

The South Asian Times

excellence in journalism

Vol. 14 | No. 36
January 1-14, 2022

NEW YEAR SPECIAL

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MOHAN WANCHOO

An Extraordinarily-Accomplished Technocrat, Iconic Philanthropist & Humanitarian, and Inspiring Community Leader

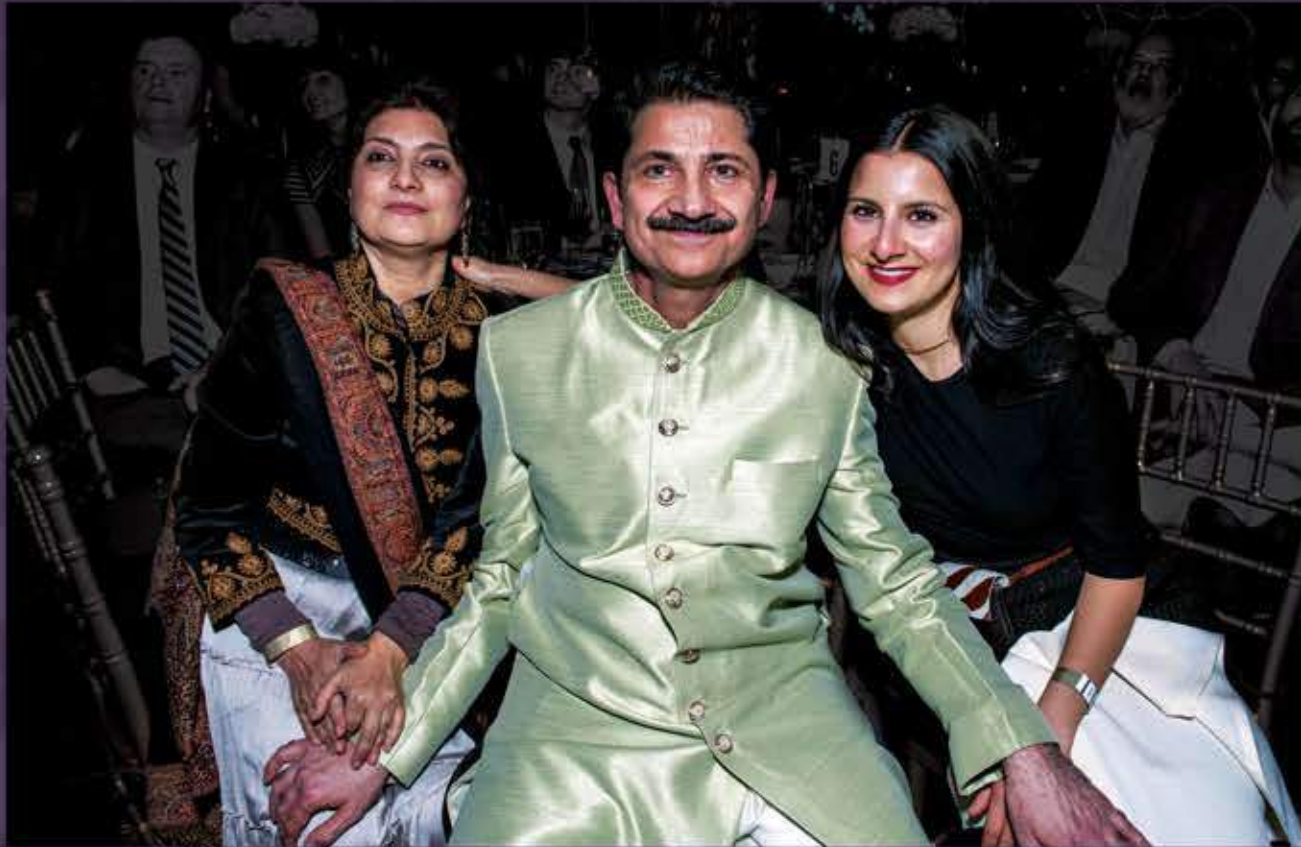
THE SOUTH ASIAN TIMES
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021

TSA Times

NEWSMAKERS | 2021 ROUND-UPS | STATE OF US DEMOCRACY | TRENDS

A MOMENTOUS LANDMARK FOR THE WANCHOO FAMILY!

Congratulations to Mohan Wanchoo, Kavita and Tapasya



Kavita and Mohan Wanchoo and their daughter Tapasya at an Ekal gala.

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR KID BROTHER'S HISTORIC HONOR

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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021



We wish you more success & more accolades

With best compliments from



Dr. P.K. Wanchoo
Dr. Maharaj Wanchoo, PhD
Nancy Pandit
Rajinder Wanchoo



*Mohan Wanchoo and his family
greeted by villagers at the Ekal
Vidyalaya village in Lake Siliserh,
Alwar District, Rajasthan.*

*(from right) Mohan Wanchoo,
sister Dr P.K. Wanchoo, brothers
Dr. Maharaj Wanchoo and Rajinder
Wanchoo, sister Nancy Pandit and
brother-in-law Col Ashok Pandit.*

The South Asian Times

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New York Edition

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Dangerous to suggest that Omicron is mild, says WHO

- ▶▶ Record weekly jump in COVID-19 cases but fewer deaths
- ▶▶ NY Schools are 'Staying Open,' Mayor Eric Adams Says

Washington DC: The World Health Organization said Thursday that a record 9.5 million COVID-19 cases were tallied over the last week as the omicron variant of the coronavirus swept the planet, a 71 percent increase from the previous 7-day period that the UN health agency likened to a "tsunami." However, the number of weekly recorded deaths declined.

"Last week, the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases were reported so far in the pandemic," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said. He said the WHO was certain that was an underestimate because of a backlog in testing around the



Washington DC and Florida have had the largest jumps in new cases in the last two weeks. (Image Courtesy: BBC)

year-end holidays.

While omicron seems less severe than delta, especially among people who have been

vaccinated, the WHO chief cautioned: "It does not mean it should be categorized as mild."

Continued on page 6

A NEW BEGINNING

Eric Adams takes over as 110th Mayor of NY



Eric Adams is New York City's new mayor. He was sworn into office in a Times Square ceremony shortly after the nation's largest city rang in the New Year 2022. Adams, 61, faces the immense challenge of pulling the city out of the pandemic, taking office as the city is grappling with record numbers of COVID-19 cases driven by the omicron variant. He's the city's second Black mayor, after David Dinkins who served from 1990 to 1993. (Image Courtesy: NYT)

(Turn to Page 48 for details)

US unemployment sinks to 3.9 percent

Washington DC: The nation's unemployment rate fell in December to a healthy 3.9 percent — a pandemic low — even as employers added a modest 199,000 jobs, evidence that they are struggling to fill jobs with many Americans still reluctant to return to the workforce.

The drop in the jobless rate, from 4.2 percent in November, indicated that many more Americans found work last month. Indeed, despite the slight hiring gain reported by businesses, 651,000 more people said they were employed in December compared with November.

Still, the data reported Friday by the Labor Department reflected the state of the job market in early December — before the spike in COVID-19 infections began to disrupt the economy. Economists have cautioned that job growth

Continued on page 6

NEW YEAR 2022 Omicron dampens New Year celebrations as world ushers in 2022



Fireworks over the Sydney Opera House and Harbor Bridge as New Year's Eve celebrations begin in Sydney.

(Image Courtesy: Independent)

New York: The Omicron variant dampened New Year festivities around much of the world, canceling celebrations at Paris's Arc de Triomphe and the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur. New York City welcomed the new year — and bid good riddance to 2021

— as confetti and cheers spread across Times Square as a New Year's Eve tradition returned to a city beleaguered by a global pandemic.

The new year marched across the globe, time zone by time zone,

Continued on page 6

Jan 6: A national day of infamy for "democratic" US

Washington DC: January 6 marked a year since the deadly siege of the US Capitol by a partially-armed and whimsically-dressed mob made of supporters of then-President Donald Trump. The attack on the Capitol — a complex that is widely seen as a symbol of American democracy —

Continued on page 6



A year later, Americans do not remember Jan 6 Capitol riot as one people.

(Image Courtesy: BBC)

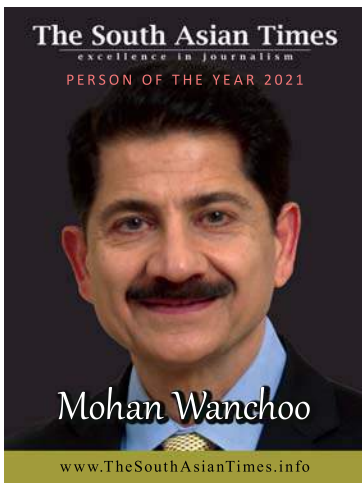
Person of the Year & New Year Special Issue

The South Asian Times Wishes You and Your Near and Dear Ones
Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year



The South Asian Times
excellence in journalism

The Asian Era



Presenting Person of the Year 2021

Letter from the Publisher



Kamlesh C. Mehta
Chairman & Publisher

his convictions. His collective contributions multiply the resources for the benefit of humanity. He is a much loved, polite, multi-talented, charming, and well-respected community leader.

Forsythe Media Group is pleased and honored to recognize and feature Mr. Mohan

Wanchoo as "The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2021".

Mr. Wanchoo is Chairman of ECI MW Holding Company. But he has quietly come into the limelight for supporting several charities like Ekal Vidyalaya, Sankara Eye Foundation, Vatsalya Gram, and Rotary Clubs in the New York area, dedicated to providing education, health-care, and social welfare services for the underprivileged in India and USA.

Our New Year & Person of the Year special issues, print & digital, have been read by well over half a million people in America and all over the world, and they are proudly displayed by many families on their coffee tables and kept in their collectibles.

Please contact us if you wish to have a hard copy, we will gladly mail you with our compliments.

With this New Year special, we bid adieu to Mr. Parveen Chopra, our Managing Editor since the inception of the paper. Now designated Founding Editor, he will continue to guide the editorial

team to ensure the continuity of high standards. We warmly welcome to the team Dr. Arvind Singh, PhD, who as Executive Coordinator will continue the legacy created by Mr. Chopra. We wish Mr. Chopra well in his future endeavors.

Since its inception, The South Asian Times has earned an immaculate reputation for its consistency for excellence in journalism, value-based content, clean display, and qualitative advertising. Our unique vision has continuously set new trends and standards in the South Asian media fraternity of America, both in print and online.

We the Team @ The South Asian Times sincerely thank all our readers and supporters who have been integral partners in our gracious presence and success. Hope you will enjoy the New Year Special issue. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome,

Kamlesh C. Mehta
Chairman@
TheSouthAsianTimes.Info

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings for a healthy, joyous, and prosperous New Year.

2021 was the year of resolute-ness and resilience, and we hope with world health authorities that 2022 will end the scourge that has afflicted entire humanity. So, the cheerful New Year news is promising good health, more happiness, and better prosperity for all.

The Team @ The South Asian Times is proud to present our annual New Year Special issue. With your esteemed support, your favorite newspaper has completed 13 years of its glorious publication. We have continued to serve the community uninterrupted even during the pandemic. We are thankful to

our loyal supporters, patrons, and colleagues for their invaluable cooperation during the testing times.

As every year, we start our New Year with an incredibly special edition by featuring The South Asian Times - Person of the Year.

There are always numerous people among us who are contributing to positively impacting the lives of others. We congratulate and admire all those who keep giving back to the community and helping humanity move forward. For the last 12 years, we have proudly featured amazing persons who have transformed thousands of lives with their Generous help, Guidance, and sharing their Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom.

This time, The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2021 is a remarkable Indian American based in Long Island: A highly accomplished technocrat who has singularly become a powerhouse raising millions for philanthropic activities; a dedicated volunteer who fearlessly voices

Cover pages of our last 10 New Year & Person of the Year Special Issues

2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
2016	2015	2014	2013	2012

Very Warm, and Heartiest Congratulations to

MR MOHAN WANCHOO

THE PROFOUNDLY DESERVING PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021 OF

The South Asian Times
excellence in journalism

*You are a
Motivation for
Mankind in
continued Motion,
A Rare Technocrat
with a Sensitive Heart
Who is Taking
Philanthropy to
a New Level*

KAVITA & MOHAN WANCHOO
YOU SHARE YOUR PASSION FOR SERVING HUMANITY

We are proud of your significant accomplishments in all your noble Endeavors.

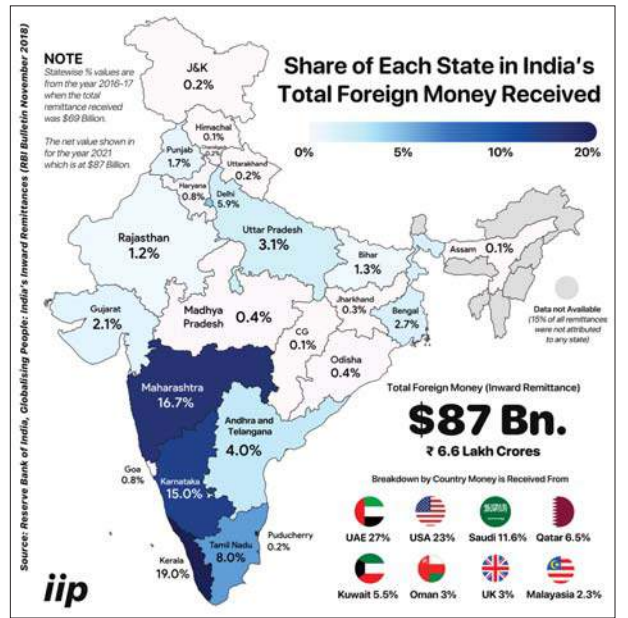
With best Compliments & Best wishes for an amazing 2022

Nimmi & Kamlesh C. Mehta

India received \$87 billion in remittances in 2021

The top three countries in the remittance to India chart in 2021 were UAE with 27 percent share followed by the US contributing 23 percent, and Saudi Arabia with 11.6 percent share. As per the Reserve Bank of India bulletin for November 2018, Kerala (19.0 percent), Maharashtra (16.7 percent), and Karnataka (15.0 percent) received the maximum share from the foreign remittance in 2021.

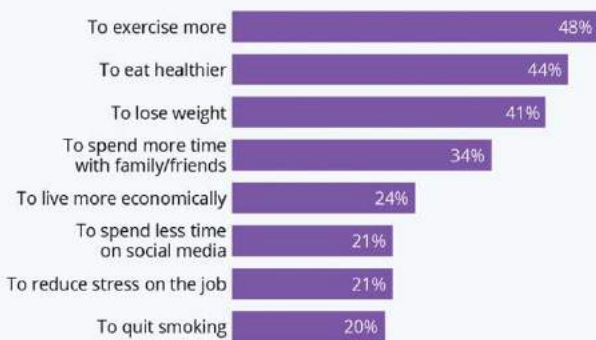
(Graphic Courtesy: India in Pixels)



Most common New Year's resolutions in US for 2022

Top U.S. New Year's Resolutions for 2022

"What are your New Year's resolutions?"



n=399 U.S. adults who have made New Year's resolutions. Conducted November 2-11, 2021. Source: Statista Global Consumer Survey



statista

According to a Statista study, the top three resolutions for 2022 in the US were exercising more, losing weight, and saving more money. 48 percent of respondents said they were focused on exercising more, 44 percent resolved to eat healthier, and 41 percent wants to lose weight in 2022. To reduce stress on the job and spend less time on social media (21 percent each), and quitting smoking (20 percent) were other promises people made to themselves for the Year 2022.

(Graphic Courtesy: Statista)

Omicron dampens New Year celebrations as world ushers in 2022

Continued from page 3

and thousands of New Year's revelers stood shoulder to shoulder in a slight chill to witness a 6-ton ball, encrusted with nearly 2,700 Waterford crystals, descend above a crowd of about 15,000 in-person spectators — far fewer than the many tens of thousands of revelers who usually descend on the world-famous square to bask in the lights and hoopla of the nation's marquee New Year's Eve event.

Though the crowds were smaller, the throngs nevertheless stretched for blocks to soak in the celebration, with many traveling from afar to take part. Confetti lit up by electronic billboards swirled in light wind on a mild winter night in New York City. Last year's ball drop was closed to the public because of the pandemic.

Dangerous to suggest that Omicron is mild, says WHO

Continued from page 3

Just like previous variants, omicron is hospitalizing people, and it's killing people."

The U.S. hit 1 million new Covid-19 cases on January 3, underscoring the threat of the omicron variant as the third year of the pandemic gets underway. Washington DC and Florida have had the largest jumps in new cases in the last two weeks. Covid-19 cases increased 902 percent in Washington DC and by 744 percent in Florida in the past two weeks. The record single-day total could reflect delayed reporting, as a number of states did not announce data on New Year's Eve and during the holiday weekend.

US unemployment sinks to 3.9 percent

Continued from page 3

compared may slow in January and possibly February because of the spike in omicron cases, which have forced millions of newly infected workers to stay home and quarantine.

For now, steady hiring is being driven by strong consumer demand that has remained resilient despite chronic supply shortages. Consumer spending and business purchases of machinery are likely propelling the economy to a robust annual growth rate of roughly 7% in the final three months of 2021. Americans' confidence in the economy rose slightly in

December, according to the Conference Board, suggesting that spending probably was healthy for much of last month.

Jan 6: A national day of infamy for "democratic" US

Continued from page 3

was unprecedented. The only other forcible breach had occurred more than 200 years earlier when British troops set fire to it in August 1814. President Joe Biden forcefully blamed Donald Trump and his supporters Thursday for holding a "dagger at the throat of democracy" with election lies that sparked last year's deadly assault on the US Capitol, using the anniversary of the attack to warn that America's system of government remains under urgent threat.

That the January 6 assault was perpetrated by flag-waving patriots instigated by a sitting president making false claims of a stolen election — and refusing to acknowledge his electoral defeat — only underscores the political danger it portends. Accepting electoral defeat is, after all, fundamental to the functioning of any democracy.

A year later, Americans do not remember Jan 6 Capitol riot as one people. A Quinnipiac poll found that 93 percent of Democrats considered it an attack on the government, but only 29 percent of Republicans agreed. A poll by The Associated Press and NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that about 4 in 10 Republicans recall the attack — in which five people died — as violent, while 9 in 10 Democrats do. Such a disparity in memory may be inevitable in our hyper-polarized politics, but it's striking given the stark clarity of Jan. 6 at the time and in its immediate aftermath.

Moreover, many Trump supporters have adopted the former president's denial over the 2020 election. In the last year, Republicans have passed dozens of laws in 19 states to restrict voting. More election battles loom in the 2022 midterms and beyond.

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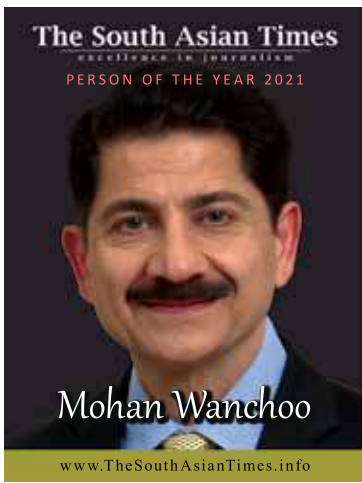
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The more you come to know about Mohan Wanchoo by talking to him or by hearing others who know him closely, you discover how multi-faceted a man he is. Of course, the multi-millions he has raised at galas for Ekal Vidyalaya has brought him into the limelight, but not many would have heard of the big tech companies, EC Infosystems and Jasmine Universe he founded and runs from New York, which are pioneering solutions for the energy industry. And not many would easily discern that behind his smiling visage and affable demeanor is a man passionate about his charity work, his business, his home country and the exiled Kashmiri Pandit community, the hurt of which had hit closer home. How he dexterously and facilely manages to balance so many intense involvements and his personal life makes him a role model for the Indian community, the country and the world.

By Parveen Chopra

Josh! Passion! Jumping for joy to see something accomplished you had worked hard for!

People who have attended Ekal galas arranged by him over the last few years were struck by his actions on stage. You can see pictures of him suspended in midair while holding an outsized check with many zeros

inspiration, he persuades other high net worth individuals, firms and foundations to join in to support a good cause, creating a multiplier effect. In turn, the charities get invaluable guidance and expertise from him, enabling them to make the best use of limited resources at their disposal.

He has created a model for other well-meaning and resourceful people in the community to follow. The least each one of us can do, he says, is do things to help at least

At what point did you start taking part in philanthropic activities?

Mohan Wanchoo: My father, Prof V.N. Wanchoo fought to root out corruption in India in the education sector. When he passed away here in New York in 1991 (victim of a road accident), I thought about what I can do to keep his legacy alive. Then, I heard about Ekal Vidyalaya around 2007. They ask you to sponsor a school for a dol-

standard of education in India.

How to help children to become good citizens of the world was a favorite topic of my father's and I thought Ekal Vidyalaya was a perfect answer. Through Ekal, we could take his dream to much larger sections of society and reach out to hundreds of thousands of children. Ekal is a story of social dreamers who believed that change is possible and education can be the medium to bring the change in the life of the last person in the

MOHAN WANCHOO

Philanthropist • Technocrat • Community Leader • Role Model

along with other luminaries who too were agog. Or his outstretched arm punching the air as he shouts, "We did it!"

That is Mohan Wanchoo for you in essence. His vision of philanthropy is broader and higher than just donating to a charity X, Y or Z. With his business acumen, he vets the organizations he would support, discerning the impact they can make. No passive donor, he throws himself body and soul into the charity. With his example and

one person not as fortunate as us. That can change the entire world, he professes.

Excerpts from an interview with Mohan Wanchoo, The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2021 held in his EC Infosystems office in Uniondale, NY. Sanjay Sura shot the photographs in Wanchoo's office and home in Old Westbury, both in Long Island.

lar a day in India. I got curious how they managed to do that. The reason they can run a whole school at that low cost is that they do not have any buildings. They teach under a tree with one teacher in rural areas. I realized that it was a great model. We do not need a building to teach kids; we need knowledge. This was a perfect model to keep my father's legacy alive, who not only fought corruption in the education sector but also strived continuously to raise the

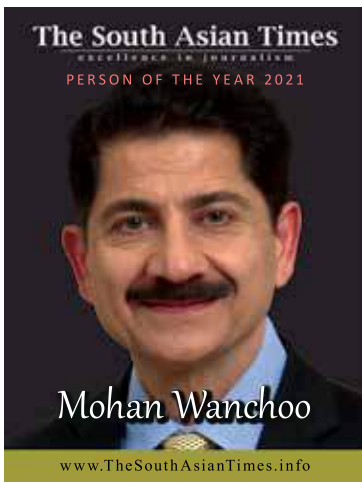
last row in the remotest parts of India.

How did your involvement with Ekal Galas start?

Mohan Wanchoo: Ekal people told me that they were not able to hold a gala event in the US since they established here ten years prior. So, I took the responsibility for holding the gala event for them. I spoke to Chirag Patel, Co-Chairman of Amneal



More than the zeros in the check displayed at the 2019 Ekal gala Mohan Wanchoo arranged, it is his jumping for joy action that captures the essence of the man and his passion for philanthropy to alleviate suffering of mankind.



Mohan Wanchoo

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

Pharmaceuticals, who graciously agreed to share the responsibility with me to hold the gala event of 2016. The first gala event, a gift from our side, was held in Cipriani, NY. Around \$2 million were raised at this glittering gala through generous contributions from many individuals, companies, & foundations.

It was mainly the CEOs of these companies, who put their trust in our dream and the Ekal Model. I have personally contributed around a million so far and will

Origins of Ekal – From Mohan Wanchoo’s speech at the 2017 Gala

We want to bring Ekal to mainstream America and spread Ekal’s message to the masses. And what better place to do it than right here in New York City.

The theme of our first Gala is the Future of India. Our distinguished speakers will describe their vision of the Future of India as they see it, how Ekal can help India move forward towards a brighter future, a Digital India where hundreds of millions of farmers will not only just grow apples but apps, and the role Ekal is playing in realizing this objective.

I would like to take you back 29 years. A young man went to a village deep in Jharkhand, Bihar, and wanted to help the

poor people there. So he asked his wife to go and talk to the women in the village. She found that they had nothing to eat.



While she approached one hut, she was stopped by the owner. When asked why,

the man told her that his daughter was playing outside and his wife was inside. He further explained that his wife does not have any clothes on because they have only one saree. When the daughter comes back, she will give the saree to her mother and only then the mother can come out.

This my friends was the turning point in this man’s life and he was none other than one of the founders of Ekal, Madan Lal Agarwal. He asked the village Chief what he could do to help. The Chief said just give education to our children. The rest is history. Agarwal opened the first school in 1986, which grew to 2,000 schools by 1995 and today there are over 1,00,000 schools run by Ekal.

people’s lives as Ekal brings light into the life of the people through knowledge and education. Not having vision is unfortunate and sight is the noblest of gifts someone

inequalities prevailing in India that are detrimental to inclusive development and also impede the growth of the nation as a whole.

Any position you hold in any of these organizations?

Mohan Wanchoo: I have been offered positions, but I’ve declined. I like to do things where I can make contributions and make a difference. I would rather be involved in activities where I create an impact and output that can achieve the goal of the organization rather than holding a position.

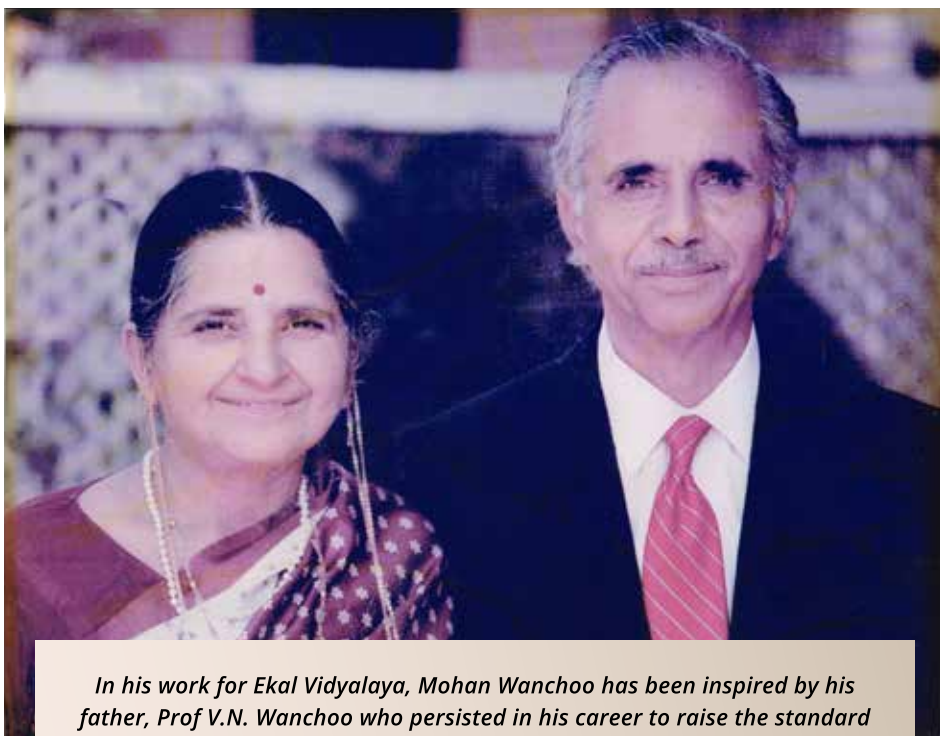
How does Vatsalya Gram do it?

Mohan Wanchoo: They have a unique model to rebuild the lives of people shattered by unfortunate incidents or circumstances. Didi Maa puts these people together in order to rebuild their hopes by placing them in a conducive environment.

What they do is, they put a minor orphan with a widow and an elderly woman. So, they give the mother a child, and a child a mother and grandmother, and a grandmother a daughter and grandchildren. Didi Maa comes every year to the US to raise funds. Three years ago, we had the first fundraising event for her in Long Island.

After the departure of the CEO of Ekal Abhiyan, Bajrang Bagra, Ramesh Shah has recently been unanimously appointed as its new CEO. Ekal Abhiyan is the umbrella organization for all the Ekal bodies. Mr Ramesh Shah is the former president and chairman of Ekal-USA and he has now practically moved to India as it is not possible to run such a mammoth organization from the US.

Continued on pg 10



In his work for Ekal Vidyalaya, Mohan Wanchoo has been inspired by his father, Prof V.N. Wanchoo who persisted in his career to raise the standard of education in India. From his mother, Gauri Wanchoo, he learnt that we should always do things for people which bring happiness into their lives.

continue to give to Ekal in the future.

In 2017 we raised \$2.1 million for Ekal through the gala event. In 2018, we mustered \$3 million at the gala at Gotham Hall in NYC. But we could not organize the gala in 2019 due to Covid. So we took the event online and raised a whopping \$6 million through a virtual event. In 2021, we raised \$4.2 million for Ekal through another virtual gala event. I was either Chair or Co-chair for all the Gala events.

Which other charities are you involved in?

Mohan Wanchoo: My mother, Gauri Wanchoo, use to say that we should always do things for people which bring happiness into their lives. I got involved in Sankara Eye Foundation in 2010 and their work is also very close to my heart.

Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) is a not-for-profit organization in the US committed to providing quality eye care services to the poor and marginalized sections of society in India. Its roots go back to a small primary health care center started in the year 1977 by Dr. R.V. Ramani in Coimbatore.

Sankara Eye Foundation brings light into

can give to the person deprived of it. On the other hand, education gives them empowerment and the ability to fulfill their dreams.

I work with Murali Krishnamurthy who founded Sankara Eye Foundation, USA (www.giftofvision.org) in 1998 to raise funds for free eye surgeries for the needy in India. Each time they do a fundraising banquet in New York, I am the co-chair of the event. We were supposed to have a fundraiser on December 17, 2021 but canceled due to Covid.

Any other charity that is close to your heart?

Mohan Wanchoo: Yes, I also support another organization named Vatsalya Gram run by “Didi Maa” Sadhvi Ritambhara Devi. She is among India’s most respected spiritual leaders and distinctive humanitarians. From her vision has emerged a unique model of a societal system that no saint or reformer has ever envisaged in the past. Param Shakti Peeth, the parent body of Vatsalya Gram, has been tirelessly working since its inception in 1992 to mainstream the marginalized members of the society (prioritizing children and women) and mitigate other socio-economic

Mohan Wanchoo receiving the ‘Pride of Ekal’ award at the 2017 gala from Subhash Chandra, Chairman of Ekal and Zee group chief.



Mohan Wanchoo has sponsored Ekal E-Shiksha Program, where kids are provided tablets for computer education.

Continued from page 9

VHP seems to be a common thread among the three main charities you support...

Mohan Wanchoo: Not really. Ekal teaches children of all faiths without differentiating between them. Sankara performs free eye surgeries for all patients without ever asking them what religion they follow. Vatsalya Gram put orphans and widows together regardless of their religion.

I actually found these organizations to be good and so supported them wholeheartedly. Our Sanatan Dharma believes in the "Live and let live" philosophy, not only for human beings but also for every living creature on this planet – animals, birds, and insects. Sanatan Dharma requires us to have consideration for all living beings and I truly believe that it is the way we should be. Those who get involved in violence do not benefit anyone but bring misery and bad fortune to everyone. We should live a life that brings happiness to everyone. The basic teaching we have from Bhagavad Gita is that we should have compassion for every living being. That is what I am trying to follow through these organizations.

Your other philanthropic activities that are lesser known...

Mohan Wanchoo: Another organization I am supporting is in Delhi -- Guru Vishram Vridh Ashram managed by SHEOWS (Saint Hardy Educational and Orphan Welfare Society). They provide the destitute elderly who suffer from Alzheimer's and Dementia

and are abandoned by their children and deserted on the streets of NCR with a place in their old age home. For the last 18 years they have been working to save the elderly who are dying on the roadside, footpaths, etc. as presently there are not many old age homes for paralytic, the disabled, and bedridden elderly which provide comprehensive support to them under one roof.

I am involved with many other organizations but I do not usually highlight my association with those as I am not giving too much time to them. I have instituted many scholarships in the name of my father in my high school, college, and other institutions in India which are associated with his memories. I donate regularly to organizations in India that support children and women suffering from no fault of their own. I also support Handicapped Children & Women's Aid that provides medical treatment to marginalized children and women. Another charity I support is SOS Children's Villages which provides a home and education for children that have been abandoned or are trapped in child trafficking.

The reason I focus on India is that there is so much poverty there. Here in the US, the state takes care of the poor but not in India. If we can take care of the people who have been forgotten otherwise, it will be a tremendous help and support for these people.

That is why my focus is on these organizations in India which help the people who would otherwise die or suffer immensely.

What is so special about Ekal that appeals to you?

Mohan Wanchoo: My conviction is that education brings light into the life of human beings as they get empowered. They can do a job, set up their own business or industry with that knowledge. They can work to make their dreams come true with education. Education also broadens the mental horizon and enables human beings to accomplish their goals.

Ekal, in fact, is not just an educational organization, they have many different projects such as Gramothan – rural development, Digital Ekal for the education of information technology, Sanskar Shiksha – moral education aimed at building character and Ekal Aarogya – a telemedicine project aimed at providing health care to villagers in remote areas among others.

In the Gramothan Project, they teach farmers scientific techniques to increase production, its quality and improve soil health. They empower women with tailoring centers where they learn

to stitch clothes and sell them for a profit. Ekal Aarogya is a telemedicine project in which village gram sevika, a woman volunteer, enters basic information of an ailing person on a phone or a tablet which is sent to the nearby doctor to prescribe treatment. The villager then can arrange to pick his medicine from the nearby designated pharmacy by himself or through someone else.

Under the Digital Ekal project, we provide tablets to kids for computer education. Then, there is Ekal on Wheels, a bus fitted with 12 computers, which goes to two villages every day to give computer education to children.

