

# The South Asian Times

excellence in journalism

Vol. 15 | No. 36  
Dec 31, 2022 - Jan 13, 2023

NEW YEAR SPECIAL

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## ANIL BANSAL

*Versatile Serial Entrepreneur, Inspiring Community Leader, Philanthropist,  
Humanitarian and Ambassador of Indian Art & Culture*

THE SOUTH ASIAN TIMES  
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

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# The South Asian Times

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Vol.15 | No. 36 | Dec 31, 2022-Jan 13, 2023 | 80 Cents **New York Edition** Follow us on [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) | [TheSouthAsianTimes.info](http://TheSouthAsianTimes.info)

## 27 Overseas Indians to receive Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2023

**New Delhi:** The 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention will be held at Indore in Madhya Pradesh from January 8-10. The awards will be conferred by the President of India Droupadi Murmu during the valedictory session of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA) are conferred by the President as part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention on non-resident Indians (NRIs), persons of Indian origin (PIOs) or organizations established and run by NRIs or PIOs in recognition of their outstanding achievements in India and abroad.

The 27 awardees this year includes Jagadish Chennupati of Australia in the field of science and technology and education, Sanjeev Mehta of Bhutan in education, Dilip Loundo of Brazil in art and culture and education, Alexander Maliakel John of Brunei in medicine, Vaikuntam Iyer Lakshmanan of Canada in community welfare, Joginder Singh Nijjar of Croatia in art and culture, Ramjee Prasad of Denmark in IT and Kannan Ambalam of Ethiopia in



**Darshan Singh Dhaliwal, Rajesh Subramaniam from the US among 27 awardees**  
(Image: Daily Pioneer)

community welfare.

The other awardees are Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay of Germany in community welfare, Mohamed Irfaan Ali of Guyana in politics and community welfare, Reena Vinod Pushkarna of Israel in business and

*Continued on page 6*

## India to host virtual summit of 120 developing nations



**"The Voice of Global South Summit"** is scheduled to be held on Jan 12-13 (Image: ARN News Center)

**New Delhi:** India will host a virtual summit of over 120 developing countries next week to share their economic woes in deliberations during its G-20 presidency this year, a top foreign ministry official said Friday.

The two day summit on Jan 12-13 will take up key issues such as the worldwide impact of the Covid-19 pandemic; the ongoing conflict in Ukraine decreasing access and affordability of food, fertilizer and fuel; and mounting debt

and inflationary pressures taking a toll on developing countries' economies, said Vinay Kwatra, the top bureaucrat of India's foreign ministry.

He rejected a suggestion that "The Voice of Global South Summit" next week implies India is moving away from old associations like the Non-Aligned Movement, a coalition of mostly developing countries. India was a founding member in the early 1960s of NAM, which was not formally aligned with or

*Continued on page 6*

## China seeks to minimize COVID risk during New Year rush



**No quarantine for overseas travelers in China from Sunday**  
(Image: LA Times)

**Beijing:** China is seeking to minimize the possibility of a major new COVID-19 outbreak during this month's Lunar New Year travel rush following the end of most pandemic containment measures.

The Transportation Ministry on Friday called on travelers to reduce trips and gatherings, par-

ticularly if they involve elderly people, pregnant women, small children and those with underlying conditions.

China abruptly ended a strict regime of lockdowns, quarantines and mass testing in December amid growing concerns about the

*Continued on page 6*

## Eric Garcetti renominated US's India envoy

**Washington:** US President Joe Biden has renominated Eric Garcetti as his envoy to India, with the White House exuding confidence that the former Mayor of Los Angeles would be confirmed by the Senate this time.

Garcetti, 51, is a close aide of President Biden. He has been Mayor of Los Angeles since 2013.

In July 2021, President Biden nominated Garcetti as his Ambassador to India. His nomination was initially blocked by

*Continued on page 6*



Garcetti was earlier nominated as his Ambassador to India in July 2021 (Image: Mathrubhumi English)

## Biden renominates several Indian-Americans to key posts

**Washington:** President Joe Biden has renominated at least half a dozen Indian Americans to key administration positions which could not be confirmed by the Senate in the last Congress.

Among those renominated by Biden and sent to the Senate were Richard Verma (54), to be Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, and Dr. Vivek

*Continued on page 6*



The 118th Congress kicked off on January 3 with the swearing-in of Senators (Image: JoeBiden.com)



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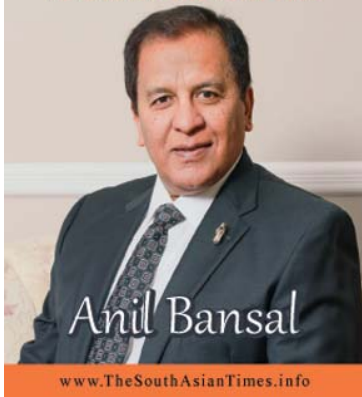
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Dear Friends,

Warm greetings for a healthy, joyous, and prosperous New Year. As we usher in the New Year, we wish you good health, more happiness, and greater prosperity.

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 14 glorious years of its publication. We are thankful to our loyal supporters, patrons, and colleagues for their invaluable continued cooperation in making us the most consistent publication.

As every year, we start our New Year with an incredibly special edition by featuring The South Asian Times - Person of the Year. This year, we are pleased to also share the special supplement

commemorating and celebrating the centennial birth Anniversary of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, our Person of the Year 2014, inserted with this edition. The supplement is also being printed and distributed in Ahmedabad, India.

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 13 years, we have proudly featured as Person of the Year amazing persons who have transformed thousands of lives with their Generous help, Guidance, and sharing their Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom.

This time, again, The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2022 is a remarkable Indian American based in New Jersey: A highly successful businessman who is also an exemplary humanitarian, philanthropist, inspiring community leader and an ambassador of Indian arts and culture here in our neighborhood.

Forsythe Media Group is

### Letter from the Publisher



Kamlesh C. Mehta  
Chairman & Publisher

pleased and honored to recognize and feature Mr. Anil Bansal as "The South Asian Times -Person of the Year 2022".

Mr Bansal was the President of Federation of Indian Associations-NY-NJ-CT (FIA-Tristate) for two years (2020 and 2021) during the worst of the pandemic of the century. Under his Presidency, FIA-Tristate rendered great serv-

ices here and also sent over \$50 Million worth of COVID supplies to India.

The Government of India bestowed the prestigious PBD Award on FIA in 2021 during his Presidency.

Mr. Bansal, IIT-Kanpur alumnus, is a real-estate magnate, diversified successful investor, and a founder of Indus American Bank. He is currently Director of Indo-American Arts Council and was instrumental in celebrating the 3-day Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, specially curated cultural and artistic events, at Carnegie Hall, New York. His charity arm, Bansal Foundation, managed also by his wife Mrs. Kumud Bansal, pledged \$2.5 Million to a hospital in his alma mater, Kanpur-IIT.

As every year, the exclusive, extensive, and immaculate Person of the Year profile of Mr Anil Bansal is also penned by our renowned Founding Editor Mr. Parveen Chopra. The South Asian Times congratulates and wishes him continued success on the launch of [www.ALotusInTheMud.com](http://www.ALotusInTheMud.com), a web magazine on

spirituality and wellness.

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.

Since its inception, The South Asian Times has maintained an immaculate reputation for its consistency for excellence in journalism, value-based content, clean display, and qualitative advertising, setting high 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 significant success & sustain. Hope you will enjoy the New Year Special issue. Your comments and suggestions are welcome,

Kamlesh C. Mehta  
Chairman@  
TheSouthAsianTimes.Info

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

<p>2022</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>2018</p>
<p>2017</p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>2015</p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>2013</p>

*Happy New Year*

*Heartiest Congratulations to*

**ANIL BANSAL**

ENTREPRENEUR, PHILANTHROPIST,  
COMMUNITY LEADER, EDUCATIONIST

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

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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

*Best wishes,  
Ravishankar Bhooplapur*

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## H-1B, EB-5 visa application fees set to shoot up

Washington: The application fees for employment-based visas, such as H-1B and L, are set to increase under a proposed US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) fee rule to recover operating costs and prevent case backlogs.

The new fees, the USCIS said in a statement on Tuesday, will allow

it to fully recover its operating costs, reestablish and maintain timely case processing, and prevent the accumulation of future case backlogs. The USCIS receives approximately 96 per cent of its funding from filing fees.

Under the new proposal, which will be subject to a 60-day comment period before it takes effect, the application fee for H-1B visas for high-skilled workers would jump by 70 per cent to \$780.

H-1B visa petitioners would also need to pay \$215 in pre-registration fees, up from the current \$10 fee.

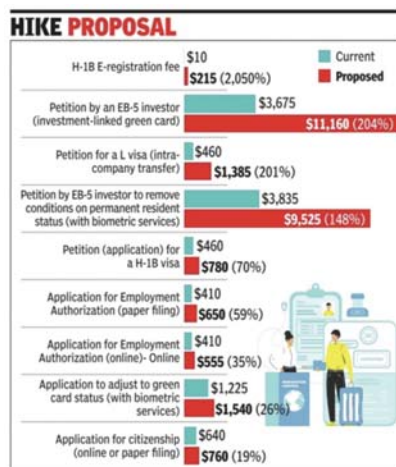
"Although an increase from \$10 to \$215 may appear dramatic at first glance, the \$10 fee was established simply to cover a small portion of the costs of the program, as opposed to no fee at all," the USCIS said in a statement. In 2019, the DHS established a \$10 registration fee per beneficiary for H-1B petitions.

Under the proposed rule, employers hiring high-skilled foreign nationals will pay 201 per cent more for employees on L-1 petitions -- a rise from \$460 to \$1,385, and 129 per cent more for individuals on O-1 petitions (\$460 to \$1,055).

Fees for requests to sponsor H-2A visas for agricultural workers will see a 137 per cent rise from \$460 to \$1,090. There will be a 135 per cent rise in fees for H-2B visas for seasonal and non-agricultural workers from \$460 to \$1,080.

Applications for green cards from immigrants who are already in the US would increase by 35 per cent to \$1,540.

The USCIS will host a public engagement session on the proposed fee rule on January 11.



Application fees for EB-5 visas would be \$11,160, a massive 204 per cent spike (Image: Tol)

## India to host virtual summit of 120 developing nations

Continued from page 3

against any major power bloc.

India endeavors, he said, to provide a common platform to deliberate on the concerns, interests and priorities of developing countries and exchange ideas and solutions to various problems. "India will work to ensure that the valuable inputs generated from partner countries receive due cognizance globally," he said.

Steering the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations' summit in 2023, India is expected to use the opportunity to gain prominence in global decision-making. Asked whether India's long-time rivals China and Pakistan will be participating in the summit, Kwatra told reporters that invitations are being extended to more than 120 countries and his ministry would provide names after participation is confirmed.

## 27 Overseas Indians to receive Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2023

Continued from page 3

community welfare, Maqsooda Sarfi Shiotani of Japan in education, Rajagopal of Mexico in education, Amit Kailash Chandra Lath of Poland in business, Parmanand Sukhumal Daswani of the Republic of Congo in community welfare, Piyush Gupta of Singapore in business, Mohanlal Hira and Sanjaykumar Shivabhai Patel of South Sudan in community welfare. Sivakumar Nadesan of Sri Lanka, Dewanchandrebhose Sharman of Suriname, Archana Sharma of Switzerland, Frank Arthur Seepersad of Trinidad and Tobago, Siddharth Balachandran of the UAE, Chandrakant Babubhai Patel of the UK, Darshan Singh Dhaliwal of the US, Rajesh Subramaniam of the US and Ashok Kumar Tiwary of Uzbekistan are also among the awardees.

The jury that selected the recipients comprised Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankharas its chairman and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar as its Vice-Chair, among other distinguished dignitaries from different fields.

## China seeks to minimize COVID risk during New Year rush

Continued from page 3

economic impact and rare public protests in a country that permits no open political dissent. On Sunday, China is also ending mandatory quarantines for people arriving from abroad.

The current outbreak appears to have spread the fastest in densely populated cities, putting a strain on the health care system. Authorities are now concerned about the possible spread to smaller towns and rural areas that lack resources such as ICU beds.

Overseas, a growing number of governments are requiring virus tests for travelers from China, saying

they are needed because the Chinese government is not sharing enough information on the outbreak, particularly about the potential emergence of new variants.

"People using public transport are also urged to wear masks and pay special attention to their health and personal hygiene," Vice Minister Xu Chengguang said at a briefing. The call stopped short of asking citizens to stay home entirely, as the government had since the pandemic began, although some local governments have urged migrant workers not to return home.

## Eric Garcetti renominated US's India envoy

Continued from page 3

Republican Senator Chuck Grassley because of allegations of inappropriate behavior by one of his senior staffers.

Though the hold on his nomination had been lifted, he could not be confirmed by the last Congress.

"Eric M Garcetti, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of India," the White House said after sending the nomination to the Senate. The move came as the White House began renominating candidates who were not confirmed in the last Congress.

"As Secretary (of State, Antony) Blinken said very recently, our relationship with India is crucial and it's consequential, so we see this as a very important nomination," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters on Tuesday at her daily news conference.

## Biden renominates several Indian-Americans to key posts

Continued from page 3

Hallegera Murthy (45), to be Representative of the U.S. on the Executive Board of the World Health Organisation.

Biden also sent to the Senate the renomination of Anjali Chaturvedi to be General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, Ravi Chaudhary to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Geeta Rao Gupta to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, and Radha Iyengar Plumb to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defence.

Verma, who served as a former U.S. Ambassador to India from January 16, 2015, to January 20, 2017, is currently the Chief Legal Officer and Head of Global Public Policy at Mastercard.

Murthy was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in March 2021 to serve as the 21st Surgeon General of the country. He previously served as the 19th Surgeon General under former President Barack Obama.

All these key administration positions were nominated by Biden in the last Congress, but they were not confirmed by the Senate.

The list of Indian-Americans in the White House as compiled by Indiaspora reflects that there would be only a few meetings inside the White House or in Biden's Oval Office that would not have an Indian-American presence.

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**PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022**

**Mr. Anil Bansal**

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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022



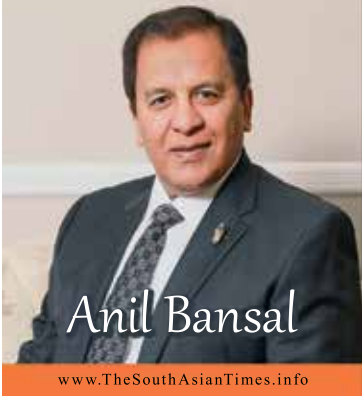
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Anil Bansal

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By Parveen Chopra

Founding Editor,  
The South Asian Times

Founder:  
www.alotusinthemud.com

Not for nothing is Anil Bansal called a serial investor/entrepreneur. With a masters in material science from Notre Dame, he went from an Apple computer distributor to starting software companies to banking and real estate.

A humanitarian at heart, he has been quietly doing philanthropic work all along. Most recently he gave a big donation to a medical school being set up by his alma mater, IIT Kanpur. He received plaudits aplenty when he helmed FIA as President for two terms during the Covid years. He is also on the board of Indo-American Arts Council. We interviewed him a fortnight ago in his office in a building he owns in Lyndhurst, NJ. He avowedly chose to base himself there because it is close to New York City where he loves to go for lunches and dinners.

