters at our embassies in all countries for depositing the banned notes whatever be their number as they are our hard-earned cash," said Gopalankutty

Right, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the gathering at the inauguration of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD-2017) celebrations, in Bengaluru on Jan. 8. Below, Modi visiting the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Exhibition Center..



Karnavar, a Muscat-based NRI from Kerala.

Resident Indians traveling or living abroad temporarily have been given until March 31 to declare the banned notes they are carrying at airports on arrival before submitting them in designated Reserve Bank of India offices.

The Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin has also urged the government to extend the deadline to Dec. 30.

Meanwhile, Modi also presented the diaspora with another June 30 deadline, urging PIOs to convert their PIO cards into Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards by that date.

"We have extended the deadline to convert PIO cards into OCI cards to June 30 from December 31 [2016], without penalty," Modi said during his inaugural address. He said special immigration counters have been set up at the New Delhi and Bengaluru airports for OCI card holders and similar counters will open at more airports soon. He said he was committed to resolving difficulties reported by many attempting to get the cards, particularly in Suriname, Guyana, Fiji and the Reunion Islands as well as elsewhere in the Caribbean.

He said he believed the diaspora represented the best of Indian culture, ethos and values, and the government was determined to give priority to the welfare, security and safety of all Indians living outside the country. "Efforts are also being made to provide maximum facilitation and ensure least inconvenience to even Indian citizens seeking economic opportunities abroad," he said.

By contrast, the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas extended an open invitation to the young diaspora to come to India where

the young men and women can tap emerging ventures in the country.

"India offers huge opportunities to be part of its growth story and realize your dreams through development programs," said Minister of State for External Affairs, retired Gen V.K. Singh. He said the Smart Cities Mission, Digital India, Skill India, Startup India and Swachh Bharat campaign were the government's flagship programs for building a prosperous, skillful and enterprising nation.

Asserting that global good could not be achieved by one country alone, he said the Indian Diaspora had to strengthen the bridges that connect it with the motherland.

"You can transform your lives and that of India through four Ts -- talent, technology, training and team work -- as the prime minister's vision will make India the skill capital of the world by 2022," he told about 400 young attendees.

Echoing Singh's call, Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Vijay Goel invited the young diaspora to take up social projects as part of its contribution to the motherland.

"We will encourage the young diaspora to undertake social projects in the country," he said in a keynote address that discussed the diaspora's role in India's transformation.

Goel said his ministry would open single-window clearance to allow the diaspora implement social projects in any state or city at the earliest.

"The young diaspora can play an important role in building a modern and prosperous India. We have taken steps to facilitate this process by simplifying rules and procedures for the overseas Indians," he said.

Earlier in the day, the three-day international event got off to a colorful start at the Bangalore International Exhibition Center on the city outskirts, with the young diaspora connecting with their motherland.

Being held for the first time in Karnataka, the mega event has drawn about 1,800 NRIs from 72 countries.

The Pravasi Divas are traditionally held on Jan. 9 to commemorate the return of Mahatma Gandhi as 'Pravasi' from South Africa to India more than a century ago. Currently, there are 3.12 crore overseas Indians globally, of which 1.34 crore are Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and 1.7 crore NRIs.

For Google CEO, a Homecoming With Heart and a Little Hilarity

Sundar Pichai doles out wit and wisdom during visit to alma mater in West Bengal

In a candid chat with students at his alma mater IIT-Kharagpur, Google CEO Sundar Pichai recalled his days at the institute, his love life and also his interview with the internet giant even as he urged them to take risks and experiment with different things in life.

Pichai doled out unconventional advice to the students on Thursday, Jan 5, when he visited the campus after 23 years.

In his address at the packed open air theater, he told them to pursue their passions, take risks, and be creative.

"Academics is important but it is not as important as it's made out to be. There is a lot of pressure to follow a set of rules throughout your career [in India]," he said.

"When you are in high school, you think of college. I get very surprised that people get into the IITs and immediately they are thinking about IIMs and so on. It is so important to get real-world experience and be well-rounded," he said.

Entry to elite institutions is "important but that doesn't guarantee success," he said. "What matters most is loving what you do."

Egged on by the students, Pichai revealed his little-known side: like any other student he, too, skipped classes.

"I think it is the rites of passage when in college," he said. "I have to say I worked hard but we did have our share of fun as well," he said as the students cheered.

Pichai, who met his wife, Anjali, at the IIT campus, also described how difficult it was to communicate with girls at their separate hostel.

"You had to walk in the front and request someone to call them. And they'd go in and loudly say - 'Anjali, Sundar is here.' It wasn't exactly a pleasant experience," he said.

Pichai, who joined Google in 2004, said he was interviewed on April Fool's day.

Quizzed during the interview about Gmail, which had just been introduced by the company, Pichai initially thought they were pulling a prank on him.

"So, I remember doing my interviews during the day and people kept asking me 'what do you think of Gmail?' But I didn't have a chance to use it and I thought it was an April Fool's joke. My first three interviews, I



Above, Google CEO Sundar Pichai during an interactive session with students at Kharagpur IIT campus in West Bengal on Jan 5. Below, Pichai, left, and Union Minister for Law and Justice and Ministry of Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad pose for a photo during a press conference on Google's collaboration with small scale local businesses in New Delhi, Jan. 4.



couldn't answer well because I hadn't used the product. In my fourth interview, when someone asked me 'have you seen Gmail?' and I said no, he actually showed me the product.

And then the fifth interviewer asked 'what do you think of Gmail?' and I was able to answer then," he said.

"I still joke sometimes that I got a job because Larry Page didn't interview me," he said.

Did Pichai get hazed in college?

"It was pretty mellow," he said. "I definitely remember when I started -- hopefully it has got better by now -- we had something called a CG chain which stands for 'center of gravity chain.' As a freshman, you lock your room and go out, then you come back and the room doors aren't open but everything inside your room has been rearranged...and all your clothes are rearranged, even the furniture. So it's quite a shock when you open your room door."

Another shocking experience - which drew the biggest response from the audience of students - was the story of his inadvertent use of an inappropri-

ate word when he greeted classmates. He innocently believed the Hindi expletive was actually a warm and friendly greeting.

One confusion he shared with the current class of students, however, was the identity of the

food served on campus. "We were made to guess whether what was served was dal or sambhar," he said.

Asked about his GPA, the Google CEO admitted he was too embarrassed to admit his first year's results, but that he did much better in the

last three years.

Pichai also revealed that Infosys founder Narayana Murthy was his ideal during his college days. "I admire people like that who put India on the map," he said.

Asked by a student as to what she'd have to do to replace him, Pichai said: "I would say be careful what you wish for, but would be happy to discuss over a cup of chai."

On whether the Google doodle could be dedicated to IIT-Kharagpur, Pichai said he will send a mail to the team but he wasn't optimistic.

- IANS

Can India Put an End to Identity Politics?

Will an Indian Supreme Court ruling banning appeals to caste, race and religion create greater equality or undermine Indian democracy?

Indian Court's Ban on Identity Politics Ruling Will Benefit Hindu Nationalists

It is clear that the aim of the Indian Supreme Court in its recent ruling to prevent political parties from invoking religion, caste or language for electoral gains was to eliminate a protracted problem that is eating into the vitals of India's democratic system and pluralistic secular fabric. The court's broad based solution, however, will add to the problem rather than help address it. In fact, the majoritarian forces, who have made use of sectarianism and religion to foment violence and win elections, will be the only parties that won't be affected by this ruling.

In a judgment in 1995, the Supreme Court had termed Hindutva, the philosophy of Hinduism, as a way of life of the people of India. Last week's judgment didn't revisit the earlier ruling to clarify whether calls for votes in the name of majority Hinduism and Hindutva would be categorized as "use of, or appeal to religion." And as the previous judgment wasn't revoked, there is a real danger that the current ruling would be used solely against political parties set up to fight discrimination against religious, caste and linguistic minorities rather than those who actively seek to unify voters using Hindu religious symbols.



By Warisha Farasat

For instance, before every election appeal by the ruling Hindu nationalist party, Bharatiya Janata Party, revives its appeal to build a Hindu temple on the site of a mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, that was destroyed by Hindu extremists who claim it was the birthplace of the god Ram. The 1995 decision could allow the Hindu right to circumvent the latest ruling by promoting the Ram Temple a heritage project.

On the other hand, any reference made to the infamous anti-Muslim riots in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh province in 2013, or the lynching of a Muslim man by a Hindu mob on

the suspicion, though misplaced, that he stored beef in the refrigerator inside his home in 2015 or speaking for an end to the historical wrongs done to lower castes Dalits (for example Bahujan Samaj Party, an influential political party in Uttar Pradesh champions the cause of Dalits) and other socially, economically and politically marginalized communities, may be wrongly penalized.

Therefore, this judgment has also put further restrictions on the right to free speech especially because issues related to social justice like the fight to end

discrimination against Dalits and the persecution of Muslim minority raised by a political party during elections, if not worded properly, can be easily brought within the ambit of corrupt practice.

This criticism of the judgment was, in fact, part of the dissent recorded by three judges among the seven-judge bench. These three judges said the "Electors however, may have and in fact do have a legitimate expectation that the discrimination and deprivation which they may have suffered in the past (and which many continue to suffer) on the basis of their religion, caste, or language should be remedied." They too, however, avoided dealing with the main flaw at the center of this judgment - unless all religions and communities are put at par, and implemented uniformly, this law won't serve its intended purpose.

- The New York Times

Warisha Farasat is a lawyer in Delhi and co-author of "Splintered Justice: Living the Horror of Mass Communal Violence in Bhagalpur and Gujarat."

India's New Bar on Identity Politics Preserves Constitutional Protections of Minorities



By Nizam Pasha

The key to understanding the recent judgment by the Supreme Court of India lies not in what the court said, but in what it chose not to say. The court did not specify what constitutes an appeal by a candidate or whether candidates could be sanctioned because of statements by his or her political party or party leaders. Lawyers presented the court with several hypothetical scenarios that could have allowed it to decide what reference to religion, race, caste, community and language would constitute an appeal "on the ground of" these identity markers attracting penal consequences and what would be a permissible reference to identity.