The Sanskar Shiksha project is aimed at the moral well-being of the targeted villages. Drinking is a menace in many villages in India. The Kathakars (folk storytellers) use their skills of storytelling and anecdotes to encourage people to leave drinking and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Thus, Ekal does many things besides education and it's a well-rounded organization, which perhaps has a mini solution for most problems ailing rural India. They have covered over one lakh villages in India and run 6,000 schools in Nepal.

How do you ensure that the charity you support wholeheartedly is worthwhile or making an impact?

Mohan Wanchoo: At Ekal, we have now engaged a firm in India to conduct impact analysis. Because many of the foundations we go to for support also like to see such analysis. Sometime this year, we should be able to get a report on the impact of the Ekal Foundation.

How do you see yourself in the future?

Mohan Wanchoo: I plan to do more philanthropic activities. Right now, I do not know what exactly but at some point I would know. There is a tremendous sense of fulfillment when we do something for people who are not fortunate enough as us. If we all start doing things for at least one not-so-well-to-do person, we can change the entire world. There are many successful people who can afford to help at least one person.



With Ekal CEOs past and present - Bajrang Bagra and Ramesh Shah. (right) Vandana Tilak, Akshaya Patra USA's former CEO.



Mohan and Kavita Wanchoo with Sadhvi Ritambhara Devi in 2019. He supports her Vatsalya Gram movement to mainstream the marginalized members of the society in India.



Mohan Wanchoo co-chairs Sankara Eye Foundation's fundraising banquets held in New York. An avid singer, he is not averse to engaging audiences with Bollywood songs.

Happy New Year

Heartiest Congratulations to

MOHAN WANCHOO

TECHNOCRAT, PHILANTHROPIST & EDUCATIONIST

O N B E I N G R E C O G N I Z E D A S

The South Asian Times

excellence in journalism

PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021



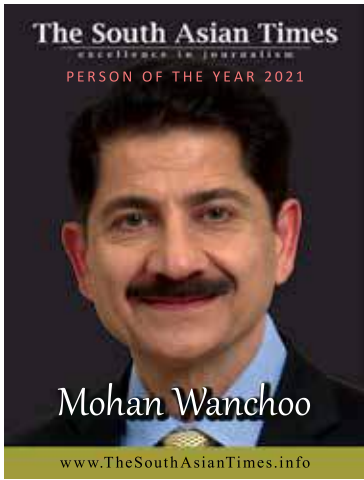
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Best wishes,
Ravishankar Bhoochlapur

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Mohan Wanchoo

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Getting around for the good of Motherland and Community

Whether it is meeting dignitaries, celebs, or supporting politicians ranging from Congress members to presidential candidates irrespective of their party, Mohan Wanchoo stays focused on his aim – how can we get them to support India, the Indian community, Hindu causes and of course his charity work.



With Anupam Kher

Mohan Wanchoo met Anupam Kher at the Ekal gala in New York in 2018 as well as at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan where the film star had started his acting school.



With Navtej Singh Sarna

Wanchoo interacted with the then Indian Ambassador Navtej Singh Sarna at the Ambassador's residence in Washington DC in connection with a Nikki Haley event.



With Whoopi Goldberg

Mohan Wanchoo met Hollywood actress and humanitarian Whoopi Goldberg when she addressed a philanthropic conference.



With Tulsi Gabbard

Mohan Wanchoo supported Rep Tulsi Gabbard's campaign for President. A devout Hindu, the Democrat took the oath of office as Congress member on the Gita and has been a big supporter of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



With Vivek Oberoi

Mohan Wanchoo with actor Vivek Oberoi, who is the brand ambassador for Ekal Vidyalaya. The two met at the Ekal gala where Wanchoo was co-chair.



With Nikki Haley

Mohan Wanchoo supported Indian American Nikki Haley's campaign for South Carolina governor, meeting her at the Indian ambassador's residence in Washington DC. Later the US ambassador to UN, the Republican leader is now a contender to become the first woman President of the country.



With Manmohan Singh

Mohan Wanchoo represented the Indian community in his meeting with the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on a visit to the US in 2011. Wanchoo also briefed the PM about his company Jasmine Universe that has pioneered energy management system to reduce carbon footprint.



With Raja Krishnamoorthi

Mohan Wanchoo supported Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi's re-election campaign. The 3-term Democratic Congressman from Illinois is a consistent supporter of India, Indian community and Hindu causes.

Wishing the community
a Happy, Healthy and
Joyous New Year

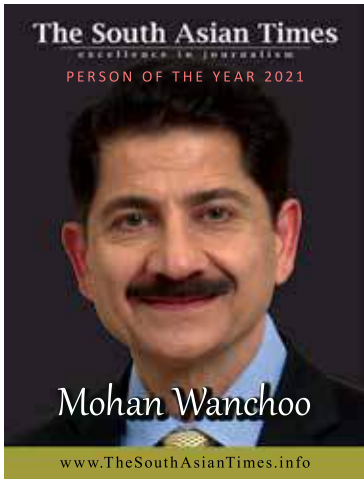
MOHAN WANCHOO IS A
PASSIONATE PHILANTHROPIST
AND A BRILLIANT BUSINESS
BUILDER, AND YET THE HUMBLEST
AND GENTLEST OF HUMAN
BEINGS I HAVE KNOWN.

Heartiest Congratulations to
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excellence in journalism
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021

**MOHAN
WANCHOO**

**SHUDH
PARKASH
SINGH**



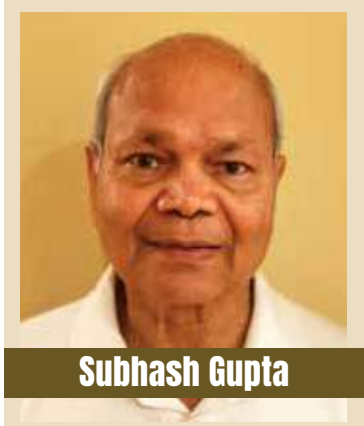


Mohan Wanchoo

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CONGRATULATIONS & ACCLAMATIONS

The announcement of Mr Mohan Wanchoo as The South Asian Times Person of the Year 2021 brought in a flurry of messages from those who have known him and admired his accomplishments and philanthropic activities.



Subhash Gupta

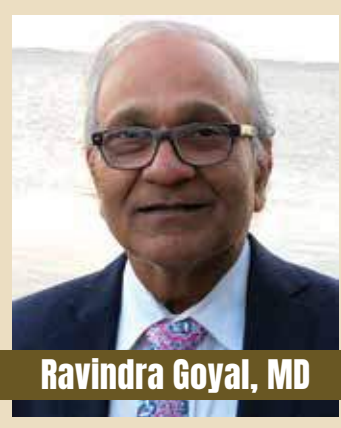
Advisory Board Chairman,
Ekal Vidyalaya
Foundation of USA

You have made the perfect choice by selecting my friend, Mohan Wanchoo "The South Asian Times-Person of the Year 2021". There are so many good things to say about him.

He is such a humble, down to earth person who is always ready to help people in need, whether it's in India or USA. Hailing from a family displaced from Kashmir, he has come a long way and embodies the true story of achieving the American dream.

As a philanthropist, he has educated thousands of tribal and the most backward children in India.

Allow me to let you know that he is one of our East Coast luminaries, the likes of Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella of the West Coast.



Ravindra Goyal, MD

President of Hindu Center,
Vice Chairman, Indo American
Festivals Inc. (NY chapter)

Mohan Wanchoo graduated from Columbia University and New York Institute of Technology in 1986 in Computer Science and went on to found and grow the software company EC Infosystems Inc.

I have had the pleasure of knowing him for almost four decades. Mohan is involved with Ekal Vidyalaya and has raised millions of dollars to provide education in India for needy children. He is also associated with Sankara Eye Foundation to help poor and needy patients bringing light in their lives.

He is not only a philanthropist, educationist, technocrat and entrepreneur, but also a great community leader.

Less known is his deep passion for Indian art, music (yes, he can croon very well) and traditional values.

a very down to earth, most amicable, most personable individual who steps in to lead when the cause is humanitarian, philanthropy or any mega enterprise. He has done wonders and turned organizations like Ekal Vidyalaya and Sankara Eye Foundation into beacons of repute, enabling them to receive large donations from leading corporates, established businesses, and wealthy individuals to serve the needy.

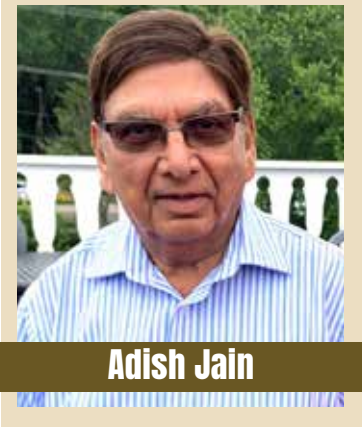
He leaves a legacy anywhere his name gets attached. His supporting wife and family stand right beside him everywhere as he continues to advance, fulfil and walk in the footsteps of his father who was an educationist and primarily a great supporter of education for all.

Like many who settle in the US, he continuously strived to pursue his goals and dreams and today as a highly successful person he is the envy as well as the pride of the Indian community.

Having had firsthand experience of problems in Kashmir, his heart is also set to make things right for all who suffered as Hindus and he pitches in to alleviate their suffering wherever he can. A great friend and inspirational advisor in need, an amazing singer and an individual who truly deserves this recognition - Congratulations Mohan ji!

it is one thing to achieve professional and financial success, but to use that status and the sphere of influence for the betterment of the underprivileged is the mark of a truly exalted person, and that is what Mohan ji is.

A man who has achieved phenomenal success professionally and yet is so humble and caring. His work for the underprivileged people in India has involved not only a lot of financial commitment, but also investment of valuable personal time and effort, year after year, to organize massive fundraising events for numerous nonprofits like Ekal Vidyalaya and Sankara Eye Foundation, to name a few. On top of that, he is the quintessential family man, a great husband, and an equally great father. Mohan ji is a "Karma yogi" in the true sense.



Adish Jain

Former Corporate Director of Danaher, now working on charitable projects with his wife, Asha Jain.

My wife and I are deeply involved with the Ekal Organization in a project in Jharkhand, India, where our goal is to help extremely poor tribals become self-reliant.

Four years ago, Mohan reached out to us to help organize an Ekal Gala to raise funds for various Ekal Projects. I was impressed by how he pulled many of us together in setting a very high goal and organizing an Ekal Gala event in New York to raise funds from a large number of donors.

That event was a great success as it was the first time Ekal was able to raise over a million dollars in a single day. It was repeated the following year with a bigger goal.

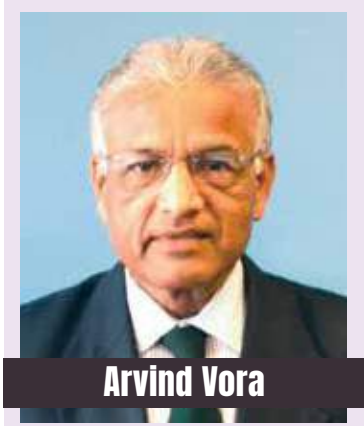
When we could not hold a Gala event in person, Mohan shifted to virtual gala to again raise millions of dollars in a single event.

When I look back, I realize that we were successful in raising large funds primarily due to Mohan's leadership. He set very high goals in each gala and then found ways to reach and exceed that goal.

During the gala, he shared his personal experience of how he and his family were touched by villagers when they were visiting an Ekal Vidyalaya in rural India.

Although he was the biggest single donor, he put other donors in the limelight during gala events.

I am honored to write this note about a person who I personally admire as a selfless person who truly wants to help less fortunate fellow beings.



Arvind Vora

Chairman of Long Island
Multi Faith Forum
and Shanti Fund.

Over the years, The South Asian Times has developed into a consistent high value publication in which many of us take great pride. I have known Mehta family since the 1990's and the newspaper's hard-working staff since its inception. They all deserve our accolades as much as the Person of the Year.

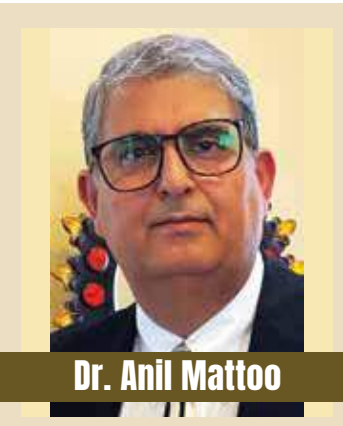
Shri Mohan Wanchoo deserves a place in the select group of highly accomplished persons named in the past as Person of the Year by the SATimes.



Nilima Madan

Financial adviser, Rotarian,
community leader

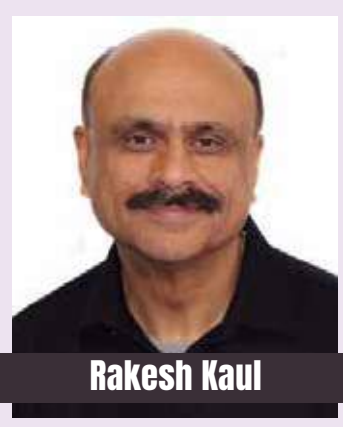
Mr. Mohan Wanchoo is Chairman of ECI MW Holding Company Inc., yet, those people close to him know him as



Dr. Anil Mattoo

Chief of Pulmonary Division
at Long Island Community
Hospital, Patchogue, NY.

I commend The South Asian Times for choosing Mr. Mohan Wanchoo as the Person of the Year 2021. I have known Mohan ji for two decades and I can vouch that the honor is well deserved, and in many ways, not surprising to the people who have interacted with him. In life,



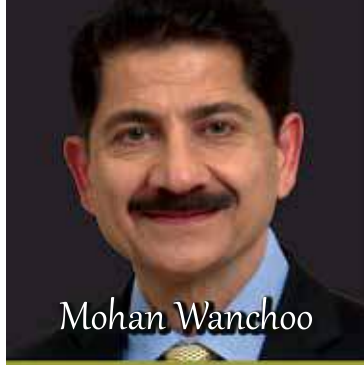
Rakesh Kaul

Kaul has had a distinguished business career as CEO. He has contributed to India chairs at universities and is author of 'The Last Queen of Kashmir'.

Simple living and high thinking is the first quality that comes to mind as one reflects on Mohan Wanchoo ji. In Kashmir, success is not defined as the presence of achievements though Mohan ji is blessed with many. Success is defined as the absence of failure. And failure is absent in even the smallest of actions that he takes.

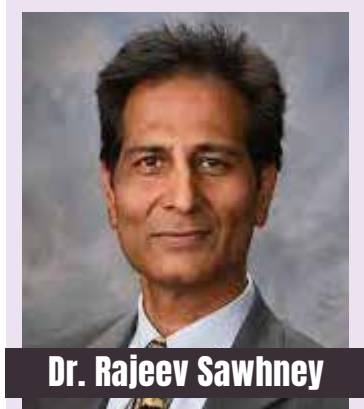
His sensitive heart makes him responsive to the world for things big or small.

He is unfailing in his courtesy to all including kindness towards those who can be of no use to him. His thoughtful mind always seeks to do dharma even amidst great uncertainty. His spirit is universal and comfortably manifests itself in a multiplicity of identities, whether Kashmiri, Indian, American, and global, all



Mohan Wanchoo

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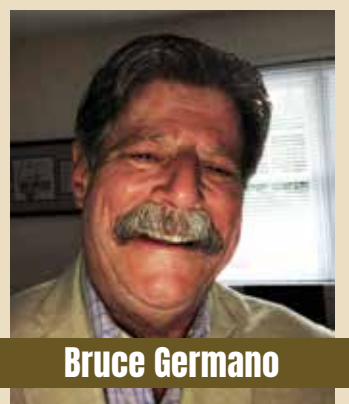
Dr. Rajeev Sawhney

Distinguished Professor, Operations & Supply Chain Mgt., Western Illinois University

Mohan was my senior in St. Xavier School, Delhi – a kind and soft-spoken individual who inspired me then and still is a source of inspiration 45 years later. If you have been floored by his looks and melodious voice, wait till you see his heart, which is even more beautiful.

Humble to the core, with deep-rooted values Mohan believes in sharing his success with others who have helped him in this journey and with the underprivileged who are less fortunate. His tireless work, both in terms of contributing numerous hours and providing financial support, in bringing education and health for the poor and needy in India is commendable.

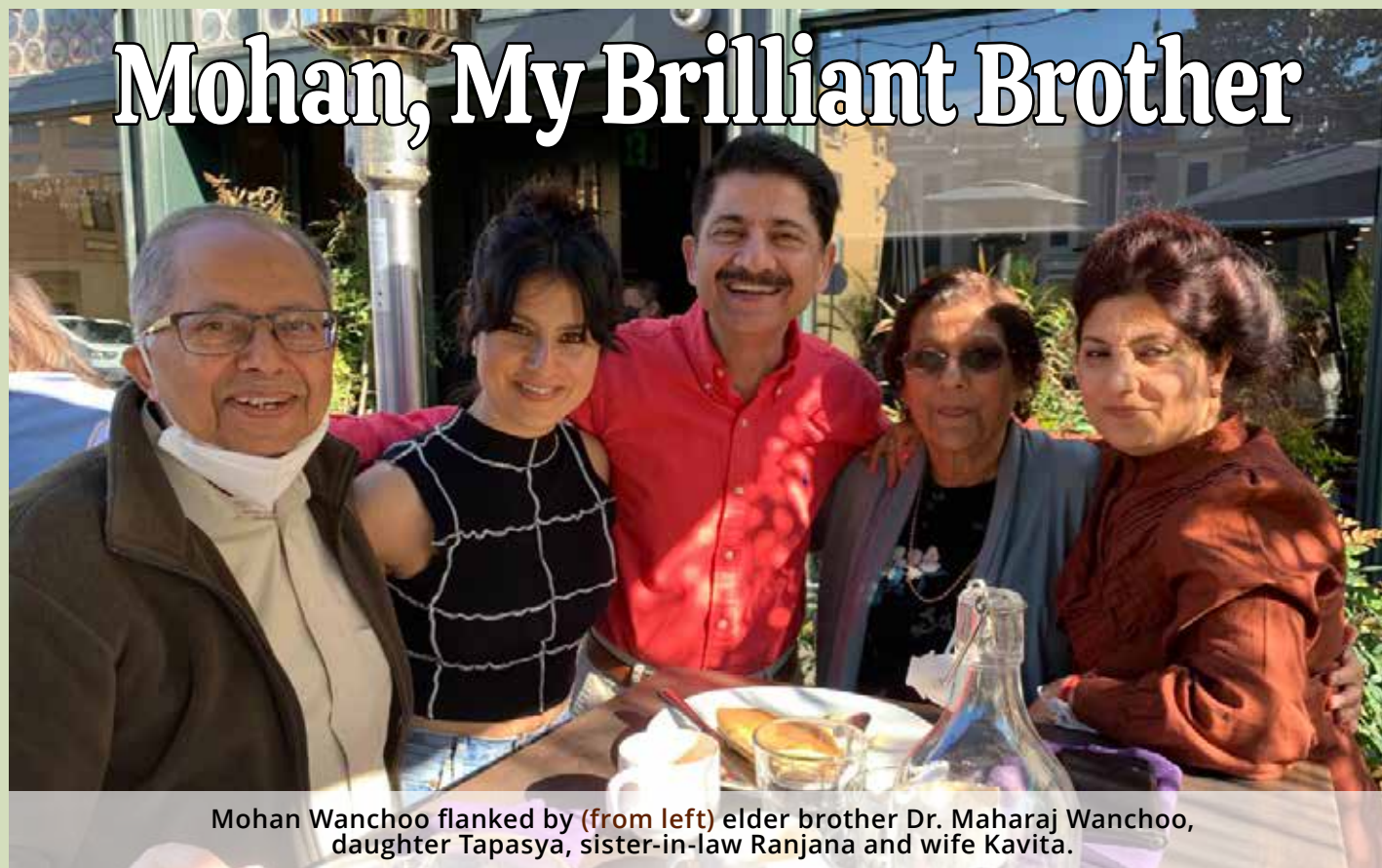
Having travelled this path before me, he is instrumental in guiding me on this path. I pray that he continues to inspire people to give back to the less privileged – and make the world a happier place.



Bruce Germano

Former COO of Jasmine Universe, LLC, founded by Mohan Wanchoo

I began working with Mohan in 2013, running a technology startup company named Jasmine Universe, that he had created. Through the years our relationship grew as he has become one of my closest and



Mohan, My Brilliant Brother

Mohan Wanchoo flanked by (from left) elder brother Dr. Maharaj Wanchoo, daughter Tapasya, sister-in-law Ranjana and wife Kavita.

Maharaj Wanchoo, PhD

Former Director, Missile Programs at Northrop Grumman

I congratulate the South Asian Times for selecting my younger brother, Mohan Wanchoo as the "Person of the Year".

Mohan is an accomplished businessman, but his heart is given to philanthropy. He always thinks and talks about the next project to expand the scope of

philanthropy to help the needy.

Being the youngest of us 5 siblings, Mohan had a very special upbringing. Along with the regular schooling, he exhibited great interest in music such that he took formal music training for 15 years. As a budding artist, his fame spread far

beyond the school clubs, and he was invited as a guest artist at large functions. This exposure built his character, and he leveraged his contacts for raising money for different causes to help the disadvantaged sections of the society.

In parallel, he developed his technical skills and started his software business in the New York area. His dedication to the business turned it into a

multi-million dollar successful enterprise. During all this busy time, he did not forget his aim to help the society and has been very active in raising awareness and large funds for movements like Ekal Vidyalaya, Sankara Eye Foundation, Kashmiri Pandit causes and other needs of the society. He is the darling of our family and we wish him success in all his endeavors.

dearest friends. As a businessman, there are few people I have ever met who are like him; brilliant and hardworking, growing his business EC Infosystems from a dream and a challenge to the largest company of its kind in the energy industry.

I have personally witnessed his extensive commitment as a philanthropist to causes ranging from the underprivileged in India to local charities on Long Island. It is a commitment that is simply driven by his unparalleled desire to help the less fortunate, without looking for any recognition.

Mohan is truly deserving of this honor being bestowed on him as he is the consummate role model for the meaning behind the Person of the Year award.



Chand Bhan, MD

Psychiatrist and Advisor, Kashmir Overseas Association

I have known Mohan for over 3 decades. I remember his humble beginnings and the subsequent pursuit of excellence. He has been a hardworking, passionate, dedicated person with incredible energy and relentless fortitude in accomplishing his goals.

A true example of a self-made man, his success is attributed to his tireless work, sharp focus and determination. Mohan is a kind, soft spoken, compassionate, polite, caring, loving human being without any big ego. He has shown leadership qualities and done selfless service for the community.

Mohan has been a big philanthropist who has contributed to numerous causes over the years; his spirit of giving is unparalleled.

He is most passionate about Ekal Vidyalaya foundation to which he has been a great supporter as he believes in the value of education, especially for the under-privileged children in India and Nepal.

He is deserving of the honor of being chosen South Asian Times Person of the Year.

many lives with your philanthropic endeavors. It has helped innumerable kids receive education. With your beautiful heart, you are creating a beautiful world to live in for so many.

The value of a life is measured not by what we do for ourselves but what we offer to society. You stand very high in that scale and we are extremely proud of you. I am blessed to have you in my life.

Uma Kapoor

Mohan's friend, Executive Director at Morgan Stanley

I am delighted to hear of Mohan Wanchoo's most deserved recognition. I have known him personally for 40 years and he has always stood out as a giving, caring and an outstanding humanitarian. Always ready to extend help and time to give solace to the needy, he is a living example of how to pay-it-forward unconditionally.



Mukesh Modi

Entrepreneur, movie maker, community leader

Mohan ji, you are an inspiration for all of us as you have shaped and transformed so

Congratulations & Acclamations

Heartiest Congratulations to

Mohan Wanchoo

The South Asian Times
 excellence in journalism
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021

WITH YOUR CHARITY WORK, BUSINESS
 SUCCESS AND KASHMIR ACTIVISM YOU MAKE
 THE COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY PROUD.
 WISHING YOU MORE AWARDS AND ACCOLADES.

WE ARE PROUD OF YOU.

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HAPPY new year

Heartiest Congratulations to

Mr. Mohan Wanchoo

The South Asian Times
 excellence in journalism
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021

YOU WILL DESERVE THE ACCOLADES
 OF THE PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION,
 THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERYTHING
 YOU DO TO SERVE HUMANITY.

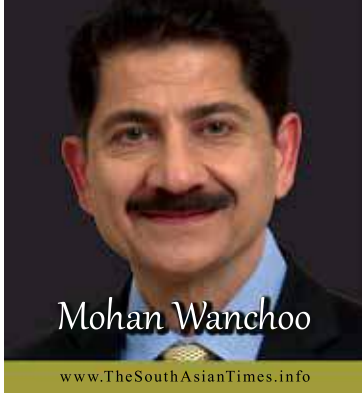
With best compliments

Hussain, Noor & Ali Baqueri

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Mohan Wanchoo

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Mohan Wanchoo had a Master's in computer science but no capital or business background. Starting from scratch, with persistence and hard work he built EC Infosystems brick by brick into a leading EDI software company for the energy industry in America. Here is how he described his journey to The South Asian Times.



Mohan Wanchoo celebrating with his staff the "Innovator of the Year" award Jasmine Universe received from Innovate Long Island in 2017. Jasmine provides advanced energy efficiency solutions.



Mohan Wanchoo at the opening of his branch office in Pennsylvania. With headquarters in Uniondale, NY, EC Infosystems has offices in Allentown, PA, Houston, TX, and in Delhi-NCR, India.

How did you get a start in the US?

Mohan Wanchoo: I was lucky that I landed my first job through the first interview I gave after immigrating to the US. Now I had means of livelihood and the company that hired me had a good tuition assistance program so they paid for my education also. I completed my Master's in Computer Science from Columbia University and New York Institute of Technology.

How did you turn into an entrepreneur?

Mohan Wanchoo: I got laid off a few times so finally I thought of starting my own company to get over insecurity over jobs. I was into developing Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) software. I had been working on the idea since 1995 but founded my company officially in 1997.

I got the first opportunity to build EDI software for the shipping industry. I successfully developed EDI Software as a Service for my client that used the Port of New Jersey. The next year the energy industry also started opening up so I started customizing my software for the energy industry. Initially, it was used only by the state of California but today there are 22 states which are using this mandated EDI technology.

We are the largest provider of this Software as a Service to the deregulated energy

industry in the US. Our headquarter is in Long Island, NY but we have offices in Pennsylvania, Texas, and in India. 2014 was the year when we really started to take off and competition was not able to catch up with us.

How is your experience of doing business in the US and how different it is from India?

Mohan Wanchoo: It's the difference between night and day. Here in the US, if you have passion and drive, you can carve out your own future. No doubt there are difficulties, but they are not insurmountable. In India, it's tough due to the level of difficulty one faces starting a venture. Before I moved to the US, once I applied for a telephone connection and the allotment was bluntly denied to me. One had to literally fight with everyone to do anything in India.

Even in the US, isn't it difficult to start a business without capital?

Mohan Wanchoo: I had zero capital to invest. Nowadays people look for capital to start but I did not start that way. I was just developing EDI software in my spare time

at home. When someone gave me the opportunity, they said I would be paid only if I solve their problem. They committed to me that if I solved their problem, they would terminate the contract with their existing vendor, which was GE (General Electric) and they would hire me as a vendor. I took on the challenge and continued to develop the software to meet their requirements. It took me a long time to develop a prototype and at the end I gave them a successful demo. They were not expecting that I would come back and show them a working prototype to solve their problem.

I had developed the software with my own resources. I started with no venture capital, no angel money. I didn't even know that stuff existed. But even after landing my first client, I was not making enough money. So, I did some consulting work alongside. In the first year, I was spinning like a top, working all by myself.

We are a large company now. I did hire more and more qualified people through the years and delegated responsibility to them.

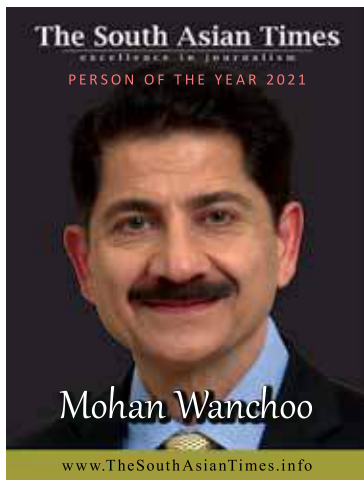
What are your future plans as a businessman?

Mohan Wanchoo: I plan to work more on Jasmine Universe. This company was named after the Jasmine flower (Chameli in Hindi) as this product was aimed at reducing the carbon footprint on our planet. We wanted to give a name that gives the consumer a feeling of well-being. Jasmine is white and signifies purity and has a beautiful smell.

Business opportunities are always there to explore. But one-third of my time is now spent in philanthropic activities. There is a tremendous sense of fulfillment when we do something for people who are not fortunate enough in comparison to us.



EC Infosystems received the prestigious Lightpath Innovator of the Year Award in 2013. Lightpath, an enterprise fiber provider, rated the Mohan Wanchoo owned enterprise as the best from among 100 hi-tech companies in the Eastern United States.



Mohan Wanchoo

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Dr. Archana Kokroo

President and CEO, Kashmiri Overseas Association

I congratulate Mohan Wanchoo on being honored as "The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2021".

He is a prominent member of our organization, Kashmiri Overseas Association, a non-profit rooted and invested in philanthropy and charity. He has contributed to it in various capacities. He is one of our biggest donors to the Educational Assistance Program, which has positively impacted many disadvantaged students. In 2021 Mr. Wanchoo helped us raise funds for KOA's programs.

As Chairman of an info-system company, he has mentored many of our young professionals. He is an exemplary person, a role model for many. Having known Mohan Ji closely for a long time, he has impressed me as one of the most kind, humble, and generous human beings. His altruism has helped make the world a happier place.

Feliks Malinin

Former Vice-President, E-commerce Inc, NY

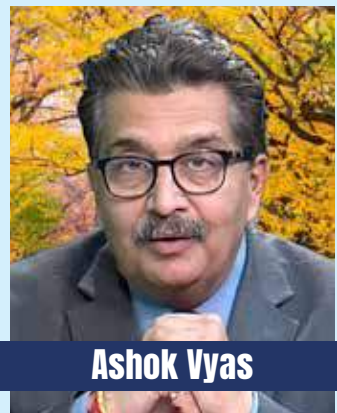
I have worked with Mohan Wanchoo in the field of Information Systems since 1991. We worked in different companies. I had created an Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) service bureau for medium and small retail companies, which had difficulty exchanging EDI transactions with various buyers.

So, I contacted Mohan at Sterling Software where he was working then. He turned out to be a very knowledgeable partner, trying to help with any problem. This professional association and mutual support

continued into later years when he created his own EDI Software as a Service from scratch for the retail and energy industries.

Mohan is always ready to help and assist any company in need of help.

He is an ardent philanthropist helping the underprivileged and socially disadvantaged people in the field of education, healthcare and disaster relief. I wish him great success in his endeavors.



Ashok Vyas

Priest, Poet, Program Director ITVGold & Founder, Heramba Studio, Insight for Creativity

Mohan Wanchoo is rarely seen without a smile. He grew up practicing yoga, which helps him face ups and downs of life without getting ruffled. Here is an icon of the Indian American community whose success in the corporate world has not affected his simplicity and genuine warmth.

I first saw him sing at a community event. As I came to know him better, I realized that he is passionate about Bharat Mata, is tuned into Indian culture and willing to contribute with his time and money for all worthy causes.

He hails from Jammu and Kashmir, and I worked with him on a TV series 'Untold Stories of Kashmir'. This was an eye-opener for me. I felt the pain of Kashmiri Hindus displaced from their homeland; and their plight is still not known even to most of the Indians.

Mohan ji doesn't come from a business family but established his business with persistence, hard work and honesty. He sets high targets and believes in achieving the impossible. His record breaking fundraising for nonprofits like Ekal is unbelievable.

I have been enriched by his friendship as he always radiates joy filled with positive energy. When I started the Everyday Gita series a year ago on the YouTube channel of Heramba Studio, Mohan Ji was the first one to give encouraging feedback as well as constructive suggestions.



Dr. Shakun Malik, MD

Head, Thoracic and Head & Neck Cancer, CTEP/National Cancer Institute, NIH; Ex-President, Kashmiri Overseas Association

It gives me immense pleasure to support Mr Mohan Wanchoo as "The South Asian Times-Person of the Year-2021".

We both being Kashmiri Hindus met at a social camp several years ago. That acquaintance has transformed into a friendship and my respect for Mohan ji.

It gives me immense pleasure to support Mr Mohan Wanchoo as "The South Asian Times-Person of the Year-2021". We both being Kashmiri Hindus met at a social camp several years ago. That acquaintance has transformed into a friendship and my respect for Mohan ji.

During my tenure as the president of Kashmiri Overseas Association, I felt comfortable calling on Mohan ji for help on many occasions and he never turned me down.

He helped support many KOA charitable initiatives (Sponsor A Child, Educational Assistance Program for youth and medical funds to help the sick and needy) every year in addition to other donations.

Mohan ji is also a very fine singer and has never hesitated to accept an invitation to perform for the community to help. He has been a thought leader, supporter and a generous donor to my new Women-centric initiative, HemAth.

There are many people who are successful in their profession or business but combining that with the spirit of philanthropy and humility is a rarity. Mohan Wanchoo is that rare and remarkable person.

CONGRATULATIONS & ACCLAMATIONS



Ranjani Saigal with Mohan Wanchoo at an Ekal Gala.