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW

*The South Asian Times: You talk about your father influencing you...*

**Anil Bansal:** Yes, I asked my father one day, are we rich or poor? My father said if your hand is like this (palm downward), you are rich and if your hand is palm up it doesn't matter how much you have, you're poor. And I think that influenced

# ANIL BANSAL

Serial investor • Community leader • Humanitarian • Philanthropist

## Shares his life journey and success secrets



me all through my life that I always wanted to be the giving hand. My father, Jag Mohan Bansal, was from Mathura and my mother, Lila Wati, was born in Ballabgarh in Haryana

For success, luck is there, but hard work is always needed. Having observed my father and grandfather, I never shied away from working hard. Actually, what I am proud of is, I've been independent in making enough money to take care of myself since the age of 12. Even as a child I would buy wholesale firecrackers and Holi colors and then sell them on the street to other kids and make money and have enough

for me to play with. And after school, for a couple of hours, I used to go to my father's shop in the wholesale electric goods market in Bhagirath Palace, Chandni Chowk in Delhi. Once there was a circus in town and somebody from there came in looking for hundreds of fluorescent lamps. I took them to my father's shop, got them at a good price and made money as commission.

*You believe going to IIT was a transformative experience.*

**Anil Bansal:** I was a brilliant student in school (Hindi medium Jain

School in Daryaganj), but I never thought I would get into IIT. Then I heard some talk and said, I'm going to take the admission test. I didn't even tell my family. But when I got selected my name was in the papers. I went to IIT Kanpur in 1972 and that transformed me, once a street kid. At IIT, even if you didn't believe it, every day you heard that you were among the smartest kids in the country. You start believing that too and your confidence level goes up and your respect for society goes up. At IIT there were Doon School- Xavier types and sometimes when they'll try to bully you, you say to yourself, okay, I must have been so much smarter than you that despite studying in an ordinary Hindi medium school I got in.

Besides a full scholarship I used to do some work for a professor. So, I used to have extra cash. I was always lavish, taking care of other kids, doing things and striking great friendships.

Around this time IITs started getting a good image outside India also when IITians started moving to the US from the late 1960s. Later, the popular '60 Minutes' news program did a segment that the US imports brain power from a place called IIT. And Bill Clinton said something positive about IIT. So, our secret was out in the public.

*You easily got into a US university for masters.*

**Anil Bansal:** For masters I applied to 10 universities in the US for scholarship, and I got nine. By this

time universities had a very positive and strong image of IITs and students from it. By now of course, IITians from my generation are deans and heading universities and corporations.

I chose to go to the University of Notre Dame in Indiana and did material science.

*Anything remarkable about your time at Notre Dame?*

**Anil Bansal:** I was already married (in 1977) to Kumud before moving to Indiana. At Notre Dame, a small town, we made great friends. There were only about 20 Indians there. So, we had a very close-knit group who became lifelong friends. I had a scholarship, but now with wife Kumud to take care of, we had to look for the cheapest place possible. So, we ended up living on a street with primarily African American residents. That again influenced me. Because people on that street were so helpful. At that time, we didn't know about racism in this country.

*What happened after you graduated from Notre Dame?*

**Anil Bansal:** I had many offers but chose to take an offer from Westinghouse in Bloomfield, NJ. The idea was, in New Jersey we could stay with my sister-in-law and save some money.

For a while I worked for a retail store, Computer Pros, selling Apple computers. I took the company from negative to substantially positive, but the owner reneged on a deal to make me a partner in his company. It was a blessing in disguise. I went to the Apple outlets manager and secured a dealership from Apple. That was 1989 when I started my first company, Essex Computers, from Newark, NJ. Then having to move office, I ended up buying a 20,000 sq ft building in Clifton. To utilize the extra space, I built a desktop publishing training center, and it took off very well. Bantam Books, Conde Nast, Bergen Record, New York Times and such big companies sent their people to get trained in software like PageMaker. Soon we were making a million plus dollars in revenue from training and also became the largest supplier of Apple computers anywhere. We also got a big contract from the New Jersey school system to service their computers.

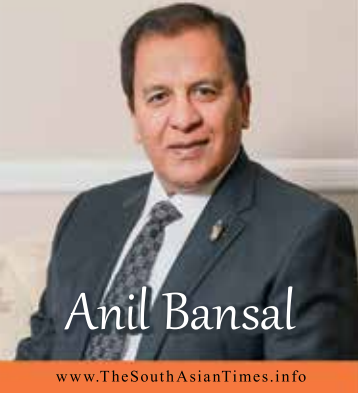
*How did you move to real estate?*

**Anil Bansal:** When we started touching 30 million in revenue, my accountant/mentor suggested I leverage that and buy real estate. I have already bought my first building. For the next ten years I bought one building every year - commercial real estate/office buildings.



Anil Bansal with his First National Realty Management team (from left) Jean Suazo, Richard DeLuca, Robert O'Connor, Tom Napolitano, Luis Jasquez, and Devin Murphy.

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Anil Bansal

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In those days, typically, you put 20% down and 80% you got as a loan from the bank. From the rent, you pay the mortgage. I hired the husband of one of my salespersons to run the real estate side. The real estate gave me the network later on to start many businesses. I was a workaholic. I never slept more than four hours.

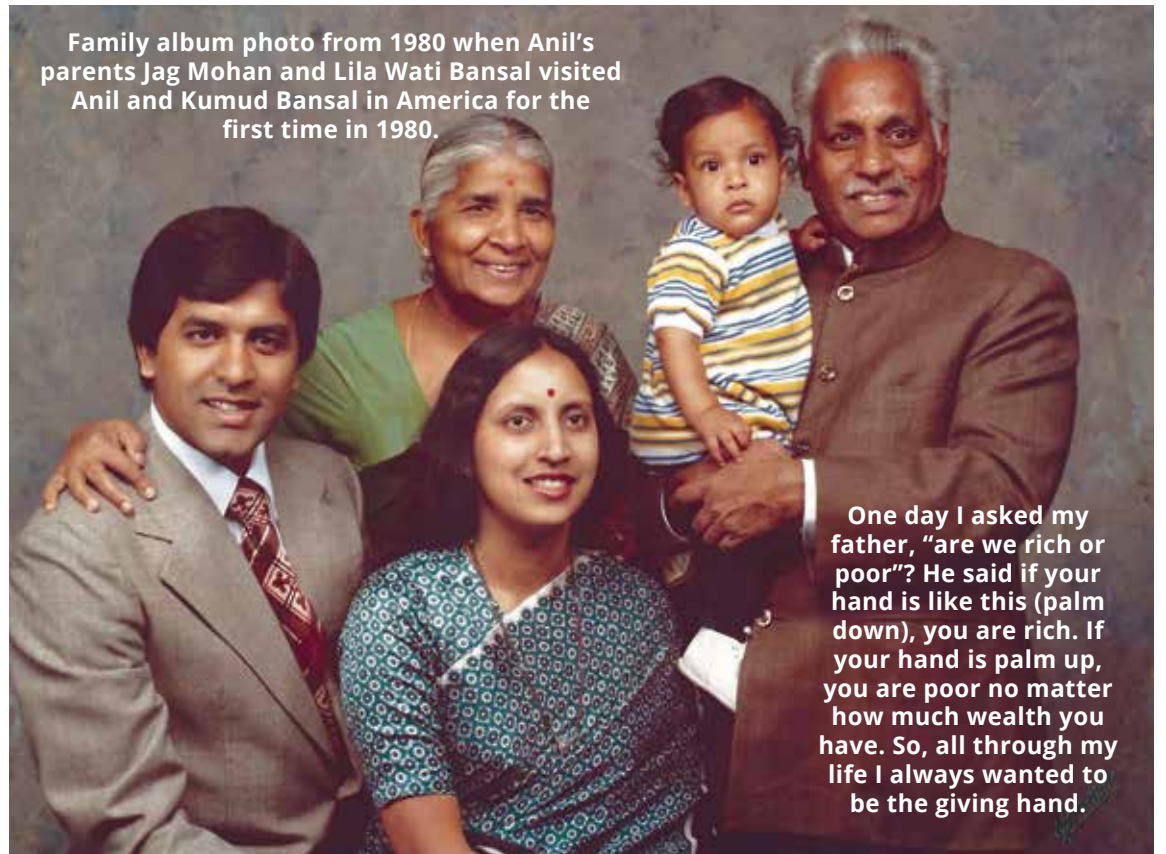
Then, in 2001, we learnt that our youngest daughter, Anka, had blood cancer. That was a life changing moment. I decided not to expand anymore. I already had businesses in India. We just decided that we'll be with her. For a year and a half, both me and my wife were with her. She passed away in late 2002.

*You are called a serial entrepreneur, tell us about some of your other ventures.*

**Anil Bansal:** I even dabbled in the restaurant business, starting Mantra in Paramus, NJ, only to sell it later. I also got involved in a company called vSplash TechLabs, which in 2011 started BuzzBoard, an intelligence and analytics platform for SMB companies. I am still their chairman. We have over 300 employees in Hyderabad, India, and about 12 here. I also helped launch a few companies in India and then gave them to the respective persons running them. Because after Anka passed away, I decided to cut down on my quarter yearly visits to India. Son Avin and daughter Neha were away at college, and I didn't want to leave my wife alone.

*Starting a bank is another thing altogether.*

**Anil Bansal:** What happened was, we had a chance to get a presentation to invest in a Vietnamese bank. That set us thinking, why can't we start our own bank to help the Indian community. The main force behind the Indus American Bank was me, Deepak Khana and Sharad Wagle. I was the Chairman. From our first branch in Edison, NJ, we kept expanding and had 5 branches. Then the 2008 fiasco hit, and we got burned, more than other banks, because most of our growth was in 2006-08 and the loans we



Family album photo from 1980 when Anil's parents Jag Mohan and Lila Wati Bansal visited Anil and Kumud Bansal in America for the first time in 1980.

One day I asked my father, "are we rich or poor"? He said if your hand is like this (palm down), you are rich. If your hand is palm up, you are poor no matter how much wealth you have. So, all through my life I always wanted to be the giving hand.

took were at the highest peak. We sold it to BCB Bank in 2015.

*Tell us about First National.*

**Anil Bansal:** We have 10 buildings in New Jersey. Our own office is in this building we own in Lyndhurst where I sit. I own 100% of First National Realty Management LLC.

Legally, you create a management company which then manages all the buildings.

*What is your management style, your HR style?*

**Anil Bansal:** I have always focused on what they do best rather than worrying about what they do wrong.

Secondly, I insist on providing them with all the tools necessary to do their job. Three, I always promote happiness. "You need coffee? You don't like this, you'll get that." We say, lunch is on us: you can order what you want... pizza, steak. Often, I take people for an outing ... One World Observatory one day, the Statue of Liberty another.



**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.**

**The world is one family.**

Jaspreet Singh Mayall and his Partners  
extend heartfelt congratulations to

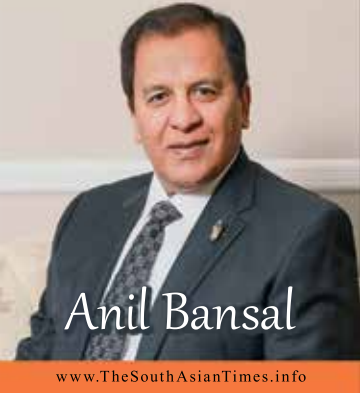
**Anil Bansal,**

humanitarian, philanthropist, entrepreneur  
and community leader.

Thank you for making the world more literate,  
healthy and peaceful.

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Anil Bansal

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*You mentioned to me that you have retired. What does that mean - you are still sitting here in your office?*

**Anil Bansal:** Retired means I don't worry about making money. I do not do any activity because I need to make money there. Real estate I

you know we have given money to the IIT Kanpur Foundation for a medical school. There's thus always meetings and communications.

But yes, I am shrinking my portfolio. Now, 10 are left from the 14 buildings we had. My hope is, in another 15 years, if not earlier, I'll be totally free.

Yet, we have a decent sized stocks portfolio. Yeah, we have enough to live on at the peak.

*What advice can you give to young Indian Americans on how to be successful and happy?*

**Anil Bansal:** There is no shortcut to hard work, and it has to be done consistently. A lot of people work hard for a short time and

will come. Then, many of my very smart friends come to me, they have done all the analysis and want to make sure that they've covered everything. You can never cover everything! Therefore, if you have a conviction, you have to learn from Nike to 'Just Do It!' And I think I'm an example of that.

Also, I have never kept any negative feelings about anybody. There have been a few people who may have knowingly hurt me for whatever reasons. But I thank them. Because at every stage of the game something good comes out of it. When you are angry at someone, just remember you're just brewing the acid inside and it burns you while the eventual goal of every action we do is to gain happiness or avoid pain.

*How has Indian upbringing, heritage, and values helped you in your journey?*

**Anil Bansal:** Humility, respect for others, helping others. You don't have to be independent. In fact, love grows when you are dependent. I'm very dependent on my wife, and she is dependent on me. Take India, US and Canada, they are so dependent on each other. Can you ever imagine a war between them? Contrarily, you've seen how during Covid many na-



Indus American Bank chaired by Anil Bansal (left) participated in India Day Parade in Hicksville, NY, where they had opened a branch.

tions, especially the rich nations, had more, but they wanted to have more, so they hoarded it. We Indians are raised being told that the world is one and you should treat everybody like family. And I think India has proved it.

*Kumud ji says your father told you that to be happy, you need your surroundings to be happy too.*

**Anil Bansal:** I truly believe in that. You cannot be happy in a sad environment. So, in order for you to be happy, you create people around you who are happy. If they have sadness, you try to fix it, you bring

happiness. And no discrimination, please. At home you try to make the happiest environment and at work too you make the happiest environment. There's no yelling, no fighting, never.

Now extend that principle to the community. As you know I've always been very lucky to be able to make more money than I need to live on. So, we've tried to give whatever we can to various causes - charities for the needy, children, women. I also support temples and gurdwaras because I find that those are incredibly powerful institutions where people go to get support.



Anil Bansal has made his office on the 6th floor of this 125,000 sq ft building in Lyndhurst, NJ. He owns 10 office buildings in the state.

run in the sense that I'm here just to have an office. But I spend time doing mainly nonprofit work. As

then quit when not getting results. You should do your work and not worry about results because they

Warm wishes and Heartiest  
Congratulations to

**Mr ANIL BANSAL**

The South Asian Times  
excellence in journalism

PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

*Keep Shining  
& Serving*

With Best Compliments from



**Mohan Wanchoo**

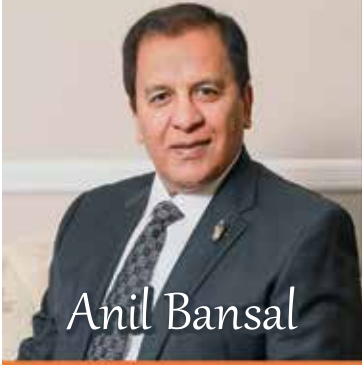
TSAT Person of the Year 2021

Chairman

ECI MW Holding Company, Inc  
Jasmine Universe, LLC



*Happy  
New year*



Anil Bansal

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# MAN OF SUBSTANCE

*Whether it is meeting dignitaries, celebs, or supporting politicians, Anil Bansal, an India lover, keeps expanding his circle of influence to support good causes, and finding ways to serve the community here and his motherland.*



(left) Anil Bansal called on the Indian ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, at the Indian embassy in Washington DC.  
(right) With Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer who represents New York State.



(left) Accompanied by the then Indian Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha and FIA officials, Anil Bansal as FIA President met with US Senator from New Jersey Robert Menendez in 2020 to raise some issues of concern to the Indian community. (center) Anil Bansal supported Hillary Clinton's candidacy for US President in 2016, assessing that she would do better for the country than her Republican rival. (right) As FIA President, Anil Bansal hosted a Meet & Greet with Rep Gregory Meeks, Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in Queens in March 2021.



(left) Anil Bansal greeted Mayor Bill de Blasio at a farewell reception in Jackson Heights, NY in 2021.  
(center) Anil Bansal with classy Bollywood actress, Vidya Balan. (right) Anil and Kumud Bansal met superstar Allu Arjun, of the 'Pushpa' monster hit fame, when he was the Grand Marshal for FIA's India Day Parade in NYC in August 2022.