Instead of addressing each of the questions raised, the court limited itself to a single issue and ruled that an appeal for votes on the grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language of the voter constituted a corrupt election practice. However, it left it up to judges in individual cases to decide whether such an appeal was made. Chief Justice T.S. Thakur, in his opinion, adopted this interpretation of the statutory provision on the basis that it serves the "constitutional ethos."

So fears that the ruling will prevent the oppression

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The Indian Court's Ban on Identity Politics Will Have Unintended Consequences

Last week's 4-part, 113-page 4-3 ruling by India's Supreme Court banning appeals to identity in electoral politics is well-written and grounded in compassion. It is also grossly misguided.

The opinion hinges on appeals "by a candidate or his agent or by any other person with the consent of a candidate on the ground of his religion, race, caste, community or language," but the jus-



By Manu Bhagavan

tics have not made clear what would constitute "consent" or how precisely to determine who is a candidate's agent.

Will candidates now seek to weaken their opponents by hauling them to court on the basis of something one of their supporters says? Will media houses, already regularly accused on being biased toward one side or the other, now be considered candidate's agents? What happens if a journalist then seeks to advocate for a particular community in need?

The majority opinion is expressly in favor of shoring up secularism and reducing prejudice and enmity between people. Yet the ruling may very well have the opposite effect.

For one thing, the ruling Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party belongs to the Sangh Parivar, a disaggregated, loosely knit group of ideologically affiliated social, cultural and political organizations whose finances, networks and organizational connections have long remained shadowy.

A cultural unit could conceivably continue to advance a religious agenda, while the political unit could maintain its distance and plausible deniability about a relationship. While the opposition will seek to make hay, the Sangh seems well positioned to spin such straw to their advantage.

More broadly, the dissent correctly observes that the Indian Constitution takes note of histories of discrimination based on caste and community throughout the subcontinent, and directs corrective, ameliorative action. How can this be done if communities cannot organize to seek representation and democratic redress?

The net result, in short, will be four-fold. Politics in India, already very rough, will become blood sport, as candidates and their party machines seek to use the judgement to disqualify their challengers. Social justice advocates, already in a precarious position, will be further pushed onto the back foot.

The ruling will likely be ultimately ignored, because it is so broad that it is unenforceable. And this will, in turn, have the unfortunate effect of undermining the legitimacy of the court itself, and erode the already weak faith in institutions further — something democratic societies throughout the world can ill afford right now.

— The New York Times

Manu Bhagavan is a professor of history and human rights at Hunter College and the Graduate Center-CUNY. He is the author of "The Peacemakers: India and the Quest for One World."

India's New Bar on Identity Politics Preserves Constitutional Protections of Minorities

Continued from page 25

of ethnic, religious or social groups from being addressed are unfounded and based on a misunderstanding of the court's judgement. The right to equality and freedom from discrimination forms the bedrock of the Indian Constitution. Any exercise undertaken, during an election or otherwise, to serve these goals can never fall foul of the constitutional ethos.

Is a promise to root out discrimination against an oppressed caste or religious community an appeal on the basis of identity or is it a pledge to uphold core constitutional values? Much will depend on how the appeal is framed. Saying, "Vote for me, I will work to promote the Marathi language," serves the constitutional goal of conserving languages and linguistic cultures enshrined in Article 29 of the Constitution. Saying, "Vote for me and I will help reclaim Maharashtra for you Marathi-speaking people and not allow immigrants to take your jobs," offends the constitutional right to reside and settle in any part of the country and would therefore constitute a corrupt practice.

The judgement is also profoundly symbolic. The Supreme Court has sent a message that keeping divisive politics out of the democratic process is a core principle of the Indian political and constitutional system and the constitutional courts are watching to make sure that principle, as well as the right to equality, are respected.

— The New York Times



AP Photo/Altaf Qadri



AP Photo/Rajesh Kumar Singh



AP Photo/Channi Anand

India's New Limits on Pandering Needn't Limit the Fight Against Discrimination

I am a Hindu nationalist," Narendra Modi announced from saffron hoardings across Mumbai, months before he was elected India's prime minister. Appeals to identity have always been central to campaigning in India, often so much so that they are not benign. At a rally for the prime minister's party's candidate in Uttar Pradesh, a local leader was reported to have told voters that sectarian riots in the state's Muzaffarnagar district in 2013 helped elect Narendra Modi the following year, and said the current election "is a question of your identity and honor."

India's Supreme Court has just intervened to limit such electoral appeals to identity. It was already illegal to solicit votes based on a politician's religious, caste, community or language identity. On Jan. 2, the court decided that votes can't be solicited on the ground of the voter's social identity either. A politician cannot say, "Vote for me because you are Hindu." Or Muslim or Dalit.

The court's decision throws up major concerns, some of which the dissent records. Voters often vote because they identify with a historically disadvantaged community. In India's democratic politics, sub-castes have risen because they were able to vote as a bloc.

Besides, should a voter's right to free speech during an election — which includes hearing a range of ideas that serve her interest — be limited by secular values and imposed ideas of citizenship?

These intellectual struggles are for the soul of our democracy and haven't been resolved in the court's judgment. Nor does the order offer much guidance on the kinds of statements that might be prohibited. For instance, the court refused to deal with an earlier decision that claims the words Hinduism and Hindutva, a Hindu nationalist ideology, only refer to a way of life. Electoral appeals to Hindutva therefore, aren't necessarily illegal.

The decision will be heavily contested, because the widened election law carries serious penalties — a bar to standing for elections for six years. That bar could kick in after a single election promise made "on the grounds of" a voter's caste or religious identity.

Clearer limits may emerge from litigation on these new rules. Ultimately, the decision to limit politicians pandering to group identity cannot preclude India's leaders from promising to end deep and historical discrimi-

nation.

The decision to limit politicians pandering to group identity — "Vote for me because you are Hindu, or Muslim or Dalit" — needn't preclude a politician from saying "Vote for me

because I will bring policies to annihilate caste and religious discrimination."

The distinction between identity and policy isn't as subtle as it sounds. A citizenry that votes on policy may be more compelled to

cool-headed logical scrutiny and to examine what a politician is really offering. Of course a politician may also seek votes on the basis of his supremacist policies — as opposed to identity. But as we see in India, Turkey, Egypt and the United States, that's a dark side of democracy that can only be fought at the hustings.

Uttar Pradesh goes to vote again in a few weeks, and the political calculus of religion and caste won't change overnight — but the judgment is, for better or worse, a move toward the making of a new Indian citizen.

— The New York Times

Karuna Nundy is an advocate who practices before the Supreme Court of India and is a member of the New York bar.



By Karuna Nundy



AP Photo/Ajit Solanki

Indian Court Ruling Leaves Unclear What Identity Claims Will Be Accepted

In banning political appeals to identity, India's Supreme Court ruled that such actions distort the purity of the electoral process and undermine the secular character of the Indian republic. This is an expansive interpretation of India's omnibus law dealing with elections, which describes such appeals as a "corrupt" electoral practice.

But curbing such appeals is easier said than done.

Rather than curtailing identity claims, the recent ruling may enable greater political violence and enhanced Hindu majoritar-

ianism.

Indian democracy is defined by the tension between individual rights and group identity. Affirmative action policies tackle caste discrimination through quotas in education, employment and housing. Rather than any separation of church and state, secularism in this multireligious country historically has meant formal respect for all religions.

Group rights are important for social justice arguments by lower castes, and demands for autonomy by religious minorities, especially Muslims who constitute 14 percent of India's

total population. Political parties also target voters based on social identities. In the absence of robust welfare policies, populist appeals to identity are an

important route to economic access and entitlements. Voting choices reflect the complex forms of identity, inequality and hierarchy that structure Indian society. They also reflect the tension between social justice claims and instrumental claims to a politics of identity.

The growth of majoritarian sentiment has altered this status quo. A contentious 1995 ruling by the Supreme Court declared "Hinduism" as a "way

of life," suggesting that appeals to Hinduism were not to be confused with corrupt electoral practice.

The recent Supreme Court judgment refused to reconsider the 1995 Hindutva case even though it is clear that the 1995 ruling tacitly endorsed the Hinduization of civil society, which has accelerated with the election of Narendra Modi

Thus this recent ruling poses an important question about what kinds of identity claims will be barred from public exhortation. Identity claims always carry the risk of exclusive politics that prioritize one social identity or experience over others.

In India today, we are seeing the overturning of an order predicated on the protection of social minorities in favor of majority rights. Given current politics, will Hindu majoritarian claims be allowed, while minorities are banned from making claims to discriminated identity, or social suffering?

Will the courts challenge this transformation, or aid it?

— The New York Times

Anupama Rao is an associate professor of history at Barnard College, the author of "The Caste Question: Dalits and the Politics of Modern India" and associate director of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society.



By Anupama Rao



Pakistani Groups Note Drop in Violence, Credit the Military

Large-scale military operations in the lawless tribal regions bordering Afghanistan are behind the reduction

By Kathy Gannon

- ISLAMABAD

Two Pakistani research groups have noted that the country saw a significant drop in militant violence last year, crediting the military for the decrease in attacks.

The two Islamabad-based groups say that large-scale military operations in the lawless tribal regions bordering Afghanistan, in the chaotic port city of Karachi and the sparsely populated Baluchistan province are behind the drop. But for the trend to continue, they say, authorities need to disband sectarian and anti-Indian extremists based in the populous Punjab province.

The findings, which are based on the groups' records, were released last week and on Sunday.

One of the groups, the Center for Research and Security Studies, said there was a 45 percent drop in violence-related deaths in 2016, compared to the previous year. The Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, which tallies violent incidents, registered a 28 percent drop in attacks in 2016, compared to 2015.