Ranjani Saigal

Executive Director, Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of USA

Much moved by Ekal's mission, Shri Mohan Wanchoo visited an Ekal school in rural Rajasthan some years ago. The visit created a deep impression on him and he decided to make Ekal core to his philanthropic efforts.

His vision both in terms of fundraising and in digital literacy has had a transformative impact on Ekal.

He co-chaired the first Ekal Future of India Gala in New York. The exquisite nature of the gala put Ekal on a new trajectory and allowed us to raise significant funds to help reach the goal of bringing education to 100,000 villages. Mohan Wanchoo is not just a brilliant entrepreneur but also a man with a giant heart.

He is not just a deep donor but also an extremely hard worker putting in hours of volunteer time.

A humble man with a passion to help those in need and with grand vision on how to make an impact, he is a remarkable human being who is an inspiration to all. I congratulate him on receiving this award.

January 3, 2021

BROWN BROTHERS HARRIMAN

Dear Mr. Parveen Chopra:

Re: South Asian Times Person of the Year 2021 Award

We have deep respect for Mr. Wanchoo as a successful entrepreneur, a distinguished philanthropist, and a community leader. Whether in building a market-leading software company in EC Infosystems (ECI), in raising millions of dollars for the Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation to provide education in rural India, or in his other pursuits, he commits an unmatched energy, creativity, and effectiveness. His visionary leadership and commitment to his employees, clients, and community were exemplified during the Covid-19 crisis. Mohan nimbly adapted ECI for remote work, maintained employment, and continued serving his clients who rely on ECI for their own client billing. As Gala Chair of Ekal Vidyalaya, he produced a virtual event that not only raised millions of dollars, but also will be unforgettable for the many that participated. We are pleased to support Forsythe Media Group in recognizing Mr. Wanchoo as The South Asian Times-Person of the Year 2021.

If you have questions, please contact Leonard at 212.493.8217.

Yours sincerely,

Leonard Fishman
Vice President

Robert Ludricks
Senior Vice President



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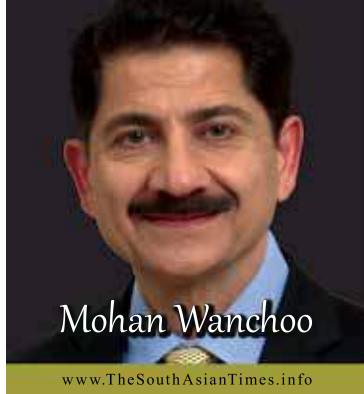
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Mohan Wanchoo

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Family Man

and Multifaceted Personality

By Parveen Chopra

Mohan Wanchoo's image of a down-to-earth, no-airs person is not just for public consumption. When you visit his home – it is in a decent neighborhood of Old Westbury, sure—you do not see any ostentation. Mohan and Kavita Wanchoo make you feel comfortable. They were their normal selves during the interviews and the photo session. In between, they had a video chat with their daughter, Tapasya, who lives in San Francisco, which gave more than a hint that they are a close-knit, affectionate family.

Kavita Ji treated me and photographer Sanjay Sura to a simple vegetarian meal of salad, dal and an exotic dish of lotus root cooked with green leafy vegetables, which she said was a staple in Kashmiri households. At dinner, conversation flowed freely from health tips to world affairs.

Kavita Wanchoo is an accomplished woman in her own right. A civil engineer by profession, she works as Project Manager in the Department of Environmental Protection of the City of New York. In her interview, she filled in with some lesser known aspects of Mohan Wanchoo's personality. (See her interview on next page).

Excerpts from the interview with Mohan Wanchoo:

Tell us about your life in India and family background.

Mohan Wanchoo: I was born in Delhi in 1957. I lived in India till the age of 23 before I shifted to the US for my studies. I was a physics graduate and had almost completed my master's from St. Stephen's College but decided to shift to the US. I got lucky with my first job in the US and then studied at Columbia University and the New York Institute of Technology to com-



plete a master's in Computer Science.

We lived in many places in Delhi including Model Town, Green Park, Probyn Road, and Ashok Vihar. My father, Professor V. N. Wanchoo, was the Additional Director of Education for the Delhi Administration. He was a professor of education

with NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) before he was made Additional Director in Delhi. He was also posted as Principal of Regional College of Education in Ajmer and also was the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Rajasthan University for a brief period.

My father was a man of lofty ideals. He fought corruption in India and was unwav-

of soliciting private tuition work in the evenings. He brought us up in the strictest environment and the ideals he stood for, remain with us forever. He followed the right path and went through difficulties and hardships but never gave up on his ideals. That had a very strong impact on all of us 5 brothers and sisters. (My two sisters are based in Delhi while two brothers are here in the US).



Photos: Sanjay Sura

Kavita Wanchoo is fully supportive of her husband's philanthropic and community activities.

ering in his pursuit. In fact, they shifted him to Regional College in Ajmer to root out corruption in that institution. He was posted as an Additional Director of Education in Delhi for the same purpose. Wherever he went, he rooted out corruption and made new enemies and they would finally create a situation for him to be transferred to his next posting.

But he stuck to his principles and never succumbed to pressure or threats. I remember an incident when hundreds of teachers gathered in front of our home as he had transferred them away from their locality so that they could focus on their job instead

I was schooled at St. Xavier's School in Delhi and then graduated from St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Despite my education in Catholic institutions, I was much grounded in our ancient scriptures. No matter what education system I went through, the Hindu tradition always prevailed because of the influence and ideology of my parents and their values.

My father, a physicist, always got attracted to STEM people turned spiritual. He followed Osho Rajneesh, and then Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Later he became a follower of Sant Darshan Singh ji of Radha Soami Satsang Beas. He used to meditate a

lot and asked us to follow him. I have been meditating and doing yoga since childhood.

You went back to India to get married?

Mohan Wanchoo: Yes, I went back in 1987 to get married to Kavita. The situation in Kashmir was normal at the time and we got married in Srinagar. Kavita had graduated from the Regional College of Engineering, Srinagar, and was working in the PWD department. She joined me in the US after a few months. She has been very supportive in my entire endeavor. Here in New York, Kavita works as a Project Manager for New York City. Our daughter Tapasya works for Tesla in San Francisco.

Tell us about your multifarious extracurricular activities.

Mohan Wanchoo: I exercise regularly. I have been doing yoga since childhood. We used to follow a TV program by Swami Dharendra Brahmachari on Yoga. I was a prolific runner. I run occasionally now. I played cricket and badminton in India. Hobbies I had aplenty.

I represented my college at IIT Bombay in an All India singing and instrumental music competition. Famous music composer duo Kalyanji-Anandji was the chief guest at the function. They gave me the first prize for Sitar and first prize for singing and offered to take me under their wings. However my father did not allow me take up music as a profession. I learned sitar for 14 years and even passed "Sangeet Visharad", a proficiency exam. I learned Sitar from Pt Panna Lal Chaurasia and Pt Babu Lal Ji. But I do not have any for-

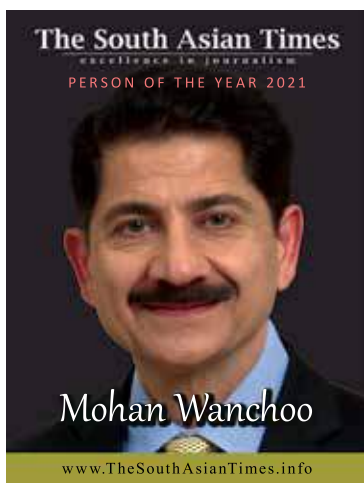


Mohan Wanchoo has proficiency in playing the sitar but is more in demand to sing Bollywood songs at charity and community events.

mal education in vocal music. I continue to sing Bollywood songs at charity events, at Ekal Galas, and banquets of the Sankara Eye Foundation, at KOA annual events etc. At the opening of Ekal events I sing the Indian National Anthem – Jana, Gana, Mana.

I loved photography and became secretary of the Photographic Society of my college. I loved nature photography and my photo features used to be published in the Morning Echo supplement of Hindustan Times.

I was also very much into theater. I performed at Triveni Kala Sangam, Indian National Theater, and Sapru House in Delhi. I did plays like 'Pagla Ghoda' and 'Vaah Re Vigyapan' by legendary dramatist Badal Sircar.



Our people have it in them, all they need is opportunities which we can provide through education. That is the best way to give back.

I am by the side of Mohan when I can. I attend the Ekal galas, Sankara banquets, Vatsalya Gram events, etc.

he hires more Americans and is not fixated on just hiring Indians. This is because the US has given us so much, we should reciprocate by giving back. His programmers are people of all ethnicities. He has been a good boss to his employees, they find him

and American cultures. She used to go to Kathak school. She speaks Hindi and Kashmiri at home. We used to take her to India every two years. She has good values and is a smart girl. She graduated in Industrial Engineering from Northwestern Univer-

Mohan has acted well in all the roles

Tell us about some qualities and personality traits of Mohan Ji that only you will know.

Kavita Wanchoo: He is very hardworking. That is a great quality - when we came to this country, he used to do two or three jobs to make ends meet. Slowly he started his own business and came up to where he is today. He is a good father, a good brother, son - he has acted well in all the roles.

I have also been working all along, serving in New York City's Department of Environmental Protection for almost 25 years.

But most of all, he likes to help people to the best of his ability. Even during Covid, he sent a lot of funds and resources to India.

Here in the USA, he has been contributing to the Red Cross.

How is he as a boss in his company?

Kavita Wanchoo: Having his office here,

friendly and approachable.

You had to flee Kashmir, how do you feel about it?

Kavita Wanchoo: It is very sad, I grew up in Srinagar, had my school and college education there. To see my parents who had built their business and everything, who had to run away one fine morning, with nothing in their pocket. For two years they were living in Jammu where they had to live in cramped quarters. I saw my father literally going from riches to rags. As a civil engineer, he had a construction company. They lost all contracts because they could not go back to finish the projects. He had to start from scratch late in his life. It was very hard for my family.

My marriage to Mohan in 1987 was the last wedding in my family. Things had started unraveling and by 1989-90 all Kashmiri Pandits were driven out.

What kind of upbringing you gave your daughter, Tapasya?

Kavita Wanchoo: Tapasya has been raised by me, my parents and Mohan. She is a good blend of both Indian

- Kavita Wanchoo

sity and then did her MBA from MIT. She worked with Deloitte, The New York Times, and is now with Tesla. She works very hard and is a perfectionist -- like her father.



Excerpts from an interview with Kavita Wanchoo:

The South Asian Times: How supportive are you of his philanthropic activities?

Kavita Wanchoo: Very much. It is great work to help people of our great country -- where we came from, where our roots are. Growing up, we saw how our parents had to work hard for our upbringing, to give us the best of education, etc. India is our motherland, and America being our breadwinner country, we always like to go back and help so that we can uplift our own people, so they come up to par and India also rises to become one of the best countries in the world.

Kavita and Mohan did a pilgrimage to the sacred Mount Kailash five years ago. To prepare for the last part of the journey, a trek high up in rarefied air, they practiced walking miles from Long Island to Queens for months altogether.



Papa sets an incredible example for me to live by

- Tapasya Wanchoo



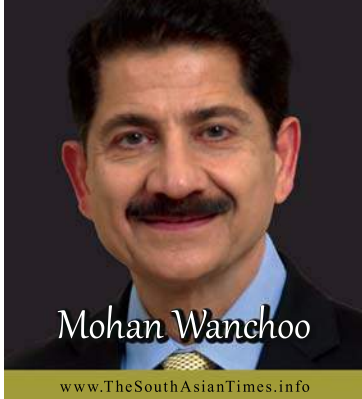
It's often hardest to put into words what the people closest to us truly mean, and this is certainly true of my dear Papa. If you'd asked me when I was a kid, I'd have said Papa was the most hardworking man in town — sleeping four hours a night while working two, sometimes three jobs, just to support us and our extended family in India. Though he's never said this to me, I suspect his motivation to start his own company stems from his deep sense of responsibility to those around him.

As I've grown older, though, I've seen my dad in a much fuller context. I've watched how he's a magnet in every room he's in. I've observed how he has remained humble despite his many accomplishments. I've witnessed how he is committed himself to his community after having taken care of those around him. And I've learned from how he handles life's biggest challenges with grace. Papa sets an incredible example for me to live by, and for that I love him and will be forever grateful.



Tapasya, who prefers to spell her last name as Wancho, is an MBA from MIT and works as Product Manager, Tesla in San Francisco.

CONGRATULATIONS & ACCLAMATIONS



Mohan Wanchoo

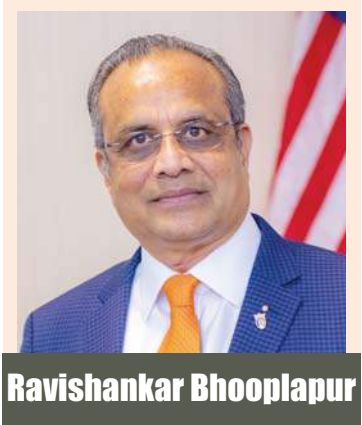
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Murali Krishnamurthy

Founder & Executive Chairman, Sankara Eye Foundation, USA

Mohan Ji is a dear friend of mine. He has been a major donor of Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) for several years and organizes a banquet in Long Island for us every year. When I go to Long Island for a fundraiser, I look forward to staying with him and singing with him. He would have just completed a big fundraiser for Ekal and he will immediately start working on the SEF fundraiser. He gives me confidence that SEF will meet its annual goal. Mohan Ji is very friendly, his smile is infectious and one gets immediately drawn to him. His multiple talents include singing and motivational speaking.



Ravishankar Bhooplapur

President, Xavier University School of Medicine, Aruba

Me and my wife Jaya have known Mr. Mohan Wanchoo having mutual friends for many years. He is a good singer and a very warm person. His passion for education and helping the poor through Ekal Vidyalaya made us reconnect many times. His leadership quality helped to raise millions of dollars to bring basic education to tribal areas of India. Over the years we worked and raised funds for many worthwhile causes. Equally important, he is a good Kashmiri who fights for the rights of Kashmiri Pandits.



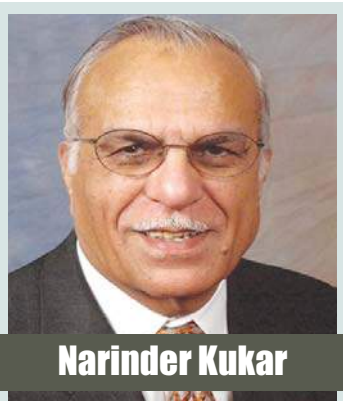
Vibhuti Jha

Executive Director, Nalanda International

Mohan Wanchoo is a paramount example of success that has professionalism as its core value and humanism as its essential value. He impresses you with his unmistakable smile, saying 'Hello ji' and engages with you in an affable and comforting way. I have had the privilege of having him as my guest on ITVGOLD program and it was a delight to hear his words communicating so much depth and understanding of the issues at hand.

As a Kashmiri Pandit he understands the pathos of his community, which he communicates with his looks, words and emotions. As a philanthropist, his leadership and exemplary work for Ekal Vidyalaya is legendary, a feat few can match! Hope there are many more to follow his leadership.

Finally, behind the secret of a successful and happy man ought to be a very happy family and Mohan is blessed in abundance by his loving wife and daughter.



Narinder Kukar

Past National President, Association of Indians in America (AIA)

Meeting Mohan Wanchoo over the years mostly at community gatherings or fundraisers, I observed a confident and a humble personality who seems to be concerned about the welfare of the disadvantaged. He has been a prominent donor to the causes he believes in: education for the poor in India (Ekal Vidyalaya), health care facilities, human rights, women's rights. I remember in the late 1990's we held a protest in front of UN headquarters for the plight of 4 lakh Kashmiri Pandits forced to flee under the threat of death, rape and conversion to

Islam by the Muslim majority – done with the connivance of the state government and a blind eye by the then ruling Congress government in India.

Mohan Wanchoo and others have continued that crusade for justice for these expelled Hindus from Kashmir. It speaks volumes regarding his concerns for justice and his perseverance in following through what he believes in. However, I was surprised to learn that this gentle, humble philanthropist, Mohan Wanchoo also founded EC Infosystems, the largest and most widely used EDI service provider. This world needs many more Mohan Wanchos.



Rajesh Raina

R&D Program Manager, NXP Semiconductors

I have known Mohan Wanchoo for three decades. He is an entrepreneur of the likes of Tata, Birla and Rockefeller. Mohan is a qualified & capable businessman who created a successful business from literally his basement. Anybody who creates and runs a successful business helps society and ecosystem in many ways. The business provides valuable products and services to customers and their employees keep the community thriving.

Just like his business and work, Mohan is deeply engaged with the charities he supports. In turn, the charities get invaluable guidance and expertise from him, enabling them to make best use of limited resources at their disposal. Frankly, I support the charities that Mohan Ji supports because I know they are already vetted by his practical and business-like acumen. I wish more and more charities had the good fortune of being guided by real-life business persons, so they could more effectively serve causes with limited funds. Truly a 21st century visionary who has successfully balanced professional and personal life along with charity in a sustainable fashion. I am pleased to learn that many others have a similar opinion of Mohan Ji – and he has been nominated for the Person of The Year award by the prestigious South Asia Times. This recognition will further serve to motivate not only millions of South Asians, but others from coming generations to attain similar qualities as Mohan Ji.



Makhan Lal Sazawal

Mohan's father-in-law, Retired Engineer, Designer & Builder

I am immensely happy to learn that your leading media group has recognized Mr. Mohan Wanchoo as Person of the Year 2021. As a philanthropist, he has given liberal contributions to various organizations which take care of people in remote rural areas of India in education and health care. He also organizes cultural programs to enable others to give liberally to such causes. He is a genius who has developed sophisticated software products for the energy industry. His company has provided employment to numerous persons in the USA and India. As a boss, he loves to receive and implement good suggestions from his employees who in turn affectionately admire his generous nature.



Kirti Sazawal

Sister-in-law

Over the years, I have known Mohan ji, my sister Kavita's husband, to be dedicated to philanthropic activities, especially for causes closest to his heart – education for the underprivileged in India. He has led the charge for various activities in the USA for Ekal Vidyalaya, which is responsible for running over 103,000 schools in rural India. He has the uncanny ability to run a very successful IT business and balance aggressive commitments for his personal, professional and philanthropic activities. A very well-deserved award!



Indu Jaiswal

Chair, Indian American Forum

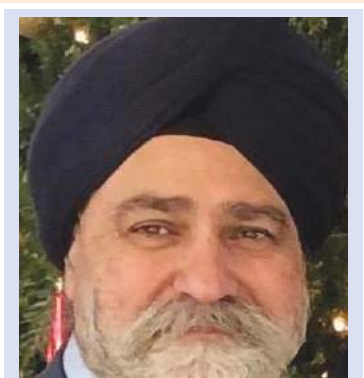
Mr Mohan Wanchoo is a well-known personality in the Long Island and Tristate region for his community and social activities. Each year he raises millions for Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation. From imparting education, Ekal has blossomed into providing healthcare, integrated village development, empowering functionality and new age technology to rural people in India. On behalf of Indian American Forum's Board of Trustees and Executive Members, our heartiest congratulations to Mr Wanchoo for this honor.



Gobind Munjal

Vice President – AIA National

I've known Mr. Mohan Wanchoo for over a decade now. Not only is he a very successful entrepreneur, he is also a very modest and down to earth person. He is best known for his passion for philanthropic and humanitarian work. He takes on serious issues affecting people in India or USA with courage and conviction. He has put his heart and soul in the issue of atrocities on Kashmiri Pandits.



Sarabjit Sawhney

Friend

I am proud to learn about this accolade for Mohan Wanchoo. We are childhood friends and were in the same class and graduated from St. Xavier high school in Delhi. Right from childhood he was very humble, social and helpful. His impeccable nature wins the heart of many. He sings Bollywood songs not only at friends' get-togethers but also at old age homes bringing joy to all.

Sushil Lal and Bobby Kathuria also sent congratulatory messages

NUTANVARSH ABHINANDAN

Wishing Everybody
a Happy, Healthy,
Peaceful & Prosperous
2022

Heartiest Congratulations to
Mr Mohan Wanchoo

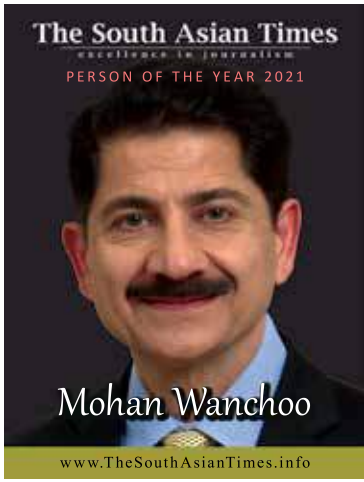
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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2021

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Mohan Wanchoo

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

AIRING THE FORGOTTEN KASHMIRI PANDITS ISSUE

Mohan Wanchoo is a true-blue Kashmiri Pandit. He also carries a stab wound inflicted on Kashmiri Pandits forced to flee the Valley and become exiles in their own country. It happened with his father in 1947 and his wife in 1990. As New York Coordinator of the Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora, he has tried to bring the issue on the front burner. He has helped Vivek Agnihotri's 'Kashmir Files' movie disseminate the message in America. He himself made a documentary with TV anchor Ashok Vyas on the forgotten genocide titled 'Untold Stories of Kashmiri Pandits', which is available on YouTube.

Excerpts from an interview with him on the topic:

TSAT: How did you get involved with the Kashmir Files movie project?

Mohan Wanchoo: This is one issue – forced displacement of Kashmiri Pandits from their homeland - that India and her government have forgotten for the last 30 years. Even the common people do not know about it in full as it was never covered in the mainstream media. 'Kashmir Files' writer-director Vivek Agnihotri has done a lot of research on this slow-burning topic.

Vivek and his wife Pallavi Joshi had come to the US two years ago and had met many Kashmiri people living here. They planned to make a movie on the subject and asked for help which we happily agreed to provide.

The movie had many screenings in US cities over the last 2 months before its official release on January 26, 2022. It is spreading the message of what exactly happened to Kashmiri Pandits in 1989. How

they were slaughtered and made to flee their own homes overnight in dire circumstances.

The 'Kashmir Files' team toured 13 cities in the US and held town halls at many places including Harvard and universities in California and Washington DC. They disseminated an urgent message to the public as well as to politicians.

As New York Coordinator of Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), I helped them hold screenings in New York. The tour started with the screening at Bombay Theater in Queens.

I became a member of GKPD around three years ago and we have sent hundreds of oxygen concentrators and other relief material to India during the Covid-19 pandemic. The original and oldest organization named Kashmiri Overseas Association (KOA) has also done a phenomenal job in sending relief supplies to refugee camps in Kashmir and to other non-Kashmiri populations in other parts of India.

What moved you to join GKPD?

Mohan Wanchoo: There is a lot of hurt, agony, and bad memories associated with what had happened to Pandits in Kashmir. Thousands were slaughtered and half a million were forced to flee, leaving behind everything they possessed.

My wife was a victim of this exodus. Her family had to flee overnight as they were told that they were next on target. They ran and managed to reach Jammu somehow and then migrated to Delhi in 1990. There are many such families in the US who had gone through the same agony and ordeal of being displaced from their homeland while the world never came to know about all this.

How is the situation in Kashmir now?

Mohan Wanchoo: Article 370 has been abrogated making Kashmir fully integrated with India. Now all the laws of India are fully applicable to the whole of Jammu and Kashmir. Now they are working on delimitation of constituencies in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Earlier, the representation was heavily tilted in favor of the Valley, but now Jammu and Ladakh would also get their fair share. It is expected that Jammu would get more seats as it has a bigger population than the Valley. Many infrastructure projects are being undertaken in the area. Rome was not built in a day and these things will take time to shape up but they have started for sure.

What about the resettlement of Pandits in Kashmir?

Mohan Wanchoo: Around 600-800 people have gone back to the Valley but local Muslims do not like it. They connive to target Kashmiri Pandits so that no one dares to go back to their homes. Many people have given the greatest sacrifice and we hope that eventually, the government will prevail and slowly Hindus will start moving back into their homes in Kashmir.

There are around 500 families of Kashmiri Pandits in the USA and all feel very intensely about the situation over there. Most of them live in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut and some are in California, Texas, and Chicago.

You call Kashmir a cradle of civilization...

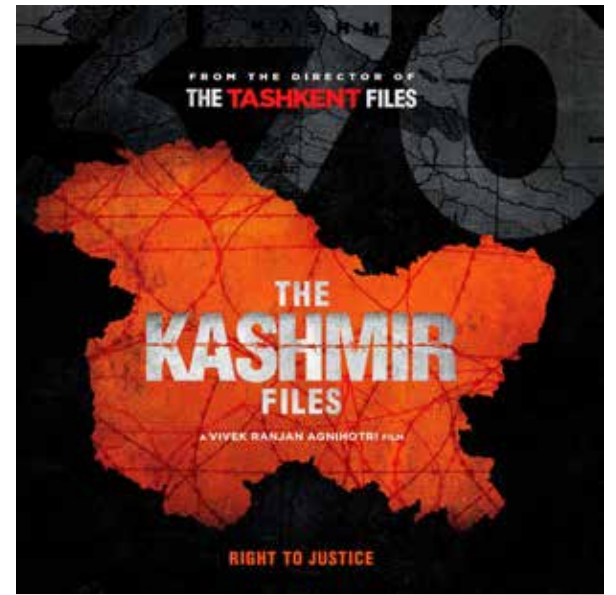
Mohan Wanchoo: Yes, Kashmir indeed was a cradle of civilization, a fountainhead. Panini wrote his treatise on Sanskrit grammar here, and Patanjali wrote his Yoga Sutra in Kashmir. Adi Shankaracharya had his permanent seat and math in Kashmir. It has been home to many of the great scriptures of Hinduism. Sharda University, now in ruins in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, was the biggest institution of higher learning even in comparison to Nalanda, which was a Buddhist center.

Lalitaditya Muktapada, the great emperor and maker of the famous Martanda Sun temple, ruled a territory in the 8th century stretching from Iraq to Thailand, but there is no mention of

him in history books. It is surprising that all the contributions of Kashmir in the fields of literature, culture, drama, and mathematics have been wiped out of the history books. Thus, Kashmir was truly a cradle of civilization that produced both warriors and the learned. Even today, most Kashmiri are inclined towards education (as my father was) and related fields instead of doing business. Many in my community looked askance at me when I turned an entrepreneur.

What is unique about Kashmiris?

Mohan Wanchoo: Kashmiri Pandits usually put their children through rigor to



Mohan Wanchoo has helped Vivek Agnihotri's 'Kashmir Files' movie screenings in America to disseminate information about the issue of Kashmiri Pandits.

make them study. They are also remarkable in other fields such as arts, acting, theater, journalism, and music. Education attracts them more than financial affluence. They are supposed to carry the baton of our scriptures and lead a life as per the scriptures. At least, it is expected from them, hence they are called "Pandit". They have a higher responsibility on their shoulders that Sanatan dharma is propagated and eventually, "dharma" wins over "adharma".

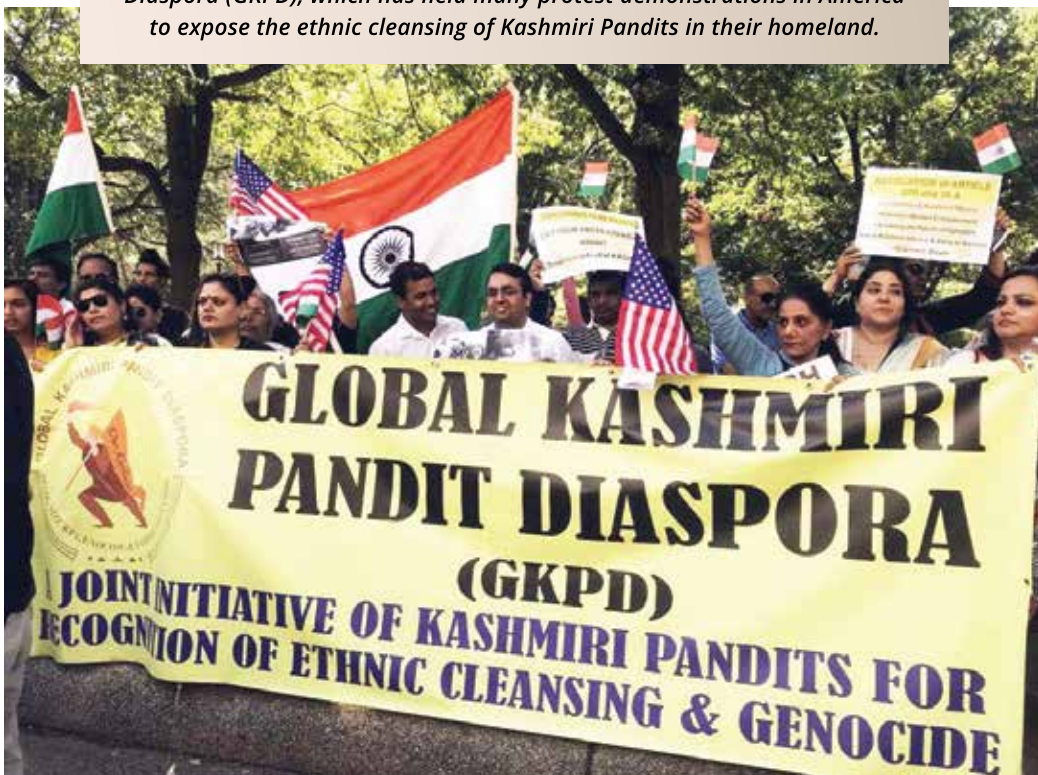
Kashmiri Pandits follow a lunar calendar called "Jantri" (called Panchang elsewhere in India). We had our own knowledge systems of astronomy, astrology, natya, yoga, Sanskrit language and grammar from Hindu scriptures. Though they were 10,000 years old we never felt the need to adopt the changing concept of education as the knowledge we possessed was self-contained.

What is Kashmiriyat for you?

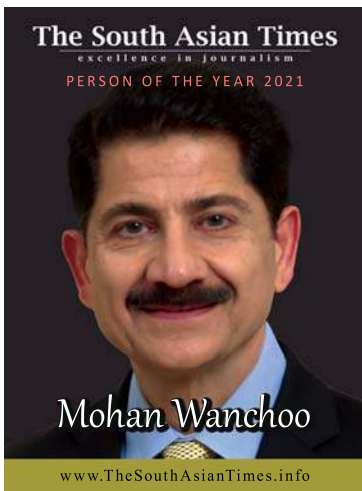
Mohan Wanchoo: My father used to teach at St Joseph's College in Baramulla in Kashmir when Kabalis raided the valley in 1947. Later he left Kashmir for Delhi. Thus, we were thrown out of our homeland in 1947.

But wherever we lived, each tradition of Kashmiri culture was followed ritualistically by my parents. We used to celebrate all festivals. We Kashmiri Pandits are orthodox and even for our birthdays till today we follow the lunar calendar "Jantri". My mother used to make Kashmiri food at home though she picked up a few Punjabi dishes from the neighborhood in Delhi. With my parents we used to speak in Kashmiri and in Hindi among the siblings.

Mohan Wanchoo is New York Coordinator of Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora (GKPD), which has held many protest demonstrations in America to expose the ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Pandits in their homeland.



CONGRATULATIONS & ACCLAMATIONS



Mohan Wanchoo

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info



Meenakshi Dua

Former Regional Director - Northern Region, Air India

Mohan Wanchoo is an icon who has created opportunities for those who thought that God existed only in temples and for the elite. A unique blend of humility, gentleness, compassion and caring with enviable qualities of leadership as an accomplished entrepreneur, he has the 'Art of winning hearts'. He sings his way to others' hearts.

He reaches out and shares his time, self and earnings with the most deserving through Ekal Foundation and Sankara Eye Foundation while most of us invest in doing what gives us material gains. His meaning of life comes from 'enabling' others -- much beyond the boundaries of 'I' and 'Me'.

An ageless, energetic, smart, youthful warrior, who loves to challenge odds and win them over. The smiling eyes and cool demeanor hide a heart throbbing passionately for others and a brain working overtime, churning out ideas to raise and reach funds to the not so privileged in his Mother India. A visionary, driven by a strong urge to sync his dreams with those who want to see the India of their dreams rising to soaring heights, his mission has been to help build a strong, educated and awakened India by making opportunities available to children and youth in remote areas and tribal belts.

He is like a candle, lighting up many other candles to together increase the brightness in others' lives. A candle whose flame is unwavering and a glow which is akin to divine. I am grateful to God for his treasured presence in our lives.



Rakesh Bhargava

Managing Partner, Opportunity Zone, MangoTree Real Estate Holdings

I have known Mohan Wanchoo for several years and am very impressed with his noble mission and accomplishments as an entrepreneur as well as a generous philanthropist. His dedicated work in bringing fundraising for Ekal Vidyalaya to an astonishing new level is amazing. His vision enabled Ekal to reach a milestone of 100,000 schools about 3 years ago. This was a mission laid out by Prime Minister Modi in a speech. It is truly a matter of pride for the US and specially New York that Mohan and his colleagues delivered on this dream ahead of time.

Mohan is relentless in his support of other charities and missions. His involvement in bringing out real facts about Kashmir is educational and eye-opener.

Mohan is a wonderful family person with superb values and a role model for our community.



Yacov Samash

Former Dean of the College of Engineering at Stony Brook University

I am delighted to learn of the selection of Mr. Mohan Wanchoo as "The South Asian Times-Person of the Year 2021" for his prominent sup-

port of causes in entrepreneurship, education, and health-care. I have been with Stony Brook for more than 23 years. I am honored to have been Mohan's friend for 15 years and to have interacted with him on many business and educational projects in our region. He has been a strong supporter of our internship program at the university, and he has recruited many of our technical graduates.