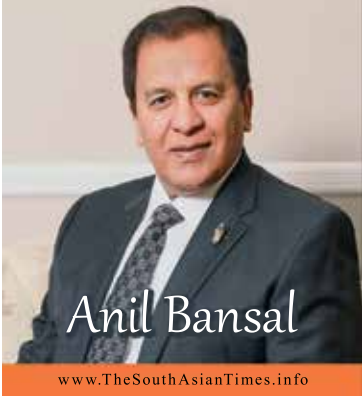


ANIL AND KUMUD BANSAL WITH THEIR GRANDCHILDREN - ANAY, LEELA, BRIAN, AND KAVI.

DEAR DAD | BABU | NANA

We love you and are very proud of you! You do incredible things every day, and we are in awe of you. Keep doing what you love, and we will always be here, cheering you on. Love,

KUMUD, AVIN, NIDHI, NEHA, WILL,  
ANKA, KAVI, BRIAN, LEELA, AND ANAY



Anil Bansal

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## COVID-TIME PRESIDENT OF FIA Anil Bansal is proud of the service they rendered in 2020-21

For FIA (Federation of Indian Associations – NY-NJ-CT-NE), the annual Indian Day Parade in New York City is the flagship event. For any President of this premier community organization, leading the parade becomes a moment of pride, a veritable lifetime achievement award. Anil Bansal was selected to serve as President in the glorious 50th anniversary year of FIA, but the Covid situation put paid to the mega celebration plans. He got one more term in 2021, there was no parade again. Yet, not only is he not regretful, he feels proud that the pandemic gave FIA an opportunity to rise to the occasion and render great service here at home and in India.

Bansal told The South Asian Times: "The grand parade did not happen under me. Maybe that gave us more reason to sit and think, how else can we serve the society as well as the community? And 'what can we do' gave us an opportunity to create new things. One of them was on 15th August doing the Indian flag hoisting in Times

Square. For the first time ever! So, that was a unique thing. Maybe it wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for Covid. And that flag hoisting on

Then, a monumental task and responsibility that came FIA's way in 2021 was crisis-managed with Anil Bansal's resourcefulness and

tilators and Oximeters, etc. We got hold of a huge supply worth \$55-60 million. But it had to be picked up from warehouses in Pennsylva-

especially Parveen Bansal, Saurin Parikh, and Ankur Vaidya himself. It took us months of working hours to get the approvals, picking and shipping and packaging and labeling and sending those containers. It was a Herculean task."

Besides starting the Diwali Soup Kitchen in 2020, Bansal also mentions something that went under the radar, the help FIA rendered to Indian students who were let go from colleges when COVID lockdown happened. India was not letting them come back home and had suspended flights from the USA. Says Bansal, "We heard of hundreds of these students who were helped by other organizations as well. But we in the FIA also made efforts, offered our homes, we got them hotel rooms, got them food. So, none of them had to sleep on the streets.

"I have to also salute our Indian consulate here. Anytime we have asked for something, they've said, how much? How can we help? And when they need something, they come to us. It's always a very beautiful thing."



Anil Bansal was felicitated by the FIA for creditably serving the organization during the two tumultuous Covid years. A collage of pictures capsuling activities during his time was presented to him in the presence of Consul General Randhir Jaiswal.

India's Independence Day became an incredible hit because that's a perfect time, perfect place. Now the tradition will continue every year."

leadership. In Bansal's telling, "New York City was ready to give us a lot of excess equipment. And India was in dire need of PPP and Ven-

nia, packed per specifications, and shipped to India. It was done under my presidency, but I can tell you that so many of us were involved,

### An abridged report by FIA of the main events and activities conducted in 2020 and 2021 under Bansal's visionary presidency.



## 2020

### FIA's Dance Pe Chance: 36th Edition

Over 500 participants for 21 performances in 4 categories (Minor, Junior, Senior & Adult). The event was held on January 25 at Patriot Theater at the War Memorial in Trenton, NJ. Eminent personalities as Judge as well as in attendance: Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha, Prachee Shah Paandya (actress & Kathak dancer) and Prachi Tehlan (actress-athlete). The chief Guest was 'Super 30' visionary, founder & mathematician Anand Kumar.

### COVID response for front-line heroes & community

FIA partnered with the Consulate General of India in New York to reach out to Indian nationals and Indian Americans in distress.

Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty acknowledged: "FIA leadership worked relentlessly to find accommodation for stranded Indian students, along with the Consulate. FIA collaborated with Pradeep Malhotra of Akbar Restaurant and the Mody family of Rajbhog to provide food packs to healthcare professionals and those on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic."

### Farewell Reception for Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty

FIA President Anil Bansal said at the event on July 8: "We are happy that you are going home, but we will miss your counsel, and your company. You have been unbelievably approachable, and so helpful."

### Welcoming New Consul General

The new Consul General Randhir Jaiswal was welcomed at a reception on August 7, 2020 at Royal Albert Palace in Fords, NJ.

In attendance besides President Bansal were FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya, Senior Advisors Dr. Sudhir Parikh and Dr. H.R. Shah.

### Tricolor hoisted at Times Square on August 15

FIA created history as CG Randhir Jaiswal hoisted the tricolor for the first time at Times Square to celebrate India's 74th Independence Day. FIA was joined by at least 16 major community organizations at the marquee event.

### Eric Adams recognizes FIA as COVID Hero

The ceremony recognizing FIA as one of the 'COVID Everyday Heroes' was held on the steps of the Brooklyn Borough Hall on September 22.

"We know more people did not lose their lives because of heroes and sheroes that are here today, and we thank you for that," Brooklyn Borough President Adams said.

As part of its community outreach during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, FIA distributed more than 3,000 meals to first responders and 1,000 face shields made by children.

### FIA launches Diwali Soup Kitchen

FIA had over 8,000 meals prepared at seven accredited soup kitchen locations in New Jersey, New York and Connecticut and served from October 21 to November 7, 2020.

The Diwali Soup Kitchen's India leg served those who were facing difficult times, especially due to

the Covid situation.

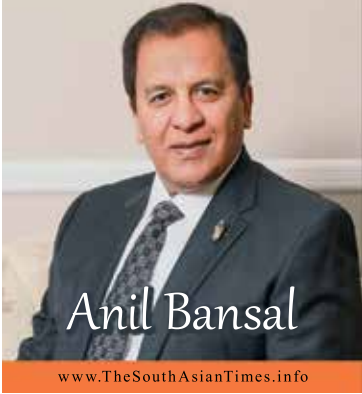
### Empire State Building illuminated in orange for Diwali

### Indian Visa, OCI Town Hall

FIA hosted a virtual Town Hall on Visa and OCI card issues on December 7. Over 11,000 applicants were helped as the new agency VFS Global took over from CKGS to handle those matters.



Anil Bansal is proud that FIA's flag hoisting at Times Square started under him in 2020. Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams attended the event in 2021.



Anil Bansal

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# 2021

## FIA receives Pravasi Bharatiya Award

The award for community service was conferred on FIA during the 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention held on January 9, 2021 in New Delhi. Team FIA

After the online competition, 300 participants were presented prizes and trophies at Akbar Hotel in Edison, NJ on March 12.

## \$135K donated to PM Care Fund

FIA and GANA celebrated the Gujarat and Maharashtra Foundation Day on May 1 and donated a Covid relief corpus of \$35K to the PM Relief Fund.

## FIA'S Covid Heroes Answer Distress Call

During the second wave of the pandemic in India, health infrastructure came under tremendous pressure. The FIA didn't just pledge its full support to the Indian government, but many medical professionals came forward to answer the distress calls.



A New Jersey Assembly citation acknowledging FIA's service to the community was presented to Anil Bansal by Mahesh Bhagia, Chairman of Edison Democratic Organization.

received the Medal and Certificate from Ambassador of India to the USA Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

## Gujarat Conclave Investment & Tourism 2021

The Gujarati Association of North America (GANA) in association with CGI and FIA held on January 10 the hybrid event to promote development in the state. Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani addressed the participants.

## Dance Pe Chance competition to find Best Bollywood Dancer in the US



Anil and Kumud Bansal at FIA's India Day Parade that took place in 2022 after a hiatus of 2 years during his presidency.

## COVID relief cargo to India

FIA shipped \$55 million worth of medical cargo to India as part of its continued efforts to help tide over the Covid crisis. Included in the cargo were ventilators, oximeters, resuscitation bags, etc.

## Biggest Indian flag at Times Square

Consul General Randhir Jaiswal unfurled the biggest Indian flag at the iconic Times Square to celebrate the 75th Independence Day of India.

## India Day messages on the biggest jumbotron at Times Square

The display was reserved by the FIA for 24 hours to mark India's Independence Day.

## FIA received recognitions from PM Modi

Separate letters of recognition from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP President Jagat Prakash Nadda were received by the FIA for their extraordinary contributions towards the community and society at large.

## 30,000+ meals distributed in US and India

FIA distributed 30,000+ healthy meals worth \$150K during the 2nd edition of Diwali Soup Kitchen in US & India.

## Promoting Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2022

# Bansal on receiving PBD award for FIA

## Statement issued on receiving the prestigious honor from the Government of India.

We are very proud, humbled and thankful to the Government of India for bestowing the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award for 2020 on FIA. It is the recognition of the hard and selfless voluntary work of so many people in the FIA family including hundreds of volunteers, member organizations, past presidents and trustees who have generously supported our work to serve the Indian American community in the Tri-state area and beyond for five decades.

This award is for the exceptional and meritorious contributions made by FIA members in creating a positive image of India in the USA, supporting and promoting bilateral issues, and being an agent of change for social and humanitarian causes here, in the



Anil Bansal says dispatching \$55 million worth of Covid cargo to India was a herculean task. But Team FIA performed very well.

The Consulate General and the Indian American Community, led by FIA, held a Diaspora Meet and Greet on November 28 to promote the upcoming 10th edition of VGGGS.

## FIA opens New England chapter

FIA announced a new chapter in New England on March 8, 2021 at an event held in Boston, MA. Abhishek Singh was named president of FIA NE. FIA is now present in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont.



Anil Bansal with (from right) Prachi Tehlan (actress-athlete), Prachee Shah Paandya (actress & Kathak dancer) and another celeb.

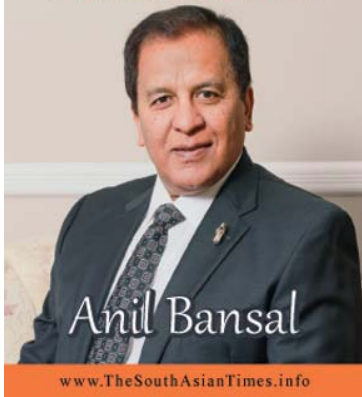
USA and back in India.

We at FIA have been totally dedicated to serving in the interests of India and the Indian diaspora in the USA. Starting this year, we have and will continue to do more for serving the poorest among us. This year a new tradition of feeding the hungry during

Diwali was a big success. In future you will see more of this kind of service from our FIA Team.

This award certainly gives us the encouragement and incentive to reach for the stars. We are very appreciative of this recognition and may God bless our motherland India and our homeland, USA.





Anil Bansal

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Continuing the conversation with our Person of the Year.

The South Asian Times: How are you involved with IAAC - Indo-American Arts Council.

**Anil Bansal:** I am a Director on the IAAC Board. I'm quite involved. We are donors and run the organization. There is an executive director, which is a paid position. We board members do the fundraising. We volunteer time and effort and besides giving money, we come up with what needs to be done: the planning part of the art and culture programs we organize. My work with IAAC is to make Indians feel good and share our rich history. To not only showcase our background to Americans, but for us ourselves to feel that we have so much to give to the world.

Anil Bansal's new focus is primarily to make fellow Indians proud, to promote their happiness and success and to help the world see them in a better light.

they define it, an ultra-high net worth person who's done extremely well. And I'm thankful to the most capitalistic society in the world, America, which has given me so much. But at the same time, I am very liberal in my thoughts. I believe everybody has a right to be loved and their sexual preferences or their race or religion has no bearing on it.

Number three, there are always people who have a lot less, they need help and we as a society have a moral obligation to take care of the have-nots. So people who have it have to take care of the people who don't. To leave them to their devices to me is inhumane. Therefore, I believe in Democrats more than Republicans in everyday life because. That does not mean that I don't support and contribute to Republicans at all. But at core, I'm a liberal person. I believe in diversity, in variety. I'd rather have



A happy Anil Bansal surrounded by Indo-American Arts Council fellow members and volunteers posing with Amjad Ali Khan and his sons after their very successful Carnegie hall performance as part of the 3-day Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, specially curated cultural and artistic events.

York, or Senators and Congressmen from these states. I support them because I want to make sure that they see Indians in a good light.

I have given big support to Chris Christie when he was NJ governor no matter that he is a Republican. But generally I'm not nonpartisan.. In the next election cycle, we are seriously thinking of doing a major support for Cory Booker, Senator from New Jersey.

*The Giving Pledge promoted by Bill Gates and Warren Buffet encourages extremely wealthy people to contribute a majority of their wealth to philanthropic causes, and not leave all for their children. I'm sure your children are doing very well.*

**Anil Bansal:** I'm very proud of my children and my wife reminds me of a popular saying in India - if your son is a spoot (good boy), he'll prosper on his own, so why worry about

him. And if he's a kapoot (wastrel), you can give him all you want and he'll blow it anyway, so why worry about him either. So, I think we have been very happy and proud, me and my wife, to have given an incredible education to our children, an incredible value system to them that we really don't have to worry about them. Yet, I am a spoiler. I love to spoil my children as well as my grandchildren but I can tell you that my children have never let me spoil them. They only say 'no' to me when I offer them things and that in a strange way makes me love them more.

Both Avin and Neha and their spouses are extremely well to do, yet they lead a simple life, and they're happy.

Of course, we have always done charity work and voluntary work. Since 2002, after our daughter Anka passed away, we have focused more on that.

*You also changed your focus to burnishing India's image.*

**Anil Bansal:** My underlying devotion, what I've decided to do is to help not only humanity, but primarily to make fellow Indians proud, to promote their happiness and success and to help the world see them in a better light. I can tell you that whether I give support, do book launches, or as you know, I am a Director of Indo-American Arts Council, I'm involved in FIA, I give to different charities, the underlying reason is to make Indians feel prouder, and better about themselves. We have to safeguard and maintain our Indian arts and deep, rich culture and showcase it to the world, to America. At the same time, making fellow Indians feel proud of who we are, what we are and what we do, and how we see the world as a family - Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.



A Director of Indo-American Arts Council, Anil Bansal like the IAAC Chairman Dr Nirmal Mattoo was a Festival of India@75 benefactor.

Earlier you were involved in New Jersey affairs at the state level.

**Anil Bansal:** Yes, that is true. I represented New Jersey State in a national level committee on diversity supporting the state governor in promoting diversity.

I was also a director, then vice chairman of Beth Israel Hospital. I used to donate to them, it is a local hospital.

But that was in the 1990s before we founded Indus American bank. Then I shifted from New Jersey affairs to the Indian community.

*You are a registered Democrat. Tell us why you support the Democratic Party?*

**Anil Bansal:** It's a little strange because I'm very capitalistic as you know I've done well. I am, however

a colorful garden than to have the same garden, same plants.

*Who are some of the politicians whose election campaigns you have contributed to?*

**Anil Bansal:** There are two levels. I give money to almost any Indian American who stands for any election. They need all the support we can give. I send them money because I think for us to have a better future, more secure future, we need to be politically active. So, anybody of Indian background who wants to stand for an election, and they ask, I donate money to them. In New Jersey I have given to Sam Joshi, elect mayor of Edison in 2021, and to Raja Krishnamoorthi, Congressman from Illinois

Number two, I support lawmakers who affect India, whether it's the governor of New Jersey or New



Anil and Kumud Bansal with Bollywood stars Malaika Arora, Tamannaah Bhatia & Remo D'Souza who presented 'RRANG: Colors of an Untold Story' show a couple of years ago. The Bansals were one of the sponsors.