Still, both organizations tempered the findings by warning that the trend could be halted unless militant groups are disbanded and called for improving relations with neighboring India and Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif echoed some of those sentiments last week, when he told a writers' conference that Pakistan needs to create an effective narrative that promotes tolerance.

"We are forgetting how to speak of mutual love, integrity, compassion and empathy," he said. His government introduced legislation in 2016 outlawing hate speech and denying clerics from



AP Photo/Arshad Butt, File

In this March 14, 2014 file photo, soldiers of the Pakistani paramilitary force visit the site of a bombing, in Quetta, Pakistan.

rival Islamic sects the right to use their loudspeakers at their mosques.

However, Sharif's government has not succeeded in disbanding outlawed sectarian groups that re-emerge later under a different name.

Also, lawmakers from his own Pakistan Muslim League have been seen on campaign platforms with members of the outlawed Sunni extremist group Sipah-e-Sahabah, which has links to the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, another violent Sunni extremist group that has been blamed for several attacks last year, particularly in southwestern Baluchistan.

"A government that is going into an election next year doesn't

want to lose votes," said Imtiaz Gul, executive director of the Center for Research and Security Studies, which authored one of the reports. "The banned outfits have madrassas that still operate, they have sympathies and influence."

A mostly Sunni Muslim country, Pakistan has for years been convulsed by brutal sectarian violence that has killed thousands. Most of the victims have been minority Shiite Muslims.

Asadullah Khan, an analyst with Pakistan's Institute of Strategic Studies says that "it isn't enough to ban" militant groups, which then surface under a new name.

"We have to get rid of them altogether," Khan said.

Prominent on the militant landscape dotting Pakistan are also the Afghan Taliban, Pakistan's own Taliban group and its splinters, as well as the feared Haqqani network. Then there are several anti-Indian groups, labelled terrorists by the United States and India — such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, which was banned but remerged as Jamaat-ud-Daawa and Jaish-e-Mohammed. Pakistan has fought three wars with archrival India, most often over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

Pakistan's reluctance to abandon militant groups altogether is inextricably linked to its perceived security concerns, said Marvin Weinbaum of the Middle East Institute in Washington.

"They remain viewed as valued proxies in a Pakistani strategic security calculus focused on Kashmir and the perceived threats posed by an India-aligned Afghanistan," said Weinbaum.

Kabul and Washington regularly demand Pakistan put an end to cross-border incursion by Afghan militants, though the 2,400 kilometer- (1,500 mile-) boundary is in itself a source of dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Islamabad says that Kabul has shunned repeated Pakistani attempts to resolve the border issue.

Pakistan Makes Case for Indian Terrorism to UN

- ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's foreign ministry says Islamabad has handed over a dossier to the United Nations over the alleged involvement of India in acts of terrorism in the Islamic nation.

In a statement, it said Pakistani ambassador Maleeha Lodhi on Friday delivered a set of documents regarding India's alleged role in fomenting terrorism in Pakistan to U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The announcement comes months after Pakistan captured an Indian spy, Kulbhushan Jadhav, saying he was behind acts of terrorism in the country. So far, Islamabad has not granted consular access to Jadhav following India's request.

Pakistan and India have a history of bitter relations. In recent months they have repeatedly exchanged fire in Kashmir, the border territory divided between them and claimed by both.

- AP

Pakistan Says It Test-Fired First Submarine-Launched Missile

- ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's military says it has successfully test-fired a submarine-launched cruise missile for the first time, giving it a "credible second strike capability."

A statement Monday said the missile was fired from the Indian Ocean and hit its target.

It said the Babur Cruise-3 missile has a range of 450 kilometers (280 miles) and can fly low to evade radar and air defenses. It added that the missile "is capable of delivering various types of payloads and will provide Pakistan with a Credible Second Strike Capability, augmenting deterrence." It

appeared to be referring to a strategy in which the ability to strike back after a nuclear attack deters adversaries from launching one.

Pakistan became a nuclear power in 1998, developing the capability to match that of neighbor and archrival India.

- AP

21 Injured in Clashes in Sri Lanka Over China Port Deal

Government signed a framework agreement for a 99-year lease of the Hambantota port

By Eranga Jayawardena

AMBALANTOTA, Sri Lanka — At least 21 people were injured Saturday in violent clashes between Sri Lankan government supporters and villagers marching against what they say is a plan to take over private land for an industrial zone in which China will have a major stake.

Police used tear gas and water cannons to try to break up the clashes, which took place as Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was attending an opening ceremony for the industrial zone, located near the port city of Hambantota, about 240 kilometers (150 miles) south-east of the capital, Colombo.

The clashes began when government supporters started throwing rocks at villagers who were marching to the ceremony site. The protesters, organized by the opposition and led by Buddhist monks, responded by throwing rocks at the government supporters. A group that appeared to have been transported to the area by the government joined in attacking the protesters with poles.

Twenty-one people, including three police officers, were taken to a government hospital in Hambantota, a hospital official said.

Sri Lanka's government has signed a framework agreement for a 99-year lease of the Hambantota port with a company in which China will have 80 percent ownership. Officials also plan to set up a nearby industrial zone where Chinese companies will be invited to set up factories. The villagers and monks are opposed to it and demand their residential and farmlands be spared.

A court had issued a restraining order on the protest, saying it could lead to unrest, but the protesters defied it.

Wickremesinghe inaugurated the industrial zone despite the clashes. Speaking at the ceremony, China's ambassador to Sri Lanka, Yi Xianliang, said that his country hopes to invest \$5 billion in the region within the next five years, and that the new indus-

tries are expected to generate 100,000 jobs.

China invested over \$1.2 billion in the port in what some analysts call its "string of pearls" strategy in countries surrounding its rival India. Although the project has seen losses since 2010, Sri Lanka's government, at first critical of the enterprise, approached China to seek help to make it viable.

Lawmaker D.V. Chanaka, one of the protest organizers, said he fears the port area will become a "Chinese colony."

"We are against leasing the lands where people live and do their farming, while there are

identified lands for an industrial zone," Chanaka said.

"When you give away such a vast area of land, you can't stop

the area from becoming a Chinese colony."

After the lease expires, it can be negotiated for another 99



Sri Lankan villagers shout slogans during a protest in Mirijawila village in Ambalantota, Sri Lanka, Saturday, Jan. 7.

Bangladesh Police Say Leader of Cafe Attack Has Been Killed

— NEW DELHI

Bangladesh police say a militant suspected of being one of the leaders of an attack on a popular cafe in Bangladesh's capital that left 20 people dead last year has been killed in a shootout with security officials.

Counterterrorism unit head Monirul Islam said Nurul Islam Marzan was one of two people killed in a shootout early Friday in Dhaka. He did not provide details. Also killed was Saddam Hossain, an accomplice of Marzan, said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

Police had said earlier that Marzan was one of the leaders of the July 1 attack on a Dhaka restaurant where 20 hostages, including 17 foreigners, were killed.

Khan said Saddam was involved in many killings including the slaying of a Japanese citizen in the hands of the suspected militants in the country's northern Bangladesh in recent years.

Marzan was identified by police as a leader of the Jumatul Mujahideen Bangladesh group.

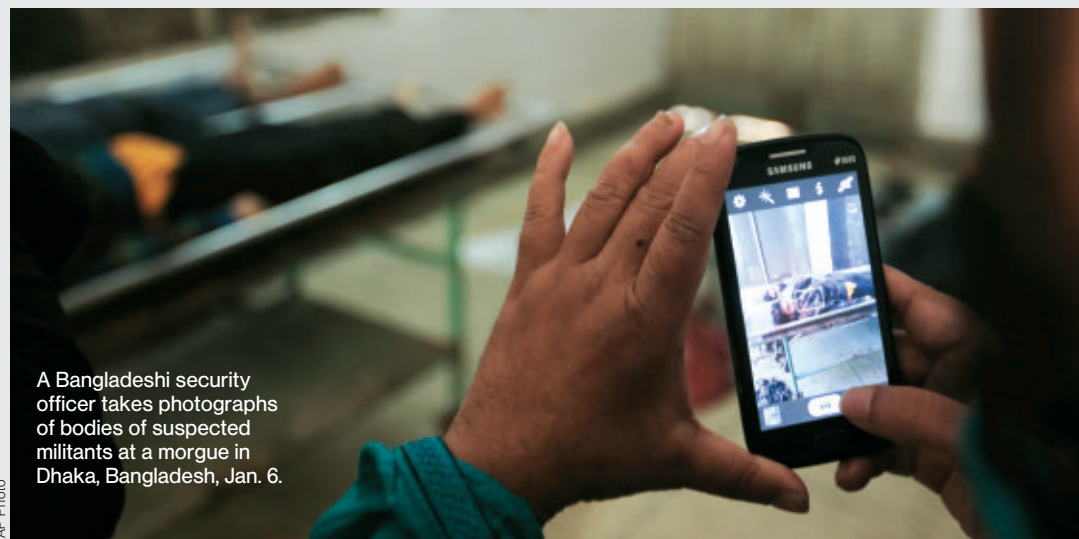
Since the July attack on the cafe, security officials have

killed about 40 alleged Islamist militants in raids.

There has been a surge in attacks in Bangladesh in recent years, and dozens of secular bloggers, writers, publishers and members of minority groups and foreigners have been targeted and killed by radical Islamists.

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for many of the attacks including the July siege, but Bangladeshi authorities have repeatedly said the IS group has no presence in the Muslim-majority country.

— AP



A Bangladeshi security officer takes photographs of bodies of suspected militants at a morgue in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Jan. 6.

AP Photo

years, according to the framework agreement, whose terms are still being negotiated. The government also has proposed to lease 15,000 acres (6,070 hectares) in Hambantota district and adjoining Moneragala district for the industrial zone.