Mohan has a heart of gold and is recognized by the business community in our region for his technical accomplishments, entrepreneurship, support for the needy, and his integrity. I have interacted with him on the Ekal Vidyalaya work. His love and incredible support for the Ekal programs to help educate millions of children in rural parts of India is an incredible example for all humanity to follow.



Lynnette Iglesias

Managing Director, Perfection Of Man Foundation

Mohan Wanchoo -- he is pure inspiration. I look up to him as my admirable brother in this life. Mohan and his wife make me admire them more every time I see them. Since I first met him, he has always been down to earth, which you normally do not expect from most successful businessmen.

As a philanthropist, he made me realize many things especially in the field of giving. He just gives not as charity but because he is a giver and always does it sincerely. You will feel confident when you work with him on any project that serves humanity.

And the most surprising thing is Mohan was born an artist, a man with musical talent. I would say it is rare to see so many of these traits in one person.



Dilip Mirchandani

Author and specialist in development and education

I have had the pleasure and honor of knowing Mohan Wanchoo for over four decades in both professional and personal capacities. He has impressed me, and distinguished himself as a skillful, innovative, and resilient technology entrepreneur, whose expansive vision of living stretches beyond the building of his essential enterprise and into a charitable outlook that's a way of conducting himself in the world. In doing so, he has contributed more than time and money, but also provided leadership for vital causes in the local community and for the worldwide Asian diaspora. To be successful in such achievements, one must have a courageous and generous heart. And these are the virtues that exemplify Mohan's character.



Varinder K Bhalla

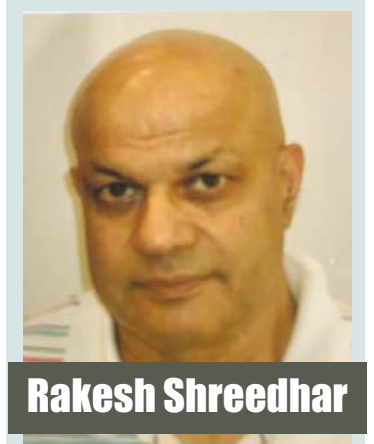
Founder, AWB Food Bank

Mohan Wanchoo is not sitting on his professional laurels or business success. Driven by the Chinese maxim, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime", he has supported Ekal Vidyalaya, an education charity, with a passion and focus to eradicate

illiteracy amongst the underprivileged in India, which is home to nearly 300 million illiterate, more than one third of the world's uneducated.

Mohan is passionately driven by the belief that life is a gift, and it offers us the privilege, opportunity, and responsibility to give something back. With his innovative thinking and entrepreneurial insights, he has raised millions of dollars for Ekal Vidyalaya and impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of the downtrodden in India by giving them the opportunities to achieve basic literacy and the potential of a brighter future.

Mohan Wanchoo stands tall amongst many other philanthropists in our communities across the US, and I salute The South Asian Times for celebrating his legacy and selecting him as Person of the Year!



Rakesh Shreedhar

Surgeon, Upstate New York.

I have known Mr. Mohan Wanchoo for almost a decade now. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with him and see his enthusiasm and dedication for rural and tribal regions of India to improve literacy, preventive health care and village development and empowerment. He is one of the biggest nationwide donors for Ekal Vidyalaya foundation.

He started the Ekal Gala functions in the New York area and has arranged them in Manhattan and elsewhere. Other regions in America are now following his example to support this very noble cause.

Mr Wanchoo has a special passion for Digital Ekal plan where children and adults, particularly women, learn computer use. A mobile bus equipped with the tablets travels from village to village to do just that.

He's also a big supporter of Vatsalya Grams that provide homes for the abandoned and destitute members of the community.



**HOPE, HEALTH
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Parveen Chopra has been the Managing Editor since the inception of The South Asian Times. He is widely seen by his team, editorial contributors, many Indian American media

Wishing our Editor the best in his next endeavor

The South Asian Times team checks in as Parveen Chopra moves on to write the next chapter of his life.

persons and readers as well prominent community members as the single contributing factor for the success and standing of the weekly paper published from New York but with a transnational footprint in its digital edition.

Significantly, before moving to the USA some 14 years ago, Mr Chopra worked in senior capacities with India Today magazine, DNA (Daily News & Analysis, Mumbai), Sunday Mail and founded India's first and only spiritual/wellness

magazine, Life Positive.

Based in Hicksville, NY, Mr Chopra also edited 'One World Under God', an interfaith journal, for couple of years before its suspension by the publisher, Mr Darshan Singh Bagga, after Covid struck in early 2020.



Message from the Publisher

In flashback, almost 14 years ago, no one in our family had any idea or any plan to venture into media. Even then, print media, particularly ethnic papers, was considered a dying species. How we got involved is a long story, suffice it to say that we ended up making The South Asian Times a significant success. Moreover, we are hopeful of sustaining it for decades to come, serving our esteemed communities in America.

We started paper in April 2008, and in a short span of time it became known as the most read and admired publication in our area of operation and beyond. The South Asian Times could not have been sustained without the great vision and expertise of its founding Managing Editor, Mr. Parveen Chopra. We salute him for his singular contribution in making it a prestigious publication of the Indian American diaspora with flawless repute.

In thick or thin, rain or shine,



Kamlesh C. Mehta

Founder, Chairman & Publisher

even during Covid, we never missed a single edition and continued to print. Today we are considered as the most consistent publication with immaculate reputation for our high standards of journalism, content, display, and advertising, thanks to values instilled by our editor.

Parveen Ji is a man of great understanding and wisdom. He is truly the most dedicated and hardworking colleague we ever came across. He enjoyed a free hand in editorial policies.

The Team @ The South Asian

Times will always cherish the learning from him and follow the path beautifully paved by him.

Though we bid adieu to him as Managing Editor, going forward we are pleased to welcome him as the Founding Editor. We will seek his guidance from time to time to ensure the continuity of high quality of our publication. We sincerely wish Parveen Ji continued success in his future endeavors and will be always there to assist him as family.

- Arjit Mehta, Nimmi & Kamlesh C. Mehta



Arvind Singh, PhD

Incoming Executive Coordinator

Every Newspaper reflects the personality of its editor. If The South Asian Times (TSAT) is a "wholesome" newspaper of the Indian community in the US, every grain of it is chiseled by Parveen Ji. It is his wholehearted efforts along with the un-

wavering support of Kamlesh Ji Mehta to the editorial team that TSAT stands where it is today. PC has laid a strong foundation for the paper with a great team able and experienced hands.

Parveen Ji, you are moving on and I wish you the best in your future endeavor. But as the Founding Editor you will remain the 'guiding light' for our team. I am proud to be part of the team under your guidance.

I will miss you, Mr Chopra, by my side on all future special issues. It's been quite a journey all these years. It's a great pleasure knowing you, my dear friend. I wish you all the best in writing the next chapter of your life. Be that writing an actual book as you'd mention or whatever next you're going to put your love and passion into, I know you'll do justice as always.



Vladimir Tomovski

Senior Graphic Designer
Digital Nomad



Shomik Chaudhuri

Marketing Consultant, NY

We are remembered for our contribution to society and for who we are as human beings, how we treat other people and how much we have helped people. In that respect, Parveen Chopra, you are an icon. You have been most kind, helpful, cooperative and an angel to associate with. As you move into the next phase of your life, your deeds and personality will continue to resonate in our minds. I pray that the next phase of your life is more fulfilling as you move from the grind of a 9 to 5 job.



Suchitra Srinivas

Contributing Editor, NJ

I have known Parveen Ji for over five years as the Managing Editor of The South Asian Times. He is one of the finest professionals in the newspaper industry that I have worked with, in India and in the US. He is humble but a thorough professional at work. Possessing a good sense of news judgement, he generously applauds editorial contributors for commendable work. I have always found that his editing makes the story read tight without losing the emotion with which I would

have written my columns.

Parveen Ji is a great writer himself. The features and reports that he writes are always in-depth that give background detail as well. Without a doubt, his passion for newsworthy reporting has made The South Asian Times stand tall among other papers covering the diaspora. Initially when I went out to cover events for TSAT, people would invariably remark, "Oh, so you work with Parveen Ji. He is a synonym for The South Asian Times."

Meenakshi Iyer & Nishant

New Delhi Bureau Chief

Thank you for your patience, kindness and the love you shared. We learnt a lot from you.

All the very best, Parveen Ji, for the life ahead. We have had some wonderful moments at TSAT. Time spent with you, your family and Kamlesh Ji in the US before Covid will remain etched forever in our memory.

Now you deserve to find some 'Me Time' and pursue what is closer to your heart. Looking forward to Arvind Singh Ji as an integral part of the TSAT team.

Where are you going next?

Parveen Chopra is now asked this question often.

"No forwarding address," he quips.

Ideally, he'd like to do something original, challenging - write fiction maybe. Or develop a project on oral history, collecting and analyzing spiritual experi-

ences of long time practitioners from different religions, cultures and countries. Did anybody come close to attaining enlightenment or got a glimpse of God?

"One caveat, I might take up the next lucrative job that comes my way," he laughs.



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A Media Maven who will be Missed

Prof. Indrajit S Saluja

*Editor & Publisher,
The Indian Panorama*

Parveen Chopra has always been an explorer, be it in the US, Australia, or India. Going by the clue he gave me, he is now on to a unique, universal project. All the best to the man who has always been a pioneer of sorts, who found-

ed the spiritual-cum-wellness magazine named Life Positive 25 years ago, which remains the only one in its category in India till today.

Parveen is a man of letters and with the felicity of expression that he enjoys, he has been able to handle any kind of writing. So, one has seen him superbly editing The South Asian Times, co-authoring books and even putting his stamp on souvenirs of

community organizations.

I see him more as a good friend who I met way back in 2007 at a press conference of the Bachchan family. He was then New York correspondent for the news agency IANS. I felt very much drawn to this Smiling Buddha. Fifteen years on, we have remained all weather friends.

Over the years, I have been impressed with his simplicity, humility,

a spirit of accommodation, and a cheerful countenance.

As he gets ready to shift gears for a more exciting experience after having served as the Managing Editor of The South Asian Times for 13 long years, I wish him all the best in whatever he undertakes. I am confident he will do another pioneering and path-breaking project as he did with Life Positive magazine.



Arvind Vora

*Chairman, Long Island
Multi Faith Forum
and Shanti Fund*

Parveen Chopra is befitting the best in his media profession - very quiet, unassuming and prefers to remain

in the background. Over the years, we have had countless meetings, events, and exchanges of hundreds of emails. Anything worthwhile I would bring to his attention for publication. My involvement with many organizations and constant desire to inform our community of upbeat and enlightening news

found a good match with The South Asian Times.

Most ethnic publications run on passion since financial rewards are almost nil as such operations are on a shoestring. They can ill-afford to send reporters to cover events and have to rely on press releases or credible reporting.

There are always exceptions, and I can count many where Parveen Ji out of his passion or interest would come and cover them.

To mark the tenth anniversary of 9/11, Long Island Council of Churches and Long Island Multi Faith Forum (LIMFF) held an event at the Quakers Meeting

House in Old Westbury. One of the hidden interests of Parveen Ji is interfaith. Not only he came to cover the event, he also took photos and befitting his nature he rather be not in the photos.

Parveen Ji's transition is a definite loss to The South Asian Times, but more so to its readers.



Sunil Tolani

Hotelier, Los Angeles

The South Asian Times has had a remarkable impact on the life and times of our South Asian community. After you first profiled me and Prince Organization in 2018, we have received thousands of communications from

people all over, who have read and applied my simple principles and their lives have been touched and transformed. Parveen ji is a principled man of strong character, grace and humility. His record of offering award-winning journalism can serve as a model for the media. TSAT Publisher Kamlesh Mehta is one of the gentlest and most decent men I have met. Your legacy is that you have transformed the lives of people. The community cheers for you.

Ashok Vyas

*Priest, Poet, Program
Director ITVGold*

Parveen Chopra has a subdued smile. He is a keen observer and as an ace editor, he immerses himself in the issues with artistic detachment. He is friendly yet a bit aloof, maybe a quality necessary for an editor.

He has been a true asset for The South Asian Times. He is good at planning and sourcing the right material for the newspaper including contributions by local columnists.

I have interacted with Parveen Ji on matters ranging from personal, social, political to spiritual. He has been fair in giving space to opposing views to enrich readers. He has also mastered the art of civil discourse on controversial issues

related to religion and politics.

I consider him as my writing guru. He has given me the opportunity to express myself on several occasions. I always benefited from his editing skill, suggestions and feedback.

While observing Parveen Ji's interactions with people at community events, I feel he is an affable, intellectual guy. Since he had edited a magazine dealing with the positive aspect of life in India, my interest in Indian culture and spirituality generated several meaningful conversations with him.

Parveen Chopra is identified with The South Asian Times in the minds of its readers, friends and well-wishers like me who developed a mysterious emotional bonding with him. He will be missed. It is not going to be easy for someone to step into his shoes.



Darshan Singh Bagga

Real Estate Magnate who published 'One World Under God'

I am glad to know that The South Asian Times continues to publish and is still in print when some other newspapers have not been able to survive in these tough times. That means your

editor, Parveen Chopra, has done a great job of providing a solid footing to the paper.

In the interfaith journal I started 'One World Under God', he again did a creditable job as editor. Its issues over two years and their compilation into a coffee table book have been admired by Americans and Indians alike.

Shivaji Sengupta

*Op-Ed Contributor,
retired academic*

I am saddened by the news of Mr. Parveen Chopra leaving The South Asian Times. Since 2016 when I first started writing for TSAT, it was he who took me under his wing and guided me.

Mr Chopra is a remarkable man. Quiet and confident, he re-

sponds to almost everything with gentle laughter that has a soothing effect on me. A man of few words, he nevertheless gives ample proof of being a meticulous and methodical journalist.

I remember when I first met him, I sensed he was a little apprehensive of my lop-sided academic background. "Would this man be able to write for Everyman; would he turn readers off with academic jargon?" So, I

made a special effort to write in a way that everyone would understand. I admit I have, like him, a philosophical bent. But I try to bring philosophy down from the heavens to the tea table. When Mr Chopra read my first article, I could hear in his voice an obvious sense of relief.

His emails are characteristically brief, words bare necessities! Yet, I always got the feeling that our editor guided the news-

paper with a steady hand. He always encouraged me in a gentle and unspectacular way. He was there for me with resources and up to date knowledge of current affairs. Needless to say, he is well-read.

It was Lord Francis Bacon who famously said, "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." Parveen Chopra is an exact example of this famous quotation.





**HOPE, HEALTH
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Indian Americans who hit the headlines in 2021

It was a tough and tumultuous year. Yet there are those who broke barriers, charted new paths and raised the bar for their peers. Here's raising a toast to prominent Indian Americans who hogged the limelight for all good reasons.



MEERA JOSHI

In December 2021, Meera Joshi created history when New York's Mayor-elect Eric Adams announced that he would appoint five women for deputy mayor positions including the Indian American attorney. She has been named as Deputy Mayor for Operations. Joshi was the acting administrator for the Federal Motor Carrier and Safety Administration since January.

As Deputy Mayor for Operations, Joshi is entitled to ensure that New York City can respond in real-time to meet and exceed the needs of every community and be a model of excellence for all urban centers, said Adams.

Joshi served as the chair and CEO of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, the largest in the nation for-hire transportation regulator. With them, she spearheaded novel Vision Zero campaigns using data tools to keep high-risk drivers and unsafe vehicles off the road, her bio noted.

"I am deeply honored to serve Mayor-elect Eric Adams and all New Yorkers. Our work ahead is clear. The operations of our city must meet and exceed the needs of every community, respond in real-time and be a model of excellence for all urban centers," Joshi said.



NEELI BENDAPUDI

Indian-origin professor Neeli Bendapudi became the first woman and person of color to

be named as the president of America's prestigious Pennsylvania State University, the educational institution. Bendapudi, who was born in Visakhapatnam and came to the US in 1986 for higher studies, is currently serving as the president and professor of marketing at the University of Louisville in Kentucky.

She was unanimously named Penn State's next president by the Penn State Board of Trustees on December 9. She begins her appointment as Penn State's 19th president in spring 2022.

Bendapudi is a recognized leader in higher education who specializes in marketing and consumer behavior. With a nearly 30-year career in academia, she has taught marketing and served in a variety of administrative roles over the years, including as provost and executive vice chancellor at the University of Kansas, dean of the School of Business at the University of Kansas, and founding director of the Initiative for Managing Services at Ohio State University.



SIRISHA BANDLA

In July 2021 when Virgin Galactic's Richard Branson embarked on his first trip to space just ahead of Amazon's Jeff Bezos, the billionaire was accompanied by an Indian onboard. Sirisha Bandla, vice president of government affairs and research operations for the company, was among the five passengers hopping on the trip with Branson.

Hailing from Guntur in Andhra Pradesh, Sirisha became the second Indian-born woman to go into space after Kalpana Chawla, who died in the tragic Space Shuttle Columbia disaster.

Sirisha joined Virgin Galactic in 2015 as government affairs manager and has since then risen through the ranks. She was also handling Washington

operations for Virgin Orbit, which recently delivered a satellite in space using a 747 plane. A graduate of Purdue University, Sirisha has a Master of Business Administration from Georgetown University.

In October last year she also joined the Board of Advisors of The Kalpana Chawla Project for Innovation.



SHEKAR KRISHNAN

Shekar Krishnan, a civil rights attorney and activist, who ran and won the race from District 25 for New York City Council became the first Indian American on that legislative body. Intriguingly, Indian Americans have been elected to the New York state senate and assembly, but not so far to City Council.

"Thank you Jackson Heights and Elmhurst for believing in me! I am deeply humbled to be elected to represent our communities in the City Council. These two neighborhoods have been a historic part of the immigrant experience in this country," Krishnan said at his victory event.



BHAVYA LAL

NASA announced in November 2021 that Indian American Bhavya Lal will be leading the agency's newly-created Office of Technology, Policy and Strategy.

Lal is a Biden political appointee who has held several positions at the agency since the

inauguration. The reorganization merged two units including the Office of Chief Technologist and Lal will also serve as Acting Chief Technologist. Lal was a prominent public voice of NASA since the beginning of the year, representing the agency at many conferences and webinars.

As a space policy expert at the Institute for Defense Analyses' Science and Technology Policy Institute, Lal was appointed as a member of a National Academies committee assessing the merits of nuclear thermal propulsion and nuclear electric propulsion for sending humans to Mars.



NEERA TANDEN

Neera Tanden, whose bid to be White House budget chief was derailed by opposition from Republicans after her sharp critiques of them on Twitter, was named White House staff secretary in October 2021, putting her in a key behind-the-scenes role.

The appointment, which does not require Senate confirmation, was announced during a morning staff call, a White House official said. The staff secretary job manages the paper flow, circulates documents among senior staff for comment as part of the decision-making process and is often known as the "nerve center" of the White House.

It is a job once held by current Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who was staff secretary for Republican George W. Bush's White House.

Tanden reports to White House Chief of Staff Ron Klain.

Tanden, previously an adviser to then President Obama and then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, had been serving as president of the Center for American Progress (CAP), a left-leaning think tank, until she became a senior adviser to President Joe Biden in May 2021.



SHREE SAINI

Shree Saini became the first Indian-American to win the crown of Miss World America 2021.

Diana Hayden crowned Shree at the event, which was held at Miss World America headquarters in Los Angeles on October 5, 2021. She was also the first Indian-origin contestant to represent America at a global stage.

An advocate for heart health, Saini has had a permanent pacemaker since she was 12 and overcame a major car accident which left her with burns all over her face. But she rarely lets any of that hold her back or define her.

The official Instagram handle of Miss World America shared the news with a caption that read as, "Shree, who is currently Miss World America Washington, also holds the prestigious position of "MWA National Beauty with a Purpose Ambassador", a position she earned by working tirelessly to help those less fortunate and in need. Among her many accomplishments, her work has been recognized by UNICEF, Doctors without Borders, Susan G Komen, and many others.

We are certain Shree will continue to immaculately embody Beauty With A Purpose, and no doubt will be successful in raising awareness and attention to the Miss World America mission. Stay tuned and follow the Miss World America 2021 journey!"

Shree Saini was also crowned Miss India Worldwide 2018 at a pageant held in the Fords City of New Jersey.



RAJA CHARI

NASA's SpaceX Crew-3 astronaut team headed to the International Space Station in November last year led by Indian American astronaut Raja Chari.



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This was for the third commercial crew rotation mission aboard the microgravity laboratory.

The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket propelled the Crew Dragon Endurance spacecraft with NASA astronauts Tom Marshburn, Kayla Barron, Raja Chari as well as ESA (European Space Agency) astronaut Matthias Maurer, into orbit to begin a six-month science mission on the space station.

Chari is commander of the Crew Dragon spacecraft and the Crew-3 mission. He is responsible for all phases of flight, from launch to re-entry. He also will serve as an Expedition 66 flight engineer aboard the station. This will be the first spaceflight for Chari, who was selected as a NASA astronaut candidate in 2017.



ABHIMANYU MISHRA

Abhimanyu Mishra became the youngest chess grandmaster in history. The 12-year-old player from New Jersey scored his third GM norm in Budapest, having already crossed the required 2500 Elo rating barrier. He defeated the 15-year-old Indian GM Leon Luke Mendonca with the black pieces, securing a performance rating higher than 2600 over nine rounds.

Mishra broke GM Sergey Karjakin's record that stood for 19 years. On August 12, 2002, Karjakin, a world championship challenger in 2016, secured the grandmaster title at the age of 12 years and seven months. Mishra, born on February 5, 2009, took 12 years, four months, and 25 days to obtain the highest title in chess.



PARAG AGRAWAL

Indian-origin Parag Agrawal became the new chief executive officer (CEO) of social networking company Twitter in December. With that, he joined an elite club of Indian-origin CEOs of top US technology companies, which includes Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.

Mumbai-born Agrawal did his B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering from IIT Bombay before moving to the US in 2005 for a PHD from Stanford University.

After working briefly with Microsoft, Yahoo, and AT&T Labs, Agrawal joined Twitter in 2011 as a Distinguished Software Engineer and climbed the ladder to reach the top position.



GITA GOPINATH

Gita Gopinath, the IMF's Indian-American chief economist, who was scheduled to return to her academic position at Harvard University in January 2022 was promoted as its first deputy managing director, recognizing her exceptional intellectual leadership in helping the global economy and the Fund to navigate the "twists and turns" of the "worst economic crisis of our lives."

Gopinath replaces Geoffrey Okamoto who plans to leave the International Monetary Fund early this year. Gopinath, 49, has served as the first female chief economist of the Washington-based global lender for three years. Gita Gopinath has had the honor of being the first-ever woman chief economist of the International Monetary Fund.



NIKHIL SRIVASTAVA

Eminent Indian-American mathematician Nikhil Srivastava, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, was jointly selected for the inaugural Ciprian Foias Prize in Operator Theory by the American Mathematical Society (AMS). Along with Nikhil Srivastava, the two other awardees are Adam Marcus and Daniel Spielman. The award recognizes their highly original work that introduced and developed methods for understanding the characteristic polynomial of matrices.

The trio's breakthrough paper "Interlacing families II: mixed characteristic polynomials and the Kadison-Singer problem" (Annals of Mathematics, 2015) solves the famous "paving problem" in operator theory, formulated by Richard Kadison and Isadore Singer in 1959.

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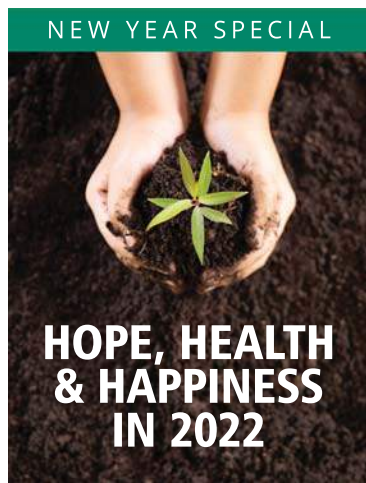
Small enough to know you.
Large enough to help you.®

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**HOPE, HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
IN 2022**

By **Neera Kuckreja
Sohoni**

The current year is about to end, but not our misery. Despite all the science and material resources behind us, we stand helpless in the face of a disease whose variants keep changing, with no precise understanding of which variant is done with, which continues, and which are yet to come.

Like the monstrous Hydra of Greek mythology, the Corona virus continues to haunt us with multiple heads, one of which - as in case of the Hydra snake - is slated to remain indestructible.

Since it first surfaced in December 2019 in Wuhan province in China, and appeared in America in January 2020, Covid (in its long form known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome SARS coronavirus2) has tested our nerves for what feels like eternity.

Precautionary measures of masking and social distancing have continued to isolate us from each other while the vaccine divide has split America into two nations - of the 'Vaxed' and the 'Non-Vaxed'. Who would have dreamt that a benign and intended to be beneficial remedy would become a source of heated debate, vicious name-calling, public shaming, and communal aggression?

Elected leaders at federal, state, and municipal levels have led the pro-vaccine charge with punitive ordinances that forbid unvaccinated employees from coming to office to work, and deny the unvaccinated public the right to access dining, drinking, exercising, and other amenities. Even children in some jurisdictions are unable to go to school or participate in afterschool activities in the ultra-stringent vaccination-requiring settings such as New York city.

The psychological impact of exclusion has brought many to the brink of mental breakdown jacking up suicide rates; economic hardship from compulsory shutdowns has led businesses to close temporarily or forever; the consequent loss of jobs and income has caused law and order to breakdown - with smash and grab crowd robbing and individual looting, car thefts, arson, battery, and other felonies on the rise.

Most important and damaging is the impact of firing unvaccinated workers on vital public services

The Power of Resilience or the Resilience of the Powerful?

Like the monstrous Hydra of Greek mythology, the Corona virus continues to haunt us with multiple heads, one of which - as in case of the Hydra snake - is slated to remain indestructible.

(Illustration courtesy nccid.ca)



including healthcare, surface, marine, and air transportation, and other logistical lifelines critical to keep our economy and citizenry breathing.

The closure of schools and the inefficient switchover to digital teaching and learning has disastrously slowed down or even reversed learning ability and standards of school children. High-school kids have paid an equally heavy price by resorting to drugs and other lethal addictions. These are poor substitutes and antidotes to mandatory isolation of teenagers which denies them the life support drawn from daily interface with peers, teachers, sports coaches, counselors and others.

With the third or fourth variant of Covid in place, an already struggling citizenry has been saddled with continued requirements of masking and distancing. But now there is the added burden from making vaccination mandatory. Already materially, physically and psychologically stressed employees are being threatened with job losses, punitive fines, and social interaction restraints.

Fiscally overstretched employees likewise are threatened under President Biden's excessively demanding regime to vaccinate every employee or pay up heavy fines per unvaccinated employee. Since the mandate applies to enterprises with 100 or more employees, its outcome is easy to predict viz, employers will fire some workers to keep their number under 100.

Our enlightened modern age - given high levels of literacy and fastest modes of information dis-

semination - was never expected to confront such a massive challenge to being vaccinated. Nor did scientists ever find themselves in the vulnerable position of being considered fallible. Since Galileo's discovery of earth orbiting the sun rather than the other way around, science has not faced such a vociferous challenge as it does today. Galileo was ordered to turn himself in to the Holy Office to begin trial for his heretical views, and custom demanded that the accused be imprisoned and secluded during the trial. Today's politicians and scientists have taken a stance similar to the Catholic Church - questioning the skeptics' views, crushing their lives, and taking away the rights and liberties of the unvaccinated. Capturing this abject surrender of the individual to the state is the slogan that says it best, "Get vaxed or Axed".

Appearing draconian to the unvaxed but entirely reasonable to the vaxed population, Covid and the regulatory regime it has spawned has made resilience a most desired quality. Today, it is no longer enough for us to merely face the pandemic but we need additionally to prep ourselves to endure the expanding regulatory power of the state and the aggressive tactics of the cancel culture.

We must also learn to deal with their chronic amnesia. When Biden, Democrats, and the partisan media complain of politicizing vaccines, they are in denial of the exact same politicization Biden and Kamala Harris indulged in when they publicly claimed being suspicious of any vaccine with which then President Trump was

connected.

On resilience, if anyone takes the lead, it is the political class. Politicians, across the board, have matchless ambition and ability to survive. Unless physically dead, in a political sense, they never die. But like the 'Ever ready' bunny and battery, they are everlasting. Lust for and addiction to power keeps them going through any and all ups and downs, humiliating or elevating electoral outcomes.

None demonstrates the compulsive desire to last out than Hillary Clinton.

Recently, a video showing her teaching a Master Class surfaced. Master Classes are high-cost digital instructional classes in which you pay exorbitantly to hear top world leaders and luminaries explain how and why they tick, enabling you to learn from their example.

Hillary was assigned resilience as her topic. Contrary to sharing valuable insights on how to prepare for and overcome failure, she ended up feeding into the doom and gloom that overwhelms us at most times when we are tested but fail to deliver. Tips from her to positively tackle challenges would have been welcome and incredibly healing in these highly depressing Corona times.

Yet, far from showing resilience, Hillary chose to make her lecture a whiny weepy hour. She managed to project herself as self-pitying and pitiable, as she sobbingly read out from what was written to serve as her "Victory speech" but instead remained unused because she lost the election. Or, as she continues to claim, was hers but

was stolen from her by Trump.

Resilience typically implies accepting events as they occur and to muster the courage within oneself to try and deal with them without breaking oneself. What it does not condone is to refrain from the need to diagnose the complexities of the situation and to correctly gauge and muster one's own ability to deal with them. Instead, what Hillary demonstrates is how she continually fails to accept the hand dealt out to her, and worse, how she continues to challenge the card dealer's legitimacy.

Among our new year's resolutions, a leading one should be to pray for resilience - not of the kind that keeps politicians from gracefully conceding defeat or the sort that compels them to be dismissive of the outcome or of the capability and credentials of others.

To find resilience, we need only to turn to the millions of Americans across this nation and the world, who continue to ungrudgingly lead their lives, but have the courage and will to renovate and innovate their lifestyles, and to adjust their aspirations and expectations of life to the changing reality and challenges of Corona.

The best resolve to make by each of us for the coming year is to refuse to allow the pandemic or the governing regime's excessive restrictions to undermine our ability and our resilience to endure and outlast both.

Above all, we need to hang on to our dreams and to continue to surpass our limitations and others' expectations of us.

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Neera Kuckreja Sohoni has a Ph.D. in economics and is a published author and opinion writer.





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2022

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By Shivaji Sengupta

"The sun to me is dark..."
-John Milton

Democracy dies in darkness," is an epigram carried by *The Washington Post* every day. I suppose darkness here means ignorance. Last week the writer, Margaret Renki, wrote in *The New York Times*, mentioning the 19th Century German poet, Goethe on his deathbed who had asked, quite literally, for more light. Writes Renki, "After the year we've just endured, we recognize Goethe's urgency. Feeling the darkness descend, we beg for more light."

Darkness.

Covid, with its multiple mutations, has brought darkness, disease and death. Having lost the House, the White House and the Senate in last year's presidential elections, Trump and the Republicans are creating revisionist voting laws and regulations in the states they have majority (which is more than the Democrats have) so as to assure by hook or by crook, that they win the midterm and the 2024 elections. The Democrats are in disarray.

More darkness.

There is, however, plenty of grassroots action from both parties to resist the other's move. I contribute to *Indivisibles*, a nationwide group of progressives trying every civic and political reforms from voting to abortion rights. But those who control the ballot have the sway. For now, the Republicans are on the upswing.

Per se, I don't have a problem with that. I have lived under the rule of the Republican Party for over half of my fifty-two years in America. What I have a problem with, what scares the daylight out of me, is the *decline of democracy in our country*. I wasn't prepared for this.

Now, I realize that my Republican friends do not believe that democracy in this country is in danger. Almost a third of the people believe that Trump won the 2020 elections, and, therefore, support the manifold Republican moves to restrict voting laws in the name of voting reform. Republican efforts to strategically place Republican officeholders who are vowing to return Republicans, as election officers, are threatening

to make a mockery of the elections, the most democratic aspect of our Constitution. No matter how much I try through friendly conversation and discussion - and through my writings such as this piece - I cannot reach them intellectually or emotionally, make them even *listen* to the possibility that what is going on politically is very, very wrong.

It all started with Donald Trump losing. The man was so sure of his victory, so absolutely certain that he would continue to be president, that

march with dangerous intent to the Capitol and riotously disrupt Congress in the process of ratifying the electoral victory of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. Five people died as a result of the riot. Over five hundred arrested and convicted. Trump was impeached by the House for his actions and believed to be guilty but found not guilty by the Senate. Guilty, because many believed that Trump was directly responsible for the January 6th attack on the Capitol. Not guilty because the

allegiance, dwindle into an *un-democratic civilization*?

As I said at the outset, the "darkness" in "Democracy dies in darkness" refers to ignorance.

Why can't people see the obvious and realize that as a consequence of one Party's' greed for presidential power, what is happening politically is the onset of darkness. It is because of *there has been a decline in educated people in America*. By educated, I mean people who are rational, logical, can distinguish

logical political decisions concerning the affairs of the state. The result is there for everyone to see. Pakistan is going downhill in every aspect compared to the rest of the world. Compared to India's 4,000+ universities, Pakistan has twenty-three! India has over 300 IT colleges and universities. Pakistan, one. India has over 200,000 doctorates; Pakistan less than two thousand. If you surf YouTube, you can see the ordinary people on the streets of Pakistan praise India's educational system, technological superiority, indigenously developed industries, Bollywood, sports - everything. In GDP, Pakistan is not only way behind India and, even Bangladesh, but is currently bankrupt.