*Heartiest Congratulations to*

# ANIL BANSAL

Entrepreneur, Philanthropist & Community Leader

ON BEING RECOGNIZED AS

**The South Asian Times**

excellence in journalism

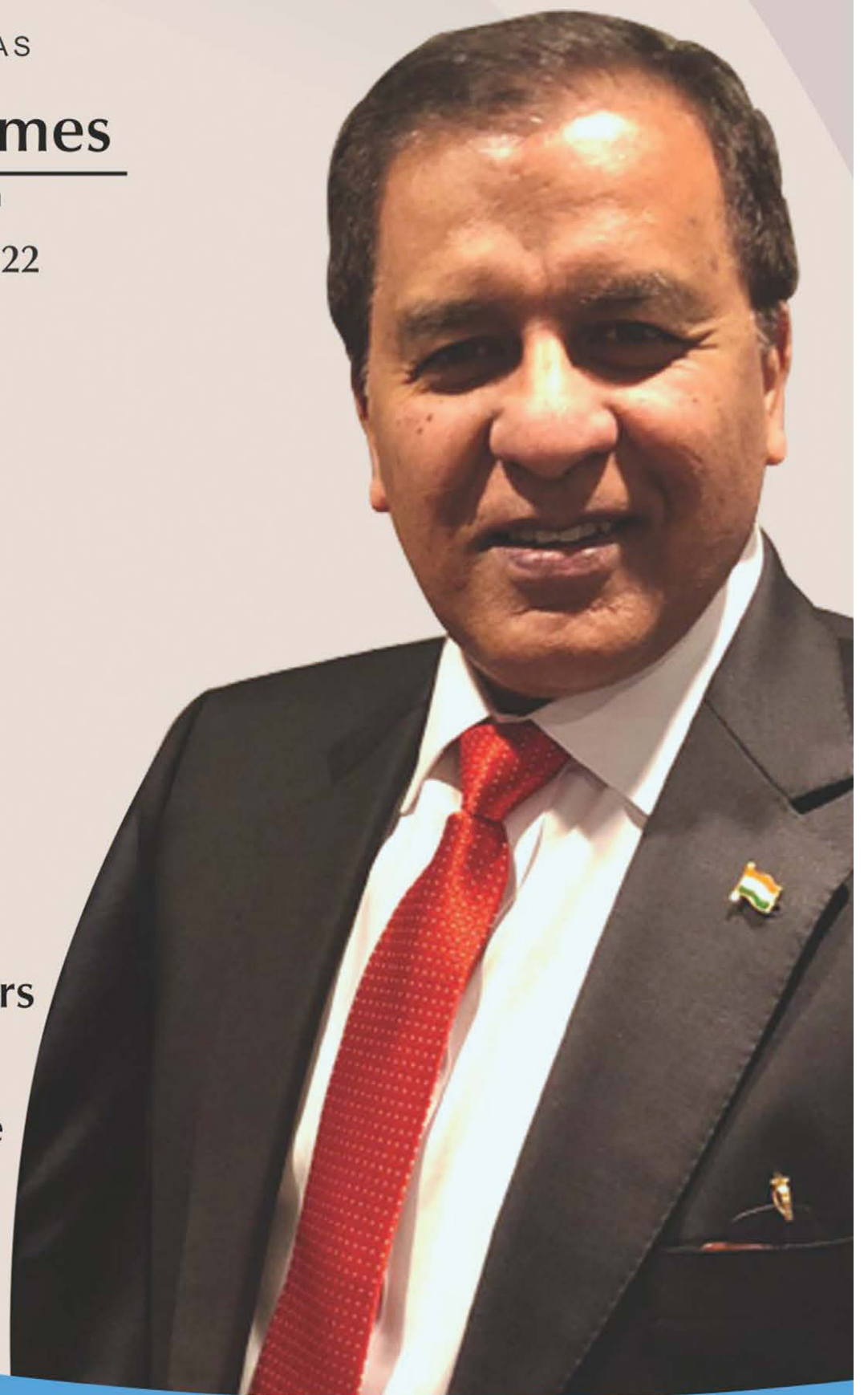
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022



*Best Wishes  
from*

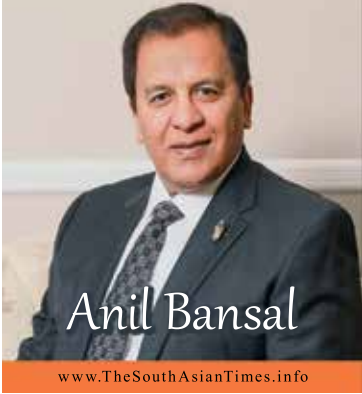
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Iselin, NJ 08830**



**AICC President 2012-2016**

# Congratulations and Commendations



Anil Bansal

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Bansal has many amazing qualities; he is a visionary, community leader, serial entrepreneur and a philanthropist. The one trait that sets him apart is his ability to truly give. If there is a genuine need to be fulfilled, you can always count on his support.

In the many roles he has played in life, he has mastered the art of providing good, pragmatic leadership to fit the call of the moment.

I have known Anil in various capacities and have worked closely with him when he served as president of the Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICC), a NJ based organization. Anil always led from the front and the key among his many valuable contributions to the chamber have been championing AICC's critical web presence and setting up a mechanism for long term financial viability.

Though Anil has never sought the limelight and prefers to operate in the background and without much fanfare, he truly deserves all the recognition the world and society can shower on him.

AICC and I personally, are honored to be associated with him and wish him the best in life, always.

entation who consistently demonstrates a solid service orientation towards everyone he meets. As you can see, I have the highest regard for one of the most amazing people I have ever met, and I am so proud of all of his achievements. Congratulations, Anil Ji.



Rekha Parthasarathy

VP / Branch Manager,  
BCB Bank, Edison, NJ

I would like to convey my heartiest congratulations to Mr Anil Bansal for being nominated "Person of the Year" by The South Asian Times.

It does not come to me as a surprise, as the hard work you, Anil ji, have done to achieve the position where you are today deserves the grandest celebration of all. Your display of brilliance in everything you do is the true reason behind your success.

Personally speaking, I have seen you working day and night to achieve the impossible. You have always gone out of your way to help all, be it your co-worker, colleague, friend or stranger, you made them feel like they are part of your big family. Things that you have achieved are nothing but an inspiration to us. Wish you much continued success in the coming years as well.



Alok Kumar

Former President, FIA and  
Bihar Jharkhand Association  
of North America

I always feel blessed that I personally know a person like Mr. Anil Bansal. His dedication towards serving the unprivileged makes me resonate with him. He is a person who always thinks of

others and has a giving nature. During the pandemic, even though he was in the US, he contributed towards serving the motherland, and in one notable instance, even helped provide a gas furnace all the way in Darbhanga, Bihar. He has previously served as the President of the Federation of Indian Associations. During his presidency, he served FIA with distinction and brought it to newer heights.

While these things encapsulate some of his many great qualities, one that makes me admire him the most is that if an entrepreneur wants to start his business, Mr Bansal is just the right man for seeking guidance. He will be your safety net if you commit to the endeavor and work honestly. Lastly, I would like to congratulate him on being recognized as the Person of the Year 2022 by The South Asian Times. This is certainly a proud moment for all of us, and I would like to wish him the best of health and more success in the times to come.



Chandrakant Trivedi

Trustee & Past President  
of FIA, Chairman of  
Brahmin Samaj of US

It is great news that The South Asian Times, a popular publication, has selected Mr Anil Bansal for the Person of the Year award.

I have known him for over two decades as a successful entrepreneur, monumental philanthropist, brilliant professional and superb human being. His visionary, dynamic leadership, and long standing distinguished service to the Indian American community is incredible and inspiring.

I have had the honor and privilege to work with him at FIA, experiencing his team spirit and well-defined goals.

I admire his numerous glorious achievements. His generosity and selfless service as well as majestic contributions have deservedly earned this great honor and recognition to him. My heartiest congratulations to Mr Bansal, his wife Kumudben, who is behind his marvelous success saga, as well as Shri Kamlesh Mehta for bestowing honor on him.



Seema M Singh, Esq.

Director, Singh Law Group

Congratulations to Anil Bansal for this well-deserved achievement and recognition as The South Asian Times Person of the Year.

Anil has selflessly helped the community and made a difference in the lives of many individuals. He has been a great mentor to many and provided the right guidance when needed. As President of FIA and AICC (Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce), he has provided the community with a platform to promote Indian culture and businesses.

As Anil Bansal's attorney I can vouch for his integrity and highest ethics. As a family friend I have seen him as a humble and caring soul. Best wishes to Anil Bansal.



Yagya & Neelima Gupta

President and CEO of Creative  
Consultants, Chennai

You have selected absolutely the most deserving person, Mr Anil Bansal, for the 'Person of the Year 22'. Our journey with Anil Bansal goes back more than 40 years. Anil is a great friend, and it has been a pleasure to see him succeed and prosper over this time. He has always been an entrepreneur and philanthropist at heart.

Even early in his career, he supported the education of students so they could become contributing members of society. We applaud his achievements and the recognition he will receive for them. To us he will always be a kind-hearted, multi-talented and well-respected friend. Our heartiest congratulations and we pray to God for his long and happy life.



Jonathan Hollander

President, Battery Dance  
Company, New York City

Heartfelt congratulations to Anil Bansal on receiving the Person of the Year award from The South Asian Times. Anil is that rare person who, having gone from a modest childhood in India and having made his way through hard work and talent, to great success in the U.S., has not forgotten the meaning that India's culture and the arts had in his formative years and has invested himself quite selflessly in promoting the arts in his adopted country. Whether it is hosting a lunch for Manipuri dancers at Tamarind (restaurant) or supplementing funding from the US Embassy in New Delhi for a Battery Dance India tour, he and his lovely wife Kumud have stepped up without fanfare to lend a helping hand. It is indeed fitting and important to shine a light on Anil despite his natural humility, to celebrate his graceful and generous support in aid of others, and to spread appreciation and awareness of India's arts and culture.



Rajeev Krishna

President, Asian Indian Chamber  
of Commerce Board (2022-2024)

Heartiest congratulations to Anil Bansal on being honored as the 'Person of the Year - 2022' by The South Asian Times. Anil



Priti Pandya-Patel

President (2015-21), Asian  
Indian Chamber of Commerce

I am so excited to hear Mr. Anil Bansal is being honored with the 2022 Person of the Year award by The South Asian Times. I have known Anil Ji for more than 15 years. We have worked together in the South Asian community and other organizations at large, such as FIA and on the Board of the Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICC) when he was President and I, Vice-President. Most recently he supported me when I was elected President of AICC (2015-2021).

Anil Ji is not only like a big brother to me but a mentor that I can always count on. He is an amazing individual who prides himself on his dedication, hard work and humble contributions to our community. His human relations skills enabled him to interface very effectively with many different types of people. Anil Ji is naturally a caring person with a strong helping ori-

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Heartiest Congratulations to

Anil Bansal

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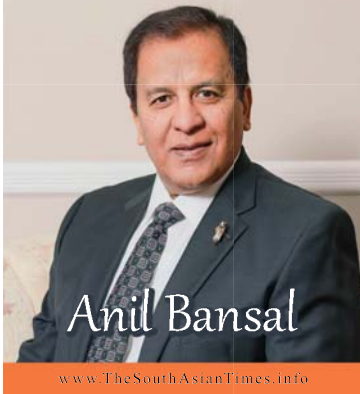
PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

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# Expanding his circle of giving

Anil Bansal hit the headlines last year when he donated a big sum of \$2.5 Million from the Anil and Kumud Bansal Foundation to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur, his alma mater, to support the Gangwal School of Medical Sciences and Technology. The school will be completed in two phases and plans to host a 450-bed super-specialty hospital.

The South Asian Times spoke to him about his philanthropic endeavors and what drives him.

*Now you have your foundation to formally do your philanthropic work under.*

**Anil Bansal:** Yes, I've had the Kumud and Anil Bansal Foundation from 2016, which being a private foundation can only give to other 501(c)(3)s. I cannot and do not take money from anybody; I can only give donations to other charities. Before the foundation was set up, we were still always giving. My wife is probably more generous than I am. She is always saying yes, do this, do that.

*How did the crematorium project come up?*

**Anil Bansal:** I was approached by Alok Kumar, ex-president of FIA and BJANA, at the peak of the Covid wave in India in 2021. "Did you hear about newspaper

articles on dead bodies floating in the Ganges?" he said. Indeed, people were just throwing the bodies in the river because they didn't have time to line up at funeral places. So, he suggested a gas/electric crematorium was the answer to be built in Darbhanga district of Bihar. I said get it done quickly as it was the need of the hour. He talked to the District Magistrate who promised to provide all the logistics to make it happen quickly. So, we wired the money to the company in Delhi which was going to make it, and within 30 days it was operational. I donated the entire money it cost: \$35,000.

During Covid we rendered other help where needed. Sometimes we supplied food to hospitals, for the police personnel as well as ambulance workers. It was routed through FIA, but I would pay for it. I gave money to other organizations as well who too were rendering such service.

*Anka's passing changed the direction of your life.*

**Anil Bansal:** FYes, I'm a completely different person and I do so much good work because you sort of shake up. Strange but true. My focus has shifted from where can I be making more money to now where can I give the money to have the most impact.

*You also started a 5K run in Anka's name.*

**Anil Bansal:** After Anka passed away in 2002, we started supporting the local Rotary Club in

Wayne, NJ for their walk. And then we started doing it as a group. About 100 of us do the 5K walk in the memory of our daughter every year for almost 20 years.

I am Rotarian, my chapter is called Wayne A.M. Rotary Club (they meet every Thursday in the

of India and Indians amongst the poorest here, who are in Paterson-Passaic County of New Jersey.

*TSAT: To which charities or institutions have you given big donations?*

need three big temples. And I say the other way around, we should have a temple in every community. Because the temple is not necessarily a place to go and worship. That's a place to feel like being part of the community.

And it is not just the fresh-off-



Anil Bansal gave \$35,000 to build a crematorium in Darbhanga district of Bihar, in the region where people were throwing dead bodies in the Ganges during the height of Covid wave in India in 2021

mornings, so the AM). Every year we donate to this Rotary and then they donate to other charities including one which I do together with them which is called the Diwali Soup Kitchen, which runs for about a month. We run it at three or four locations. The idea is that I wanted to create a positive image

**Anil Bansal:** IWe have given to the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, which has beautiful temples in New Jersey. We always support them. We have also given to Pratham, to Akshaya Patra, which are huge projects back home. In India, we got 12 bathrooms built in a girl's high school in my mother-in-law's name in Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh. In another school we passed by, we saw kids playing on the terrace where the parapet was only a foot high. This was dangerous - the kids could fall off. So, we gave money to make the walls 3 ft high. You just pick up those things and we have been able to.

I am in favor of donating to temples and gurdwaras, and my reasoning is a bit different. Imagine you are a new IT person hired here. You moved from India with your wife and three-year-old child. How do you make friends? How do you keep your sanity? How do you feel you belong here? Guess what? If they go to their temple, gurdwara, or church, they would meet people who are kind, in a welcoming place. They will mingle, become part of the local community, and will have fewer emotional issues, or psychological issues. They will be happier people. So that's why I don't agree with those people who say we don't need 500 temples, we just

the-boat people who are helped that way. The same thing can be said for our older people also. Suppose you lose somebody, you become a widow or a widower, and your life changes, your finances and support system may collapse. But at least there is one institution which is your temple, where you're not judged, where you are free to go and be part of. In a different scenario, your kids may move away, your spouse may go away, but the temple still provides you with that glue of living in the society which you now may miss.