The Rev. Magama Mahanama, from a group calling itself the Monks' Organization to Protect National Assets, said that the clergy, following an ancient tradition, would issue a decree to the government to stop the leasing. Historically, kings in predominantly Buddhist Sri Lanka are said to have abided by decrees issued by Buddhist monks.

"It's a way of conveying the message that the monks are not for it," Mahanama said. "Ninety-nine years means at least two generations. When they (the Chinese) take root here, what's the guarantee that we will have it back? There is a major threat of cultural erosion and demographic change."

Wickremesinghe, speaking to reporters earlier in the week, said the partnership arrangement was necessary to free Sri Lanka from the debt incurred to build the port. He blamed the debt on former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, whose government was friendly to Beijing.

Wickremesinghe said the industrial zone was necessary to make the port and the nearby Chinese-financed airport, also running at a heavy loss, viable.

"The port can't be taken away," he said, adding that his country's former British colonial rulers did not take away the Trincomalee harbor or the Colombo port.

— AP



BOLLYWOOD CONFIDENTIAL

By Karishma Upadhyay

Hrithik Roshan's On-Again, Off-Again Year

Messy scandal and box-office bust made 2016 forgettable

Friendly Exes

Hrithik Roshan had an exceptionally forgettable 2016. The year started with the scandal with former "Krrish 3" co-star and alleged ex Kangana Ranaut. Instead of dying out, the spat got uglier by the day. At one point, even cops and lawyers were involved. It was without question the nastiest scandal Bollywood has witnessed in recent years.

The Roshans must have hoped that "Mohenjo Daro," Hrithik's first release in a year and a half, would shift the focus back to his career. Well, the Ashutosh Gowariker film did do that -- but not in a good way. The period film was an unmitigated disaster at the box office. And, it didn't help that the critics has nothing good to say about Hrithik's performance either.

The actor's inner circle, though, insists that Hrithik has nothing but fond memories of 2016. This was the year that the actor and his ex-wife, Sussanne Roshan, mended fences. After 17 years of marriage and two beautiful sons, the couple had called it quits in December 2013. It's taken the couple a few years, but they seemed to have rediscovered the friendship their marriage was based on.

"Hrithik and Sussanne are at a place where they are happy to spend time with each other. Over the holidays, Hrithik first took his sons for a skiing holiday in Switzerland and then they joined Sussanne with her extended family for a break in Dubai. Their sons are so happy to see their parents together again," says a friend of the former couple. Insiders maintain that while there's no chance that they'll get back together, Sussanne and Hrithik are happy to be friends once again.

Sussanne sent out the sweetest shoutout to Hrithik on his birthday earlier this week by posting a photo of the two of them on Instagram. The duo then played hosts to their extended families over dinner to celebrate the actor turning 43. This former couple is setting all sorts of post-divorce goals.

PDA Alert

Last week, teen heartthrob Tiger Shroff and his girlfriend Disha Patani returned from a quick vacation in Sri Lanka. And if their fellow passengers are to



be believed, the young couple was all over each other. "They



Disha Patani
es," says a source.

The former Miss India and Tiger have been a couple for a few years now but are yet to make their romance official. Every time I have asked him about his relationship with Disha, Tiger has said, "There's no time for romance. We are just good friends. We love dancing together and that's the basis of our friendship. I don't have too many friends from the industry. Disha is one of the few girls I hang out with but that's about it." Another "we are just friends" couple.

All is NOT well

"Befikre" wasn't the landmark film Aditya Chopra and everyone at Yashraj Productions had

looked very in love and oblivious to anyone around them. They held hands the whole time and kept leaning over for little kisses," says a source.



Tiger Shroff

Hrithik Roshan

thought it would be.

The film got a very lukewarm reception both from critics and at the box office and no one was more surprised than Aditya Chopra. The director thought he was making a romance that would define the present generation much like "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" did in the '90s.

The film's failure means that YRF is taking a hard look at all their future productions.

Scripts and budgets are being scrutinized with a fine-tooth comb before being greenlit. The studio recently announced launching



Aditya Chopra

Raj Kapoor's grandson, Aadar Jain, in an untitled project helmed by Habib Faisal. Opposite Aadar, the studio is going to launch Anya Singh, a Delhi-girl.

One hears that studio executives are having second thoughts about this film. Habib's first directorial film was the Parineet Chopra-Aditya Roy Kapur film, "Daawat-e-Ishq," that failed at the b.o.

There are also doubts about whether Aadar is what the industry calls "hero material." Over the years YRF has given the industry many new talents like Ranveer Singh, Anushka Sharma, Parineeti Chopra and Arjun Kapoor.

"We pride ourselves in being a studio that gives newcomers a chance. We have faith in Aadar but we just need to make sure that he is backed by the best both in terms of storytelling and economics," said a source from the studio.

While they might be rethinking their smaller budget films, YRF is going to be busy with three mega-budget films this year. Ali Abbas Zafar will direct a sequel of "Ek Tha Tiger" titled "Tiger Zinda Hai" with Salman Khan. Adi Chopra will reunite with Shah Rukh Khan for an untitled production. And Aamir Khan and Amitabh Bachchan are going to start shooting the period drama "Thugs of Hindostan" in two months.

Beverly Hills awards ceremony gives the world a look at some of India's best



A 'Golden Globe' of Shining Moments for Dev Patel, Sunny Pawar and Priyanka Chopra

From News Dispatches

As the A-list of the entertainment world stepped out at the 74th Golden Globes Award to dazzle film and TV audiences worldwide, headliners of Indian origin were quick to garner some prized attention and accolades as well at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday, Jan. 8.

Even during his moment in the spotlight, Dev Patel, was happily upstaged by his "Lion" costar, 8-year-old Sunny Pawar. The pair, wearing complementary tuxedos, had shared the screen in the Golden Globes thrice-nominated drama. Sunny, however, found the ceremony to be an especially uplifting experience as he was lifted high in the air in his fellow actor's arms as the youngster announced the film to the audience. "Lion" nominations included Best Motion Picture - Drama, Best Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture and Best Supporting Actress in a Motion Picture. The film, shot in Kolkata and Australia, releases in India on Feb. 24.

Patel, who lost the supporting actor role award to Aaron Taylor-Johnson in "Nocturnal Animals," said earlier in the evening he never agrees to take up a project thinking about awards. He had told reporters, before the program's start, "I am not really holding my breath. I am feeling very grateful to get nominated in the category. Being just 26, I still have a lot to learn. I am lucky that I am able to represent India on an international stage."

His appearance with young Sunny, who portrays a younger



version of Patel's character, clearly charmed and stirred spectators nonetheless, as their appearance together on stage drew an explosion of cheers. Sunny came to the part with no acting background and no English-speaking skills and was only 5 at the time of his audition.

Above, presenters Sunny Pawar, left, and Dev Patel at the 74th Annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Jan. 8. Right, Jeffrey Dean Morgan, left, and Priyanka Chopra presenting an award.



Paul Drinkwater/NBC via AP

Continued on page 32



He Stirs the Drinks for Celebrity Endorsements

Continued from page 19

He developed a love of dancing and golf. He was on the varsity bowling team.

"It's the footwear," he said. Today he was wearing Louboutin loafers with his T-shirt and jeans.

After business school, Oza got a marketing job at Coke. His work there earned him awards, but some executives wanted him out.

"Rohan was an anomaly at Coke, not the blue blazer and khaki

pants, but he was also a magical figure who captured people's attention in ways that many other corporate folks couldn't," said Jeff Rubenstein, who worked with Oza at Coke, and is the chief marketing officer at Wtrmln Wtr.

Sensing trouble, Oza left for Vitaminwater, a fledgling Queens, New York-based brand.

That friend can now visit Oza not just at the palatial house here but at a luxury apartment in Tribeca and a house in the Hamptons, in New York, not far from Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, where the "brandmaster," as some call him, has played with Timberlake.

He met Bai's Weiss through former Sen. Bill Bradley, who was also thinking about investing.

His caddie introduced Oza to the makers of his favorite beef jerky, and he has helped turn that business into Chef's Cut.

At a recent "vision session" with Bulletproof Coffee, he grilled founder Dave Asprey and his fellow investors Trinity Ventures about the company's hiring plans and e-commerce strategy.

Oza is certain that with the right marketing and product development (and perhaps, the right support from a famous person), Bulletproof Coffee will follow in the footsteps of Bai, Vitaminwater, Smartwater and Vita Coco.

"People don't want soda anymore," he said. "This is a movement."

— The New York Times



A 'Golden Globe' of Shining Moments for Dev Patel, Sunny Pawar and Priyanka Chopra

Continued from page 31

Patel, who had made his debut in the Oscar-winning "Slumdog Millionaire," said the red carpet was the farthest thing from his mind during the shooting of the film version of Saroo Brierley's best-selling autobiography, "A Long Way Home." It is the story of an Indian boy who is adopted by a couple in Australia after falling asleep on a train only to awaken and discover he is far from the only home he has ever know - and is unable to speak the language.

"I would be lying if I say that awards are not amazing," Patel said. "Awards can really change someone's career. You get recognition. You might get scripts that you didn't get earlier." But, he added, it is not his prime motivator.

He does feel a tremendous responsibility, however, for serving as a tangible and memorable player on screens worldwide, representing India, where he has roots in Gujarat. In his third film, "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel," he portrayed an Indian hotel manager. His next film, also set in India, is "Hotel Mumbai," and is based on the 2008 terrorist attack on the Taj Mahal Palace & Tower hotel there.

"I want the world to embrace stories from India," said Patel, pleased that he can play an active role in creating that response. "It shows that markets - Hollywood and England - are trying to explore stories about people...not just about an Asian person or a rich person. It's about humanity ... When I decided to do the story on Taj, we looked past the color and skin of the characters... (and focused on) how some of the staff went over and above to protect

"Awards can really change someone's career. You get recognition. You might get scripts that you didn't get earlier"

their guests in times of terror."