Why has all this happened in Pakistan? In my opinion, lack of a rational educational system is one reason.

Why am I harping on Pakistan? Because, even as I worry about the way the political system is being held hostage to unscrupulous people in power, I read in newspapers and witness in the media how down south Republican states are using government apparatus to rewrite their history, especially eradicating the history of slavery and even dictating what books maybe retained in the public libraries and which books to be destroyed! These same bureaucrats should be reminded of what has happened in Pakistan and in other similar countries. *Do not be complacent! Democracy dies in darkness.*

I leave you with a quotation from the 17th-century poet John Milton's *Samson Agonistes*:

*The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.*



My Republican friends do not believe that democracy in this country is in danger. Almost a third of the people believe that Trump won the 2020 election, and, therefore, support the manifold GOP moves to restrict voting laws in the name of voting reform. Their efforts to strategically place Republican officeholders who are vowing to return Republicans, as election officers, are threatening to make a mockery of the elections, the most democratic aspect of our Constitution.

(Illustration courtesy Vox)

the electoral defeat - a convincing one at that - was like a volcanic earthquake to him. Egged on by ruthless, dishonest advisors who care nothing about democracy, Trump convinced his forty million or so followers that the Democrats "stole the elections." The first salvo at Democracy was Trump trying to force the election officers of Georgia and Arizona to overturn the result. "I just want to find 11,780 votes," he pleaded with the Georgia Secretary of State. Then he tried to brow-beat his Vice President to use his position to annul the election results in those two and several more states. Senators and the congress people of his Party joined him in this. Fortunately for America, the Vice President refused to comply. Trump then complained about the election being stolen loudly throughout the country.

His last ditch stand was to rally six thousand of his supporters to

impeachment process began when he was no longer president. You cannot impeach anyone who is no longer holding the position he is being impeached for.

However, having failed to re-enter the presidency through a back door, Trump this time rallied the myriads of his supporters in the majority of the states Republicans governed to change and regulate election laws to Republican advantage. If these revised voting laws and regulations are finally allowed to stay, the Party in control of a state will deliver for their presidential. The opposition will never win!

Does this sound like America, or more like the elections in a politically backward, developing country in South America, Africa or South East Asia? We, who have come away from some of these countries, and made the United States our home, do we have to see our adopted country, to which we have sworn

between premises and arguments, and not instinctively gravitate to the claims of those with whom they agree in the first place. Conversely, they refuse to listen to any counter argument.

Education is intricately related to democracy. Lack of it among the electorate leads to political leaders exploiting the uneducated, even dominating them. Let me give just one example. Madiha Afzal, a Pakistani political scientist at the Brookings Institute in Washington D.C., demonstrates in her book, *Pakistan Under Siege*, how rewriting of history to suit Pakistani Islamization has completely bereft that country's high school student of logic and rationality. My own conclusion is, reading Dr. Afzal's book, that forty years of such biased education, the lack of intellectual discussions in the classroom is producing an electorate that is utterly incapable of making informed and



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**HOPE, HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
IN 2022**

By **Hector Kenneth
Kumar**

In the Shakespearean tragedy Julius Caesar, Cassius invokes Brutus' character to get him to rebel against the mighty Caesar saying "The fault dear Brutus lies not in our stars but in us that we are mere underlings". Today there are many within the Congress that share Cassius' point of view ahead of a critical five-state election, an election where Congress is projected to be marginally ahead only in one state i.e. Uttarakhand.

The lethargy of the Congress and total reliance on a stuttering family franchise means that the BJP led by Narendra Modi is all set to stamp its authority on the election setting the tone for 2024 and rubbing the Congress further into the ground.

Ideally, these elections should have been one where the opposition led by the Congress seized on factors like the failed farm bill, inflation, and the China bug-bear to take the fight to the BJP, but the Congress seems to be running on fumes fighting a battle with no strategy and importantly no general in command. Add to that the Congress' leadership pig-headedness to fight BJP on a field that it rules aka the Hindu vs Hindutva debate and you have a losing proposition.

The BJP's trump card is Narendra Modi, seven years in power have not diminished the PM's popularity and he continues to hold sway over the electorate. The gains of the past seven years are debatable, the economy is stuttering, vigilante attacks on minority communities are on the rise, China has inched further into Indian Territory and Beer is cheaper than Petrol or Tomatoes. Yet the BJP has kept its nose ahead, especially in the electorally critical state of Uttar Pradesh by stoking the fires of muscular majoritarianism. In the past UP elections were a mathematician's delight, caste combinations were worked out and alliances stitched, Yadav's and Dalits, Muslims and Mallahs all carefully weighed against the strength they brought to the voting booths. But now, the BJP with a saffron-robbed monk in charge of the state has clearly made this

election a fight between 'us' and 'them'.

The point is emphasized in almost all election speeches by Adityanath where he invokes Jinnah and Topi-wale ahead of development. The images from the alleged disastrous handling of the Covid-19 crisis and the continued rise of crime in the state are long forgotten, the electorate now being fed an overdose of saffron. This is coupled with a PR overdrive where Adityanath is selling his alter image, the one that sees him inaugurating an

dominance message on the ground. The lone worry for the BJP was in western UP with the groundswell against the farm bills, but with the Prime Minister moving to repeal them that crisis is since averted and its back to Mandir and Masjid.

A recent C-Voter survey projects the BJP to win upwards of 40 percent of the vote share translating into a majority in the assembly. If that happens Adityanath will rise to become first among equals and become the first Chief Minister of Uttar

the legislation. With the Hindu voter assuaged, Dhama is projecting his 'young man' image to steal a clear march ahead of Congress and the fledgling AAP. It's the same story in Goa where the 26 percent Christian vote is critical for the BJP's survival, and PM Modi ensured he send the right message when he made it a point to call on the Pope during his visit to Rome.

The BJP is now hard selling that to the Voter, what it has done is drive a wedge in the Christian vote, perhaps enough to

an astute politician who can read the tea leaves is not lost on anybody. He continues to be the single factor that stands in the way of any alternative faction's aspirations in 2024. There are feeble attempts being made, led by Mamata Banerjee and the ever-hopeful Sharad Pawar, although at the moment that effort seems to be concentrated in keeping the Congress and the Gandhis out of power.

Mamata has national aspirations and her sojourn into Goa is only an attempt to dip her feet in the pool and see if the water temperature is good enough for the long swim to 2024. Her chieftain is election strategist Prashant Kishor who believes 2022 is not a semifinal for 2024 and there are many state elections prior to that, what he fails to mention is that Mamata is not a factor in any of those polls.

The fact is that the opposition is divided by ideology and ambition and no single factor unites them against the Modi juggernaut. Australian Cricket legend Don Bradman once said "When you play test cricket, you don't give the Englishmen an inch. Play it tough, all the way. Grind them into the dust", Narendra Modi's politics follow that playbook, grinding his opponents into the dust and come to the Ides of March when the results are firmed, we could well see an example of that.



Seven years in power have not diminished Modi's popularity and sway over the electorate.

(Image Courtesy: The Print)

airport complex one day and ten medical schools the other seeking to emphasize his development credentials.

The opposition led by the Samajwadi Party of Akhilesh Yadav is left fighting the street battle. Their fight becomes tougher with a rejuvenated Congress led by Priyanka Gandhi set to eat into their votes. While the Congress will also run in the UP contest but it does have a vote share which could have helped Akhilesh pip the BJP at the hustings.

Images of a refurbished temple at Kashi Vishwanath and those of a proposed one at Ayodhya have helped the BJP cause as its ground cadre projects the saffron

Pradesh to beat the anti-incumbency factor and return to the Assembly as CM. It will also place him firmly in pole position for a shot at the top job in the future.

The BJP election machinery is so well organized that unlike Congress it can read the writing on the wall clearly and act on it. The point is emphasized in two smaller states poll-bound in 2022 i.e. Goa and Uttarakhand. The state government of Uttarakhand had brought legislation to take over the management of Holy pilgrimage sites, a move opposed by the Hindu clergy.

A new Chief Minister, Pushkar Dhama, in chair recognized the challenge and promptly repealed

send the BJP back to power in a state with a small electorate. In Punjab as well, it was the BJP at the center that sensed the mood in the farming community ahead of the elections and repealed the farm bills. At the same time, the BJP tied up with the breakaway Congress faction led by former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. Although they are far behind in the sweepstakes the BJP has kept itself alive ahead of the curve by ensuring it remains a credible factor when the general elections are fought in 2024, by then the BJP may even re-ally with its old friends the Akali Dal while the Congress battles an internal fight in its state unit.

The fact that Narendra Modi is



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10 events that impacted India in 2021

HOPE, HEALTH & HAPPINESS IN 2022

From Republic Day protests in Delhi in January to the recent Nagaland civilian

killings – 2021 saw numerous significant events in India. The year brought with it the unprecedented Delta-fuelled second wave of COVID-19 that overwhelmed the country's health system and killed tens of thousands of people. Here is a recap of the most noteworthy events in India:

1. REPUBLIC DAY PROTESTS



(Photo courtesy: IANS)

On January 26, tens of thousands of protesting farmers had clashed with the police in New Delhi during a tractor parade to highlight their demands. Many of them driving tractors reached the Red Fort and entered the monument, where a religious flag was also hoisted. Over 500 police personnel were injured. Protesters scaled the historic monument's walls, raising a banner beside India's national flag. Over 300 barriers were shattered, and 17 government cars were destroyed. Many people, including farmer leaders, were outraged by this deed, which they described as an unfortunate incident.

2. COVID-19: INDIA'S OXYGEN CRISIS



(Photo courtesy: thewire.in)

Within three months of India starting the world's largest vaccination drive on January 16, the second wave of Covid-19 devastated the country, and by April 30, India was reporting over four lakh new cases and 3,500 deaths a day. Amid oxygen shortage and a crumbling medical infrastructure, India hit a new low with two lakh deaths in May. Many international news publications believed that the number of dead was severely undercounted. According to a report in NPR, an additional 3.4-4.7 million people died during the pandemic in India, over 10 times the official death toll of 4.14 lakh.

3. PANDORA PAPERS

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists leaked 11.9 million files containing the names of politicians,

businessmen, and celebrities from over 200 nations and territories on October 3. The documents pertained to how prominent people amassed wealth in secret offshore assets. The list included the names of over 300 Indians, including famous businessmen, sports figures, and movie stars, like industrialist Anil Ambani, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and megastar Amitabh Bachchan.

4. PUNJAB POLITICAL CRISIS



Punjab CM Charanjit Channi and his predecessor Amarinder Singh. (Photo courtesy: The Quint)

Punjab saw a major political crisis this year as Amarinder Singh, one of the strongest regional satraps of the Congress, stepped down as the state's Chief Minister. The 79-year-old submitted his resignation along with that of his council of ministers on September 18, ahead of the assembly polls early next year. Singh said that he felt 'humiliated'. Charanjit Singh Channi became the first-ever Dalit leader to hold the CM's post in the history of Punjab.

5. LAKHIMPUR KHERI VIOLENCE



The incident occurred during the farmers' protest in Uttar Pradesh. (Photo courtesy: The Cognate)

On October 3, four farmers protesting the farm laws and a journalist were mowed down by an SUV allegedly carrying BJP workers in Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh. The main accused in the case Ashish Mishra, son of Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra Teni, was later arrested along with three others. In the violence that followed the incident, some people were lynched and vehicles set ablaze.

6. ASSEMBLY POLLS; MAMATA SWEEPS BENGAL



A Trinamool Congress supporter celebrates Mamata Banerjee's win in West Bengal. (Photo courtesy: onmanorama.com)

High-stakes assembly elections were witnessed in West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Puducherry. While the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress retained power in Bengal for the third consecutive time, the Left Democratic Front headed by Pinarayi Vijayan made the first re-elec-

tion in 44 years in Kerala. In Tamil Nadu, MK Stalin's Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam dethroned incumbent Edappadi K Palaniswami's All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led alliances won in Assam and Puducherry.

7. PEGASUS ESPIONAGE

In July, a leaked database of Israeli surveillance technology firm NSO Group, which was accessed by a Paris-based media nonprofit Forbidden Stories and Amnesty International, was shared with 17 media groups from 10 countries. The database included the list of government clients to which Pegasus, spyware, was sold. More than 300 verified Indian mobile phone numbers, including those of opposition politicians and journalists, were on the list of targets for surveillance. Prominent among them were Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, political strategist Prashant Kishor.

8. FARM LAWS REPEALED



Farmers celebrate at Tikri border in New Delhi. (Photo courtesy: telegraphindia.com)

On December 9, farmers called off their agitation after the government sent them a letter accepting most of the demands. Earlier, on November 15, PM Narendra Modi, in a televised address, had apologized to the farmers and announced the repeal of the three laws. A fortnight later, Parliament passed the Farm Laws Repeal Bill, 2021. The Centre also agreed to form a committee on Minimum Support Price and withdraw all cases against the farmers.

9. NAGALAND CIVILIAN KILLINGS



People attend a mass funeral of civilians killed by security forces in Nagaland. (Photo courtesy: scroll.in)

14 people were killed on December 4 in firing by the security forces during a counter-insurgency operation in the Mon district of Nagaland. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the case was of the 'mistaken identity' as Army had received information on the movement of extremists in Oting, in Mon district, and on suspicion of the vehicle carrying extremists, it was fired upon. The army apologized for the incident and initiated an inquiry, even as the state saw massive protest rallies and the clamor to repeal Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

10. RISE OFOMICRON

Just when the worst of the pandemic seemed to be over, the World Health Organization warned that a new Covid variant Omicron has been detected. Omicron has spread across the world in the past few weeks crushing hopes of life returning to normal. As many as 422 Omicron cases have been detected across 17 states and union territories in India so far and 130 of these people have recovered or migrated, according to Union health ministry data on December 26.



HOPE, HEALTH
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IN 2022

POSITIVE RESULTS DESPITE POLARIZED POLITY

Trump vanquisher struggles with own agenda



President Biden signing the \$2 trillion infrastructure bill. But his massive Build Back Better package is nowhere near passing. (Photo courtesy: AP)

The inauguration of President Joe Biden on January 20 marked a transition in executive branch rhetoric from “America First” to “America is Back.” The legitimacy of Biden’s victory with 306 electoral votes was questioned by Donald Trump and his supporters, with unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud. Biden’s inauguration was historic not only because a transition of power was achieved despite efforts to subvert this democratic norm, but also because Kamala Harris became the first woman to be sworn in as vice president.

But since then, President Biden’s approval rating, at 44% in mid-December, is among the lowest of any president at this point, second only to Trump. Biden’s per-

ceived inattention to the economy and his handling of America’s chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan are just two factors contributing to bipartisan disapproval. His vaccine mandates have the conservatives heaping scorn on him. Worst, though he managed to get the \$2 trillion infrastructure package passed in Congress, his Build Back Better has sputtered to a halt, mainly because of opposition from a Senator of his own party, Joe Manchin, who represents West Virginia, a red state.

However, not all is lost. Democrats have vowed to salvage the Build Back Better in 2022. Joe Manchin joined fellow Senate Democrats for a special caucus meeting around Christmas to try to find a middle path.

Billionaires plug for civilian space flights

Perhaps for the first time, the humans inside a spacecraft were worth more than the vehicle itself. On July 11, British business magnate Richard Branson strapped himself into the cabin of VSS Unity, along with three employees of his space tourism

company Virgin Galactic, for the suborbital flight.

Just over a week later, in a move timed to coincide with the 52nd anniversary of Americans’ first landing on the moon, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos climbed into a New Shepard capsule as a passenger on the first crewed flight conducted by his company, Blue Origin. Each billionaire slipped out of gravity’s clutches for a scant handful of minutes. But taken together, the two jaunts into sub orbital space promised to usher in a new era of spaceflight and space flyers alike.

Elon Musk’s SpaceX also launched and returned four non-professional astronauts on the private Inspiration4 mission in September.



Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos’ jaunts into sub orbital space promised to usher in a new era of spaceflight and space flyers alike. (Photo courtesy: Time magazine)

Kamala Harris beset by problems of a No 2

Vice President Kamala Harris narrowed her eyes and changed the subject when asked at the end of her trip to Paris in November what she had learned that would prepare her for the presidency.

Though she broke the highest glass ceiling for a woman in America, and is next in line to President Biden, 79, Harris has tried to quash any talk that she is aiming for the top job.

All the same, Harris has struggled to tell her own story, leaving others to fill the void. Conservative media have attacked her while mainstream outlets have published a string of stories about low morale and high staff turnover in her office.

Like many vice presidents, Harris is learning how hard it is to define herself as a No. 2.

“I wouldn’t say she’s had a lot of opportunities to really stand out,”



Kamala Harris became the first woman and first Indian American to be sworn in as Vice President of USA. (Photo courtesy: AP)

David Axelrod, a former advisor to President Obama, said.

The excitement among Harris’ supporters on the day she was sworn in as the first woman, the first Black American and the first person of South Asian descent to hold national office has given way

to frustration over what some view as unfair treatment by the media, the political class and, to some extent, the public.

Indeed, in interviews, some voters expressed open hostility to the notion of a female president. And several studies have shown Harris and other women of color experience more vicious and frequent online harassment. Her two highest-profile assignments have been notably difficult: leading diplomatic efforts to curb migration from Central America and pushing back against laws in Republican-led states to curtail voting access.

The number of people stopped by immigration enforcement near the border hit record highs this year, and two Democratic voting rights bills are being held up in the Senate, where Democrats lack the 60 votes to overcome a Republican filibuster.

The Jan. 6 insurrection and its cascading effect

On January 6, as Congress convened to certify Joe Biden’s electoral victory, hundreds of protesters who were in D.C. for the “Save America” rally violently breached the U.S. Capitol building, making it as far as the Senate chamber, killing one Capitol police officer, and injuring more than 140 others. Instead of encouraging a peaceful transfer of power—a fundamental tenet of American democracy—then President Donald Trump stoked the flames of insurrection with rhetoric about the election being fraudulent, stolen, and called on supporters to take action.

On January 13, Trump was impeached—for an unprecedented second time—for “incitement of insurrection.” More than 700 people involved in the riots have been



A gallows hangs near the Capitol building during the storming of the seat of US democracy. The noose was to pressure then Vice President Mike Pence to throw the election in favor of Trump. (Photo courtesy: Wikipedia)

charged with various crimes so far. The House “select committee” is investigating the attack.

Amid Trump’s false claims of

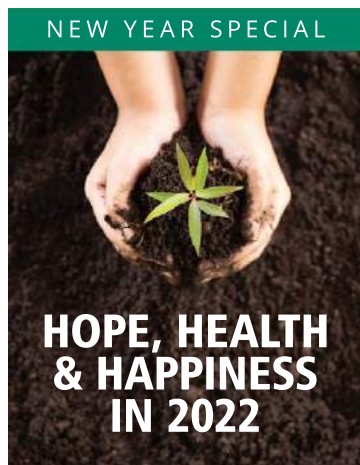
voter fraud, numerous states with Republican-led legislatures have passed laws that introduced new voting limits. Critics accused such efforts as unfairly targeting people of color, and Democrats in Congress fought for passage of comprehensive voting rights legislation.

Worse still, liberals have pointed out how Trump allies are vying for positions such as secretary of state and governor in battleground states like Arizona, Georgia, and Pennsylvania to be in a position in 2024 to try and overturn the results of the election and send in pro-Trump slate of electors if he is in the race. What is more terrifying are warnings of civil strife if the winner of the close presidential race in 2024 is not to the liking of the far right or the far left.

Awkwardness of AUKUS not just in acronym

On September 15, President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson jointly announced a new trilateral security partnership named AUKUS. The most significant part of the deal was the U.S. pledge to provide Australia with technology to build eight nuclear-powered (but not nuclear-armed) submarines. The only other country to receive similar access to U.S. technology is the UK. AUKUS was widely seen as a response

to growing Chinese assertiveness. Not surprisingly, Beijing denounced the pact as “extremely irresponsible” and “polarizing.” Even France fumed because AUKUS terminated a \$37 billion agreement it struck with Australia in 2016 to build a dozen diesel-electric powered submarines. France used the incident to press its case for “strategic autonomy,” that is, the ability of the European Union to act independently of the United States in world affairs.



**HOPE, HEALTH
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TOP NEWS THAT IMPACTED INDIAN AMERICANS IN 2021

Despite living in the shadow of the pandemic life went on with more milestones achieved, new paths trodden for Indian Americans as a community. Here's a quick look on some significant events from the past year that'll have a lot of bearing on the future....

Growing clout of Indian Americans in Biden administration

Through the year a number of Indian Americans were in news for their appointments in the Biden administration. While Rashad Hussain became first Muslim to be nominated to head US diplomacy for advancing religious liberties, former diplomat Vinai Thummalpally was appointed Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of US Trade and Development Agency. Maju Varghese, who previously served as a key

member of the Biden campaign and the inaugural committee was appointed as the deputy assistant to Biden and director of the White House Military Office and Mala Adiga as the policy director of his wife Jill Biden. Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Sonal Shah, Kamal Kalsi and Smita Shah were the latest nominations for members of his Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

Indian-American hoteliers grew to own 60 percent of industry



(Image courtesy: AAHOA/Facebook)

Members of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) – largely Indian Americans – now officially own 60 percent of the industry.

The count was based on a new study conducted by AAHOA in partnership with Oxford Economics, a global leader in forecasting

and quantitative analysis, on the economic impact and industry influence of the association's nearly 20,000 members.

The study analyzed the share of US hotels and rooms owned by AAHOA members, hotel operations, hotel guest ancillary spending, capital investment, and indirect and induced impacts supported by AAHOA hotels in other parts of the US economy. The 34,260 AAHOA Member-owned hotels account for 60 percent of all hotels in the US, 3.1 million guestrooms, and 2.2 million direct impact jobs.

The study's topline results were presented to AAHOA Members during the general session on the first day of the 2021 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show on Aug 3 in Dallas.

Elected mayors, 2 Indian Americans make history in Edison and Cincinnati

Two Indian Americans won hotly contested races as mayor of two important cities, creating history in the November 2 elections.

Sam Joshi became the first Indian-American elected Mayor of Edison, the 5th largest municipality in New Jersey. The Democrat defeated his nearest rival Republican Keith Hahn by over 1,700 votes. Joshi had been serving as the Vice President of the Town Council.

Thirty nine-year-old Aftab Pureval won the mayorship of Cincinnati defeating David Mann, a fel-



Aftab Pureval - Mayor Cincinnati, OH

low Democrat and town councilor. He is the son of Indian and Tibetan immigrants.

Four Sikhs among 8 killed in Indiana FedEx facility mass shooting

In mid-April last year four Sikhs, including three women, were among eight people who were killed in a mass shooting at a FedEx facility in the state of Indiana staffed by a large number of Indian-American employees, shocking the community leaders.

The gunman, identified as 19-year-old Brandon Scott Hole, was a former employee who died later by suicide. This was the worst Sikh massacre in the US after the Oak Creek Gurdwara mass shooting in Wisconsin on August 5, 2012, where seven members of the community were killed.

The four victims who belonged to the Sikh community were: Amarjeet Johal (66), Jaswinder Kaur (64), Amarjit Sekhon (48) and Jaswinder Singh (68).

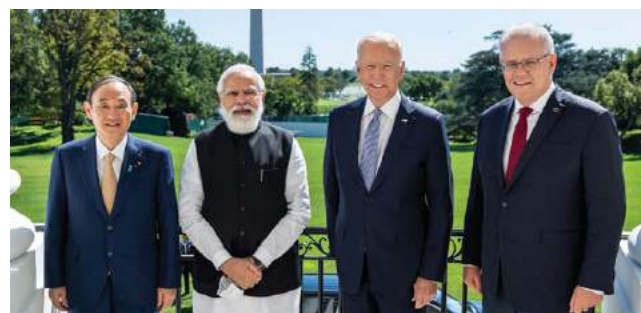
On July 28 the Indianapolis Metro Police Department (IMPd) and other law enforcement agencies held a press conference to announce the conclusion



(Image courtesy: ndtv.com)

of their investigation where in the authorities determined that this shooting was "an act of suicidal murder" and not driven by any particular ideology.

PM Modi visited US for first summit of Quad leaders



(Image courtesy: PM Modi/Twitter)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flew down to participate in the first in-person Quad Leaders' Summit along with leaders of Japan, and Australia in Washington with US President Joe Biden hosting the leaders at the White House on September 24. The PM had an "extensive and productive" discussion with President Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga. He later went to New York to address the United Nations General Assembly.

NY Governor Andrew Cuomo stepped down post sexual harassment scandal

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo resigned in August following an inquiry that found he sexually harassed 11 women, mounting legal pressure and demands for his departure by President Joe Biden and others, a startling downfall for a man once seen as a possible U.S. presidential contender.

Cuomo, a Democrat who had served since 2011 as governor

of the fourth most-populous U.S. state, made the announcement after New York Attorney General Letitia James on Aug. 3 released the results of a five-month independent investigation that concluded he had engaged in conduct that violated US and state laws.

Cuomo, 63, was elected to three terms as governor, as was his late father, Mario Cuomo.



(Image courtesy: Hindustan Times)

In a first, New York's World Trade Center lit up for Diwali

For the first time ever, a Diwali-themed animation adorned the One World Trade Center, a symbol of the City's eternal goodness.

The animation went live from Nov 2-4. Dubbed the All-American

Diwali experience, it also included a fireworks display viewed on both sides of the Hudson.

It was organized by New Jersey-based South Asian Engagement Foundation. On its part, FIA commemorated Diwali and 75

years of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav by lighting the Empire State Building in the colors of 'diya' in the presence of Consul General Randhir Jaiswal and some celebs.

AIA NY did Diya lighting at Times Square and displayed Diwali messages on the Nasdaq billboard & on mobile LED screens in NYC, Queens and Long Island to mark Deepavali 2021.



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Leading organization of Indian-origin people in the US, the Federation of Indian Associations – New York, New Jersey and Connecticut (FIA-NY NJ CT) hosted a special ceremony at Times Square to celebrate India's 75th Independence Day. While in 2020 it had hoisted India's National Flag

Biggest Indian flag unfurled at New York's Times Square

at Times Square for the first time at the iconic New York City destination, it hoisted the biggest tricolor unfurled at the same venue to mark 75 years of India's independence in 2021. The 48 square feet-long tricolor was unfurled at the 25-foot tall flagpole on August 15. Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal unfurled the tricolor.

The first India Day billboard at Times Square was displayed for 24 hours and the Empire State Building was also lit in the hues of the Indian tricolor.



(Image courtesy: India in New York/Facebook)

Bill introduced to declare Diwali Federal holiday

led by Congresswoman Carolyn B Maloney from New York, lawmakers in November introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to declare Diwali, festival of lights, a federal holiday.

The historic legislation was co-sponsored by a number of lawmakers including Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi.



Powerful Congressman Gregory Meeks, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, also supported the legislation.

Reprieve for H4 visa holders, major win for H-1B employers

In November the USCIS said it will now provide automatic work authorization permits to the spouses of H-1B visa holders on H4 visa. The immigration-friendly move of the Biden administration is likely to benefit thousands of Indian-American women.

Earlier in October 2021 in a major victory for employers, a US court has approved a settlement under which

an American immigration agency has agreed to recognize market research analyst as a specialty occupation for the purposes of determining the applications of H-1B visas, most sought-after by Indian IT professionals. The settlement approved by the federal district court in the Northern District of California would now let companies request that the USCIS reopen and re-adjudicate their denied H-1B petitions.

Indian Consulate hosts Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav week

The Consulate General of India in New York held a Special Week celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav from 29 Nov-6 Dec 2021. The journey of "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav", celebrating 75 years of India's Independence, was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March. The Special Week was launched by Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Minister of State for Culture through a video message.

The week-long program showcased various facets of India including dance, music, meditation, language, cultural diversity and aspirations of its people. While some of the programs were



(Image courtesy: Indian Consulate)

in-person, others were in virtual mode. The physical programs were also broadcast through the consulate's social media handles for wider reach.

US Hindus campaign against Dismantling Hindutva conference

Prominent Hindu groups fought vigorously an attempt to fuel Hinduphobia by organizers of 'Dismantling Global Hindutva Conference' held in September 2021. From writing letters and petitions to 41+ universities initially listed as sponsors to generating social media outcry – no stones were left unturned.

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The year that was – A look back at 2021 in South Asia

The year 2021 wasn't kind to South Asia. Pakistan experienced massive inflation and anti-government protests; Nepal and Myanmar saw political turmoil, and most importantly, the Taliban, which has been designated as a terrorist organization worldwide, moved in fast to fill the power vacuum and establish control over Afghanistan.

Here's a look back at all the events that made 2021 a politically significant year in South Asia:

TALIBAN TAKE OVER AFGHANISTAN



Taliban's new 33-member cabinet includes men who are considered terrorists by the US. (Photo courtesy: NDTV)

US President Joe Biden ordered the complete withdrawal of US soldiers from the country by no later than September 11, the 20th anniversary of the deadly 9/11 attacks.

As the American soldiers left Afghanistan, the country's national army collapsed like a house of cards, paving the way for Taliban forces to once again take over the nation. The Taliban's march into Kabul on August 15 prompted panic, chaos, and one of the United States' most serious foreign-policy crises in years. Crowds of Afghans fearful of Taliban rule rushed to the airport, desperate to board flights. Terrorists affiliated with the Islamic State attacked those gathered outside the gates, killing at least 183 people. Several images—including those of Afghans clinging to departing military aircraft—became searing symbols of US failure.

On August 30, the last US soldiers flew out of Afghanistan, now under the control of the Taliban, which the US failed to defeat after nearly 20 years of war.

The Taliban now face a hard task amid one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, while finding it difficult to establish their own legitimacy, battling ISIS-K, handling a tumbling economy, and sticking to their theocratic ideals of a Shariah-run state. As winter advances, there are serious shortages of food, medicines, and drinking water everywhere in the country. UNICEF and WFP both estimate that one million children are at risk of dying from hunger as the freezing winter depletes food supplies and cuts off rural communities.

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC WOES

Inflation is battering Pakistan's economy with prices of everyday goods on a rise, petrol-diesel prices surging, and most importantly, PM Imran Khan's government does not have funds to run the country. "We don't have enough money to run our country due to which we have to borrow loans," Khan said, adding, the "rising foreign debts and low tax revenue had become an issue of national security". Pakistan's November inflation hit 11.5 percent, the highest in 20 months. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) retained Pakistan in its grey list and urged the country to do more to investigate and prosecute senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated terror groups involved in terror financing. This adversely impacted the country's



Rising inflation is hitting the country's sizeable poor and middle classes. (Photo courtesy: siasi.pk)

prospects of obtaining financial assistance from world bodies such as the IMF, World Bank, and Asia Development Bank. The former head of Pakistan's Federal Board of Revenue said that the country has gone bankrupt. Its total debts and liabilities have crossed PKR 50.5 trillion, marking an increase of some PKR 20 trillion under the current government. The State Bank of Pakistan data showed that the current account deficit has increased to 4.7 percent of GDP, far above the target of 2-3 percent for 2021.

US SANCTIONS BANGLADESH



Rapid Action Battalion is the most-prestigious anti-crime and anti-terror unit of the country's police force. (Photo courtesy: Wikimedia)

On December 10, just six days before the 50-year anniversary of Bangladesh's victory in its Liberation War, the US slapped sanctions on an elite Bangladeshi paramilitary force, Rapid Action Battalion, for human rights abuses. NGOs have alleged that RAB and other Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies "are responsible for more than 600 disappearances since 2009, nearly 600 extrajudicial killings since 2018, and torture," the US Treasury said. The move marked the first time the US sanctioned Bangladesh, which is now the only South Asian country other than Afghanistan to receive the sanctions since 1998. (Individuals from South Asian countries have been targeted with sanctions in recent years, including two Sri Lankan military officers recently.) The announcement delivered a rare blow to Bangladesh's ruling Awami League party, which has sidelined the opposition and cracked down on dissent with impunity.

MYANMAR COUP



Following the coup, mass protests erupted across the country demanding restoration of democracy. (Photo courtesy: futurity.org)

Myanmar's powerful military deposed the ruling government in a coup d'etat and took control of the South Asian country. The new military junta declared Aung Suu Kyi's party National League for Democracy's landslide victory in the 2020 elections invalid. Military ruler General Min Aung Hlaing announced a year-long emergency before announcing himself as prime minister of the country. Several ministers including Suu Kyi were detained by the junta. Nationwide protests against the move met with a bloody crackdown, with more than 1,300 people killed and some 11,000 arrested, according to a local monitoring group. Suu Kyi was jailed for four years for incitement against the military and breaching COVID-19 restrictions, in a ruling that was widely condemned by the international community.

IN NEPAL, OLI OUT, DEUBA IN



After the exit of K P Sharma Oli (left), Sher Bahadur Deuba took over as Nepal PM. (Photo courtesy: sunitinews)

In July, Nepal's Supreme Court reinstated its parliament, which was dissolved by caretaker Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli in May, and ordered that his rival Sher Bahadur Deuba be appointed as prime minister. The move dealt a major blow to Oli, who was unable to muster a majority in the House of Representatives and had sought to force a fresh election by dissolving parliament on May 22. Oli became the PM in 2018 after the Communist Party of Nepal won a majority of the seats in the House of Representatives.

The party, however, has had two splits this year, weakening Oli's hold on power. Deuba, 75, was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the fifth time. Under Deuba, Nepal has been trying to improve ties with India, which took a severe hit during Oli's regime.



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While Netanyahu's ouster and the end of Shinzo Abe era made some of the top global headlines in 2021, the world faced another Covid threat as Omicron variant started spreading fast at the fag end of the year

Israel: Netanyahu ousted

Naftali Bennett, leader of the right-wing Yamina (United Right)



party, was sworn in as new Israeli prime minister in June ending Benjamin Netanyahu's record 12-year rule.