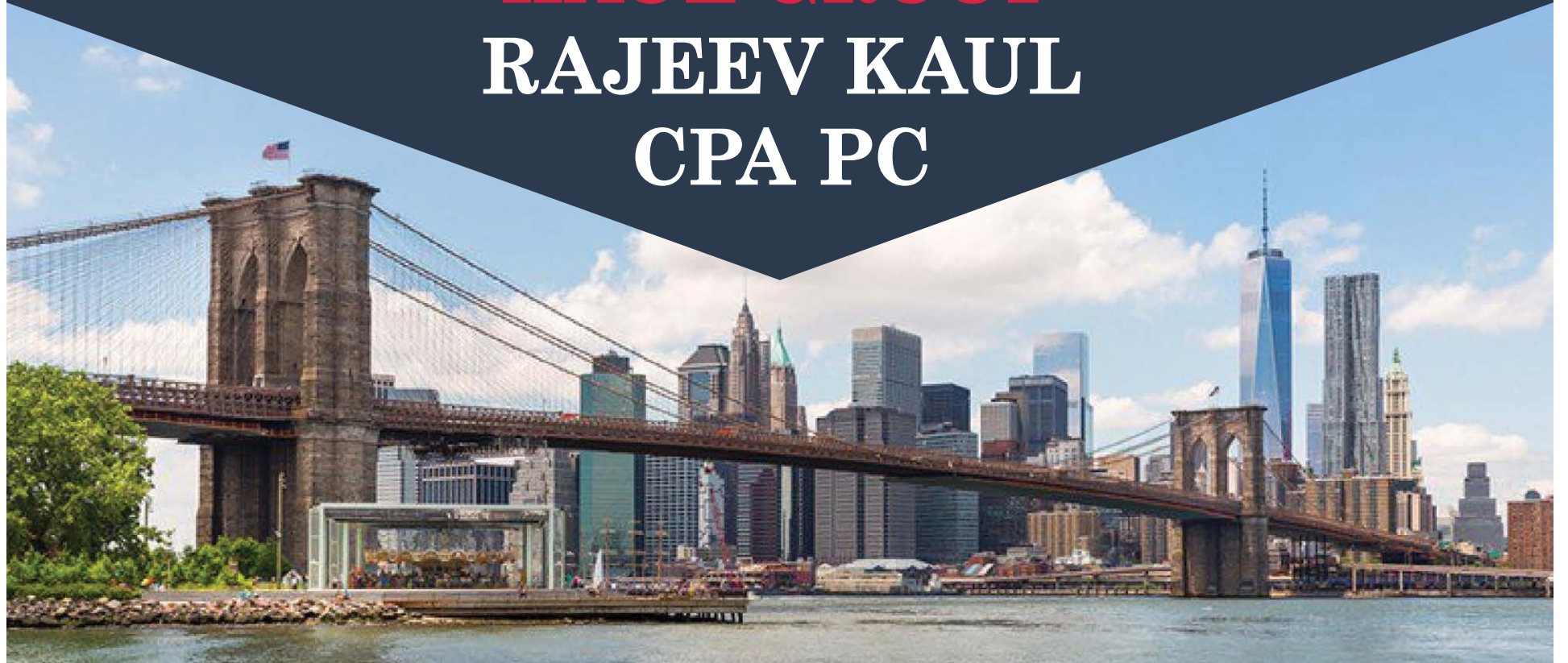
Anil Bansal favors donating to temples, which are not just places of worship but also welcoming community centers for people to mingle and get help when needed. The Bansal couple were honored at the opening of the Sai Datta Peetham temple in Edison, NJ.



Anil Bansal donated \$2.5 Million from the Anil and Kumud Bansal Foundation to IIT Kanpur, towards the School of Medical Sciences and Technology which will have a 450-bed super-specialty hospital.

*With best wishes to Anil Bansal for his Lifetime Achievement  
- From Kaul Group*

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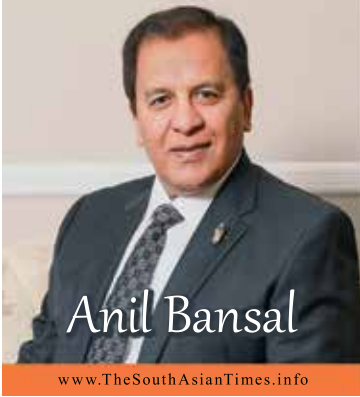


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Anil Bansal

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# Congratulations and Commendations

I am honored to share a message on the conduct and character that has made Anil bhai Bansal stand on a high pedestal, distinguishing him as an iconic community leader and a stalwart of FIA.

Since he engaged with the community in the last two de-

acades, Anil bhai has delivered as a caring philanthropist, a genuine leader in times of need for the community. Be it his tenure in the banking sector, where is created a historic landmark by starting the first Indian American community bank, or his engagements and investments in other sectors, he has always kept the community and the motherland at the forefront.

As a small episode of his supportive leadership, I distinctly recall when I approached him with the idea of setting a Guinness world record for our community, he meticulously heard the plan and was on board with it. When we came up short in 2014, he encouraged and cheered me up, saying, "We now have the layout and dos and don'ts. We will set the record next time we attempt it."

Anil bhai has been a pillar of strength to the community and various nonprofit trade and community organizations, including FIA. The selfless work that Bansal Foundation, he and Kumudben do is beyond praise. For FIA, Anil bhai's tenure was unprecedented and full of challenges. However, he selflessly and quietly tackled the severe impacts of Covid on our community and navigated FIA through a tumultuous timespan with the organizational implications of the pandemic and losing a longstanding co-founder and past Chairman, Shri Ramesh Patel.

Anil Bansal is calm, quiet, inclusive, and understanding in his implementation of ideas. Memories that come to mind: During the second Covid wave in India, a large containment of cargo was received from the City of NY, with the help and efforts from CGI-NY - Amba-

sador Jaiswal and DCG Sinha. Upon receiving the notification to take delivery of the cargo and ship it to India, all of us at FIA were at our wits' end about what should be done, given our inexperience with shipping logistics. Anil bhai, Parveen Bansal, and I met over ice cream outside one of the warehouses. The magnitude of the cargo (18 shipping containers worth \$55 million) as well as the complex coordination of packing, labeling it, and short timeframe, made it quite a task for the FIA team led by Anil bhai and coordinated by Parveen. Yet, under this stressful and demanding challenge, Anil bhai delivered. He even helped label the boxes himself. The logistics was handled by Parveen Bansal (no relation to Anil bhai), who shares my sentiment and is appreciative of the service Anil bhai rendered to our motherland as FIA President.

Then again, former FIA President Alok Kumar brought a proposal to FIA saying funeral homes from India had approached him seeking help. Their appeal was to urgently sponsor and install a 'hybrid' crematory in Darbhanga, Bihar, that runs on gas/electric combo. As there were lines for days on end at funeral homes to provide last rites to those that fell to Covid, families waited with departed ones' bodies in tractor beds for 12-24 hours to perform the rites. Alok told me he connected with Anil Bansal who said to buy the crematory and get them to start the assembly, and he will sponsor the project. With a six-figure cost, the crematorium project was well received in areas of need in multiple states of India. This was made possible by the direct and exclusive support of our truly revered

community leader, Anil bhai.

I am a first-hand witness to his contribution and well-earned stature with other important trade and art organizations, including AICC (Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce) and IAAC (Indo-American Arts Council). As true New York Giants fans, we share a common fanbase, and he kindly offers promo items and tickets to others.

In conclusion, one can earn, be rich and spend on oneself, which is understandable as a self-accomplishment, but to give back and, more importantly, to give away is a truly selfless and rare feat that very few distinguished leaders can accomplish. Anil bhai is a prominent leader in addition to his accomplishments as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. As they say, behind every successful man... Kumud Bansal has played an unsung role behind the scenes of supporting and sacrificing so that Anil bhai can serve our community. Thank you, Kumudben!

Thank you to The South Asian Times and Kamlesh Mehtaji for striving hard and continuing this unique tradition of recognizing diverse community leaders as Person of the Year. Compliments from FIA to the entire team of this excellent paper, including editor Parveen Chopra for working on this feature tirelessly and sincerely. Along with the Federation of Indian Associations of NY NJ CT and New England (NE), President Kenny Desai, President NE Abhishek Singh, Board Members, Advisory Board, the Executive Teams, I, Ankur Vaidya, congratulate both Kumudben and Anilbhai Bansal on this well-deserved accomplishment with wishes of many more to come.



Ankur Vaidya

Chairman, FIA

## Fulsome praise from FIA Chairman



Kenny Desai

President, FIA 2022-23  
Chairman, TAK Group

I am pleased to send my greetings and congratulations to my friend Anil Bansal on being honored as Person of the Year for 2022 by the South Asian Times.

He is a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist who has made a difference in the lives of many in his adopted land and the

land of his birth.

His commitments of service to the community are innumerable. He launched a community bank, Indus American Bank, with many branches in New Jersey and Long Island. He spearheaded the effort to establish the Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce which now has a membership of over 200 Indian owned businesses. In 2020 he took over as the President of the Federation of Indian Associations NY, NJ & CT, which he served with distinction and took it to newer heights during his two years at the helm - 2020-2021.

In addition to serving on the board of Indo-American Arts Council, he is active in many other non-profit organizations.

Anil's leadership and support during the Covid 19 pandemic was invaluable in shipping medical supplies and equipment to India and funding for an electric/gas crematorium in Bihar.

I wish him continued success, good health and happiness.



Jayesh H. Patel

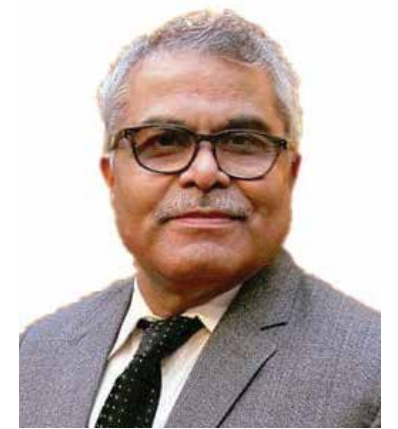
Past President & General  
Secretary of the Board of  
Trustees of FIA (NY, NJ, CT, NE)

President of India Cultural  
Society, Mahatma Gandhi  
Center & Hindu Temple

Congratulations to Mr. Anil Bansal for being recognized as Person of the Year by The South Asian Times, a reputed South Asian news-

paper particularly known for publishing accurate, fast and fearless news for the Indian American community through their weekly print and digital media.

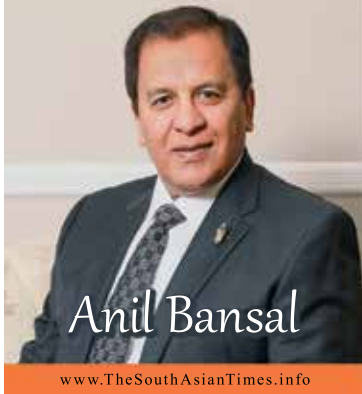
Mr. Anil Bansal is the man of the South Asian community known for his Brilliance, Intelligence, Versatility, Resourcefulness, Incredible multiple talents, modesty, integrity, lifelong selfless service in diverse arenas - FIA (NY NJ CT NE) and many other organizational activities. Through glorious accomplishments in professional and public sectors, distinguished community service, and missionary zeal, he has achieved a lot through his visionary and dynamic leadership with a lot of dedication and commitment. He more than deserves to be recognized by the most prestigious The South Asian Times newspaper.



Mahesh Dubal

Executive Committee, FIA

Mr Anil Bansal has been a pillar of the community and has been a champion for their cause. He remains a constant source of inspiration to many including myself. I congratulate him on this well-deserved award.



Anil Bansal

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

# Congratulations and Commendations

Hicksville, Long Island. I found him a dynamic man of a few but very precise words with innovative ideas and progressive goals. We have remained friends since then, communicated and spent some good time with each other at various occasions.

During our dispersed encounters over the years, he always charmed me with his smiling lips and talking eyes. I always made a mental note to meet him more often to learn more.

Over time, I learned about him being a Rotarian, his high academic background, huge real estate empire, inspiring leadership, his love for Indian arts and culture, and philanthropy through his privately funded Bansal Foundation.

The more I learned about him, the more I admired him for his significant contributions to the community at large. Anil ji along with his wife Kumud ji have a golden heart & helping hands, coming to the aid of many in need.

The simplicity, down-to-earth and affectionate nature of Kumud ji left an indelible impression on me and my wife, Nimmi ji. It is a pleasure knowing them, we both deeply admire the couple for their wonderful understanding and great partnership in giving back to the community.

Choosing Anil ji Bansal, to recognize and feature him as The South



Kamlesh C. Mehta

Chairman,  
Forsythe Media Group

It is always a pleasure sharing observations and thoughts about those who leave pleasing impressions and positively inspire others' thoughts & actions. Anil ji Bansal stands tall among them, it's indeed a pleasure knowing him.

Over a decade ago when I first met with Anil ji Bansal, he was the Chairman of Indus American Bank, and The South Asian Times was by default the most preferred newspaper to promote their newly opened branch in

## Anil Bansal is larger than life and wildly funny

by Thomas Napolitano

Financial Controller, First National Realty Management, Lyndhurst, NJ

I have known 'Anil' (Anil Bansal) for 25 years now, and my partnership with him goes back to 1998 when his IT company, Essex Computers, acquired J&J Computing in New York, the organization I had been employed with. Since then I have remained partnered with Anil and or his family in a regular professional capacity. Today, I manage six large commercial properties under his ownership, all in New Jersey.

Having worked with Anil day in and out, I've found him to be highly intelligent, shrewd, sympathetic, understanding and generous almost to a fault of himself. I would add, too, Anil is larger than life and wildly funny.

The secret of Anil's success? It's within his intellect and unique desire to make others happy. His personal sales skills are unmatched. He's able to work with multiple personalities, bringing all together within the boardroom. Anil has an inherent ability to make others feel better about themselves. I honestly think that's his magic.


Anil will never slow down. Yes, you hear him talk about downsizing his portfolio. However, he keeps expanding on his vision, ever moving forward. From humble beginnings graduating on to software sales, IT solutions, banking, lending and real estate. In the mix, he's involved in non-profit organizations, assisting those in need, and continues to acquire properties keeping all of us at First National very busy.


At the same time, as I know Anil's extended family well, family is paramount to him. Kumud is by

his side, always with a smile. His grandchildren are in focus now, as he finds ample time to invest

in their lives. Anil has said to me many times that he wants to give it all up when he is about 85 years

old. I've been telling him that we're going to be here when you're 85 still acquiring properties!






**CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA  
NEW YORK**

January 3, 2023

**MESSAGE**

I am happy to learn that The South Asian Times has selected Mr. Anil Bansal, a distinguished member of the Indian-American community, for their Person of the Year 2022 award. I extend my warmest congratulations to him.

Mr. Bansal truly deserves this award and appreciation. He has had a successful career, but more importantly, he has combined his professional success with community service. As President of FIA (NY-NJ-CT), he made significant contribution to the well-being of Indian-American community and to fostering India-US ties. He played a critical role in giving a helping hand to the community and to those in need in India during the pandemic. As Director of Indo-American Arts Council, his contribution to celebrating 75 years of India's Independence 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' is equally commendable. People like Mr. Anil Bansal, who derive strength and satisfaction from giving back to the society, are an inspiration for future generations of the community. We look forward to working with Mr. Bansal to strengthen the ties between diaspora and motherland.



(Randhir Jaiswal)

**The South Asian Times  
New York**

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Asian Times-Person of the Year 2022 was an easy decision. It took us less than 30 seconds to decide when Chairman of the Federation of Indian Associations in NY-NJ-CT-NE, Mr. Ankur Vaidya,

proposed his name for a once-in-a-lifetime honor. We wholeheartedly congratulate Anil ji and wish him and his family many more glorious achievements in years to come.