As for any Hollywood-vs-Bollywood tension, Patel said he has yet to experience difficulty working in the industry in Hollywood on account of being an Indian actor. "No," he said, "what you have to do is turn an obstacle into an opportunity. I've learned to embrace my identity and not shy away from who I am in films that I choose. That's what has got me so far."

At the same awards ceremony, Priyanka Chopra made her own stunning statements - though not all of them, in her case, were verbal.

Her arrival on the red carpet in a custom-made Ralph Lauren golden gown with a

plunging neckline and an overabundance of sequins even stunned her "Baywatch" costars from a distance, since neither were able to attend the gala.

It was, perhaps, her way of having fun too. Just before the awards gala, Chopra told reporters she enjoys having "a lot of fun on the red carpet as I meet people with whom I work. It's a fun time for me." It was her debut appearance at the Golden Globe Awards where she was to present the award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series - Drama. She was joined by Jeffrey Dean Morgan in making the presentation to Billy Bob Thornton for his role of Billy MacBride in Amazon TV's legal drama series, "Goliath."

"Baywatch" costars Zac Efron and Dwayne Johnson took to Twitter to lavish praise upon the style shown by the Bollywood "desi girl," a former Miss World. Johnson tweeted: "Bad is an understatement. Why I love her! Stunning tonight. Being 'Baywatch' Golden Globes."

Chopra thanked him, noting that his presence at the awards was missed.

"Congrats Priyanka! Teams kill it tonight! You look beautiful! 'Baywatch' babe," Efron added in his own tweets.

Her response? "Thank you Zac Efron... Representing! Missed you tonight." The trio will costar in the American action comedy, which makes its debut this spring.

It was, in a way, a reprise of her fashion role on last year's red carpet at the Emmy Awards or at the Oscars, where she wore a Zuhair Murad white gown. She added that her choice of a Ralph Lauren creation was totally appropriate for the moment.

"I think the people wear the clothes that work for an event. I have worn Indian designers internationally, and vice versa. There is no harm in it as clothes are clothes. People should wear what they feel like wearing."

In her case, that included a dazzling smile.



Dev Patel, Priyanka Chopra and Riz Ahmed arrive at the 74th annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Jan. 8.

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By Nida Najar

Om Puri, one of the most acclaimed Indian actors of his generation, whose four-decade career included appearances in well-received British and American films, died on Friday at his home in Mumbai. He was 66.

His wife, Nandita C. Puri, said the cause was cardiac arrest.

Om Puri appeared in some 300 films, most of them in India. He was known in the West mainly for his roles in the hit British comedy “East Is East” (1999), for which he received a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) award nomination, and “My Son, the Fanatic” (1997), in which he played a Pakistani-born taxi driver in industrial North England.

In her review of “My Son” in The New York Times, Janet Maslin wrote that Puri had made his character the center of the film “through sheer force of personality.”

He also had small roles in “Gandhi” (1982), the Mike Nichols horror film “Wolf” (1994) and the historical thriller “The Ghost and the Darkness” (1996).

Puri first attained widespread acclaim in the 1980s during the so-called Indian new wave, when screenwriters and directors, steeped in world cinema, were devoting themselves to socially conscious themes, often dealing with the lives of India’s oppressed classes.

He sought to bring nuance to his roles, as he explained in a 2000 interview with The Times about his work in “East Is East” as the patriarch of a large Pakistani family, a performance praised by critics for its depth.

“I look for subtext,” he said, “the hidden script within the script.”

Puri’s broad-nosed face — marked by a childhood case of smallpox — was not the stuff of Bollywood heroes. When he auditioned for the prestigious Film and Television Institute of India in the 1970s, the committee debated where he might fit in the industry, remarking that he had the face “neither of a hero, nor a villain, nor a comedian,” his wife, a journalist, wrote in “Unlikely Hero” (2009), a biography of Puri.

But that face became a key to his success. With the Indian new wave focusing on social issues



East is East

Om Puri, an Acclaimed Actor Who Rose With the Indian New Wave

He sought to bring nuance to his roles by looking for the hidden script within the script

and common people, it opened up opportunities for him.

His first meaty role was in “Aakrosh” (1980), as a man who is wrongly accused of killing his wife but who refuses to speak to his lawyer. Puri spent nearly the entire film mute.

“Nobody but Om Puri could have played it with so much expression,” Anjum Rajabali, a screenwriter and close friend, said in a phone interview. “Every

time you look at his face you know what he is feeling.”

Puri was born on Oct. 18, 1950, in Ambala, then part of Punjab State in north India, the last of nine children born to a junior railway officer. Among his siblings, only his brother Ved survived into his adulthood. The family struggled to make ends meet, and Puri was sent to live with his mother’s brothers in Sanaur, so that they could take

care of his education.

He studied at Khalsa College in Patiala and at the National School of Drama in New Delhi, where he performed in Hindi-language productions of “Hamlet” (in the title role) and of plays by Ibsen, Brecht and Shaw.

His performance as a Bombay policeman who succumbs to corruption in the 1983 film “Ardh Satya” (“Half Truth”) was the turning point in his career. The

film was both a critical and box-office success and brought him fame.

“For the first time, commercial filmmakers woke up and took notice of me,” Puri was quoted as saying in the biography.

As the Indian new wave faltered at the box office in the late 1990s, Puri increasingly took on small roles in commercial Hindi films that were “not appropriate to what his persona on the screen was,” Rajabali said.

Pritish Nandy, a writer and politician in Mumbai, posted on Twitter that Puri had “spent the best years of his life disappointed, waiting for roles he deserved but never got.”

He had personal troubles as well. His friend and fellow actor Anupam Kher said in a remembrance published in the news-magazine India Today that Puri had died a “lonely death.”

After the release of his biography in 2009, Indian newspapers were awash with reports of tensions between him and his wife, partly because, as he said in an interview with The Times of India, he was unhappy about details she revealed about his early sexual history.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, Ishaan.

Puri was philosophical about his disappointments.

“I, frankly, don’t dream, because I want to remain happy,” he told The Times. “When you dream too much and the dream doesn’t come true, you hurt yourself. And I don’t want to hurt myself. So I don’t dream. I take things as they are.”

— The New York Times



The Hundred Foot Journey

The Man Who Would Dress Bruce Wayne

Pune-born Vivek Nagrani's Men's Wear Shop is not for everyone

By Valeriya Safronova

Lounging on a cerulean leather chair at his store in Manhattan, a glass of Bunnahabhain 12-year-old Scotch in hand, Vivek Nagrani talked about the two types of men who frequent high-end clothing shops.

"There's Banker A, who goes to Harvard, Goldman and buys a Lamborghini," said Nagrani, 44.

That's not his usual customer. "Or there's the guy who went to community college (his parents had no money)," he said, "but he loved finance and made his way to the top. Our client tends to be that guy. Top of the industry, but he had to earn it."

And that guy, Nagrani said, doesn't like to go with the crowd, even when it comes to his clothes.

That's why, since starting his first full collection in 2013, Nagrani has offered limited editions, with each item numbered on an inside tag. The pieces are made in factories and workshops in Italy or Peru. Suits start at \$1,800, and the shirts range from \$350 to \$695.

Nagrani entered the business in 1999, when he formed a partnership with a French factory in an attempt to make the ultimate men's socks.

His plan worked: Esquire declared his product "the best dress socks in the world," and his clients include Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

Nagrani, born in Pune, India, and raised in Northern and Southern California, sold what he called "junk toys" before his foray into socks. He built the business from there.

His store, VK Nagrani on East Houston Street, is hard to find, its entrance obscured by graffitied glass. Most clients come by appointment. The first room is small, with a rack of clothes on one wall, a cash register and a vending machine filled with socks.

A set of stairs leads to a larger space, with flowers, fake palm trees, colorful art, rotary-dial telephones, a framed vintage Playboy Club membership card and a fully stocked bar.

Right outside the larger space



Andrew White for The New York Times

is a narrow putting green and a life-size painting of Superman and Batman embracing each other.

Toward the back of the store is yet another room, set up as a closet, complete with a settee and a mounted deer head. Whose closet? In Nagrani's imagination, it's Bruce Wayne's.

If you're Bruce Wayne, and you're out all night kicking people's butts, he said: "You don't want to think about what you're going to wear the next morning. But you still have to look like Bruce Wayne. So everything is interchangeable. Each piece should layer and function six months of the year."

Which is why Nagrani offers classic lines, luxurious fabrics and subtle details, like a shirt sleeve lined with suede or a jacket constructed with Alcantara, a durable fabric developed in Japan for car upholstery.

Perhaps the reason he is so familiar with his customer's desires is that he's really designing for himself.

"Being in this industry and having friends at different brands, I had my choice of everything before," Nagrani said. "But it wasn't cohesive and it didn't feel the way I wanted it to. That's why I started making clothes. They're not designed for everybody."

— The New York Times



Andrew White for The New York Times



Right, Vivek Nagrani in his store in the Bowery, VK Nagrani. Above, the boutique's interior, with its graffitied storefront window. Below, Jim Meeks, left, gets input from Nagrani while trying on a scarf.