Israel's longest-serving leader, Netanyahu won a record four elections and held office five times.

His ouster came after Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid announced that he had reached a deal with a small pro-settler party and others to form a coalition government to cast Netanyahu out.

Japan: End of Shinzo Abe era

Shinzo Abe announced that he was resigning from the post due to health concerns in August.

The 65-year-old made the



announcement at a press conference in Tokyo saying he needed to be treated for a flare-up of his intestinal disease that led his first one-year stint to end abruptly in 2007. Yoshihide Suga was elected as the new leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to replace Abe.

Germany: End of Merkel era

Germany's center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) led by incumbent Vice-Chancellor Olaf Scholz, won the general election with 25.7 per cent of the vote in September, beating the conservative union CDU/CSU and bringing an end to the Angela Merkel era.



The conservatives led by Merkel had dominated Germany's Bundestag or the lower house of Parliament for over a decade.

With the retirement of Merkel, Germany and, to some extent, the European Union will enter a new era with unclear prospects.

China: CCP cements President Xi Jinping's stature

Hailing Xi Jinping as the creator of a body of "theories and thoughts", the Chinese Communist Party passed a historic resolution this November putting him on par with Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

The third resolution was adopted



at the Central Committee's 6th plenum paving the way for a third term for the President starting next year.

Haiti: President Jovenel Moise assassinated

Haiti's President Jovenel Moise was assassinated and his wife injured in an attack on their home in the nation's capital, Port-au-Prince. Moise had led Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the world, since 2017 but had faced widespread protests demanding his resignation.

(File photos, wikipedia)

Business

5 business deals that made big splash in India

From Tata Sons making a winning bid to buy Air India back to Byju's acquiring coaching institute Aakash Institute, here are the top 5 deals of 2021 as the Indian startup ecosystem came of age with 82 unicorns with nearly \$40 billion investment in 2021 alone.

Tata Sons rescues Air India

On October 8, 2021, it was made official that Tata Sons had made

the winning bid of Rs 18,000 crore to buy debt-laden Air India back from the Indian government, paving way for the return of the carrier under the brand Tata after 68 years.

As far as the recent developments of the deal are concerned, the Competition Commission of India has provided its nod to the sale. The deal is expected to revive Air India.

Sony, Zee Entertainment Merger

Sony Pictures Networks India Private Limited (SPNI) and Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) have signed definitive agreements to merge ZEEL with and into SPNI, in a deal that would create the largest entertainment network by viewership. The combined revenue of the merged entity is expected to reach close to \$2 billion. Mr. Punit Goenka will lead the combined company as its Managing Director & CEO.



Byju's acquires Aakash Institute

One of the most valued edtech startups in the world, Byju's acquired Aakash Institutes early this year in a deal worth about \$1 billion. The acquisition was the largest to be made by an Indian startup.

The acquisition was aimed at integrating the online educational services offered by Byju's and its subsidiaries with Aakash Institute's

offerings. "The future of learning is hybrid and this union will bring together the best of offline and online learning, as we combine our expertise to create impactful experiences for students," said BYJU'S founder and CEO BYJU Raveendran.

Tata Digital buys Big Basket

Tata Digital bought a majority stake (64.3%) in BigBasket's registered firm Supermarket Grocery

Supplies Private Limited, in a deal reportedly worth about \$1.2 billion. The acquisition was made official in April 2021.

The news has come at a time when Tata Group is aiming to make its own super-app. With the acquisition of BigBasket, Tata has taken a major step towards realizing its plans of building its own super-app.

Piramal Capital acquires DHFL

In September 2021, Piramal Enterprises Ltd announced the acquisition of the troubled housing financing firm Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DHFL) for a whopping Rs 34,250 crore.

Post-acquisition, Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd (PCHFL), which is a subsidiary of the Piramal Enterprises Ltd, were to merge with DHFL.

(File photos)





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BIGGEST SPORTS HEADLINES OF 2021

From empty stadiums during Tokyo Olympics to a 10-wicket haul in a Test and first-ever Olympics gold by Neeraj Chopra, sport saw it all as the world slowly reopened after a long spell of pandemic

Max Verstappen narrowly beat Lewis Hamilton

An emotional Max Verstappen described his journey to being crowned 2021 Formula One world champion as "insane" after he beat rival Lewis Hamilton in a last lap sprint for victory at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on 12 December. Verstappen thus snatched from Hamilton the chance to be crowned champion a record eight times.

It was a fitting end to a season that saw the two contenders go wheel-to-wheel in over 22 races, spanning four continents. It marked the first time the contenders were equal at the season finale since 1974.

Messi bids adieu to Barcelona after 21 years

Lionel Messi fought back tears during a press conference in August at which he confirmed he is leaving Barcelona, where he has played his entire career.

Lionel Messi broke down even before he spoke. There was a round of applause as he stood on the stage, bawling his eyes out. And then the bombshell dropped: "After 21 years I'm leaving with my three Catalan-Argentine kids. We've lived in this city, this is our home. I'm just really grateful for everything, all my teammates, everyone who has been by my side."

After 21 years, 17 seasons with the first time, 778 appearances, 672 goals, 10 league titles, six Balloons d'Or, four Champions League trophies, it's all over for Messi and his maiden club.

Rahul Dravid new head coach of Team India



Rahul Dravid's appointment was another major news which came out of Indian cricket. As per BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, Dravid was reluctant to take up the job at first and the board had to work hard to rope in the ICC Hall of Famer.

Dravid, probably the most high-profile coach in international cricket at present, replaced Ravi Shastri after the T20 WC 2021. Under him, India made a winning start and defeated New Zealand in T20I and Test series.

(Photos: Twitter, Instagram)

Neeraj Chopra clinches Olympic gold

Neeraj Chopra fought his way into the spotlight with a throw of 87.58m and immortalized himself as the first track-and-field Olympic Games medal-winner for India.

His was the country's seventh medal and the only gold in this Olympics and he joined shooter Abhinav Bindra (2008 Beijing Games) in an elite and very hard-to-reach club of India's individual gold winners in the showpiece.

Chopra shattered the glass ceiling to become the country's first gold-medallist in 13 years. He be-



came the youngest Indian to win an Olympic gold and the only one to do it in his debut Games.

Simone, Naomi bring mental health to the fore

It was the year that mental health took a prominent position in the sports world — led by two female athletes: Simone Biles and Naomi Osaka.

Biles, the American gymnastics superstar, earned her seventh Olympic medal and second in Tokyo with a third-place finish in the balance beam final on Aug. 3.

That was a week after she took herself out of several competitions to deal with a dreaded mental block that gymnasts call "the twisties," which prevents an athlete from performing high-level moves safely.



This was two months after Osaka pulled out of the French Open before the second round to take a mental health break after having announced she would not participate in news conferences in Paris..

The curious case of Peng Shuai



Peng Shuai is at the centre of growing concern after the tennis star alleged in November that

a powerful Chinese politician sexually assaulted her. The 35-year-old Peng, a former world number one in doubles, went missing only to reappear quite out-of-the-blue at a sporting event and a restaurant where she declared that she was absolutely fine.

Many questioned the sudden twist in the tale, including sportspersons and celebrities who had raised a hue and cry over her disappearance, which many think prompted the Chinese government to take necessary action to thwart global outcry and suspicion.

Australia win T20 World Cup

Australia won their first cricket T20 World Cup with an eight-wicket victory over New Zealand in the final on 14 November.

Australia have not lost to New Zealand in a knockout game over the last 40 years.

David Warner's impressive comeback from being dropped by Sunrisers Hyderabad in the preceding IPL season to receiving the 'Player of the Tournament' medallion in the T20 World Cup, was a true story of redemption.

Virat Kohli removed as ODI skipper

This was probably the biggest news coming out of Indian cricket in 2021. Nearly 90 minutes before the selection for the South Africa tour, Kohli was told about



being removed as the ODI captain.

He had relinquished the T20I captaincy in September and a couple of months later, the selectors decided to have one white-ball captain. Kohli continues to hold the top job in Test cricket and is always available for selection in ODIs and T20Is.

Another news from Indian cricket that made headlines was Kohli contradicting BCCI president Sourav Ganguly during a presser before departing to South Africa.

Tokyo Olympics in a pandemic

Any sporting event is, at its heart, a show. It has the actors on center stage, performing for the rest of us. It has the spectators, sitting in their seats watching raptly. And — in modern times, at least — it has the "home" audience, which in the past half century of growing video viewership has far outpaced the numbers of those actually in attendance.

When it comes to fan interaction, sports, arguably, have been affected the most of all. When TV cameras panned various Olympic venues and found emptiness, or even seats painted in seemingly random drab colors to look as if there are people in them, it was clear something — that certain something that only a crowd can provide — was glaringly absent.

Ajaz Patel's impressive 10-wicket haul



New Zealand's left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel became only the third bowler to take all 10 wick-

ets in an innings as India folded for 325 during the second session on day two of the second Test against New Zealand in Mumbai on 3 December during the India vs New Zealand series.

The Mumbai-born 34-year-old Ajaz, joined an elite list comprising just Jim Laker (1956) and Anil Kumble (1999) in scalping 10-wicket hauls in a Test innings. With all 10 wickets in his kitty, Patel also surpassed the great Richard Hadlee to record the best figures by a New Zealand bowler. Hadlee had taken nine for 52 versus Australia back in 1985.

When Novak Djokovic lost his cool

Novak Djokovic, during the Tokyo Olympics, lost his cool and abused his racket several times during a 6-4, 6-7 (6), 6-3 defeat to Pablo Carreno Busta of Spain in the bronze-medal match of the tennis tournament.

Djokovic received a verbal

warning for the net-post incident, but Carreno Busta appeared to question the chair umpire as to why it wasn't a point penalty since it was the second instance of racket abuse. The umpire, however, hadn't warned Djokovic for the first incident.

|| Swasti Mantra ||
सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग्भवेत्॥

May all be happy
May all be healthy
May all enjoy prosperity

Wishing you all

Happy New Year

2022

Kanchana & Jagadeesan Poola



**HOPE, HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
IN 2022**

On busy 1st day, NYC mayor Eric Adams urges resiliency against pandemic

- ▶ Adams is a vegan who wrote a book in 2020 about how a plant-based diet helped him with diabetes.
- ▶ Adams declared that New York is “not going to be a city of violence.”



Adams, 61, faces the immense challenge of pulling the city out of the pandemic. (Image Courtesy: Reuters)



Mayor Eric Adams with Dr. Rahul Sharma, Chair of Emergency Medicine of New York Presbyterian-Weill Cornell Medicine, who treated the NYPD officer shot on January 1. (Image Courtesy: NYC)

New York: New York City's new mayor, Eric Adams, on his first day in the office pledged to steer the nation's largest city out of the pandemic by drawing on the resiliency of its people and promising a government that works better. Adams rode the subway from his Brooklyn brownstone to City Hall for his

first day on the job.

Adams, 61, faces the immense challenge of pulling the city out of the pandemic, taking office as the city is grappling with record numbers of COVID-19 cases driven by the omicron variant.

The city has also been facing a rise in violent crime, particu-

larly in shootings and killings, a part of a national trend in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hours after being sworn into office in Times Square as the city rang in the New Year, Adams used his inaugural address to promise more efficiency, invoke New Yorkers' reputation for toughness, and urge the city's nearly 9 million residents to make a New Year's resolution that their lives not be controlled by the pandemic. “Getting vaccinated is not letting the crisis control you,” Adams said at City Hall.

Adams, a former New York City police captain, kicked off his first day as mayor by calling 911 to report two men fighting, and later in the day promised to aggressively go after violent crimes.

“I am clear on my mission to aggressively go after those who are carrying violent weapons in our city,” Adams said outside a hospital where he and his new police commissioner, Keechant Sewel visited after a police officer was shot January 1 while

“Get Stuff Done” is the motto of senior team of Eric Adams

Mayor Eric Adams announced members of his senior staff who will oversee operations at City Hall and advance his strategic policies and priorities.

“This team has the experience, knowledge, and skill to take our government — and our city — to new heights,” said Mayor Eric Adams.

The appointees in the senior team include –

- ▶ Frank Carone, Chief of Staff
- ▶ Dawn Miller, First Deputy Chief of Staff
- ▶ Madeline Labadie, Deputy Chief of Staff
- ▶ Ryan Lynch, Deputy Chief of Staff
- ▶ Menashe Shapiro, Deputy Chief of Staff
- ▶ Tiffany Raspberry, Senior Advisor for External Affairs
- ▶ Stefan Ringel, Senior Advisor to the Mayor
- ▶ Andrea Shapiro Davis, Senior Advisor for Talent and Appointments
- ▶ Eric Ulrich, Senior Advisor to the Mayor
- ▶ Edward Mermelstein, Commissioner, Mayor's Office of International Affairs
- ▶ Fred Kriezman, Commissioner, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit
- ▶ Roberto Perez, Director for Intergovernmental Affairs
- ▶ Dan Steinberg, Director, Mayor's Office of Operations
- ▶ Rachel Atcheson, Special Assistant to the Mayor



(Image Courtesy - Provided)

sleeping in his vehicle in a precinct parking lot between shifts.

Dr. Rahul Sharma, Chair of Emergency Medicine of New York Presbyterian-Weill Cornell Medicine, treated the NYPD officer, who was shot on Saturday, January 1st, and was thanked by Mayor Adams dur-

ing the press conference for his care. Dr. Sharma also serves as an NYPD Honorary Police Surgeon.

Adams said that he plans to keep in place many of the policies of outgoing Mayor Bill de Blasio, including vaccine mandates that are among the strictest in the nation.

Expertise and Experience galore in Team Adams

Before taking office on January 1, Mayor Eric Adams announced a slew of key appointments. Adams appointed Manny Castro as the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) while Fred Dixon has been reappointed as president and CEO of NYC & Company. Kevin Kim will serve as the commissioner of SBS. He is the first Korean-American to hold the role. Nina Kubota has been reappointed as president and CEO of the School Construction Authority. She was first appointed in April 2021 and is the first Japanese-American woman to serve in the role.

Earlier, Lisa Flores was appointed as director of the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) and Marjorie Landa as director of the newly-created Mayor's Office of Risk Management and Compliance. Jacques Jiha will continue to serve as Director of the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Maxwell Young is the new Communications Director.

National Community

New York's Jain youth takes 'Diksha' in BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha

Vadodara: A total of 109 youths took Diksha in the Diksha Mahotsav of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha in Vadodara, Gujarat at the hands of Guru Mahant Swami Maharaj and left worldly life to become monks.

All those who chose monkhood for the rest of their lives took 3-year training at Sant Talim Kendra of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha at Sarangpur (Gujarat). Out of the youths who took Diksha, 14 were foreign residents, 29 graduates, 14 postgraduates, 42 engineers, and 46 were 'only children' of their par-



Diksharthi Jainam Shah did his schooling at Herricks High School and graduated From Pratt Institute. (Photo: Provided)

ents. The Diksha Mahotsav was held in Vadodara on the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of Pramukh Swami Maharaj.

One of Diksharthi Jainam Shah (Dadhichi Bhagat) was born in New York to parents Pritam and Kavita Shah from Rajasthan (Pindwara) and settled in Roslyn (New York). He did his schooling at Herricks High School and graduated From Pratt Institute with degrees in Architecture and Construction Management. He was working with one of the best architecture firms in

Manhattan before he quit the job to embrace the path of renunciation and being initiated as a sadhu. His sister Dr. Shenika Shah became the youngest captain in the US Army Hospital serving both the nation and the community.

The Diksha ceremony took place with Vedic rituals. The youths, their parents, and relatives also took part in the rituals. Later, the parents wholeheartedly offered their beloved sons at the holy feet of Guru Mahant Swami Maharaj to become sadhus.

NEW YORK CITY MAYOR PROCLAIMS DEC 29 ERIC KUMAR DAY

Issuing the proclamation, Mayor Bill de Blasio has lauded the contributions of India American army veteran Eric Kumar and his community work. "We are proud to recognize the Co-Founder of South Asians for Right Choice, Eric Kumar," the signed Proclamation of December 29 reads. It goes on to state that under Eric Kumar, "South Asians for Right Choice has been committed to its goal of promoting the representation and participation of South Asian Community in our nation's political processes. Under Eric Kumar's leadership SA4RC has worked to inform South Asian New Yorkers about government at the local, state and national levels, address issues that impact them, and advocate for improved public policies."



The Proclamation continues, "Throughout his career Eric has demonstrated a sincere commitment to uplifting and empowering the Indo-American and South Asian communities, through his role as leader of SA4RC, his work with Association of Indians in America, his efforts to foster and strengthen the relationship between United States and India, and his service to the country as a veteran of the US army, Eric has made an indelible impact in New York and beyond. He exemplifies the spirit of care and compassion that defines our city."



US Army Veteran Proudly Serving the Community

Eric Kumar is a Veteran US Army officer. During his six years of service between active duty and National Guard, he was in combat in Desert Storm operation in Iraq / Kuwait, and was also deployed to Kosovo and South Korea along the DMZ line with North Korea.

He has over 25 years of combined experience as Political Operative, Entrepreneur, Executive, Team Building, Military, Public Sector, Community Service, Finance, Mortgage Banking,

Real Estate Investments, Communications, Event planning and Program Management.

Eric Kumar is Co-Founder of South Asians for Right Choice, which prominently got cited in the Mayor's Proclamation. He is also co-founder and president of South Asians 4 Better New York and a former National President of South Asian Business Alliance Network (SABAN). He is also Co-founder of G30 for India Vision Foundation, a non-profit subsidiary of India

Vision Foundation, which was formed by IPS Officer Dr. Kiran Bedi who also served as Lt Governor of Puducherry. Eric Kumar is founder of Commercial Capital Funding Group, a Nationwide Commercial Lender / Broker, specializing in Business Loans, SBA Loans, and Commercial Mortgages. He received his Masters in Finance and BA in Public Accounting from Hofstra University. He lives in New York with his wife Totee Kumar and 2 sons, Keerath and Kavish.



**HOPE, HEALTH
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IN 2022**

New Delhi: A large chunk of Omicron cases in India as the country faces a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic have been reported from big cities, the head of the country's vaccine task force told NDTV, adding the third wave of the pandemic is very much here.

Large cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata have a combined 75 percent share of infections of the highly transmissible coronavirus variant Omicron that was first detected in South Africa in November, said Dr NK Arora, who has been very closely involved with the rollout of vaccines from the very onset.

"Look at whatever the variants have been genome sequenced... We got our first virus right in the first week of December. So, last



India's Omicron tally touched 1,892 on January 4.
(Photo courtesy: scroll.in)

week, nationally overall, 12 percent of the variants identified were Omicron and the week gone by in the previous week, it has increased to 28 percent. So, it is rapidly increasing as a proportion of all the Covid infections in the country.

Now, having said that, I must

also say something more important and that is that around the major metro cities, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and particularly Delhi, it is over 75 percent of all the isolates now," said Dr Arora, who is Chairman of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immuniza-

tion, or NTAGI. India recorded 37,379 fresh Covid-19 cases and 124 deaths in the 24 hours ending 9 am on January 4. With 11,007 recoveries, the active cases in the country stood at 1,71,830.

According to the Union Ministry

of Health, the Omicron tally on January 4 touched 1,892, with the highest number of cases in Maharashtra (568). Delhi reported 382 cases of the new variant, followed by Kerala (185), Rajasthan (174), and Gujarat (152).

country were transformed into vaccination centers, where children received their first shot of Covaxin.

While Bharat Biotech's Covaxin has been the only approved vaccine for children, two more vaccines -- Corbevax and Covovax -- have been approved by the Centre and can be used as booster shots. According to reports and sources, the two vaccines could be used as booster shots.

Over 40 lakh children between ages 15-18 have been given Covid-19 vaccine jabs on January 3. The drive continued till 8 pm as per data shared by the CoWIN portal.

Over 39.88 lakh beneficiaries between the ages of 15 to 18 had registered on the CoWIN portal till January 3 afternoon. The registration for the same began on January 1.

Educational institutions, government centers across the

of Health, the Omicron tally on January 4 touched 1,892, with the highest number of cases in Maharashtra (568). Delhi reported 382 cases of the new variant, followed by Kerala (185), Rajasthan (174), and Gujarat (152).

Navjot Sidhu attacks his own govt, triggers turmoil

New Delhi: Ahead of the Assembly polls, the internal rift in Punjab Congress has widened with state party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu attacking his own government and ministers, including Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi.

According to sources, party leaders in Delhi are unhappy with the state of affairs in Punjab and have asked the state leaders to put up a united front and refrain from speaking against each other.

Sidhu has been critical of state Home Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, who reportedly has offered to quit his portfolio, for not arresting SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia in a drug case.

The Congress leaders have been saying the government will take action against him but only an FIR has been lodged.

Former Akali minister and brother-in-law of Sukhbir Badal, Bikram Singh Majithia was booked on December 21, under sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act. As per the FIR, Majithia was booked for allowing drug smuggling through the use of his property or conveyance, financing the distribution or sale of drugs, and hatching a criminal conspiracy for smuggling.

Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Channi had said last month that his government won't allow any drug trafficker to go scot-free and that the law will take its own course in Majithia's case.



Punjab Congress Chief Navjot Sidhu's public swipes have put his own party in the spot.
(Photo courtesy: The Tribune)

But a restless Sidhu is demanding immediate action against Majithia and has accused the home minister of "complacency" adding to the troubles in the state unit.

Though the Congress leadership in Delhi is trying to fix the internal problems of the states going to polls there seems to be no end to the troubles as after Punjab, problems erupted in Uttarakhand.

UP election: Opinion poll predicts comfortable win for BJP

New Delhi: The BJP is set to comfortably win the assembly election in Uttar Pradesh making Yogi Adityanath the first chief minister serve two consecutive terms since 1985, an opinion poll conducted by VETO for Times Now Navbharat has predicted.

According to the survey, the BJP might end up bagging 230-249 seats in the 403-member House while the Samajwadi Party is likely to bag 137-152 seats. The Bahujan Samaj Party, which bagged 19 seats in the 2017 assembly polls, is projected to win anywhere between 9-14 seats. On the other hand, Congress is expected to face another poll debacle with the survey predicting just 4-7 seats for the



Yogi Adityanath is the favored CM candidate for 52% of the respondents.
(Photo courtesy: moneycontrol.com)

party. The survey falls in line with other pre-poll surveys which have predicted a smooth victory for the BJP but

at the cost of a major seat share which will come as a direct gain for the Samajwadi Party.

For the BJP, while the Adityanath-led government's claim of revamping the law and order situation and the development works done in Kashi, Mathura and Varanasi seem to have worked in its favor, the issues of Lakhimpur Kheri violence, the second COVID-19 wave, and the farmers' protest might cause a substantial dent to its image.

Further, Yogi Adityanath was the favored chief ministerial candidate for 52 percent of the respondents, followed by Akhilesh Yadav (32 percent), Mayawati (13 percent), and Priyanka Gandhi (2.2 percent).

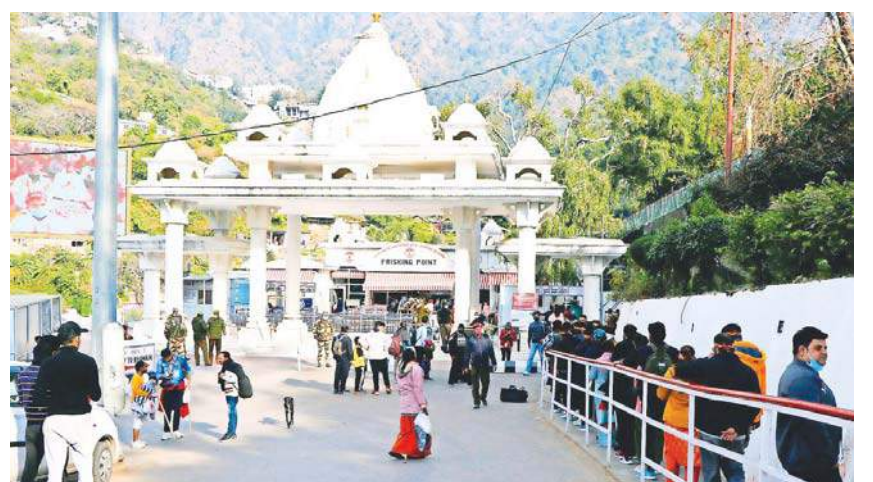
12 dead, 14 injured in stampede at Vaishno Devi shrine

Jammu: Twelve people were killed and 14 injured in a recent stampede at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district.

Officials of the shrine said the stampede occurred when a large number of devotees entered the Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan without permission slips.

"Extremely saddened by the loss of lives due to a stampede at Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan. Condolences to the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon. Spoke to JK LG Shri @manoj_sinha_Ji, Ministers Shri @DrJitendraSingh Ji, @nityanandraibjp Ji and took stock of the situation", Modi said on his official Twitter handle.

The Prime Minister's Office also announced an amount of Rs 2 lakh each for the dead from the Prime



Pilgrims queuing up on their way to Vaishno Devi shrine.
(Photo courtesy: indianexpress.com)

Minister's National Relief Fund. The PMO said that the amount would be given to the families of those who

lost their lives due to the stampede. The injured would be given Rs 50,000, the PM's Office added.



**HOPE, HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
IN 2022**

Washington DC: Patients with insurance will no longer receive so-called "surprise bills" following emergency medical care from an out-of-network doctor or facility. In December 2020, Congress passed a \$900 billion COVID-19 relief bill that included the main provisions of the law coming into effect on January 1, 2022.

Patients will still be responsible for any deductibles and copays they normally would have to pay under their plan, but they may only be billed at their plan's in-network rate.

One of the many constants of American medical care in the past few years has been the unexpected: Surprise medical bills. Around one in every six times someone checks into the hospital, or is taken to an emergency room, the treatment is followed by a surprise medical bill, a 2019 study found. But as of January 1, 2022, federal law now bans many types of surprise medical bills. Patients will also be protected if an out-of-network clinician is involved in a planned procedure at an in-network hospital, like if a surgeon is called in to assist during an operation, or a patient's anesthesiologist is out-of-network.

The law also requires out-of-network

New law makes many surprise medical bills illegal from Jan 1



The law also requires out-of-network providers to give patients notice of their charges 72 hours in advance of a planned procedure. (Image Courtesy: Kaiser Health News)

providers to give patients notice of their charges 72 hours in advance of a planned procedure. Patients will have to agree to receive out-of-network care to be billed. If a patient receives unexpected out-of-network care, health service providers and insurers will now be responsible for submitting their billing disputes to an independent arbiter.

"Generally speaking, keeping the consumer out of it and forcing the providers to be the ones to settle is a positive," said Eagan Kemp, a policy expert with Public Citizen, a liberal advocacy group, also told AP.

From the Desk of Nassau County Legislator Arnold W. Drucker

Embarking on a New Year Filled with Promise



By Arnold W. Drucker

Greetings and Happy New Year, dear friends and neighbors!

We are living in one of the most challenging times in our nation's history, but I am confident our perseverance and spirit will see us through this and onward to brighter days ahead.

As we navigate obstacles, LD 16 remains available to assist in securing COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, and booster shots. Please follow me on social media for regular updates about important testing and vaccination resources available for you and your loved ones.

To protect your hard-earned money, my office is partnering with Nassau County's Assessment Review Commission to host virtual tax grievance workshops on Friday, Jan. 21, and on Thursday, Feb. 10. Sign up on my website for one of these informative sessions and learn how to challenge a tax assessment. Details will be shared through social media and the LD 16 email list.

I am hopeful of passing legislation to repair or replace dangerous and defective sidewalks on County roads. Department of Public Works has repaved many County roads- it's perfectly fitting to have our sidewalks redone as well.

I look forward to launching Legislature's special task force to combat antisemitism. We hope to engage community leaders and residents through public hearings to identify the root causes and develop effective legislation to eradicate antisemitism at its incipient stages in our County.

I will continue to advocate amending the County's Human Rights Law to better protect Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders from targeted acts of hatred and bigotry.

My office is planning blood drives to ensure the gift of life is available to all. We need to protect ourselves from COVID-19. Please continue to wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, and get vaccinated and boosted.

When Nassau County residents work together, we thrive together - and I hope that message will carry us all through the year. Please stay safe!

(Arnold W. Drucker, of Plainview, was first elected to the Nassau County Legislature in 2016. He represents the 16th Legislative District in the Nassau County Legislature.)



Biden Signs \$770 Billion Defense Bill

The bill includes \$7.1 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative aimed at China

Washington DC: U.S. President Joe Biden signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, for the fiscal year 2022, which authorizes \$770 billion in defense spending, the White House said on December 27. Earlier, the Senate and the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly for the defense bill with strong support from both Democrats and Republicans for the annual legislation setting policy for the Department of Defense.

"The Act provides vital benefits and enhances access to justice for military personnel and their families, and includes critical authorities to support our country's national defense," Biden said in a statement after signing the bill into law.

Authorizing about 5 percent more military spending than last year, the fiscal 2022 NDAA is a compromise after intense negotiations between House and Senate Democrats and Republicans after being stalled by disputes over China and Russia policy.

It includes a 2.7 percent pay increase for the troops, and more aircraft and Navy ship purchases, in addition to strategies for dealing with geopolitical threats, especially Russia and China. The NDAA includes \$300 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance



NDAA includes a 2.7 percent pay increase for the troops, and more aircraft and Navy ship purchases. (Image Courtesy: Global News)

Initiative, which provides support to Ukraine's armed forces, \$4 billion for the European Defense Initiative, and \$150 million for Baltic security cooperation.

The bill includes \$7.1 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and a statement of congressional support for the defense of Taiwan, as well as a ban on the Department of Defense procuring products produced with forced labor from China's Xinjiang region.

It creates a 16-member commission to study the war in Afghanistan. Biden ended the conflict - by far the country's longest war - in August 2021.

DON'T WAIT. GET AHEAD OF LEAD.

Stay current!
Learn about new rules and responsibilities for owners under NYC law.

Under NYC's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act, property owners must inspect and remediate all potential lead hazards safely.

New definition for lead-based paint: The definition of lead-based paint changed to paint that has a lead content measured at 0.5mg/cm², lowered from 1.0mg/cm².

New definition of the term "resides" for a child: Lead-based paint requirements now apply to units where a child under the age of 6 routinely spends 10 or more hours per week, not just where they live.

New requirements for 1-2 family homes: All of NYC's lead-based paint requirements now apply to tenant-occupied units in 1-2 family homes.

NEED HELP?

If you can't afford to fix or remove lead paint hazards in your rental properties, there are grants and other resources available that can help.

Visit nyc.gov/leadfree TODAY for information about your responsibilities and resources to help you get ahead of lead.

Recovery of the Foundations of Indian Knowledge Systems

Recognition of the Secret of the Vedas
Reinterpretation of the Indus Valley Civilization
Rebuttal to the Aryan Invasion Myth

Twelve Evidences



A Calendar for the year 2022

by

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान खड़गपुर
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR

The Center of Excellence for Indian Knowledge System inaugurated at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur published a calendar for the year 2022 titled 'Recovery of the Foundation of Indian Knowledge Systems.'

It covers subjects such as the Indus civilization, cyclic time, space-time causation, non-linear flow and changes, Aryan sages, unicorn, Aeons of time, cosmic symmetry, semantics and semiotics, and world wars.

In each of the pages dedicated to 12 English months (January-December), the calendar challenges the myth of Aryan invasion through evidence. The South Asian Times will publish the same through the year in the first issue of every month beginning January 2022.

(Courtesy: IIT Kharagpur)

India's Sacred Space

The glaciers of Mount Kailash is the source of two important river Valley Civilizations –
(a) SINDHU or INDUS Valley Civilization from its Pre-Harappan (7000 BCE) to Post-Harappan diaspora (1000 BCE) in the West and (b) the SANPO or Brahmaputra Valley Civilization in the East

The tributaries of Indus as mentioned in the Rig Veda are sourced to the Siwalik ranges in the Central-Eastern Himalayas. One can trace an entire network of settlements along these tributaries i.e., Beas, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej, from the Eastern Himalayas to the Western River Valley. Also, the Eastern Sanpo Valley is the seat of pre-historic availability of proto-Paleolithic Riwoche horses found in India before the Aryan invasion (Time, Vol 146, No 22) and (Down to Earth, 15 February 1996).

Further east of Indus is the Ganga-Gomati-Ghaghara Civilization. The river Gomati recurs in the Rig Veda, specifically

the 8th Mandala. It is the very seat of the ancient forest of Sages, Naimisharanya, as mentioned in the Upanishads, and now adjacent to the historic Lakshmanapuri (later Lucknow).

The Colonial historians have repetitively avoided the East-West trajectory of Indian Civilization. They forged an Invasion Myth from the West through the Eurasian Steppes to intelligently contain the Vedic culture within 2000 BCE. The archaeology of the Indus Valley was therefore misinterpreted and de-contextualized.

January

2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	31					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Republic Day	27	28	29



भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान खड़गपुर
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR



HOPE, HEALTH & HAPPINESS IN 2022

Ancient Bharatiya traditions place prime emphasis on the development of manobala (bala=strength, manas=the feeling/emotional mind) for starting anything new. All successful Ayurvedic medical prescriptions quietly calculate all disease prognoses, personal power, and relationships based on the mental strength of each person. This is one reason why two people with the same disease get very different prescriptions in Ayurveda and why people with money but no mental strength lose their fortunes.

If it is so important, then why

The South Asia Times Columnist Dr. Bhaswati Bhattacharya is a Fulbright Specialist 2018-2023 in Public Health and Clinical Asst Professor of Medicine, Weill Cornell Medical College, New York. Her bestselling book *Everyday Ayurveda* is published by Penguin Random House. bhaswati@post.harvard.edu / www.drhaswati.com

doesn't mainstream society put more premiums on the development of manobala?