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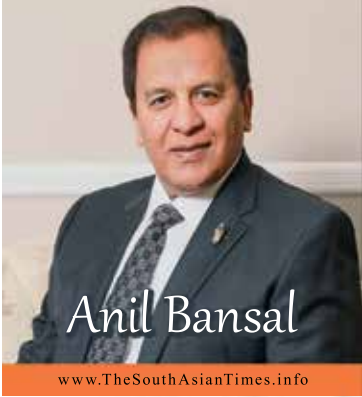
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Submitted by the Staff of  
First National Realty Management.



Having worked with Anil Bansal for 25 years, Tom Napolitano knows him from close quarters, and sees him as larger-than-life.

Tom Napolitano told The South Asian Times that this blurb on the company website (fncusa.com) "was orchestrated by all of us at First National, without Anil Bansal's knowledge, and it is heartfelt."



Anil Bansal

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

# KUMUD BANSAL

## A loving supporter at home

Easy to talk to, no-frills Kumud Bansal spoke to The South Asian Times a fortnight ago when she was visiting her husband's office in Lyndhurst, NJ. The staff there know her well and fondly talk of her amiable nature.

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW

**The South Asian Times:**  
Tell us about yourself.

**Kumud Bansal:** My father was a doctor. I did my BA from Meerut University in India. I left my MA English midway because I got married - here in Paramus, NJ. We have been married for 45 years now. I am a homemaker, have always been. I cook and take care of the house.

**TSAT:** Tell us about your family.

**Kumud Bansal:** I have to mention Anka first, she was the youngest of our three children. She died of leukemia at age 17. She received a transplant and was fine for a while, but then the changed medicine caused side effects.

Our eldest is son Avin, who is in finance. He went to Stanford for undergrad and then did his MBA from Harvard. That's where he met Nidhi Gupta, with a similar Stanford-Harvard background. Ni-

dhi is also in finance and works for Fidelity. They live in Boston, MA.

Our daughter, Neha, did undergrad from UPenn and then she studied law at Notre Dame. She met Will Hannan there. Now, she is an insurance lawyer, and he has specialized in labor law. They live in Watchung, NJ.

We live in Wayne, NJ. We moved to our house here in 1989 and still live here. He wanted to move out, but I resisted. I have

raised our children also to be very simple - not fancy or high end.

**TSAT:** Which of Anil's qualities contributed to his tremendous success?

**Kumud Bansal:** One he always talks about. His grandfather had told him, "If you want to be happy, you have to make your surroundings and people around you happy. Yes, he is very caring for everybody, be it family or people in his business.

He's a very loving and caring person and like his father, he treats everybody the same way, be they rich or poor, friend or stranger. He treats everybody very respectfully.

Yes, he makes a goal and works hard to achieve it. He loves challenges. Even if he fails, he moves on. Even if somebody cheats him, he doesn't hold a grudge.

**TSAT:** In which ways have you supported him in his endeavors?

**Kumud Bansal:** He doesn't need any support from me. Just being loving and being there for him is the only support I have given. And I trust him. I do question him sometimes, and he answers. I don't think he has ever lied to me. But yes, I keep him grounded.

**TSAT:** You and Anil have visited 100 countries. Why so much travelling?

**Kumud Bansal:** There is so much to see in the world, to meet different kinds of people. We love history and we love nature. So, we just go and enjoy ourselves. Among memorable trips I can count Mt Kailash-Mansarovar lake way back in 2005. Then, Antarctica was just amazing.

**TSAT:** I'm told Anil entertains his friends a lot when he visits Delhi.

**Kumud Bansal:** He used to, but now many of them are not around. So, now when we go to India, we spend some time with his elder brothers' families. They like religious places, so we take them to Vaishno Devi, temples in the South, etc. Another week we travel with his IIT buddies, all very successful people.

**TSAT:** How do you two keep fit?

**Kumud Bansal:** I do exercise and 'YouTube Yoga'. I cook myself and I try to eat healthy. We love to eat out too, more him than me. He does yogic stretches. We go on walks. Anil used to play sports a lot -- tennis, skiing, he is a member of a golf club. We have a pool at home, so we swim.

**TSAT:** Any spiritual connection, meditation... that kind of thing?

**Kumud Bansal:** He's not a religious person, but he supports others who are religious. He will sit with me in a temple. My parents were Radhasoamis; when I was growing up, they taught us the basics. But we are not very fanatical about that. Anil says if you are a good person, and you do good deeds - that's what religion is. We give in charity, help when asked.

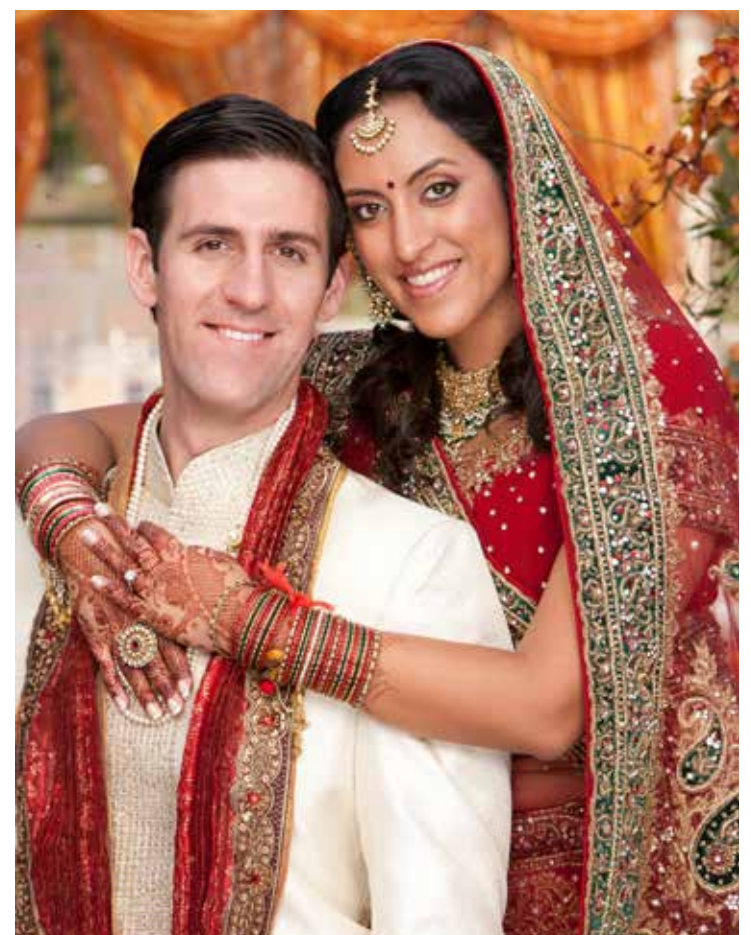
**TSAT:** How is he as an employer?

**Kumud Bansal:** I look at the kitchen in his office, and wow! that is better equipped than mine at home. I think he is very good with his employees; he doesn't order them around. But I must say that his employees are also very good, very loyal. When Covid struck, he told his employees, "Whether you come to work or not, I'm going to pay you." Most continued to attend the office. Some tenants in his buildings could not pay, and he worked with them so that they could stay.

He has an incredibly diverse team of people at work. He is inclusive and values people of all backgrounds. And that is both at work and in his personal life. I am incredibly proud of him.



Avin Bansal and wife Nidhi Gupta with their sons Kavi and Anay, Nidhi's mother, Sangita Gupta, and the Bansals.



"I don't think I could have found a better son-in-law or husband for Neha than Will. His is a loving family," says Kumud Bansal.



Anil Bansal

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

By Neha Bansal Hannan

Senior Vice President,  
Casualty Claims, Chubb

How does one describe her hero? Generally, in ways that stretch the imagination. But for me, there is no need to stretch what or who my dad is. The first words that come to mind when I think of him are: loving, generous, selfless, and grounded. It is hard to separate each of those attributes from one another, because they are so intricately intertwined to make him who he is.

Dad loves all people, regardless of their backgrounds, stations in life, or beliefs. He is always willing to hear opinions different from his own, and he grows with each interaction. He has such an innate desire to help others that he does so without even thinking about it. And he is just as comfortable at the head of the table in a boardroom as he is on the floor of the living room, playing with his grandkids.

I have had countless friends and acquaintances seek out my dad for his counsel, and each time it reminds me that he is a true one-of-a-kind person who gives his time, love, and attention freely and

without asking anything in return. I have never met a more generous and selfless person than him, and he makes me feel proud to be his daughter. I am not surprised that my dad has been bestowed this honor of "Person of the Year" for 2022, as he's been that person to me for most of my life. My hero does not wear a cape (usually), but he sure loves to wear shorts / sweatpants and a banyan.

Yes, Dad is a prankster and jokester. He always brings laughter and lightness to all of us. In fact, you will often find my father on the floor messing around with his grandkids. The louder the noise and the more kids he has around, the happier he is. He is like a personal Jungle Gym for my children!

My dad also loves spoiling the kids, much to our dismay. My daughter, however, is more than happy to let him spoil her to the point where she insists my parents vacation with us because she knows she will sneak away with Nana for some presents!

Dad is also an adventurer at heart. My parents' goal is to travel the whole world, and we were fortunate, my siblings and I, that they have taken us to amazing places. We've been to Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, New Zealand, all over Europe. My parents have been to Russia, even China and beyond, and they have instilled in us the desire to explore the world as well.

When asked what the secret to my dad's success is, one thing stands out most to me: he is not afraid of failure. He is willing to take chances because he is okay if it does not succeed. For him, it's the challenge that excites him.

## My Dad, My Hero



Neha with her parents, husband Will Hannan and their kids, Brian and Leela.

Dad needs very little to be happy, but he derives so much happiness doing things for other people. Sometimes, I think he does too much, but my mom is ground-

ed, which helps make Dad stay grounded, too.

For me, my dad is my confidante. He has always been so non-judgmental that I could come to

him for anything, not fearing that I would be in trouble or looked at with disappointment.

My dad has also helped guide me into who I am today and where I am in my career. For example, I was never confident as a kid, and I did not think I was as smart as my brother, Avin, or my sister, Anka. Yet, Mom and Dad both never wavered on their confidence in me. I would beat myself up, but they never minimized me. They always uplifted me. They did not make decisions for me, but they gave me the confidence to believe in myself and my choices.

The only thing they ever told me I had to do was to get a good education. Education has always been an incredibly important thing in my family. With dad's guidance, I ended up enrolling in law school, at his alma mater, Notre Dame. He never pressured me into becoming a lawyer, but rather, he knew it was another tool in my box to help guide me in whatever I chose to do afterward. The legal profession teaches you to think and analyze. As it turned out, I liked that, and I did well with it.

I also found my future husband in law school. Dad never pressured me about whether to marry someone who was Indian or non-Indian. Will was raised Catholic; his family is of Irish heritage from California. But when my parents met Will's family, they saw that while their cultural traditions might be different, their family values were aligned with ours. In the end, for both my parents, who the Hannan family is as people was more important than their ancestry. And that is a true hallmark of my father.

## Remembering Anka

*The Bansal family still deeply feels a loss 20 years after their younger daughter Anka passed away at age 17. In her memory, they have supported a 5K run every year in June since 2005 with their local Wayne AM Rotary Club in New Jersey to help the club fund its philanthropic endeavors. This is how Neha remembers her younger sister, Anka Bansal.*

We went to Norway in the summer of 2002, and that was a memorable trip because my sister, Anka, was there with us. Diagnosed with blood cancer a year earlier, she died a few months later. Norway was a beautiful country, and we spent a lot of really great time together.

Younger to me, Anka was so full of life. In her teens, she hadn't decided on a career, but she was very logical, and so we would tease that she might become a lawyer (eventually I became one). While I was a follower of rules, she always wanted to test boundaries. I learned a lot from her because she was a lot like my father in that she did not feel constrained by the rules of the world in a way that made her and my dad special.



Anil Bansal with his three children, Neha, Anka and Avin in Norway a few months before Anka passed away.

In order to do great things, you have to stretch. You must go beyond your box. She was good at that, and I think she got that from Dad.

In turn, Anka's death changed my dad, and it changed all of us. Anka was very giving, very loving.

Anka's passing put life in perspective in that it is so short. We were robbed of Anka. But then we were also gifted extra time with her after her diagnosis through a bone marrow transplant by an anonymous donor. That extra time with her, too, made us realize that our family, our relationships, our experiences are what drive happiness.

The generosity of a stranger – through the bone marrow donation – gave us more than we could ever ask for: a little extra time. And that generosity is something I believe my father has carried forward in her memory.

## World is a better place because God put my Daddy here



by Avin Bansal

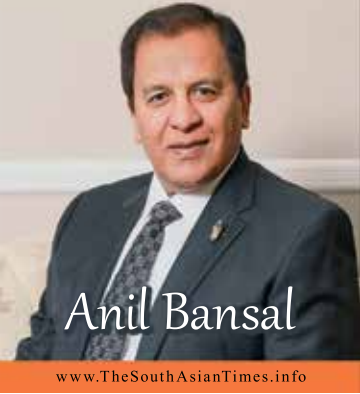
Tech startup CFO and angel investor, Stanford, Harvard alumnus

When I was a young child at my most upset, angry at everyone, I would say, "God put everyone on this Earth to bother me. God only put my Daddy here to love me." From a young age, he impressed upon me the importance of hard work, taking on responsibilities (without expectation of praise or reward), taking on

challenges without fear of failure, and protecting and providing for my family in every way possible.

He showed me the power of self-confidence as he repeatedly pursued entrepreneurial opportunities even if he had no background in a given industry, but he quickly became more knowledgeable than 99% of people in that field. All this while being fun, a loyal friend to everyone, and never taking life too seriously.

He has also been active in the community, sometimes in formal ways but often silently in the background. His generosity (especially with his time, not just money) is unmatched and he's always asking, "What do you need? What can I do?" In this way he sets a great example for everyone who crosses his path. Life is fragile, and we have countless challenges in the world. But I know the world is a better place because God put my Daddy here.



Anil Bansal

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by William Paul Hannan

One of my favorite stories about my father-in-law, Anil, involves a last-minute trip to a baseball game halfway across the country. Since I was a child, I have been a devoted (and, until recently, a long-suffering) fan of the San Francisco Giants. In October 2014, the Giants were playing the Kansas City Royals in the World Series, and were winning 3 games to 2, with a chance to win the championship in game 6. Seeing the Giants win a World Series was a dream of mine, so I got the crazy idea that I should try to go. There were three problems: 1) the game was being played in Kansas City, Missouri – not exactly a convenient trip from New Jersey; 2) the game was starting in

less than 24 hours; and 3) perhaps most problematic, I had no one to go with (my wife Neha, who would normally be up for such an adventure, was not able to come because we had a baby at home).

The first (and only) person I thought to ask was Dad. But he wasn't a Giants fan, and to my knowledge, wasn't much of a baseball fan. However, those minor issues, which would likely result in an answer of "no" from 99% of people, were quickly overcome by Dad's spontaneity and sense of adventure. Immediately after I stammered out the idea, Dad told me to book flights and a hotel for the next day, while he looked for tickets to the game.

Less than 18 hours later, we were in Kansas City sitting in excellent seats behind home plate watching my team play for the World Series championship (Dad gladly sported a Giants jersey and hat that I brought for him for the occasion). Alas, the Giants were down by 7 runs after 2 innings, and ended up losing 10 – 0. Despite that, we had a great time, and it was an experience that I will never forget. Very

# The length Dad went to make me happy



No baseball fan, yet Anil Bansal flew halfway across the country to help son-in-law Will Hannan watch his favorite team play a crucial World Series game in Kansas City, Missouri.

early the next morning, we were on a plane back home, less than 24 hours after we had left.

As I sat on the plane, it hit me that for Dad the experience had little to do with baseball or going to

the World Series. He was presented with an opportunity to make someone else happy and have a fun spur-of-the-moment adventure while he was at it, and there was no hesitation in going for it. This instance involved a baseball game halfway across the country with his son-in-law. That, in and of itself, is a relatively unimportant endeavor in the grand scheme of things. However, it speaks to a much more serious and significant quality that Dad possesses – if he has the chance to help someone or make someone else happy, he will not hesitate to do so. While this certainly applies to his family, I have also seen Dad exercise this trait towards many different people in many different situations. This story always brings a smile to my face and encapsulates everything about Dad that makes a person feel lucky to know him.