The Raj Delusion

India plays a romantic part in the British imagination and since Brexit such imperial nostalgia has made a comeback



Public Domain, from the British Library's collections, 2013

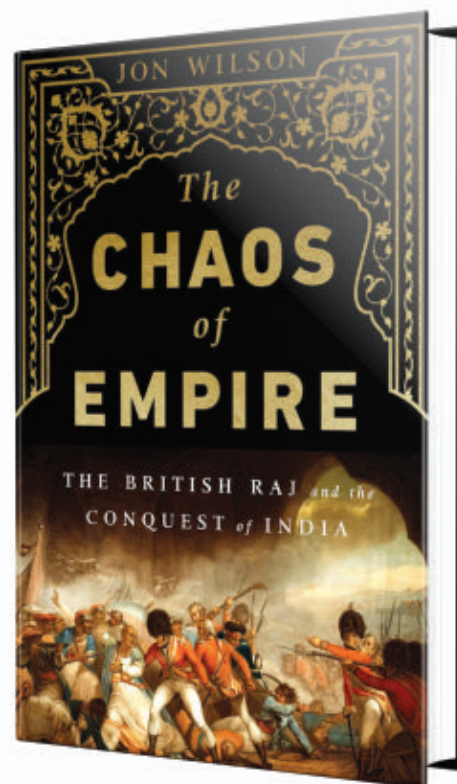
By Yasmin Khan

British rule in India was chaotic, exploitative and cruel. The ties between Britain and India run deep. It's a relationship that stretches back at least 400 years and if you look at their family trees, many British families have links to India. The country plays a romantic part in the British imagination and since Brexit such imperial nostalgia has made a comeback. The prime minister Theresa May, on her recent trip to India, talked up "Global

Britain"—a term that echoed the time when Britain ruled the waves. But this wistful vision has a tendency to collide with political reality. In this case the Indians demanded to be treated as equals in matters of immigration, especially when it came to university students. The prime minister wasn't so keen on that and came back snubbed, the Indian press dubbing her "muddled May."

So what does this vision of global Britain rest on? What was the relation-

ship between Britain and India like during those long centuries of imperial domination? Jon Wilson, a senior lecturer in British imperial and south Asian history at King's College London, has written an eloquent book that traces the thread of British rule from the earliest days of colonial contact around 1650 through to the final lowering of the union flag in August 1947. Based on Wilson's original digging in archives across both countries, *India Conquered* will be an eye-opener for anyone with rose-tinted views of the Raj.

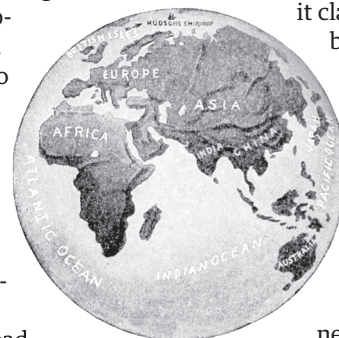


The Chaos of Empire: The British Raj and the Conquest of India
By Jon Wilson
584 pp. PublicAffairs; First US ed. edition. Hardcover, \$29.99.

about the British letting "doubts and disputes" cloud their judgement, and treating him without respect or amity. From then on, the default position when things didn't go the way of the East India Company was for the British to go to war.

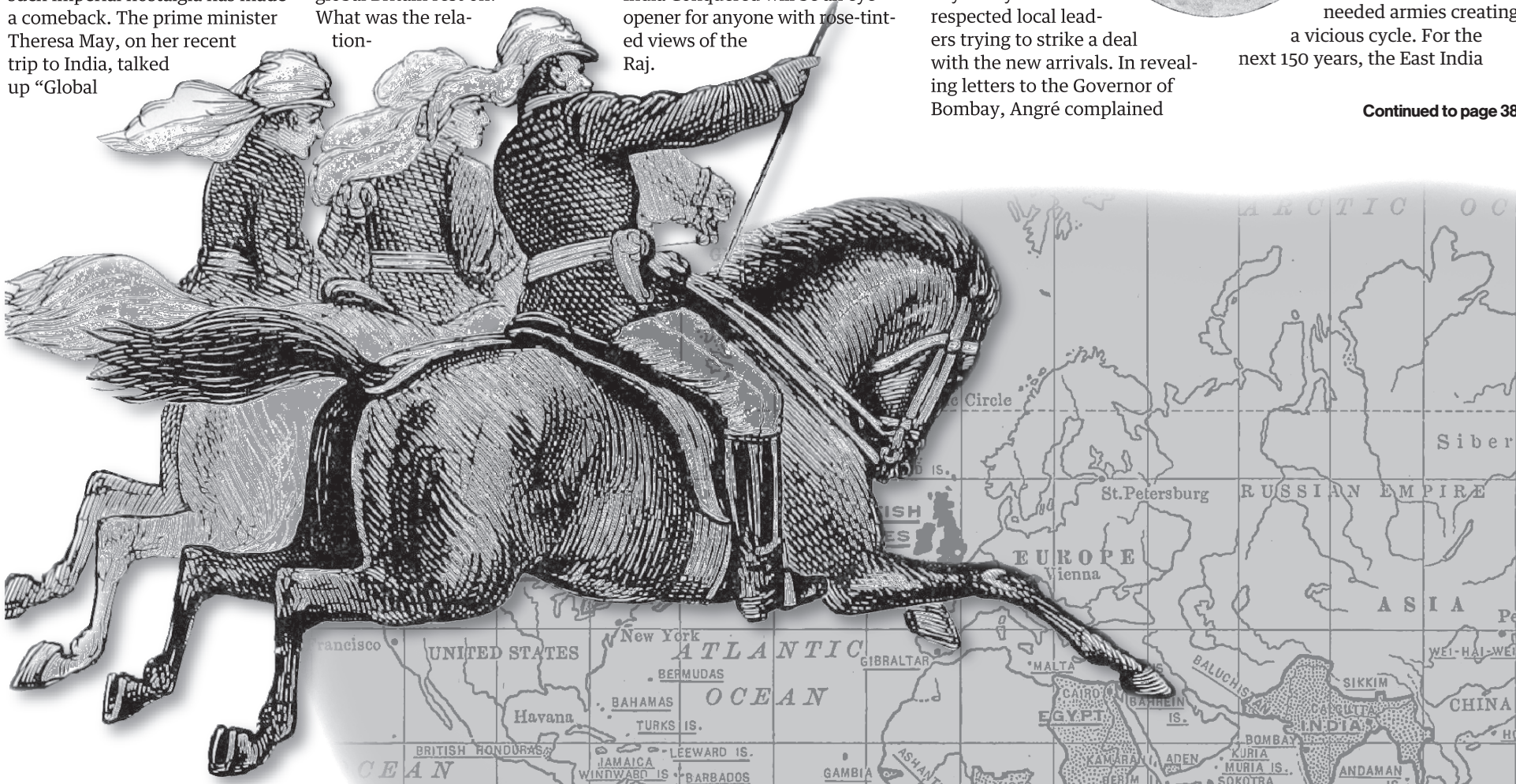
But winning battles like the famous one at Plassey in West Bengal in 1757, which saw the defeat of the last independent nawab of Bengal Siraj ud-Daulah, was not as difficult as running a land-based empire. Everywhere they went, the British stirred up resistance, instability and uncertainty. Rather than bringing peace, as it claimed and some still believe today, the new rulers created havoc, trampling over the remnants of the Mughal state. Armies needed revenue, and revenue collection needed armies creating a vicious cycle. For the next 150 years, the East India

Wilson begins with the very earliest British traders to set foot on Indian soil in the mid-17th century. There were half-a-dozen East India Company officers in a handful of small towns trading pepper, silk and cotton along the southwest coastline. Using French and Dutch footholds, the British began building forts and violently suppressed so-called pirates in order to protect their trade. These "pirates," men like the Maratha commander Kanhoji Angre, were actually savvy and respected local leaders trying to strike a deal with the new arrivals. In revealing letters to the Governor of Bombay, Angre complained



Armies needed revenue, and revenue collection needed armies creating a vicious cycle. For the next 150 years, the East India

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The Raj Delusion

Continued from page 36

Company was almost continually engaged in fighting south Asians in one kingdom or another.

In the early 19th century, the East India Company gradually absorbed into the British state. A network of district administrations were established and the cantonments filled with new bungalows. These were, in turn, filled by men and women trying to keep up with London fashions and to keep their homes as islands of Englishness. But despite the differences between the Company era and later formal British imperialism, Wilson argues that there was a clear thread running throughout: a desire for wealth, matched with the conviction that the British were superior to the Indians. Revenue collection was, this book argues, “the main priority” until independence in 1947. Actual political power was never fully established or stabilised. Some imperialists wanted to go further than others in pushing through legal and land reform, but everywhere there was agreement that India was a backward place which Britain was ordained to civilise.

During well-known flash points such the crushing of the 1857 rebellion and the Amritsar massacre of 1919, unregulated violence led to debates back home over how the empire was being run. Some supported vengeance. Charles Dickens wrote in 1857: “I wish I were the Commander in Chief in India... I should do my utmost to exterminate the Race upon whom the stain of the late cruelties rested.”

THE RAJ AT WAR A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF INDIA'S SECOND WORLD WAR



YASMIN KHAN
Winner of the Royal Historical Society's Gladstone Prize 2017

The Raj at War:
A People's History of India's
Second World War
By Yasmin Khan
432 pp. Penguin Random House.
Hardcover, \$36.76.

Yet there was also intermittent scepticism. Disraeli, who later crowned Victoria Empress of India, nonetheless seized the post-Mutiny moment and grilled Palmerston's government. In 1919 there was general outrage over the shooting of 300 unarmed civilians at Amritsar. Yet both sides in Britain

were keen to project an essentially fragile empire as steely and all-powerful.

The Raj was neither a benign liberal anachronism nor a brutal, bloodthirsty plot to extract resources. Rather the British mostly muddled along during its time in the subcontinent, full of anxiety and unease, trying to turn a profit while also enforcing racial hierarchies.

There was one rule for Indians and another for the British. John Stuart Mill, who articulated a universal vision for the liberty of western people, advocated a very different system for Indians, based on a strong imperial state improving the “physical and mental condition of the inhabitants.” While

at home, the Victorians extended education provision; in India, levels of investment in literacy were pitiful by comparison. Some of Mill's hoped-for development did happen—there were passionate Victorian enthusiasts for irrigation, railways and other infrastructure—but it was all done on the back of poorly paid Indian labourers. Building bridges and canals were, Wilson suggests, a sop to the native population in place of granting them any substantive political representation.