The main reason for neglecting the profound importance of mental health and effective rituals of self-care is the lack of good teaching of personal power in our best schools, universities, and the media. Sports coaches, music teachers, and arts teachers were our earlier link to emotional development, but these are a low priority today compared to exam prep.

Look at the best-schooled people. They are trained to get high scores on logic and calculation, but rarely focus on critical thinking and analysis that involves the emotions and intuitive mind. Indians living successfully in the diaspora or in urban cities of India have embraced western, modern culture so fully that they have unwittingly adopted the lack of values that reflect the basics of being human.

Worst of all is the labeling of bhakta (blind Hindu follower) or Hindutva radical on anyone that supports ancient Indian rituals or cultural thinking that we all have the power of God within us, and we are unabashed worshippers of the

endless (Sanatana) cycles of nature.

Of all who denigrate ancient Bharatiya values, known as hindu-phobia/hindumisia, the most common are educated, successful Indians in the diaspora and wealthy pockets of India. Why? They do not appreciate the connection between nature, adhyatmika, and the triad of power-money-success.

Here are a few steps through which one can practice to enhance manobala:

Breath

The first key to mental health is early morning breathwork. Conscious breathing techniques developed in yoga demonstrate how to develop the connection between the conscious mind and the vagus nerve that controls the diaphragm. If you learn how to breathe properly, your 5 senses will become linked to your mind during your breathwork. Proper breathing also eliminates toxins, changes our neurochemistry almost instantly, and increases our lung power and the immunity that resides within the respiratory tissues. Spending time in nature, in silence, during breathwork brings the mind back to its natural connection with the body's

perceptive elements.

Intimate Relationships

While popular media and oppressive fear-based religions dispense shame and guilt around intimacy, equating it to sex, Bharatiya values stress the importance of safe touching and physical comfort among friends and a close-knit family. The environment where each member can grow amidst a feeling of safety allows a child to develop inner vs. outer fears, connecting their senses with their intuition, and exercising the bioelectric heart. This connects all inputs of the body, heart, senses, and mind. When they get older, they can then distinguish the difference between intimacy and sexual pleasure.

Time in Nature

To heal, spend 30 minutes in an old grove of trees or a mountain area. Allow the mind to notice everything it can perceive. The powers of perception are honed when we walk quietly through nature, watching, listening, smelling, and feeling everything living around us. Regular hiking, activities, and a daily walk on the natural earth are essential for reconnecting with the slow drone pulse of the earth.



Everyday Ayurveda



By Bhaswati Bhattacharya

MPH MD (Family Medicine)
PhD (Ayurveda - BHU)

Ancient Bharatiya sage placed constant emphasis on developing mental and emotional resilience using practical tools, handing them down generation to generation, uninterrupted. Yet these practical tools are ignored in favor of new psychiatry theories that eventually lead back to ancient Bharatiya wisdom!

Pediatricians recommend the COVID-19 vaccine for 5-17 year olds.

Will my child have side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine like I did?

For children ages 5-11, the dose is only a third of the amount that is given to adults and side effects appear to be milder.

COVID-19 VACCINES SAVE LIVES. GET YOUR CHILD VACCINATED.
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Top Bollywood headlines in 2021

HOPE, HEALTH
& HAPPINESS
IN 2022

From the arrest of celebrity kid Aryan Khan to surprise weddings and non-stop social media battles, here are some of the most memorable Bollywood moments in 2021

1. Twitter bans Kangana Ranaut



Kangana cooked up several storms on social media with her instigatory comments in 2021. From statements about the West Bengal assembly elections to inflammatory critique of the farmers' protests, the actress stopped at nothing to have her opinions heard. All of it led to her ban from Twitter. Earlier, Diljit Dosanjh and Ranaut got into a war of words on Twitter after the release of the singer's new single, Riri (Rihanna).

2. Aryan Khan detained in drug case

Despite a number of conspiracies shroud-



ing the exact context of his arrest, Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan was marched to Arthur Road jail in Mumbai for alleged use of illegal substances by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). After spending 22 days in prison, he was granted bail with no proof forthcoming of his alleged drug possession. It reminded us of the Rhea Chakraborty-Sushant Singh Rajput saga all over again. Actor Ananya Panday's Mumbai home was also raided by the NCB.

3. Hollywood celebrates Diwali via Priyanka



This year saw the rise of Indian soft power through Hollywood's embrace of Diwali and its associated parties. Priyanka Chopra Jonas hosted one which saw the likes of Chrissy Teigen and John Legend attend. YouTuber Lilly Singh threw one too with Mindy Kaling, Lisa Koshy and others celebrating the festival of lights as well.

4. Vicky-Katrina wedding made a splash



The celebrity couple tied the knot at a private ceremony in the Six Senses Fort Barwara Hotel, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan, with friends and family in attendance. The initial photographs showed Vicky following Katrina and then the two waving at the paparazzi gathered at a distance from the venue. The pre-wedding festivities started officially on December 7.

Other new Bollywood couples in 2021 were Varun Dhawan and Natasha Dalal; Dia Mirza and Vaibhav Rekhi; Yami Gautam and Aditya Dhar; Rhea Kapoor and Karan Boolani; Rajkumar Rao and Patralekhaa.

5. Harnaaz Sandhu wins Miss Universe

India's Harnaaz Sandhu became the new Miss Universe, 21 years after Lara Dutta won the title in 2000. She represented India at the 70th Miss Universe 2021, held in Eilat, Israel.

The 21-year-old from Punjab claimed the crown edging out Paraguay's Nadia Ferreira and South Africa's Lalela Mswane. Sandhu was presented the crown by Andrea Meza, former Miss Universe 2020 from Mexico.

Before the Chandigarh-based model, only two Indians have won the title of Miss Universe - actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara



Dutta in 2000. Sandhu has also worked in Punjabi films like "Yaara Diyan Poo Baran" and "Bai Ji Kuttange".

6. Kareena, Saif trolled over son's name

A certain section of the internet took offense to the couple naming their first son Taimur, which they erroneously linked to the Turkic invader. A similar controversy unfolded after it was revealed that the couple had named their second son Jehangir. Saif Ali Khan, along with his wife Kareena Kapoor Khan, were trolled for naming their second son Jehangir Ali Khan.

7. I-T raids on Taapsee Pannu, Anurag Kashyap

In March 2021, the Income Tax Department's investigation unit conducted searches at premises linked to Bollywood actor Taapsee Pannu and film director Anurag Kashyap in Mumbai. The searches were a part of a tax evasion probe and conducted at about 30 locations in Mumbai and Pune.

'83' film delivers an unforgettable experience

New Delhi: Director Kabir Khan's '83' is a recreation of a momentous event - the Indian cricket team's first-ever World Cup victory in 1983. Despite being predictable, the film offers an exhilarating and occasionally touching experience that has viewers leaving the auditorium caught up in an afterglow of excited patriotism.

The film, mounted like a brilliantly restored or recreated documentary, captures the three and a half months of - 'the may or may not win' drama, where the actors and few of the actual players seamlessly weave in and out of the narrative.

The film focuses only on cricket and has everything that cricket fans could have possibly hoped for. The narrative - highlights and flashes the crucial matches and the moments in-between them, bringing back memories to the big screen after nearly 38 years.

As you are transported back in time, you witness how the 'underdog' Indian team was treated with disdain, and despite all odds, how they emerged as winners. It is invigorating to witness the matches once again and your mood swings like Kapil's bat. You cheer



A scene from the film '83.' (Indian Express)

for him when he creates history with a fabulous 175 - not out against the Zimbabwe team, and your blood boils when you realize that the legendary game was not recorded on camera because the BBC did not think it was important enough.

What you see on screen is Kapil's charisma,

the locker-room banter, the occasional tension and problematic behavior between the teammates, the strategy they planned during the matches and above all, the anguish and thrills of the matches played during that unforgettable summer.

Casting is another aspect of the film that

could not have been better either. Ranveer with his prosthetic dentures - oddly resembles Kapil Dev, but he slips into his shoes effortlessly delivering a brilliant performance that tugs at the heartstrings.

While he emulates the captain of the team, Saqib Saleem plays Mohinder Amarnath, Tahir Raj Bhasin essays Sunil Gavaskar, Jatin Sarna is Yashpal Sharma, Jiiva is K. Srikanth, Harrdy Sandhu is Madan Lal, Nishant Dahiya is Roger Binny, Ammy Virk plays Balwinder Sandhu, Addinath Kothare is Dilip Vengsakar, Dhairya Karwa is Ravi Shastri, Chirag Patil is Sandip Patil.

Boman Irani as the commentator Farrokh Engineer, Pankaj Tripathi as PR Man Singh, Neena Gupta as Kapil's caring and supportive mother, and Deepika Padukone as Kapil's wife Romi have their moments of on-screen glory.

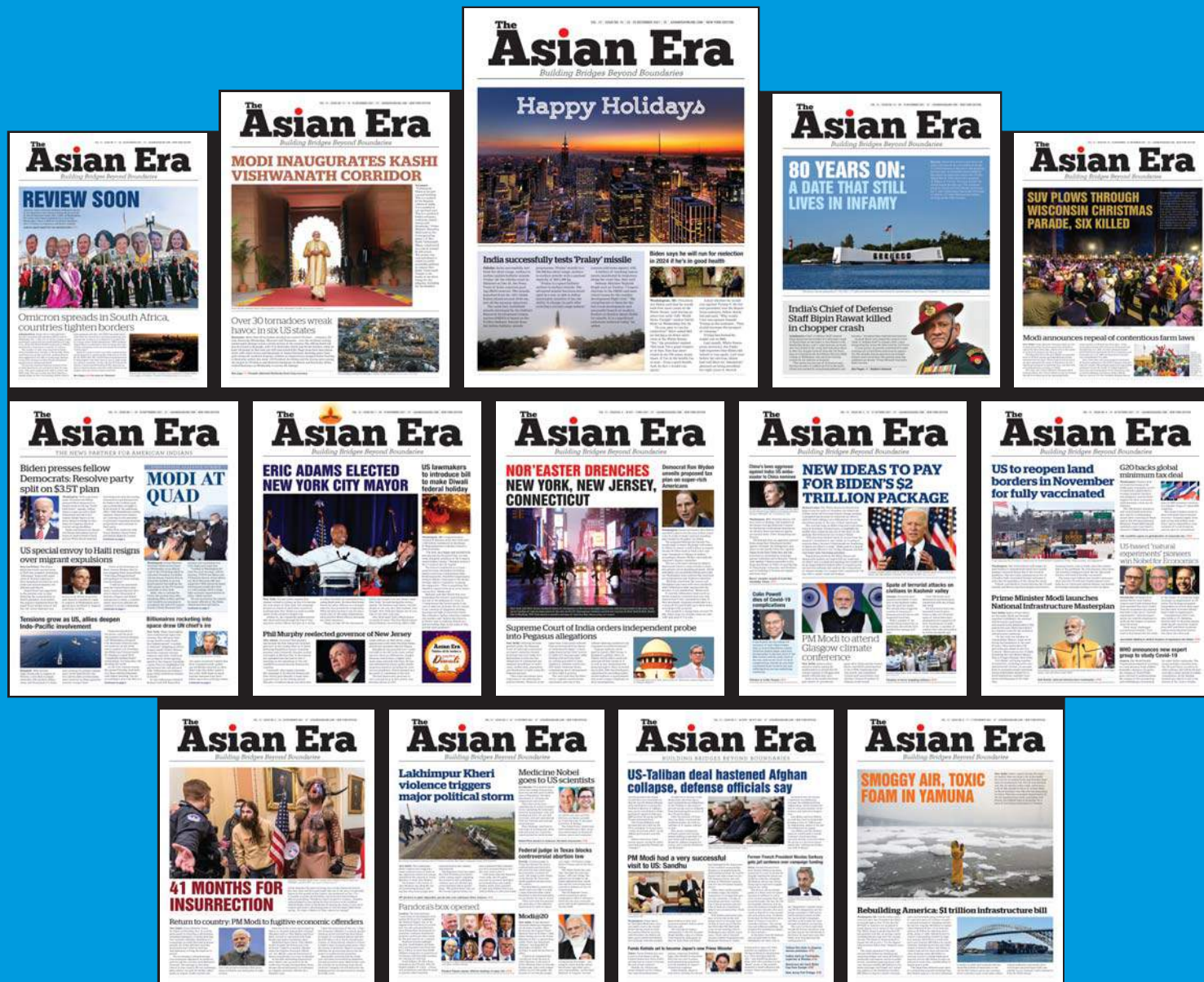
The film is astutely mounted, with ace production values.

Overall, the narrative - like most of Kabir Khan's films - is unabashedly manipulative, but this one delivers a cinema experience one won't be able to forget about anytime soon.

The Asian Era

Building Bridges Beyond Boundaries

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**HOPE, HEALTH
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Twitter's new CEO Parag Agrawal is the latest alumnus of India's prestigious technical universities appointed to head a multi-billion-dollar US tech firm, and Shivani Nandgaonkar wants to follow in his footsteps.

The 22-year-old student at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay - Agrawal's alma mater - has already been recruited by Google to become one of the thousands of IIT graduates at major American tech companies.

"When I heard about Parag, I was so happy," she said. "One IITian is also CEO of Google, Sundar Pichai. So this is my (stepping) stone now."

Twitter's Agrawal is the youngest chief executive in the S&P 500 index of the US' biggest companies at just 37.

Like Google-parent Alphabet's 49-year-old CEO Sundar Pichai, he left India after his IIT degree to pursue a postgrad degree in the United States before working at several American companies.

Other Indians at the highest corporate tech echelons include IBM's Arvind Krishna and Palo Alto Networks' Nikesh Arora - both IIT alumni - along with Satya Nadella of

Microsoft and Shantanu Narayen at Adobe.

Executives and experts say that beyond the South Asian nation's sheer size, the phenomenon is due to multiple push-pull factors and skill sets including a culture of problem-solving, the English language and relentless hard work.

IIT graduate and Sun Microsystems co-founder Vinod Khosla believes that after growing up with multiple communities, customs and languages, Indians have the ability to "navigate complex situations."

"Educational competition in India and societal chaos helps hone their skills in addition to the rigorous technical education at the IITs," the billionaire venture capitalist told AFP.

'Creme de la creme'

Silicon Valley demands technical expertise, managing diverse communities, and entrepreneurship in the face of uncertainty from its top executives. "In innovation, you have to be able to break the rules, you're fearless. And... you can't survive a day in India without having to break one rule or the other or dealing with incompetent bureaucracy or corruption," said Indian-American academic Vivek Wadhwa.

"Those skills are very useful when you're innovating in Silicon Valley, because you have to constantly challenge authority."

And they are valuable: ride-hailing giant Uber this month offered IIT



Satya Nadella (Microsoft), Arvind Krishna (IBM), Parag Agrawal, and Sundar Pichai (Google). (Image courtesy Forbes)

Bombay students first-year packages of \$274,000 for jobs in the United States.

The contest for such prizes begins early in a country of more than 1.3 billion people with a longstanding focus on education.

The IITs are seen as India's top universities, and more than one million pupils apply each year for just 16,000 places.

For one-and-a-half years, Nandgaonkar studied up to 14 hours a day, seven days a week. Some other students started preparations at just 14 or 15, she added.

"Imagine having an entrance which is 10 times more difficult than MIT and Harvard. That's what the IITs are," Wadhwa said. "So, it's the creme de la creme of the country."

India's biggest export?

The IIT network was established in

1950 by the country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who envisaged a pool of highly trained science and engineering graduates to help build India after the end of British rule in 1947.

But the supply of engineers was not matched by sufficient domestic demand, so graduates looked further afield, particularly in the United States where there was hunger for highly skilled workers as the digital revolution took off.

"In the '60s, '70s, and '80s, even into the '90s, Indian industry was not yet at the advanced (stages) and... a lot of those who wanted to do cutting-edge technology felt the need to go abroad," IIT Bombay Deputy Director S. Sudarshan said.

Agrawal, Pichai and Nadella spent a decade or more working their way through the ranks of their respective companies, building up

insider knowledge while gaining the trust of the firms' American founders. And for years, more than half the applicants for US H1-B skilled immigrant visas have been from India, and mostly from the tech sector.

In contrast, engineers from even more populous China had the option of finding jobs at home or returning after completing their US postgrads as their domestic economy boomed, said Johns Hopkins University professor Devesh Kapur, an IIT graduate himself.

The phenomenon may wane in time as India's own tech sector thrives, offering the country's best and brightest minds greater domestic opportunities, but for Nandgaonkar, becoming a tech boss like Agrawal or Pichai is not a far-fetched idea.

"Why not?" she said, "Dream big!"

Some mentions from the list of illustrious IIT alumni in America

Ajit Jain



(Image courtesy: Omaha World Herald)

Ajit Jain (70), who did his mechanical engineering from IIT-KGP, is the Vice Chairman of insurance operations at Berkshire Hathaway.

Jain worked for IBM before he moved to the US in 1978, where he earned an MBA from Harvard University and joined McKinsey & Co. In 1986, he left McKinsey to work on insurance operations for Warren Buffett. Jain was invited by his former boss, Michael Goldberg, who had left McKinsey & Co. to join Berkshire Hathaway in 1982.

In January 2018, Jain was named Berkshire Hathaway's vice chair of insurance operations and appointed to Hathaway's board of directors.

Pradeep Kumar Khosla



Pradeep Kumar Khosla, who did his BTech from IIT Kharagpur, is a computer scientist and university administrator. He is the current Chancellor of the University of California, San Diego.

After graduating, he worked in the area of real-time control with Tata Consulting Engineers and Siemens until 1982. By 1986, he had received both an MS and PhD degree from Carnegie Mellon University.

(Image courtesy: forbes.com)

Rakesh K. Jain



(Image courtesy: national medals.org)

Jain is the Andrew Werk Cook Professor of Tumor Biology at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the Harvard Medical School and Director of the E.L. Steele Laboratories for Tumor Biology at the MGH. In 2015, Jain received honorary doctorates from Duke University, KU Leuven, Belgium, and IIT-Kanpur. In 2013, he was awarded the National Medal of Science. He is regarded as a pioneer in the area of tumor microenvironment and is widely recognized for his seminal discoveries in tumor biology, drug delivery, in vivo imaging and bioengineering.

Rakesh Agrawal



(Image courtesy: Purdue University)

Agrawal is a chemical engineer known for his contributions to cryogenic gas separation and liquefaction and renewable and solar energy. He is the Winthrop E. Stone Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering at Purdue University in the US. In 2002, Agrawal was elected as a member of the National Academy of Engineering in the US for contributions to the development and worldwide implementation of high-efficiency and high-purity cryogenic and non-cryogenic gas separation processes.

Raghuram G. Rajan



Raghuram G. Rajan who received his Bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from IIT-D in 1985 along with the Director's Gold Medal for all-round performance, became the 23rd Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

He is currently working as a professor at the University of Chicago, and also as the Economic Counselor and Director of Research at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

(Image courtesy: Famous People)

(Source: IANS)



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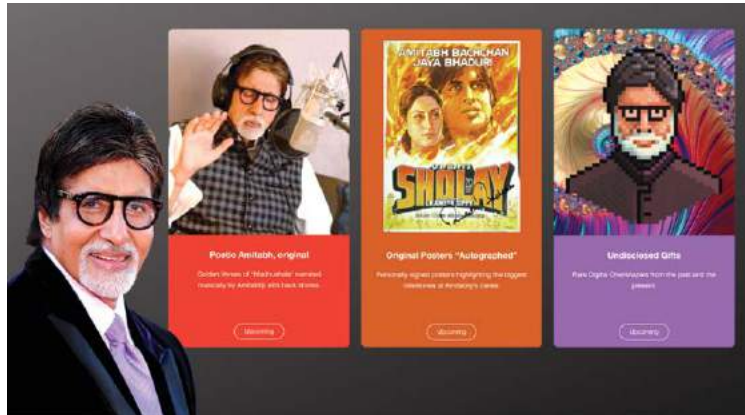
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In the past four years since they first came into existence in 2017, Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) have carved up a niche that has been growing rapidly as an increasing number of people are willing to pay for virtual collectibles. Global sales volumes of NFTs have galloped to \$10.7 billion in the third quarter of 2021, making an eightfold increase from the previous quarter, data from market tracker DappRadar showed.

Though India was slow off the mark, celebrities from the world of Bollywood and cricket are now

India joins global craze for NFTs as race for virtual collectibles heats up

Global sales volumes of NFTs have galloped to \$10.7 billion in the third quarter of 2021



Bollywood superstars such as Amitabh Bachchan and Salman Khan are planning to launch NFTs soon. (Image courtesy: Forkast)

consumed by the concept of NFTs. They are launching digital memorabilia as non-fungible tokens.

Bollywood superstars such as Amitabh Bachchan and Salman Khan are planning to launch NFTs soon.

While Bachchan's NFTs will include autographed posters of his movies, Khan has been building excitement on his Twitter account about the planned NFT launch. "Amitabh Bachchan's NFT auction will be a major event to witness because it will act as a curtain-raiser to understanding if Indians are willing to open their wallets for a digital creation by their favorite star's collection," says Monica Makhija, a market analyst working in Gurgaon.

With celebs entering the market, it's an innovative way for fans from all around the world to own the NFT of their favorite Bollywood actor and also collectibles

from their films. Fans tend to do crazy things for superstars.

Other celebrities and even sportsmen are not far behind. Indian cricketer Dinesh Karthik is auctioning a digital art reel from a cricket match where he hit a match-winning six on the last ball for around 5 ethers, a digital currency, worth around \$20,000. But he has yet to receive any bids.

Though, others have had success. One of India's top fashion designers, Manish Malhotra, recently sold NFTs of digital sketches of some of his most famous creations for \$4,000 apiece. Malhotra's website shows one can purchase some of his bridal wear outfits at a lower price range of \$2,500-\$3,500.

Artists' lost dream is finally coming true



Image courtesy: Photo ED Times

NFT token holds information of ownership thereby testifying the proof-of-originality. Now, imagine what happens if artists can attest to the ownership of their artwork content?

They would earn royalties without chasing the intermediaries (music companies, art galleries, brokers, etc.) during their lifetime. After their demise, the royalty goes to their declared nominee. This has inspired budding or experimental artists who, once posting their work for free sale or selling it for an affordable price, realize the potential inherent with NFTs that they can now use through blockchain technology and the use of NFTs.

NFTs create opportunities for new business models that did not exist before. Recently, art-backed NFTs have been selling for millions of dollars at major auction houses and other art houses. For example, an artwork by digital artist Beeple Digital was auctioned for US\$69.3 million, making it the third-largest sale by any artist to date.

Booming market of Virtual collectible leaves its Carbon footprints

Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are digital certificates of authenticity that are attached to any form of digital art—this can be in any form, be it audio files, video clips, stickers, memes, tweets, and even this article that you're reading, any form of digital art can make its creator a millionaire.

Introduced in 2017, NFT is one of a kind digital asset, which is part of the Ethereum blockchain and can be traded using Ether cryptocurrency. NFTs use a blockchain that records the ownership of the items, as individuals can have sev-



Introduced in 2017, NFT is one of a kind digital asset that can be traded using Ether cryptocurrency. (Courtesy: The Fordham Observer)

eral copies of the art but the original and authentic ownership will

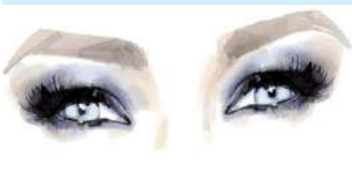
be just one, this is what makes NFTs different from the rest. These records are then stored on computers across the internet, making them public and impossible to lose or destroy.

Unlike cryptocurrencies, which are fungible or can be split, NFTs cannot be interchanged and are irreplaceable. Also, unlike any other traditional collectible, NFTs enable the creator to be paid some amount each time the collectible changes hands. While many cyber enthusiasts believe that the NFT trend is only going to soar high-

er in the near future, others hurl brickbats at NFTs for their obvious lack of utility and for being an absolute environmental burden.

A single Ethereum transaction's carbon footprint stands at 33.4kg CO₂, which is as much as 74,000 VISA transactions, according to Digiconomist, a platform dedicated to exposing the unintended consequences of digital trends, typically from an economic perspective. Additionally, each time an NFT is minted and sold results in a further increase of the overall carbon footprint.

Melania Trump to sell you an NFT of her 'cobalt blue eyes'



(Image courtesy: Artnet News)

Former First Lady Melania Trump is selling a non-fungible token (NFT) of her "cobalt blue eyes," her office announced on December 16. The watercolor image of Trump's eyes called "Melania's Vision" by fashion artist Marc-Antoine Coulon will cost 1 Solana, a cryptocurrency worth about \$180 as of December 16. Purchase of the NFT also comes with an audio recording from Trump "with a message of hope," the statement said. Trump also said she will be releasing more NFTs "in regular intervals." This first NFT is available until December 31, she announced.

World's first SMS sells for €107,000 at NFT auction

The first SMS ever sent over a mobile phone in 1992 was sold as an NFT at auction for 107,000 euros (\$120,600) at the Aguttes auction house in December 2021. The buyer, whose identity was not disclosed but is a Canadian involved in the tech sector, is now the owner of a unique digital replica of the first SMS message in the form of a Non-Fungible Token, or NFT. The first SMS was a 15-character message sent to Vodafone employee Richard Jarvis wishing him "Merry Christmas".



(Image courtesy: The Hindu)

Former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey sold his first tweet as NFT

Jack Dorsey, the former CEO of Twitter, sold his first tweet as an NFT token, for over \$2.9 million on Monday when the bidding ended on the "Valuables" platform, which is run by Cent, a blockchain-powered social media network. The tweet, which says, "just setting up my twtr," was first posted by Dorsey on March 21, 2006.



(Image courtesy: ZDNet)

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**HOPE, HEALTH
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By **Dev Banad
Viswanath, Esq.**

The EB-4 visa is an employment-based immigrant visa for special religious employees. Ministers/Priests and non-ministers in religious vocations and occupations may consular process or adjust status in the U.S. to perform religious work as a full-time compensated employee. There is a cap of 5,000 employees who may be issued a visa under the EB-4 category if they will be employed as a non-minister. There is no cap for employees who will be employed as a minister. Non-minister special immigrant religious employees include those within a religious vocation or occupation engaging in either a professional or non-professional role.

In order to qualify as a special immigrant religious employee, the foreign individual must:

eign individual must:

* *Have been a member of a religious denomination for at least two years immediately before the filing of a petition. The religious denomination must be a bona-fide non-profit religious organization in the United States.*

* *Come to the U.S. to work in a full time, compensated position as either*

- ▶ A minister of that religious denomination;
- ▶ A religious vocation either in a professional or nonprofessional position; or
- ▶ A religious occupation either in a professional or nonprofessional position

* *Employed for either a*

- ▶ Bona fide non-profit religious organization in the U.S.; or
- ▶ Bona fide organization that is associated with the religious denomination in the U.S.

* *Have been employed in one of the above positions after the age of 14, either abroad or in the U.S.,*



(Photo courtesy lawfirm4immigrants.com)

for two continuous years immediately before the filing of a petition.

Both the employing non-profit religious organization and the religious employee must provide supporting documents along with the proper forms. The religious organization must provide proof of tax-exempt status and proof of salaried or non-salaried compensation. The religious employee must provide proof of membership, documentation showing that religious worker is qualified to perform the duties of the proposed position, and proof of previous religious work.

There is a similar non-immigrant

category of visa for religious workers called the R-1 Visa. Please note that while the two categories are related and similar, they are parallel and anyone or organization considering bringing religious workers to their religious institution or entities should review them carefully with an experienced immigration professional who understands the process of foreign national religious workers.

Any dependents of EB-4 nonimmigrants, spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21, will need to apply for derivative family visas once the principal applicant is approved.

Dev Banad Viswanath is the Principal Attorney of The Banad Law Offices PC in the United States, and Banad Immigration in India for which Attorney Michael Phulwani is also affiliated as Of Counsel. With Offices in Manhattan, Queens, Bangalore, and Mumbai, the firm is able to assist clients with all facets of the immigration process, including Employment Visas, Consular Visa Assistance, Student Visas, Removal & Deportation, US Citizenship and Green Card Applications based on Family or Employment. Dev B. Currently in India, pl call him at Bangalore and Mumbai numbers: (080) 266-15891, (022) 2640-1140 or (022) 2673-0893.



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FINAL GOODBYE

Celebrities who left us in 2021

It has been a tough year for many as people world over tried to rebuild their lives despite living in the shadow of the pandemic. The past, however, is not to be forgotten as we remember those who moved on to another realm of the universe...



Larry King

The veteran TV and radio host known for his signature suspenders and legendary interviews, died Jan 13. He was 87.

"For 63 years and across the platforms of radio, television and digital media, Larry's many thousands of interviews, awards and global acclaim stand as a testament to his unique and lasting talent as a broadcaster," his company Ora Media said in a statement. "Additionally, while it was his name appearing in the shows' titles, Larry always viewed his interview subjects as the true stars of his programs, and himself as merely an unbiased conduit between the guest and audience."



Dilip Kumar

Legendary actor Dilip Kumar, credited with bringing method acting to Hindi cinema, passed away at the age of 98. He was admitted to the hospital on June 30 and passed away on July 7.

He perfected the brooding hero role in movies such as Devdas (1955) and Mughal -E-Azam (1960).

The actor, whose original name was Muhammad Yusuf Khan, is also regarded as the first 'Khan superstar' of Bollywood. He is survived by his wife Saira Banu.



Colin Powell

Colin Powell, the first Black US secretary of state whose leadership in several Republican administrations helped shape American foreign policy in the last years of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st, died from complications from Covid-19 on October 19. He was 84.

Powell had multiple myeloma, a cancer of plasma cells that suppresses the body's immune response, as well as Parkinson's, CNN reported.

Before rising to become the Secretary of State, Powell served as National Security Adviser and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Yashpal Sharma

Former India batsman Yashpal Sharma, a member of the 1983 World Cup-winning side, passed away on July 13 at his home in Noida. He was 66.

The right-handed batsman, who was the backbone of India's middle-order in the 1983 World Cup, played 37 Test matches, scoring 1606 runs, and 42 ODIs scoring 883 runs. He also played 160 first-class matches, representing Punjab, Haryana and Railways, and scored 8933 runs.

But he was best remembered internationally for his performances in India's first World Cup win, in 1983. He aggregated 240 runs at an average of 34.28 to return as the second-highest scorer for India behind skipper Kapil Dev in the tournament.



Puneeth Rajkumar

A death that shook the south Indian film fraternity this year was the sudden passing of Kannada star Puneeth Rajkumar on October 29. He was only 46 years old. He suffered a massive heart attack while at the gym and was rushed to a private hospital in Bengaluru after he complained of chest pain. Popularly called Power Star and lovingly called Appu, a name given to him after his debut as a lead actor in a 2002 film, Puneeth was easily the biggest contemporary star in the Kannada film industry. His body of work included several blockbuster films such as 'Raajakumara', 'Jackie', 'Milana', and 'Anna Bond' among others. He was posthumously awarded with Karnataka State's highest civilian award Karnataka Ratna.



Prince Philip

Prince Philip, the irascible and tough-minded husband of Queen Elizabeth II who spent more than seven decades supporting his wife in a role that both defined and constricted his life, passed away on April 9 in Buckingham Palace. He was 99.

His life spanned nearly a century of European history, starting with his birth as a member of the Greek royal family and ending as Britain's longest serving consort during a turbulent reign in which the thousand-year-old monarchy was forced to reinvent itself for the 21st century.

He was known for his occasionally deeply offensive remarks — and for gamely fulfilling more than 20,000 royal engagements to boost British interests at home and abroad. He headed hundreds of charities, founded programs that helped British schoolchildren participate in challenging outdoor adventures, and played a prominent part in raising his four children, including his eldest son, Prince Charles, the heir to the throne.



Bipin Rawat

India's first Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat died in a helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu on December 8. He was among the 14 people who were on board, including his wife Madhulika Rawat and staff members.

The first sitting Chief of Army Staff to be appointed as the CDS, Gen Rawat had an illustrious career spanning over four decades during which he served with distinction in several conflict-ridden areas, including Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast.

As CDS Gen Rawat was tasked to bring in theater command and jointness among the three services, and he was pushing it with a tough approach and specific timelines in the last two years.



Milkha Singh

India's 'Flying Sikh' died of Covid-19 related complications on June 18. Aged 91, Milkha Singh is one of India's greatest athletes. He had won India four Asian gold medals and finished fourth in the 400m final at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

The veteran athlete's track and field conquests are part of India's urban legend. He won India its first Commonwealth Gold Medal in 1958. Out of the 80 international races that he has participated in, Milkha Singh has won 77. He won five gold medals in the international athletic championships and was awarded the Helms World Trophy in 1959.



Rohit Sardana

Among the top Hindi anchors in India, Rohit Sardana is said to have contracted Covid-19 and it was unclear whether he had fully recovered or not. On April 30, 2021, he succumbed to a heart attack. The journalist was with Zee news for several years, before he joined AajTak in 2017. His popular show 'Dangal,' featured debate panels but had also been controversial for its rhetoric. He was awarded the Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Puraskar by the Indian government in 2018.



Sidharth Shukla

The actor who rose to fame with the television series 'Balika Vadhu', passed away following a massive heart attack on the morning of September 2. He won 'Bigg Boss 13' and was known for his drop-dead gorgeous looks as well as his sweet chemistry with his 'Bigg Boss' contestant Shehnaaz Gill. He was in the most searched celebrity list of Google in 2019 and also appeared in a Bollywood movie 'Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania' alongside Alia Bhatt and Varun Dhawan, for which he received a lot of appreciation.