*(To conclude the story, the Giants won game 7 the next day, and with it, the World Series championship. Of course, we were back in New Jersey by that time).*

# Around the world for family fun

Anil Bansal reckons that he has visited 100 countries, and he is not done. He encourages his family too to travel and takes them along when possible. Wife Kumud and children Neha and Avin remember amazing places they have been to and fun times they now share with grandkids around.

The Bansals frequently travel to India, seen here getting clicked at the new, monumental Sardar Patel statue in Gujarat.



Anil & Kumud Bansal enjoying their time with daughter Neha, son Avin, their spouses and children at Disneyland, Florida.



Anil Bansal clicked Kumud during their visit to Krakow, Poland.



Anil and Kumud Bansal skinny dipping in Iceland's hot springs.



The Bansals with Kumud's sister Manju and her husband Anil Agarwal in Arizona's City of Page, known for iconic canyons and red rock formations.



**FIA FRATERNITY  
CONGRATULATES**

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**PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022 -  
MR. ANIL BANSAL,**

**AN ICONIC PHILANTHROPIST,  
A SELFLESS COMMUNITY  
LEADER FOR THE  
DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITION.**

**FIA - BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

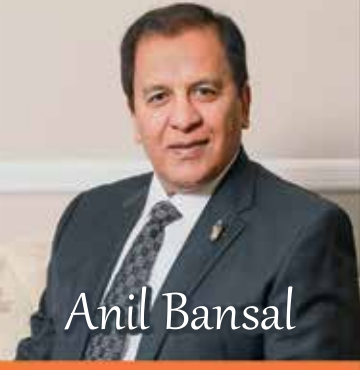


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**FIA NEW ENGLAND - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**





Anil Bansal

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

**Manju Agarwal**

Sister-in-law

We moved into the house across the street from my sister, Kumud, and Anil in 1993. Little did I know what an adventure it was going to be! We are blessed to have a great, tight-knit family. We have many dinners with Kumud and Anil and we even go on vacation with them. There are many things about Anil that are great, but my two favorite attributes of his are: 1) Anil loves my food. I love cooking for him and he is always ready and willing to come over. 2) I am always learning from Anil.

I worked for Anil years ago and I learned that there was no task too small for him. If there was something that needed to be done, he would likely be rolling up his sleeves to complete it rather than calling someone else to do it. I look forward to learning more from Anil for the next 30 years!

# Family immerses Anil Bansal in Love & Gratitude

*"You are the Person of the Year every year for us!" they say in unison.*



Sisters Kumud Bansal and Manju Agarwal with their husbands, Anil and Amit.

**Mudit Gupta**

Nephew

This recognition, Anil uncle, is a testament to your incredible achievements and the impact you have made. You have inspired and guided countless

individuals, sharing your experience to help others reach their full potential. Your selfless acts of kindness, compassion, and generosity have touched the lives of so many, and we are grateful for all that you do.

As my uncle, you have always been there for our family, offer-

ing love, guidance, and support. You play so many more roles in my life. You are my mentor, who has been a constant source of wisdom and inspiration. As my friend, you have offered me a shoulder to lean on, and I know that our times together are guaranteed to involve laughter

and a good meal.

Those of us who know and love you are so proud to see you recognized for your many accomplishments. I look forward to all that you will continue to achieve in the future while offering my heartfelt congratulations on this well-deserved honor.

**Namrata Wong**

Niece

Anil masaji, my uncle, has been a pillar of our family. He is someone all of us turn to for advice or help. It doesn't matter who you are, if you need help, masaji's always the first one who comes sprinting. I learned this firsthand when I was a teenager.

I grew up living across the street from masaji. One day, when I was in high school, I was home alone. I came out of the shower and heard loud banging downstairs. I was terrified. Here I was, all of 16 years old, I had no idea what to do. I ran to the phone in my parents' bedroom. I immediately called Anil masa. I have no recollection of our conversation, but within sixty seconds, masaji was entering through our front door (he had an extra set of keys). He was panting and looked formidable. If I were an intruder, I would have run scared just seeing the look on his face. Looking back, it was amazing - Masaji sprinted (not jogged, not drove, but sprinted!) to our house without a bat or any sort of weapon. He had no idea what awaited him. But true to his nature, he was ready to go into battle with just his fists. And I would always bet on Anil masaji.

**Dr Malini Mathur**

Niece

Anil Bansal has transformed more lives than he will ever know. He exudes positivity and makes everyone feel special, whether he knows them well or not.

He always encourages everyone to be their best and accept nothing less than exactly what they want. He imparts his wisdom with love to young and old, and never asks or expects anything in return.

He helped me through some of the hardest times in my life. I feel honored to be his niece and to have benefited from his love



and generosity for years. He deserves this Person of Year honor more than anyone else I know, and I am proud he is being rec-

ognized for his greatness. Of course, Kumud Bansal has been by his side faithfully through this amazing journey.

**Sonuka Sendhey**

Niece

Congratulations on being honored as Person of the Year by The South Asian Times!

You are an inspiring entrepreneur, doting husband, and loving father. Your caring nature,

encouragement and guidance have enabled the people who are fortunate enough to cross paths with you to follow their dreams (including me).

We love you and are sooooo proud of you!

Thank you for always being there for us. You are the Person of the Year, every year for us!

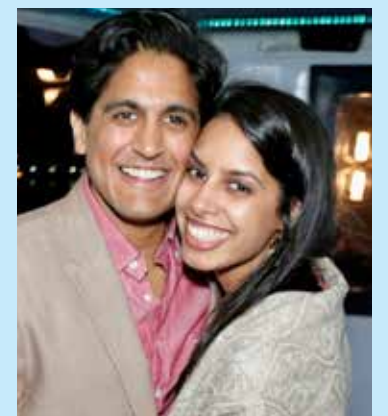
**Shuchi Agarwal**

Niece

I was blessed to have grown up with Anil phuphaji in my life. What stands out most about him is how well he maintains the fine balance of professional accomplishments, with humility serving the community, and taking care of his family. He has taught me that one should never lose faith in oneself because success can be measured in many different ways and when one door closes another one opens. From traveling with him, to working as his employee, to spending countless hours at his house, to enjoying his several visits to San Francisco, all of my experiences and memories with phuphaji are

filled with love and laughter.

I am so glad that my daughters also get to experience his playful nature and incredibly huge heart and selflessness. He truly deserves this honor. Congratulations phuphaji, we love you!



Shuchi Agarwal with her husband Rohit.

**Parul Harley**

Niece

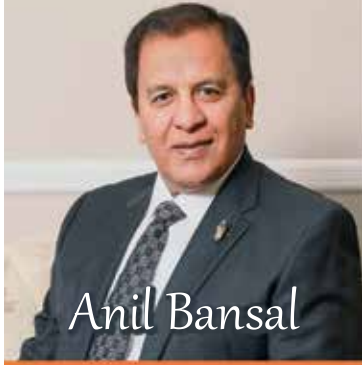
When my son asked Anil masaji if he knew where to get a \$2 bill, not only did he get my son a brand new crisp bill but showed up with one for every child there. This is standard for my mausa. Extraordinarily generous, super-inclusive, thoughtful, and kind. He makes everyone feel welcome, wanted, and included.

**Ritika Malini**

Niece from Montreal, Canada

I'm beyond thrilled, feeling so much joy and truly believe Anil chachaji deserves this honor. Congratulations to chacha on his well-deserved success and impressive achievements. He is a gem of a person and so humble. I learn so much from him every time I interact with him.

# Congratulations and Commendations



Anil Bansal

www.TheSouthAsianTimes.info

/ service. He has been instrumental in providing help to the needy in India and in the USA during the Covid-19 pandemic. I congratulate him on this recognition and award.

to help those in need, with no talk about his gestures even to his closest friends. Such men are a rare breed, and I salute your selection of Anil Bansal for the honor which he truly deserves.

without expectation and always being there for the greater good. He is a change maker who strives to make this world a better place while being inclusive and inspirational. Kudos on this recognition.

to an entrepreneur. He was instrumental in starting the first South Asian community bank, the Indus American Bank from New Jersey.

Anil has been very generous with his time and money in the local Indian community affairs. He served with me on the IITK Foundation. Most recently, he has donated a significant amount of money to his alma mater, IIT-Kanpur for a school of medical research and technology. I am sure his philanthropic activities will continue to help not only the South Asian community but the other needy too.



Saurin Parikh

Vice President, Federation of Indian Associations - Tristate

Anil Bansal Ji is a true community servant, leader and well-wisher. During his two terms as the President of FIA, I had the honor to work with him closely. I learned that a "No" is not a word in his dictionary, especially when it comes to community work / help



Hemant Jalan

MD, Indigo Paints, Pune

In a world where many do charity for publicity or vested interests, Anil Bansal stands apart. His philanthropy is deeply rooted in a desire to do good for society, in a very silent manner with no desire to seek anything but the common good of the impacted beneficiaries. In my 50 years of association with him since our college days at IIT Kanpur, I have always admired his selfless desire



Falguni Pandya

Friend

Anil Bansal is a man of class, intelligence, sophistication and has a big heart. His accomplishments speak of his caliber and deem him worthy of being the "Person of the Year" of this esteemed publication. I have known Anilji for more than a decade on a personal level as a friend, as a mentor and as a role model. He never shies away from leading where needed, helping



Ram Misra

Professor, Montclair State University, Former Chair, The IITK Foundation, Founder, IITK East Coast Alumni Chapter

I am delighted to learn that The South Asian Times has decided to recognize and honor my friend Anil Bansal as the Person of the Year 2022 - a very well deserved honor. I have known Anil for over 40 years. I have watched him transform from an engineer

## Vidula & Milind Agtey

Friends

Dear Anil, it's been a long, fun ride with you as our friend from our Notre Dame university days till today. We are proud of all that you have achieved and accomplished over the years. Most of all your generosity and thoughtfulness have been a gift for so many, and we are happy to see that you are being duly honored. We wish you nothing but the very best and look forward to celebrating many wonderful years together.

Heartiest Congratulations to

# Mr Anil Bansal

ENTREPRENEUR, COMMUNITY LEADER, PHILANTHROPIST

ON BEING HONORED AS



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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

With best compliments

Pradeep Malhotra

Akbar Restaurant

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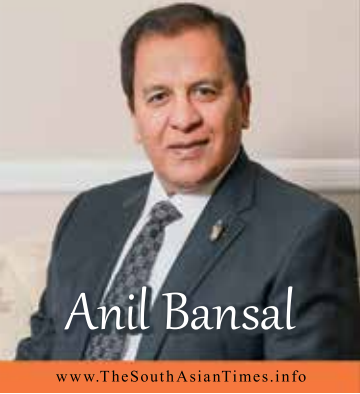
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TheSA Times

# Congratulations and Commendations

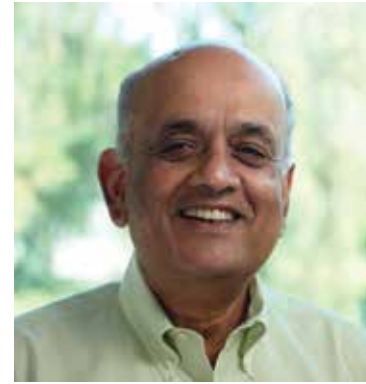


PPE drives during the Pandemic crises and your endless business guidance and vision. Once again, Congratulations and blessings to Mr. Bansal for being a dedicated philanthropist and selflessly contributing to our community.

several years. During the unique and difficult COVID-19 times, as a true leader, he led the community with respect and responsibility and supported several causes during the pandemic. His exemplary hard work and achievements are encouraging and inspiring for our young community leaders.

He is the well deserving candidate for this honor and I'm happy to celebrate him and his achievements.

compassion for society at large. I congratulate him on such a prestigious award and I wish him greater recognition in the future.



Dr Satish Gupta

Friend

I wish to congratulate Mr. Anil Bansal for being recognized as South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2022. I have known him for over 50 years since we became friends in 1972. I wish to highlight three attributes of Mr. Bansal.

He is the most charitable and giving person I have known, and his desire and ability to help anybody and everybody who requests his help. In addition to directly helping himself, he has

raised money for the charities that he supports.

He has demonstrated his entrepreneurship talent in multiple arenas, where he showed success far beyond even the professionals in those arenas. His dedication and love to his family is unmatched and is a model for all his friends.



Sangeeta Malik

Agency Owner, Allstate

Congratulations to Anil Bansal for being recognized as The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2022 - a well-deserved honor. He is a great philanthropist and community leader, who is always there to help the community and make a difference in the world.



Mahesh Bhagia

Chairman, Edison Democratic Organization

Warmest congratulations to Mr. Anil Bansal! We all are so appreciative of the countless hours you have spent aiding our community each and every day. We have improved as a community through your tremendous generosity from leading soup kitchens to multiple



Parveen Bansal

Past Secretary, FIA

I'd like to offer my sincerest and heartiest congratulations to Mr. Anil Bansal for being honored as person of the year by South Asian Times.

As you all know, Anil Ji is a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist serving our community and supporting meaningful causes. I have known him for



Prakash Mohan

Friend

I have known Mr. Anil Bansal since 1977 when he graduated from IIT Kanpur. I have always admired him for his intelligence, entrepreneurial acumen, and

# ANIL BANSAL

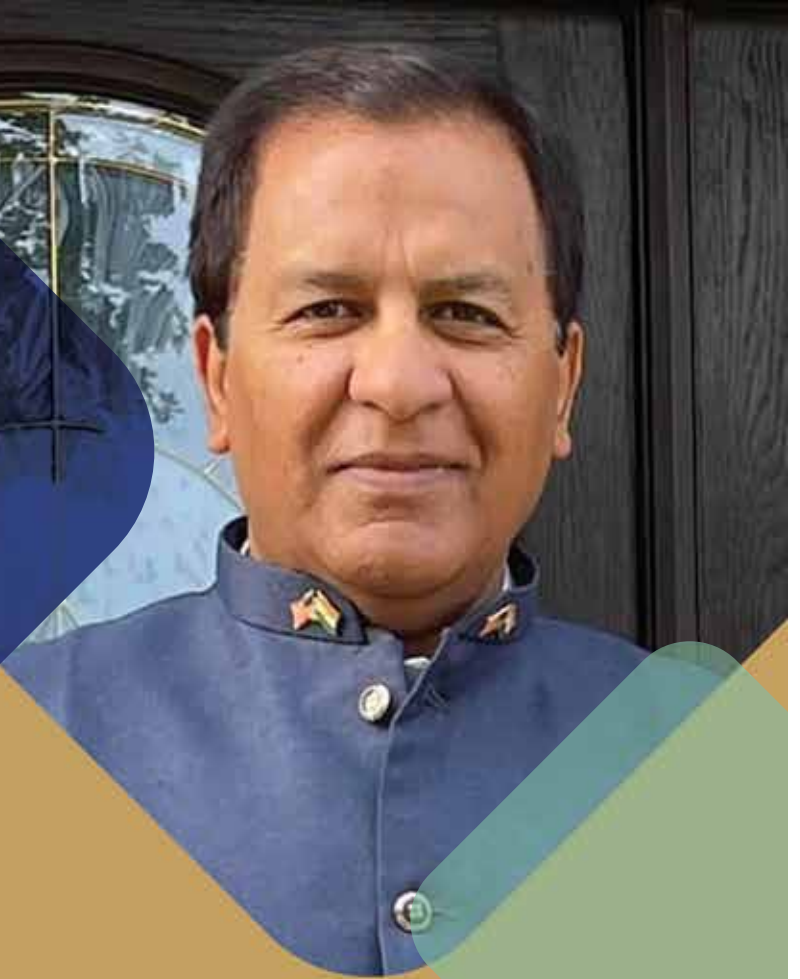
The South Asian Times  
excellence in journalism

PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

*Some people have the gift of touching the life of another in a deep and meaningful way!*

*You have that touch!*

Thank you for touching so many lives ...  
for being a friend to one and all.