In this light, British rule in India is reduced to something mucky and mundane, exploitative and callous. “As long as they could get on with their job (whatever that job was) Britons in India were rarely interested in the people among whom they lived.” This was a middle-class empire, full of bureaucratic paperwork and balance sheets. There were moments of grand Ornamentalism—for example, George Curzon's durbar and tiger-hunts, theatrically staged for the “age of the photograph and silent film.” But on the whole, this was hardly a glorious vision.

The mercurial trick that British writers performed (and nobody did this better than the Whig historian Thomas Babington Macaulay) was to mask the mercenary reality with celebrations of the progressive triumphs of British rule. They elevated the often humdrum work of friends and relations in India to one of a civilising mission. As John Malcolm put it in 1826, looking back at his long career in India, “The inhabitants of that country rejoiced at the introduction of a government which gave toleration to their religion, security to their property and which, from its character, promised... a tranquillity more durable than they had ever enjoyed.” Versions of this benevolent but mythical vision have been doing the rounds ever since.

Even banal imperialism can have nasty side-effects. Wilson is especially good on the economic changes wrought on India's landscape, environment and—most importantly—people. As imports of Lancashire cloth devastated the indigenous economy, Indians became exporters of raw materials rather than the craftsmen of exquisite silks and calicoes. Indian producers were increasingly locked into global markets and no longer insulated from global fluctuations in prices. Any cotton booms—like the one during the American Civil War of 1861-5—were inevitably followed by busts. In the past, people might have been protected by common lands, or access to the forests,

Continued on page 39



Public Domain, from the British Library's collections, 2013

A Novel of Infidelity in a Fast-Changing India

A wife meets her younger lover on the Delhi Metro

By Aditi Sriram

The cover of Ratika Kapur's second novel, "The Private Life of Mrs. Sharma," shows a map of the Delhi Metro. A shiny, air-conditioned labyrinth underneath an overcrowded city, it serves 2.8 million people daily, including the novel's narrator, Mrs. Sharma, who belongs to a growing, mobile Indian middle class. Public and private domains collide on the station platform and force spontaneous decisions — quick, before the train comes — which is where the story begins.

A wife, mother and doctor's receptionist, Mrs. Renuka Sharma is on her way to work one morning. She is preoccupied: Her husband is working abroad to provide for the family; her son shows no interest in school, "lying around the house with a long face" and telling her he wants to be a chef. While recharging her Metro card, she meets Vineet, a kind-looking stranger with a calm voice. Kapur shows us Mrs. Sharma the person, not the travel statistic, a woman whose identity contains a kind of mobility too. This wife and mother soon becomes an adulterer.

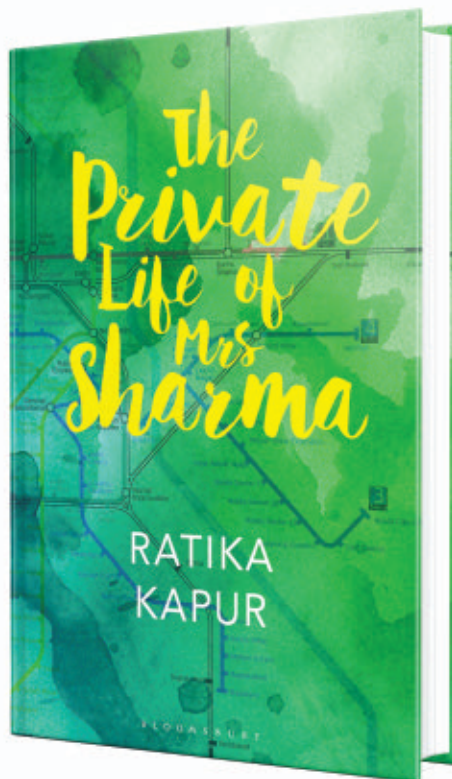
The book shuttles between Mrs. Sharma's secret persona and her family role. Kapur writes in the first person, so the narrative is messy and surprising, guiding the reader's curiosity to the denouement. Will Mrs. Sharma's son find out? Will she continue being unfaithful once her husband returns? Does she love Vineet?



Keith Bedford/The New York Times

But the author is in no hurry. She lets Mrs. Sharma elaborately explain herself, setting her up as an unreliable narrator who prefers rhetorical questions to self-criticism. Things that go awry are her fate, not her fault. She later reveals she was unfaithful earlier than she let on. Her tone is candid, yet cautious; part diary, part confession. But for a story so dependent on facts, chronology and pacing, this subjectivity is frustrating, not suspenseful.

The proper nouns help. Those acquainted with Delhi will recognize the Hauz Khas Metro station and its environs. Early on, Mrs. Sharma meets Vineet at the dumpling shop outside the station, then at a popular cafe farther away and later at a hotel at the end of a Metro line. Kapur has created an original narrative idiom for Mrs. Sharma, using public transit and public spaces as a foil for this very private rela-



The Private Life of Mrs. Sharma
By Ratika Kapur
192 pp. Bloomsbury Publishing. Paperback, \$16.

tionship: "The train was late and so we started talking," and a few sentences later, "the train came. Vineet and I got on and stood quietly side by side as we normally do."

Kapur's descriptions of trust are equally stark. Recalling her first night with her husband, Mrs. Sharma declares: "All this love and romance and everything that happens between a man and a woman?"

This is what it is. It is the greater density of a man's bones, the greater weight of him that will give to his woman both peace and pain."

"The Private Life of Mrs. Sharma" belongs to an emerging genre of Indian fiction written in English; it plays with voice without being vernacular, and features women without being chick lit.

Having written about Anglicized, elite Delhi in her first novel, "Overwinter," Kapur has consciously created a character "whose intimacies are colored in Hindi," she told an interviewer, "but whose ambitions are articulated in English."

Mrs. Sharma considers herself "respectable" more than anything else. The word appears often, reminiscent of Kazuo Ishiguro's narrative refrain in "The Remains of the Day" about "dignity." "I am a respectable married lady who hails from a good family," she says, with a mixture of pride and barely contained rage.

"I have a child and a respectable job, and a mother-in-law and father-in-law. I am not a schoolgirl, and even when I was a schoolgirl, when I was Miss Renuka Mishra, even then I actually never did the types of things that other girls of my age did."

This novel is Mrs. Sharma's chance to reflect on what she has actually done. Her words reveal a dignity more private and complex than society can perceive. The book is worthwhile, and quick to read — perfect for your train ride to work.

— The New York Times

The Raj Delusion

Continued from page 38

or by feudal landowners who kept reserves of grain in stock. But now, in the era of private property and low wages, they starved. Between 12m and 30m people died from starvation or famine-related diseases in India in the last quarter of the 19th century.

The earliest meetings of the Indian National Congress in 1885 took place against this dark backdrop. Although Congress leaders were elite gentlemen and did not, at this stage, dream of total sovereignty, they were united in their criticisms of India's sink into poverty.

Once Congress did take power in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru's gov-

ernment achieved higher rates of growth and less food deprivation than the British had managed.

Of course, there is a danger here of talking of the Indians and British as antagonistic blocs pitted against one another. The reality was more complex. Though they don't get much attention here, some Britons had a profound love of India.

People such as William Jones, the brilliant scholar of Oriental languages who wrote of the Sanskrit language that it was "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." Or Annie Besant, who moved to India, wore a sari and became President of the Indian National Congress during the First World War, ending up in prison for her opposition to the empire.

But Wilson focuses less on the colourful exceptions than the gritty norm, dispelling fantasies of the Raj by sticking to a close economic analysis.

As the empire entered the 20th century and Gandhi transformed the nature of Indian politics, the story becomes more familiar. Gandhi brought "something like a revolution" to India, says Wilson, appealing to those Indian middlemen who made the running of the empire possible.

There were plenty of wealthy Maharajas and businessmen who stayed loyal to the British and continued to benefit handsomely from empire throughout. Wilson is not unaware of this, but he downplays it in order to bring out the global and economic underpinnings of imperial decline. Gandhi's most impressive moments of political protest

tallied neatly with agrarian despair, especially during the Great Depression.

As the war with Japan sucked India into the Second World War, the old system broke down completely: India experienced massive mobilisation and recruitment of an army 2.5m strong, rapid inflation and widespread state intervention in aspects of everyday life. Crucially, for the first time ever, Britain owed India money. London had agreed to pay for the war, and had to honour its commitment after the conflict ended. By 1946 the shrinking number of British administrators faced hostile political factions, discontented soldiers and potential social breakdown.

In readiness for their departure, the British "weeded out" and burnt documents all over the

country, removing incriminating files that could be used against them. At independence from Britain's balance-sheet empire, bonfires of paper from the Secretariat clouded the sky in New Delhi. Twelve million people migrated across the new borders drawn in blood at Partition, thousands died in riots and from disease.

Wilson does not depict Partition as a uniquely devastating event, rightly setting it in the context of the 1940s and the high numbers of people killed by dislocation all over the world at the time. "It could have been much worse," he boldly surmises, which is a terrifying thought, but possibly true. In the end an empire founded by conquest had come full circle, and ended in violence too.

— The New York Times

Test Cricket's Greatest Match of All, for its Own Survival

With fast and flashy as the modern standard, T20 cricket has become the new mantra

By Gaurav Mathur

They say time and tide wait for no man. The times have definitely changed and whether it is for the better can be best answered by historians ahead. One thing which we can agree on is that the world is definitely faster than before. The question on every cricket lover's mind is whether faster is necessarily better in the context of the gentleman's game. In the time of T20 cricket, can Test cricket survive?

In the age of effective marketing and advertising, glitz sells and has sold like never before. T20 cricket is the new mantra in our age. It is fast, flashy, pays well and can make you a hero overnight or over one good session. It's also a quick game and you can go home in about three hours. The cricket attracts a fair mix of crowd both young and old, male and female and has proven to be a crowd attractor. This in turn has led to higher ticket sales and revenues.