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HOPE, HEALTH & HAPPINESS IN 2022

January 8, 2022

Ruled by number 8, Saturn and Mercury, your excellence is unmatched in terms of planning and observing. Your footprints will be followed by others. You should pay attention to the saying "Careless habits may lead to happening". Your dual personality helps to claim name and fame in all front of life. You are always there for your kins and friends. Your benevolent nature is an asset for you. You are supposed to get respect and regard from your coworkers and seniors. You believe in "Earn and Spend theory" means on one hand your diligence pays for you and on the other your spendthrift trait will credit you. You are likely to follow western culture of taking no tension for future. Your wardrobe is replete of high profiled and branded items. Your mental and physical state will catch your interest in spirituality. Catching time: November, January, May and July.

January 9, 2022

Ruled by number 9, Mars and Mercury, your state of being honored will improve in front of your seniors, parents and all others related to you. You are as fast as bullet train in taking the decision



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ANNUAL PREDICTIONS: FOR THOSE BORN IN THIS WEEK (JANUARY 8-14, 2022)

and all are likely to encourage you. Your needle always point to attain your aim by your sheer hard work. You are resolute by nature which clarifies all your doubts about any work assigned to you. Your way of working and way of talking all loved by everyone from your house to your gaffers. You will be ideal for your juniors. Your jolly nature infuses happiness in everybody's life. You are affirmative and amiable. You will get full support from your coworkers and seniors which take you on placid ride. Best time: Feb. March and July.

January 10, 2022

Ruled by number 1, the Sun and Mercury, systematic and pragmatic approach will provide a good base to start a new enterprise or grow in the existing one. You are the person who is always in demand. Psychology is the trade which if you follow will create benchmark for others. Your grilling skills will keeps you away from your foes and bilked person. In short you are a perfectionist in your area. Your spouse proves to be lucky for you as your nuptials follow by lot of surprises and monetary increment for you. You will feel a rising star inside you after your marriage. You utilize your time by increasing your intellectual powers of dealing with enigmatic problems. Taking chances is good as said "Luck favors bold" but also "Excess of everything is bad". You may get into fuss because of

this gambling so play wisely by putting all your experiences with you. Prosperous moths: October, January, March and August.

January 11, 2022

Ruled by number 2, Moon and Mercury, you easily get influenced by people of elite club who will direct your life on right path. Work is everything for you so whatever you start its good time for it and surely you will accomplished it. Your supporting nature and simplicity leave a lasting impression on people you meet. At some point of time, you tend to behave whimsically and that eccentric characteristic must have been controlled for your betterment. The coming year will provide you a lot of opportunities to attend some holy and spiritual ceremonies. Your quality to get well very easily with people around you will increase your networking and social circle. This year, you will get ample chances to change your job profile but a sense of satisfaction may not exist. Chances to move on from job to business are very high. A person of opposite sex may add new wings to your life and may change your entire vision towards life. You may get a legacy and money from a will. In the months of August, November and February, you may get success in your respective fields.

January 12, 2022

Ruled by 3, Jupiter and Mercury, your

hardnosed approach will take you on high rides. You are highly intellectual person with knowledge of every domain in your kit. You will rise like a shining star in the year to come. Your mind is extraordinary sharp which can solve conundrums within no time. Your organized risk taking abilities is good but high paid ventures may turn out to be inconsistent for you. Clashing of egos with your blood relatives may results in strain and irritation for both the parties. You are well versed with the pace of the competition as your communication skill which is the need of the hour is unbeatable. You ting to sort out all the matters but somewhere your immaturity may bring criticism for you. Advise to deal smartly with important matters of your life. Desired time: November, February and July.

January 13, 2022

Rules by number 4, Uranus and Mercury, unwittingly you will get lot of name and fame in your business but don't get excited just take the charge. Your shy nature may not increase the count of your social circle but your impregnable ideas and highly authoritative capability of taking your conclusions will make to handle the steering of your life in systematic way. You would also raise your bar by doing consistently good work. At times you show your introvert side and that side of yours needs to be modified, so that your

close ones won't misinterpret you. Go and express your feelings with any hesitation in love matters. You could associate or get connected with any social service organization. You would also take some strong decision independently this year. Chances to get a big break in entertainment industry are very high. September, February, April and June will shower the blessings.

January 14, 2022

Ruled by number 5 and Mercury, your inborn attitude will help you to make good relations at your work place with dignity. Circumstances will force you to follow your ideals path in your ventures.

You get ample of opportunities to prove your mettle at your work place and will appreciate by all. Circumstances will lead you to spend time with your family and with your livewire gestures you lead the show. You might hit the jackpot which improves your stability of your life. You are down to earth person. Playing with hurdles from your childhood makes you tough personality not easy to dominate. People will like for what your are by nature. They tend to follow you. Time to abreast you with your knowledge which unknowingly will open many doors for you to go places. If can't withstand with your affair then wise decision is to quit gently. Catchful months: November, December, May and July.

STARS FORETELL: JANUARY 8-14, 2022

ARIES: It should be a week of reflection for some.

Focus on the areas that need attention and identify yours strengths. This will enable you to excel in your field with hard work. Students have much to cheer and look forward to this week. They may soon see positive results of their hard work. Those looking to start their career may begin their professional journey shortly. Including superfoods in your diet may give a boost to your wellbeing. Newly married folks may decide to extend their honeymoon and enjoy a blissful time. It will be prudent option to clear all your pending dues or loan on time by the weekend. People staying in rented house may have a difference of opinion with the house-owner over a trivial matter.

LEO : The favorable position of stars present an opportune time to make the changes you desire in your life. Stronger, both mentally and physically, this is an ideal time to make difficult decisions, both on personal and professional front thatyou have previously pushed to one side. Your finances are likely to going through a positive phase. Returns from a past investment too will be on the higher side. Don't overdo an exercise routine, stick to your planned physical activities and let your body's energy flow naturally. This may also enhance your mental strength. Your positive frame of mind will enable to face a setback in love easily. Those looking to invest in real estate may find a lucrative deal coming their way.

SAGITTARIUS: Some of you may run into an old acquaintance and relive your carefree and happy days once again. The meeting may also turn into something deeper and prove beneficial later on. Be careful while lending money as chances of recovery appears very slim. Those looking to rent out they property should verify all details about the possible tenants carefully to rule out problematic aspects. It is a good time to plan a trip with your family to an exciting holiday destination as much fun is envisioned for all members. Seek the advice of expert before opting for any new diet or exercise routine, as an ill-informed decision may prove costly later on. Now is the best time to go out and splurge a little.

TAURUS: It is time to rise to the occasion and face all the challenges coming your way on the professional front confidently. This will enable you to make a mark at workplace. Avoid shrinking domestic duties despite your busy schedule. Your efforts to help around the house are likely to please family elders. Do not get into arguments that don't concern you. Maintain a distance from petty politics for your own peace of mind. Make some time and space to be alone with your thoughts this week. Meeting romantic partner after long is likely to offer a break from monotony and infuse a new spark in romantic ties. A trip overseas could be coming your way, bringing new opportunities with it.

VIRGO: It is likely to be a favorable week for any undertakings, especially those that enhance your knowledge and skill. Pay attention to the signals your body maybe giving out to you. Forget about all the problems and concerns, take care of yourself; avoid self-mediation at all cost. This is an auspicious week for networking and expanding your professional circle. Your good work is likely to be noticed by seniors and may open doors of promotion and increment. Go ahead with the investments you are really sure about and handsome profits may soon come your way. Deal with domestic troubles as soon they arise, seek help of relatives or family elders for an amicable solution.

LIBRA: Attending an event may prove beneficial for new entrepreneurs as they may find good investors for their new startups. You may be tasked with something important or prestigious at workplace. By moving carefully and patiently, you will be able to overcome complications and come out a proud winner. The week may turn out be a great time for your romantic life, and you are likely to enjoy your relationship with the partner/beloved. You can even plan a new adventure trip together. Some relatives may call in on you unexpectedly later this week bringing much laughter and joy on the domestic front. If possible schedule your travel plans for another time as hurdles and inconvenience are foreseen in your journey.

AQUARIUS : It is high time to bring order & discipline in all that you do. Be it a well kept working station or an orderly domestic front; enforcing discipline would work wonders for you all week. You would be able to realize all your plans and even the most unconventional ideas are likely to find understanding and response in the hearts of people. Those in the academic profession are likely to get encouraging news about their tenure. It promises to be a beautiful week for those in love. You can expect a lot of support and encouragement from your partner. The week promises lots of pleasant events and new acquaintances, try to make a good impression on others. Those planning a family getaway should rethink travel plans for some time & stay home for now.

PISCES: Avoid resting on your laurels and become complacent on the professional front. Make most of the momentum and surge ahead towards the goals you have set for yourself. You will need to be at your empathetic and tactful best while guiding a young family member. Patience and understanding will be vital to make them see the right path. Be very sure of your feeling before taking the next step on the romantic front. Those in business should focus on the marketing aspect of their venture as it may fetch some good business deals. In good shape, your mind and body will be in perfect sync and make you feel totally invigorated all week. Put travel plans on hold for the moment as the Pandemic is not over yet.

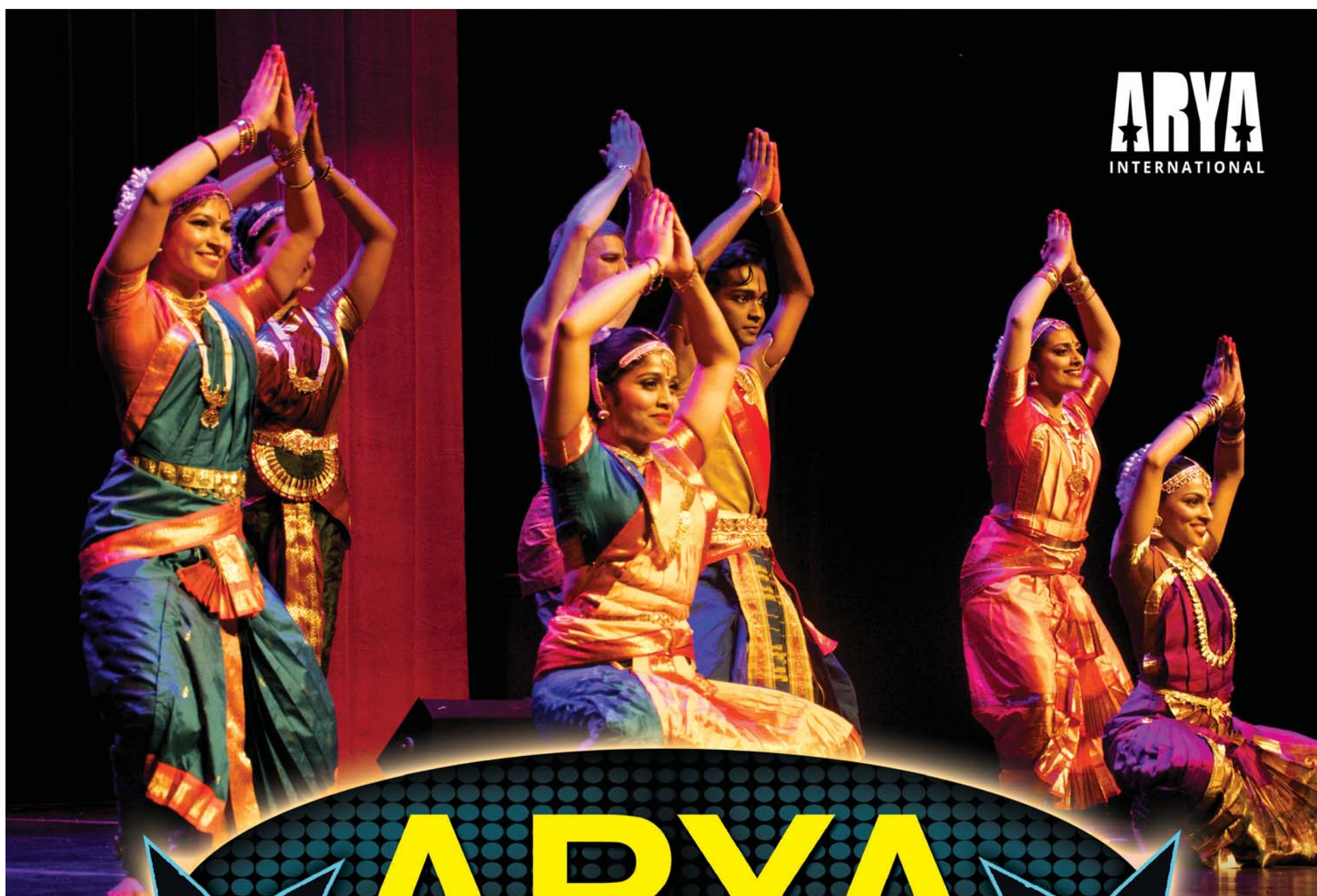
CAPRICORN: The week is favorable to focus on the things that you find difficult and tackle obstacles you previously thought you never could overcome. Your intuition would remain strong and would help you in making the appropriate decision. Don't neglect the activities and hobbies that bring you pleasure. It is also a good time to finalize your adventure holiday plans. Some of you may succeed in generating a second source of income and add to your wealth. Those in the final phase of property negotiations are advised to defer the deal for another time as stars are not favorable right now. Those keen to settle down may find a suitable match through traditional method. They are likely to enjoy much happiness and contentment in their marital life later on.

GEMINI: Your schedule is likely to remain packed all week with professional commitments. Use this time to seize opportunities that arise and even take a big chance. Strong support from your significant other is likely to give you strength and confidence to face every situation with enthusiasm. If you are feeling shaky about a fresh project, give it time or consult an expert. Hasty move can harm your capital. Attention to your health may be required. Seek doctor's opinion for any nagging concerns, however minor, to rule out anything serious. A long-drawn legal litigation over property may finally settle in your favor this week. It is a good time to plan a vacation with your family for fresh spiritual insights and explorations.

CANCER: Your good luck is likely to shine strong bright this week. Some of you can consider taking calculated risks in financial matters; the gains are far likely to exceed the gamble. Listen to your instincts to make the right decision. You may have to assume a more authoritative position in domestic matters to ensure peace and tranquility prevails at home. Try to relax, keep calm and restraint, all confusions will be resolved by themselves. Those looking to expand their family may hear happy news very soon. Those setting out on long journey need to cross-check travel itinerary carefully as any oversight may make the trip tiresome and hectic. Attention from a work colleague may both surprise and flatter you.

SCORPIO: You have been occupied with so many tasks and social activities that you have never really got time to spend for yourself. It time to prioritize things that are important and let go of the others, to safeguard your physical and mental wellbeing. This is a period of opportunity, rife with new beginnings. Your efficiency and eye for detail may improve your standing on the professional front and may even bring awards and accolades. Don't enter into investments or accept bargains that are supposedly risk-free, but take your time to make an informed choice. You are likely to feel emotionally satisfied on romantic front. There would be a plan for traveling to a distant place with your loved ones later in the week.

PISCES: Avoid resting on your laurels and become complacent on the professional front. Make most of the momentum and surge ahead towards the goals you have set for yourself. You will need to be at your empathetic and tactful best while guiding a young family member. Patience and understanding will be vital to make them see the right path. Be very sure of your feeling before taking the next step on the romantic front. Those in business should focus on the marketing aspect of their venture as it may fetch some good business deals. In good shape, your mind and body will be in perfect sync and make you feel totally invigorated all week. Put travel plans on hold for the moment as the Pandemic is not over yet.



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HOPE, HEALTH & HAPPINESS IN 2022

ARIES: (Mar 21-Apr 20)

You are likely to excel in all aspects of life in the year 2022. New possibilities may spring up and open doors to new beginnings in the first quarter. Your family and professional life both may bring good results for you. You may want to introspect, which is likely to make you wiser and more astute. Pursuing your creative passions, which may bring you fame and fortune, is likely to benefit you in the year 2022. Your financial position may generally remain strong. Expenses and spending may be balanced. On the domestic front, the year 2022 may prove to be auspicious. Peace and warmth may prevail all around. Children may make good progress in their respective fields. On the professional front, the year 2022 may be fruitful for youngsters, as their career choices may take them in the right direction. It is advised to upgrade your skills and knowledge to keep you with competition in job market. In year 2022, your energy levels are likely to be increased as you adopt healthy habits, which include physical exercises, yoga and meditation. You are likely to focus more on maintaining a positive mental attitude. In the year 2022, sensuality may be at its peak. Single individuals are likely to fall in love. Those in a long-distance relationship are likely to move in with their partner.

Lucky Color: Pink **Lucky Number:** 2, 6
Lucky Months: January, July & November.

TAURUS: (Apr 21-May 20)

This year 2022 may give you ample opportunities to bring desired changes in your life. Happiness could become your mantra for the year 2022. You may be able to make sensible decisions, which may alter the course of your life in the coming time. A sense of joy may rule supreme at home. You may become more accommodating to others' opinions. Some may even get a chance to intern in reputed organizations. Travelling may prove to be worthwhile. The year 2022 may be satisfactory on your financial front. You may see an increase in your wealth as you work towards building your fortune to secure your future. On the domestic front, the year 2022 may be quite amiable. A new member is likely to arrive in the family, keeping everyone in good spirits. The year 2022 may be quite progressive as far as your professional front is concerned. You may get a host of opportunities to prove your mettle. In the year 2022, health may undergo changes. You are likely to enjoy good health as your fitness training exercises. Towards the second quarter, your partner may be supportive of your decisions. Towards the last half of the year 2022, there may be some misunderstandings, which are likely to create rifts. But your sensible handling of issues may calm things down.

Lucky Color: Yellow **Lucky Number:** 3, 9
Lucky Months: July, September & December

GEMINI: (May 21-Jun 21)

This year 2022, you are likely to reap the benefits of your past efforts. Focusing on your goals is likely to make them more reachable. Do not lose your sense of fairness in tasks that require your intervention. You may have to push your boundaries and accelerate your pace to excel in your tasks. Your relationships are likely to improve and your love life may be very delightful. Students may get a chance to study abroad as their new session begins. The year 2022 may be good for your finances. Some of you may have enough reserves to purchase a new property. On the domestic front, the year 2022 may be very special as a happy atmosphere is likely to prevail at home. Relationships may improve and your ties are likely to strengthen in the New Year 2022. The year 2022 could bring mixed results on your career front. Hard work may be needed to perform well. There could be some profes-



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2022- HIGH HOPES FOR A GOOD YEAR FOR ALL

sional hurdles to face. The year 2022 may be quite bright as far as your health goes. Dietary changes and sporting activities may keep you fit and glowing. On the romantic front, the year 2022 could be very promising. Married couples may get to enjoy more understanding as well as intimacy. Your love life is likely to be quite fulfilling and satisfying.

Lucky Color: Maroon **Lucky Number:** 1, 4
Lucky Months: February, March, August & Oct.

CANCER: (Jun 22-Jul 22)

In the coming year 2022, you may get to see a marked change in your life. It is likely to be a perfect time to gather more information and learn new things. You need to pay attention in matters of finance and health. Travel to a foreign land for personal or professional purpose during the third quarter of the year 2022 may help you relieve stress and enjoy yourself thoroughly and tie up pending tasks. The year 2022 promises to be auspicious on your financial front. It may be a favorable time to invest in shares and speculative activities. Business may boom in the second quarter, bringing unexpected gains. On the domestic front, you are likely to have an average year 2022. Those married may start planning their families in the first quarter. It is likely to be a fairly productive year 2022 on your career front. You may grow as a professional and your skill set may be in great demand as the year 2022 progresses. Your health is likely to be perfect in the year 2022. Your love life may be a bit challenging this year 2022. You may have to act patiently to bring back lost love in life.

Lucky Color: White **Lucky Number:** 6, 9
Lucky Months: January, May & September.

LEO: (Jul 23-Aug 23)

The year 2022 may be good for you for personal growth. You are likely to overcome all hurdles that had been troubling you in the past. Peace and harmony may become the success mantra for your new year 2022. Your family and personal life may undergo a vast change and it is likely to be filled with happiness and pleasure. Some of you may get a chance to travel abroad. Focus on your goals and the year 2022 may pass smoothly. On the financial front, the year 2022 promises to be quite good. You may gain from investments in property and land. Some of you may experience a rise in income as the year 2022 progresses. Your domestic life may be quite fulfilling in the coming year 2022. Your relationship with your estranged siblings may improve, spreading cheer in the family. The year 2022 may be quite fruitful for your career. The start of the year 2022 may bring hopeful prospects. You are likely to make good progress on your professional front. On the health front, you may enjoy good health throughout the year 2022. Minor weather-related allergies or underlying disorders like BP or diabetes may bother you. Your romantic front is likely to be a roller-coaster ride in the coming year 2022. Couples in a long-distance relationship may plan to settle down towards the third quarter of the year 2022.

Lucky Color: Brown **Lucky Number:** 5, 11
Lucky Months: May, October & December

VIRGO: (Aug 24-Sep 23)

In the year 2022, positive energies may fill up your routine and you may be motivated to work harder than you did previously. You are likely to devote more time towards building your relationships, which will augur well in the years to come. Staying fit may become your mantra for the year 2022 and you may work hard to maintain good health. You may get to reap the benefits of your past efforts in the New Year 2022. Many pending tasks may see completion and you may get to enjoy the fruits of your hard labour. On the economic front, your position is likely to be stable in the New Year 2022.

Dealings in ancestral property may bring profits. The year 2022 may bring mixed results on the domestic front. The year 2022 may be quite good on your career front. Promotions and

salary increments are likely for senior professionals in the Year 2022. You may have to pay extra attention towards your physical fitness and dietary patterns. Your romantic front is likely to be very promising in the year 2022. Happiness may prevail in your love life and mutual understanding is likely to grow between you two.

Lucky Color: Green **Lucky Number:** 6, 8
Lucky Months: April, September & December

LIBRA: (Sep 24-Oct 23)

The Year 2022 may start on an optimistic note and good things may start to fall in your lap. It is likely to be a very fruitful phase for your personal growth. You may have to work hard to make your dreams come true in the first few months of the year 2022. Those working can look forward to a productive and satisfying time ahead. Financially, the year 2022 could be rewarding as you make money from various sources. Those seeking adventure may find travelling in the year 2022 - either for business or for leisure - very fulfilling. In the year 2022, some of you may be able to purchase a dream home or a vehicle from the money saved over the years. On the domestic front, a marriage celebration may keep the homely atmosphere abuzz with activity during the third quarter of the Year 2022. On the professional front, your stars are likely to be very favourable as the Year 2022 begins. Your skill sets may be much in demand and chances of receiving monetary benefits are high in the year 2022. You may remain happy and calm throughout the year 2022. Yoga practices may help you maintain sound mental health. Towards the beginning of the year 2022, your romantic front may be a bit challenging as your significant other may be busy with their work schedule.

Lucky Color: Grey **Lucky Number:** 3, 6
Lucky Months: February, July & August.

SCORPIO: (Oct 24-Nov 22)

In the Year 2022, you are likely to add new meaning to your life by incorporating positive thoughts in your routine. You need to keep sight of your future and work in accordance to your plans to make your mark. Motivation may be your key to success. The planetary alignment is in your favour and its effects may be seen in your routine work during the second quarter. Your enthusiasm and energy need to be channelized in the right direction to benefit in life and reach your personal targets as the New Year begins. On the financial front, you may have to be watchful of your expenses as overspending is likely in the coming year 2022. Use your intuition wisely in matters of money to keep the trade running smoothly and steadily. In the Year 2022, activities of children could become a cause of concern. Strict guidance may be required to set them right. The Year 2022 is likely to bring prosperity and all round growth in careers of Scorpio natives. Steady inflow of projects throughout the year 2022 may keep you busy. Some of you may receive an overseas job offer. Indulging in physical activities and practicing yoga throughout the year 2022 may bring positive changes in your overall wellbeing. On the romantic front, some tiffs and misunderstandings are likely to shake the core of your relationship in the first quarter of the year 2022. Happiness and intimacy may increase between you and your significant other.

Lucky Color: Peach **Lucky Number:** 5, 9
Lucky Months: January, May & October.

SAGITTARIUS: (Nov 23-Dec 21)

The Year 2022 brings happiness in your life as you start it on positive note. You are likely to dedicate the year 2022 to yourself and your interests. You may nurture your relationships and give time to your loved ones. You may face a few challenges during the mid part of the year 2022 and there may be some trials and tribulations to go through. However, this is likely to be a temporary phase, which may give you an enriching experience. On the financial front, you may have to be extra watchful of your expenses as they may shake your bank account during the mid year. Huge monetary gains are likely towards the last quarter, securing your future. The year 2022 promises to be cheerful and positive on your domestic front. Those with children of marriageable age may receive good news regarding a marriage proposal. On the professional front, you may be able to impress your bosses with your dedication and efficiency towards the second quarter of the Year 2022. Better career opportunities may come your way in the last half of 2022. Consider them all. In the year 2022, your

health is likely to remain fine. Practising yoga asanas and breathing techniques may help you stay fit in the Year 2022. On the romantic front, those in a long-term relationship are likely to settle down in holy matrimony in the first quarter of the Year 2022. The year 2022 is likely to be emotionally and romantically rewarding as you get to spend more time with your partner.

Lucky Color: Lemon **Lucky Number:** 7, 9
Lucky Months: March, June & October.

CAPRICORN: (Dec 22-Jan 21)

As the Year 2022 begins, promising prospects for a better tomorrow may come your way, which are likely to give you a chance to prove your worth. You may gain momentum in all aspects of your life, which may be rewarding and worthwhile. Your talents may be tested and you are likely to succeed in all your endeavours. You may experience a sense of enthusiasm and positive energy, which you are likely to utilize in the right direction during the second quarter of the year 2022. In the Year 2022, your financial position may be quite secure as you are likely to make huge profits from past investments made in the share market. In the first quarter of the year 2022, news of arrival of a baby in the family is likely to keep the domestic atmosphere jovial. A planned vacation in the third quarter may improve your mood and your interpersonal relationships. Those employed in the agricultural sector may have to face some challenges in the year 2022. In the year 2022, your health is likely to improve and you may find a balance in your physical as well your mental wellbeing. On the romantic front, your playful attitude is likely to spice up your love life in the year 2022. Passions may peak and for singles, the year 2022 may prove to be quite lucky as they may find a suitable match in an old friend. Those going through the procedures of a divorce may end up reconciling.

Lucky Color: Dark Blue **Lucky Number:** 4, 8
Lucky Months: January, May & September

AQUARIUS: (Jan 22-Feb 19)

As the Year 2022 begins, it may bring with it favourable options for you to excel in all spheres of life. Your energy levels may be at an all time high, which may help you get going steadily into the second quarter. The stars are likely to be in your favour and breaks in between may not affect your achievements in any way. In year 2022 you may achieve great things in life with your persistence and strong resolve. You may also get to enjoy the rewards and awards that come with it. On the financial front, you may see some ups and downs in the Year 2022. Expenses may rise and you may not be able to balance them with your income. Your domestic front is likely to be very satisfactory this year 2022. Promotions and increments may be impending towards the end of the second quarter. On the health front, the year 2022 may bring good results. Dietary modifications, sporting activities and practice of spiritual healing may keep you fit and in good shape. As the year 2022 progresses into the third quarter, you are likely to become more relaxed and comfortable in your relationship. Connect and happiness may increase between you two.

Lucky Color: Purple **Lucky Number:** 6, 9
Lucky Months: April & August

PISCES: (Feb 20-Mar 20)

As the Year 2022 begins, luck may be smiling on you and you are likely to move ahead in life despite all the odds. Your confidence may return and it is likely to help you make quick and correct decisions. You are likely to focus on things of value and pay more attention towards personal development. Your outcomes may exceed your expectations. Your quality of life is likely to improve and you may finally get to pursue your long-held dreams. Your well-planned financial arrangements may bring steady profits. There may be an increase in your wealth and your future may become more secure. On the domestic front, work commitments may not give you enough time to spend in the company of loved ones. On the professional front, the year 2022 may be quite rewarding as you get to reap the benefits of your past efforts. Corporate workers can expect promotions. The year 2022 is likely to bring average results on your health front. Physical activity and a good lifestyle may keep you fit all year round. On the romantic front, you can expect fulfilment and happiness as your ties strengthen in the year 2022.

Lucky Color: Red **Lucky Number:** 2, 9
Lucky Months: March, June & December



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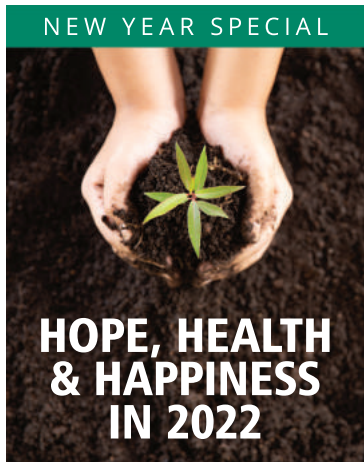
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New Year's Message

Jan. 1, 2022

From Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I send my warmest, heartfelt greetings to all of you for the New Year as we enter 2022.

As we have all passed through two difficult years with the global pandemic, my prayer is for life to improve for everyone in the coming year.

In thinking about a message and slogan for the New Year I wanted one that would be the most appropriate for the challenging times through which we have been passing. This slogan is one that everyone, no matter who we are, where we live, and what is happening in our lives, can use as a North Star to help make the coming year better. The slogan for this New Year is:

Experience the Inner You In 2022.

This message is universal and can be put into action by people from all walks of life. As hard as we may try, we can change certain aspects of our outer life, yet often find things happen to us for which we have no control. However, there is one thing each of us can have control over and that is tapping into what is inside of us. We each have an inner self that is unchanging, permanent, and everlasting. It is not subject to the ups and downs of our outer life. While we pass through moments of happiness and sorrow in our daily life and often have no control over them, we have within us a permanent place of joy. Going within to find it brings us lasting peace and happiness. For this reason, this slogan is one that can guide us in the coming year. We can each go within and experience our inner self.

How can we experience our inner being? Meditation is a simple practice that helps us focus our attention to uncover the treasures within. By finding this center within, our real self, we experience all peace, all joy, all bliss, and all consciousness. Tapping into it drenches us in lasting happiness that transforms our life. We become fortified with inner strength and a positive, optimistic attitude to help us pass through life's challenges.

As we enter 2022, let us spend time daily in meditation so each of us can "experience the inner you in 2022."



Yours affectionately,
(RAJINDER SINGH)

ANUVRAT MOVEMENT

This new year let's resolve to go vegan

By John Di
Leonardo

We're in a new year and that means you may be thinking about a New Year's resolution. Perhaps you're thinking about getting leaner or building more muscle. Maybe you'd like to be a little kinder or live a little greener. Perhaps you simply want to give more back to your community. By following just one simple ANUVRAT—or small vow—that of ahimsa, you can accomplish all these resolutions simultaneously.

Ahimsa—or nonviolence—is a primary tenet of Jainism. For Jain ascetics, this vow is a Mahavrata—or major vow—and may be observed by wearing a mask to avoid accidentally ingesting insects or gently sweeping their path with a broom so as not to accidentally step on any insects who may be hiding in their path. However, each of us can easily follow this path to a lesser extent by simply leaving animals off our plates and out of our closet. Traditionally, this requires vegetarianism and the avoidance of animal-based fabrics, however, I would contend that in the year 2022, we can (and should) easily take this a step further and avoid all animal products (including dairy and eggs) as well, strengthening our minds, bodies and souls all at the same time.

In my next article, I will go into detail as to how egg and dairy industries have become creative to hide their shortcomings. Their main goal is survival and misinforming consumers by brainwashing them with self-serving propagandas. Cruelty inflicted was beyond imaginations. Unfortunately, our government does not help by not considering birds as part of Animal Welfare acts. Thankfully, in the year 2022, there are an infinite number of tasty and healthful replacements for animal flesh, eggs and dairy. One can buy soy or oat milk in nearly every grocery store and even many coffee shops. And Beyond Meat, which makes realistic plant-based meats out of vegetables like peas and beets has become widely available at food marts and even major restaurant chains like TGI Friday's, with plans for it to soon be available in even fast-

ly and better our health, the environment and the lives of animals by only consuming compassionate, animal-free food. The organization Veganuary specializes in helping people make the transition for the new year and my organization Long Island Orchestrating for Nature (LION) would be happy to help too. You can reach us at www.humanelongisland.org.

John Di Leonardo is the founding director of Long Island Orchestrating for Nature (LION). He was previously the Senior Manager of Grassroots Campaigns and Animals in Entertainment Campaigns for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). He has a Master's degree in Anthrozoology from Canisius College. He also earned a graduate certificate in Jain Studies from the International School of Jain Studies (ISJS) in India. John can be reached at John@humanelongisland.org.



Acharya Tulsi Ji

food restaurants like KFC, McDonald's and Taco Bell.

Not only is eliminating animal-based products from your diet better for your karma but it is also better for your health and the environment. A staggering 51 percent or more of global greenhouse-gas emissions are caused by animal agriculture, according to a report published by Washington D.C. environmental think-tank the Worldwatch Institute. According to the

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, vegans are less likely to develop heart disease, cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure than meat-eaters are. In fact, NFL players like quarterback Cam Newton and world record strongmen like Patrik Baboumian are now going vegan to both help animals and improve performance.

"Ahimsa Parmo Dharma" is a Sanskrit phrase popularized by Mahatma Gandhi. In short, it means, "Nonviolence is the highest duty." This year, I encourage each of us to take this ANUVRAT a little bit more serious-



John with a rescued turkey at And-Hof Sanctuary for Animals last year



We wish you



HAPPY NEW YEAR

Manju & Raja Amar wish you all the best in 2022



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