There are many influential voices in cricket that have issued dire warnings about the survival of Test cricket, predicting that Twenty20 could dominate the landscape within 20 years. Some lay part of the blame for Test cricket's potential ills on the restructuring of the ICC. Money forms a huge basis for viability in life and cricket isn't far behind. With only 10 teams playing Test cricket and four of those already struggling to stay competitive, the risk of the game degenerating to the extent that the result of many Test series is a foregone conclusion is both high and real.

In September 2016, India played its 500th Test match against New Zealand in Kanpur. In this journey spanning 84 years, 285 cricketers have played for India. Most players were born in Maharashtra, followed by Gujarat. No one from the North East has ever played a Test match for India. India's Test cricket journey started at Lord's in June 1932, when Mohammad Nissar and L. Amar Singh reduced England to 19 for 3 before the home side fought back to seal a 158-run win. It was only

in February 1952 that India won its first Test, beating the same opposition in Madras by an innings and eight runs within four days - the first truly glorious occasion for Indian cricket. For a team that took 20 years and 25 tests to win their first match, Team India has come a long way.

Every player's goal, growing up, is to play Test cricket for their country. Now the question for kids is whether it's really worth trying to juggle two different formats of the sport when the rewards in one so greatly outweigh the other. At the moment, younger players still seem to want to do both and even those who have come to prominence in T20 try and develop their Test game. But how long will that go on?

In India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, New Zealand - and even to a certain extent Australia - crowds for Test matches are falling. It doesn't take a huge stretch of imagination to see a situation in which most players will be contracted to franchises and play the majority of their cricket in the T20 format. It

won't happen for a while, as international boards will do everything in their power to prevent it, but market forces are likely to win the battle in the long term. The emergence of well-funded T20 competitions like the Indian Premier League and the Big Bash in Australia

has shifted the financial balance of power away from Test cricket to the shortest form of the game.

I have provided enough reasons for why Test cricket will face challenges in the future. But the eternal optimist in me refuses to believe that Test cricket will die. Look at the matches played recently. Most of the games are coming to a conclusion. Teams are fighting it out and are looking to post a win. Under Virat Kohli, India is looking to win every time it steps out onto the field. The bowlers are hunting in packs and aren't breaking down. The batsmen are firing and somebody usually steps up in every game. Kohli has a promising bunch of youngsters with him and looks good to take the Indian team ahead on this journey. In recent months, India thrashed England and New Zealand this year. South

Team India has come a long way since victory in its first Test in 1952



IANIS



Above, Indian captain M.S. Dhoni greets compatriot Virat Kohli for his half century during the second WT20 semi-final match between India and West Indies at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, on March 31.



IANIS

Africa thrashed Australia in Australia. They in turn thrashed Pakistan who had also lost against New Zealand. The cricket has certainly been entertaining and competitive and I don't find any signs of it abating.

There are many who have woken up early or have stayed up late to watch the beginning of a Test match and the same have switched off their television during one too many an IPL season. T20 cricket won't be numero uno as there are so many fans who still believe that Test cricket is the ultimate test for any cricketer.

It is meant to be played and till the cricketers and fans believe in it, so will the administrators. While time and tide may wait for no one, it is the bold and adaptable who survive and thrive. That's Test cricket for you.

Immigration: A Post-Election Q&A

By Allen E. Kaye

The presidential election has jolted campuses with speculation and concern about undocumented community members and other issues impacting international populations. The roughly 750,000 young people who have been approved for the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program have been the subject of particular attention. More broadly there have been some calls to create "sanctuary campuses." Statements and petitions have been circulated by college and university presidents, student groups, and policy-makers. This Issue Brief is offered as a "current moment" aid in framing discussion and assessment by campus leaders, in the hope that it provides information that may assist in situational response, campus policy review, and engagement on the issues addressed here.

Why is this complicated and the future uncertain?

As explained below, DACA is not a law or regulation, it is simply an executive order. It does not confer legal status or a pathway to citizenship, it is only relevant to a small portion of undocumented individuals in the United States, and it can be modified or ended at any time. Many individuals with DACA status are college or university students. Much of the pre-election campaign discussion regarding immigration enforcement was not focused on this group. In addition, it is unlikely that all of an institution's faculty and staff who are concerned about its DACA students know exactly who these students are. Similarly, it is unlikely that the balance of a campus's undocumented population—students and others—is known.

There has never been large-scale immigration enforcement directed at undocumented individuals at American colleges and universities. It is far from clear whether the new administration's immigration policies and enforcement practices will target, include, or exclude current DACA students and other undocumented members of our nation's campus communities.

Nor is it known what form such actions might take. How long it would take to design, resource, organize, and implement governmental policy changes or enforcement actions are anyone's guess. The likelihood of success of judicial challenges to such policies and enforcement actions is speculative as well, even if the certainty and vigor of such challenges are not. In short, it is inevitable that there will be more questions than definitive answers for some time, but it is prudent to anticipate that the new administration may usher in changes in current laws, regulations, and policies.

What is the big picture?

Millions of undocumented immigrants have entered the United States during the last quarter century. Many arrived as infants or young children; they have grown up in the United States but without legal status. Added to their ranks are those who came and overstayed visas, who had poor immigration representation, or whose parents did not follow through on immigration applications.

In 2003, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) ceased to exist, and its functions were transferred to three new entities under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). ICE is largely responsible for enforcing immigration laws within U.S. borders.

ICE's officers and agents currently conduct enforcement actions consistent with a DHS November 2014

memorandum that prioritizes threats to national security, border security, and public safety. ICE's own Sensitive Locations Policy provides that enforcement actions should be avoided at sensitive locations, which include "post-secondary schools up to and including colleges and universities, and other institutions of learning such as vocational or trade schools." However, these policies can be modified or rescinded at will by the new administration.

What is DACA?

DACA, the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy, provides administrative relief from deportation for specific individuals who apply for and receive DACA status. It was announced June 15, 2012.

As noted, DACA is not a law, or even a regulation. It does not grant a legal status, nor does it offer a pathway to permanent residency or citizenship. It simply reflects the Obama administration's priorities regarding deportations.

With roughly 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., the administration chose to put those with criminal records or outstanding deportation orders at the top of the list for removal, and those with DACA status at the bottom. Many hope that DACA can be a bridge to comprehensive immigration reform by Congress.

DACA reflects the USCIS's exercise of its prosecutorial discretion to permit approved individuals to stay for two years at a time without fear of deportation. Those granted DACA status also may receive a Social Security number and two-year employment authorization documents.

DACA status may be given to undocumented young people who had no lawful status on June 15, 2012. To qualify, applicants must:

have been physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012;

have been under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;

have come to the United States before reaching their 16th birthday;

have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007;

currently be in school, or have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, or have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or have been honorably discharged from the Coast Guard or the Armed Forces of the United States; and

have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

(To be continued)

Allen E. Kaye, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Queens College of the City of New York, Columbia Law School (JD) and New York University Law School (LLM), is the President of the Law Offices of Allen E. Kaye and Associates and Of Counsel to Pollack, Pollack, Isaac & DeCicco. He is a past National President of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and Co-Chair of the Immigration Committee of the Queens County Bar Association. He has been selected by Martindale-Hubbell as a 2014 "Top Rated Lawyer" in the practice of Labor and Employment (for Immigration) and the 2017 Edition of The Best Lawyers in America.

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Ink Signatures No Longer Required on Affidavits of Support

By Allen E. Kaye

Continuing from last week answers to questions about changes in the National Visa Center's Affidavit of Support.

Household size includes dependents and other immigrants being sponsored. The Form I-864 asks for the financial sponsor's household size. The sponsor must include in their household the principal visa applicant and any derivative applicants who plan to immigrate within six months of the petition. The sponsor also must include his or her spouse; unmarried children under 21 (unless these children have reached majority under the law of their place of domicile); anyone else claimed as a dependent on the sponsor's tax return; and other people in the United States whom the sponsor is supporting on a different I-864. A sponsor does not have to include people on other I-864s who have not yet immigrated to the United States.

If a sponsor's income does not meet the Poverty Guidelines, he or she can submit the value of assets to make up the difference. Financial sponsors can only include assets

that are convertible into cash within one year and without considerable hardship or financial loss to the owner. Sponsors may include the value of their home. They may not include the value of their automobile, unless they can show they have more than one and the primary automobile is not included as an asset. The intending immigrant can include his or her assets in this calculation but needs to file a Form I-864A to do so. If you submit evidence of assets to NVC, they will be included in your case file and only reviewed during your visa interview overseas. NVC will not review these documents.

Financial sponsors must be domiciled in the United States. Domicile is where a person has his or her principal "residence," with the intention to maintain that residence for the foreseeable future. If a financial sponsor has been living abroad, he or she can reestablish domicile in the United States but will need to provide proof that they have done so before any income can be considered in support of the intending immigrant's visa application.

For more information about domicile, visit our frequently asked questions online.

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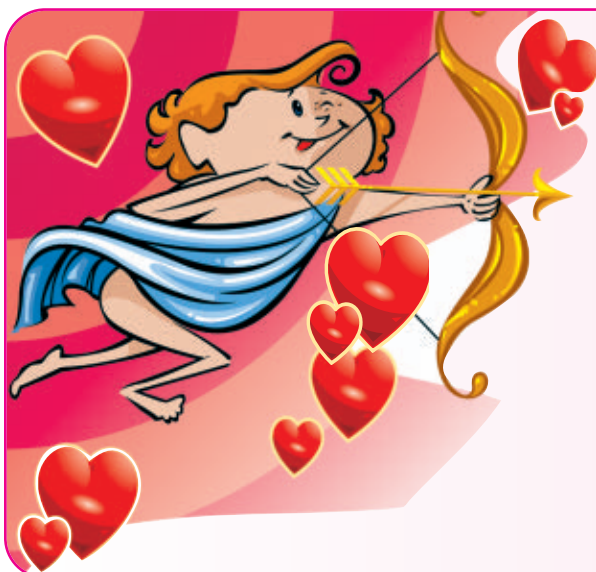
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