*Best Wishes & Heartiest  
Congratulations to*

# Anil Bansal

GREAT FRIEND OF THE COMMUNITY

ON BEING RECOGNIZED AS

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PERSON OF THE YEAR 2022

## & Mrs Kumud Bansal

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## FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS NY-NJ-CT-NE

# About FIA



The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) is one of the oldest and largest non-profit grass-root umbrella organization. Established in 1970, the FIA represents the growing Indian diaspora in the Northeast USA. Through its over five decades of deep-rooted grass-root community engagement and enhancing initiatives, FIA has grown in tandem with Indian diaspora while continuing to promote safeguard and nurture the values and culture that are vital to India-American community. FIA (recorded 2 Guinness World Records during India Day Parade in US in 2022) is established in the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine States in USA.



FIA was honored with the **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2021** for Community Services

**FIA Creates History, Enters Congressional Records,**  
Vol.168.No.81



**FIA successfully registers 2 Guinness World Records:**  
Most Different Flags Flown & Largest Damaru Ensemble



**Diwali Soup Kitchen Drive:**  
Served **30,000+** people with **healthy & hygienic meals** across the community in **USA & India**





**FIA hosted** first of its kind virtual Town Hall & **helped 11,000+** **OCI - Overseas Citizenship of India card** - applicants under its Community Outreach Programs

**FIA shipped medical & life-saving cargo worth \$55 Million to India** as part of its continued efforts to help the motherland **fight the Covid crises**



**FIA extended** its presence to 8 states - **New England Chapter Launched** in 2021



**Dance Pe Chance:** The **India's Republic Day Annual Dance Competition** saw **over 19,000** at participants in **38 years**



**FIA successfully celebrated the World's Largest India Day Parade** in Manhattan with **Over 150,000** participants in its **40th Edition**



**Flag Hoisting** at the Iconic Times Square in New York City to **Celebrate India's Independence Day**



# A Bright Future at Xavier University School of Medicine

*From the Desk of Xavier University School of Medicine  
President Ravishankar Bhooplapur*



Xavier University School of Medicine has had a tremendous year. We welcomed many new students and celebrated three White Coat ceremonies in 2022, along with welcoming new faculty and staff members. We are proud to be one of the Top 10 Caribbean Medical Schools and have a 95% USMLE Step 1 passing rate. We provide our students with quality medical education as we prepare them for successful careers in the medical field.

It is important to recognize that, year after year, our students are excelling in academics. This is a direct result of the hard work of our faculty and administration under the leadership of Chief Academic Officer Dr. Dubey, Dean of Basic Sciences Dr. Mohan, VP of Academic Affairs / Dean of Clinical Science Dr. Pestell, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Dr. Carey, Dean of Pre-Med Dr. Pawlak, Associate Dean of Clinical Science Dr. Abazid, and all our Department Chairs. I would also like to recognize the members of our great Board of Trustees who help guide the success at Xavier University School of Medicine.

Xavier celebrated our 2022

commencement ceremony in June. There were a total of 52 graduates in the class, with more than half of them joining the ceremony in-per-

developing 52 new doctors for the global healthcare system. He also urged the graduates to remember their time in Aruba fondly, telling

We try to make attending medical school as attainable for as many students as possible. In 2022, we awarded more than \$1.5 million in

est scholarship that Xavier offers, providing students with \$60,000 towards their medical education.

We are honored to recognize the legacy of such a great man with the Congressman John Lewis Equality Memorial Scholarship. Xavier is proud to promote diversity in medicine in his name, and we look forward to continuing to provide access to a quality medical education to many deserving students.

At Xavier University, we are unwavering in our dedication to upholding the highest academic standards in medical education, and our commitment to excellence is continually validated by many international accrediting bodies. These vital recognitions enable our graduates to secure exceptional residencies and become licensed physicians in the US, Canada, and all over the world.

This past March, Xavier University School of Medicine administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni met with representatives from the Accreditation Commission on Colleges of Medicine (ACCM) regarding Xavier's re-accreditation. The ACCM granted Xavier its initial accreditation in 2015.



Rendering of Xavier University School of Medicine's new \$70 million academic building, set to open in Fall 2024.

son in Aruba. Our keynote speaker was His Excellency Endy Croes, Minister for Education and Sport of Aruba. Minister Croes beamed with pride that Aruba played a role in

the graduates, "You may all not have been born in Aruba, but I am sure that wherever you go, you will remember us and will keep the nation of Aruba in your hearts."

scholarships to new students. We offer 15 different scholarships, including the Congressman John Lewis Equality Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is the second larg-

At the Xavier University School of Medicine 2022 Graduation, Keynote Speaker His Excellency Endy Croes, Minister for Education and Sports of Aruba, beamed with pride that Aruba played a role in developing 52 new doctors for the global healthcare system.



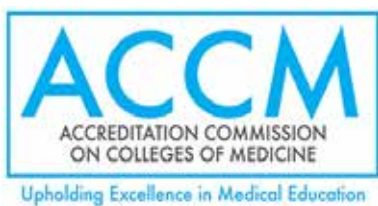


Jagadeesan and Kanchana Poola with Aruba Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes and President Ravi Bhooplapur at the opening ceremony of the new residential campus in August 2021.



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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**  
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**Fully Accredited and Approved**



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Dr. Rachel Karmally  
Trustee / Alumni



Dr. A. Aboud  
Trustee / Alumni



Dr. Akwasi Achampong  
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His Excellency  
Dr. Amin Mahmoud  
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Dr. Obi Nwasokwa  
Trustee Emeritus



Dr. Anthony Shallash  
Trustee Emeritus

For more information, visit [XUSOM.com](http://XUSOM.com)

a week are included in our full-service cafeteria that provides all-you-can-eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets, and transportation in our luxury Xavier vans.

Just a few weeks ago, Xavier University School of Medicine announced that construction on phase two of the Aruba campus will begin on January 9, 2023. Phase two of Xavier's campus transformation will see the creation of a new academic area of campus. The total cost of the new academic block is projected to be \$70 million.

We are very excited to secure funding and begin construction on our new academic campus. Xavier's new academic campus, combined with our new residential campus that opened in September 2021, will become not only one of the best medical school facilities in the Caribbean, but one of the best in the world.

Set to open for the Fall 2024 semester, construction on the new academic campus will last for approximately 18 months. This new academic area of campus will include a theater-style auditorium, state-of-the-art classrooms and labs, research facilities, seminar rooms, a new library, study areas for individuals, small groups, and large groups, student lounges, and a walk-in clinic.

In June, we received official word that we received the full 6-year re-accreditation, meaning that Xavier's accreditation from ACCM now is valid through December 31, 2028. We are proud of this recognition and will continue to support our graduates on their journeys in the medical field.

This new academic building will continue to attract some of the best and brightest students to medical school in Aruba, continuing the tradition of success Xavier University School of Medicine has had in preparing students for successful careers in the medical field.

*Xavier has received the full 6-year re-accreditation from ACCM, which is now valid through December 31, 2028.*

In September of 2021, Xavier University School of Medicine opened a new residential campus to help make students' transition to Xavier and Aruba as easy as possible. Our all-inclusive residential complex offers students fully furnished suites. Meals 7 days

We have a very bright future at Xavier University School of Medicine.

To learn more about Xavier University School of Medicine, visit [XUSOM.com](http://XUSOM.com).



The Poola family donated \$1.5 million to the Xavier Foundation to support the building of a new residential campus in Aruba.



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By **Diya Kumari**

If one still needs a proof – Presidency of the G20 grouping is the evidence that India is on the way to become the guiding light for the world in order to build a peaceful, progressive, and prosperous tomorrow for every living being. Able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is now the guiding light not only for India but also for the globe.

While the world is staring at another wave of COVID in China and consequent economic downturn, India stands as the shining star among the top economies. This is because PM Modi had steered the country in the most trying circumstances towards safer shores.

The sheer size, complexity, geographical spread, and diversity of India makes it a challenging task as strenuous as scaling Mount Everest with hands and feet tied. That is why, the country's rapid economic growth, in fact, the fastest in the world with inflation very much under control, is what the world is looking at with hope for answers as global leaders brainstorm for ideas to tame the frankenstein.



(Image: PIB)

**It makes my heart swell with pride, and I also thank my stars, that I am also a tiny part of the ecosystem working with the Prime Minister for translating his thoughts and ideas into concrete actions for all round progress of everyone – 'sab ka saath, sab ka vikas'. With an economic philosophy rooted in 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam' - the world is one family, PM Modi often comes up with simple solutions that the experts somehow pass by**

# INDIA MARCHES AHEAD IN 2023 UNDER PM MODI



**In all his endeavour, focus remains on five elements – transparency, delivery, use of technology in governance, innovations and inculcating a sense of pride among the countrymen and women. This is the recipe for success – of any and every initiative of the Prime Minister, starting from the 'Swachh Bharat mission' to 'Har Ghar Jal' to the rolling out of the 'New Education Policy', or the several steps taken to reform the corporate governance and services delivery mechanism reforms undertaken with the objective of reaching the government services to the last man standing. (Image: PIB)**

Conventional economic theorists may often wonder about the effectiveness of the out of the box and off the beaten track interventions suggested by PM Modi, but eventually come around to the point when they see them working on the ground.

Early on into the Prime Ministership, Modi had worked out what he wanted to do – to do things on a scale and shape that was never attempted before, things which showcase the prowess of the Indian scientific and engineering community that is building the modern New India, and an India marching confidently on all fronts.

Just to cite an example, ISRO has been a success – which has been achieved after years of hard work. But what has added to the already successful government's space exploration organisation is the freedom to perform and freedom to operate given under the new dispensation with the result that this is now soaring high, in terms of reputation as a satellite launcher for the world. And today, ISRO and the rockets it makes are the vehicles that carry satellites of countries around the globe, and thus contributing to the overall progress of the global services sector, in the arena of wireless communications and its various applications.

Yes, India was, and has been a global hub for manufacture of vaccines and pharmaceutical drugs, but it was PM Modi's push that made the world turn to India in times of trouble – when the pandemic hit. India not

only carried out the world's largest vaccination drives ever for inoculating hundreds of crores of people against COVID virus but also helped several countries with life-saving vaccines.

All this steadfast belief in our scientists and engineers comes from the strong sense of self-belief, pride and confidence stemming out of being a self-built man for PM Modi who rose through the ranks - from a being a 'karyakarta' to lead the country as Prime Minister during the tumultuous times.

A strong votary of self-reliance - Aatmanirbharta, his forceful interventions to guide the domestic industry become world beaters are bearing fruit. It is not without reason that global giants in different sectors and industries are looking at India as their manufacturing base. And thanks largely to the economic sagacity of PM Modi that the Indian economy is performing much better than the rest of the world, as per the assessment of different rating agencies and global economists.

If the projections for the immediate future present a far better picture of India, as compared to even nations in the developed West, it only means that India is doing something, or everything right, notwithstanding the criticism of the nay-sayers and perpetual cribbers.

Stress on infrastructure building – of which strengthening and increasing the roads and highways network, power gener-

ation, and expanding communications (5G telecom network) – will only be adding to the overall economic activity that will take the economy higher than we are at present stationed.

Today India has become the fifth largest economy in the world that is also growing at the fastest pace, much faster than nations of the developed world as well. India is poised to become the third largest economy according to the consensus among rating agencies, and global economists who see in India a potential to show the world a model of economic growth with a strong focus on people's welfare. It must be remembered that PM Modi had brushed aside all arguments of costs and capitalist notions of no free lunches when he insisted upon providing free food grains for 80 crore people, the largest welfare programme in the post Covid world.

And, it is not just for economic revival the world leaders look towards PM Modi for. His sagacious advice and persuasive abilities are what the world leaders wish to lean on as the world sits on the brink of a war into which many nations can be sucked in. For sure, at the G-20 meeting at Bali, world leaders hoped that PM Modi's personal rapport with Russian President Putin would help repair the situation that has added its own pressures on the global economy and is pushing it down.

The added responsibilities on PM Modi's shoulders are large, but I am fully convinced that if there is anyone who can steer the world away from the path of aggression and onto the path of peace, it is PM Modi, and the world may have just made absolutely the right choice.

Already, Modi has indicated what his immediate task as the person leading G-20 – is to try and persuade reforming the functioning of multilateral agencies – when he highlighted the failure of the global community to reform the multilateral institutions, after the baton was passed to India from Indonesia.

His forceful personality and persuasive powers, coupled with tact and tenacity, are sure the elements needed for achieving this objective in the overall interests of the comity of nations – of global institutions that are efficient in functioning, and that can carry out what they were supposed to in the first place.

As an Indian and as a staunch follower of Prime Minister Modi, I am extremely proud to be allowed to be a part of the delivery mechanism of ideas that power a much-needed transformation in the lives of the people.



**Diya Kumari** is the Member of Parliament from Rajsamand, Rajasthan. She also works for women empowerment through Princess Diya Kumari Foundation based in Jaipur, India.

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# India and the Tech Horoscope of 2023

Digital hygiene will be more important than ever for everyone

By Dr Ajay Data

**P**andemic rocked the world in the last few years. It almost took away two years from us but if I try to see the silver lining in this gloom, it also led to mass Digital Adoption by the vast population.

India has taken huge advantage of digital technologies not only to test, track and trace but also for vaccination and awareness. In my opinion, the pandemic has shrunk ten years of digital adoption efforts in two years. Digital India has proved to be a life saving initiative for India and will continue to make an impact in the lives of the common people.

However, the crypto crash wiped out more than \$2 trillion in wealth. As per Crunchbase, venture capital-backed companies absorbed \$2.9 billion in the third quarter of 2022, down 66 percent sequentially and 81 percent on a year-on-year basis.

Big Tech companies are downsizing and resulting in tens of thousands of job losses world over. Now with 2023 upon us, this is an opportune moment to reflect upon this tumultuous year, learn lessons and start looking ahead.

## Humanoid Robots

We have heard of social robots and Co-bots or collaborative robots, that can work just like your colleague in the office. 2023 will see robots becoming more like humans. You should not be surprised when you see a robot taking on the role of CheckIn executives, bartender, concierge or a caregiver for the geriatric.

They will also perform complex tasks in warehouses and factories as they work alongside humans in manufacturing and logistics. Elon Musk revealed two Optimus humanoid robot prototypes and said the company would be ready to take orders within the next 3 to 5 years. The robot can perform simple tasks like lifting items and watering plants.

## Driverless Vehicles

It's hard to move to a new city without MapmyIndia or google map app these days. These maps are now going to be powered with AI and automobiles will take us to the destination we want, without any chauffeurs. Driver less cars and trucks are already getting permissions and soon that will be reality in India too.



**Localized domain names and email addresses are the key pillars. On my idea to promote Universal Acceptance in the world, ICANN along with UASG are going to celebrate UA-Day on 28th March every year on my proposal. The first ever UA-Day is going to be celebrated globally in 2023 with the main event in India. This will accelerate the process to bring the non-English population online. All businesses, websites and services have to accommodate email addresses in different languages like अजय@डाटा.भारत -email ID in Hindi. (Image: Tech Giants India)**

mation they have been resolved.

## Artificial Intelligence

In 2023, more technology teams will focus on putting data and actionable insights in the hands of the entire workforce. AI will process the enormous amount of data generated by every organization, external data sources will be leveraged to gain even more insight and data governance will become a priority for more organizations. Even the AI projects by the government of India like Bhashni will make a huge impact in people's lives.

## Digital India Act

A significant amount of work has been done on the proposed Digital India Act. The draft legislative framework to support "India's techade" is expected by early 2023. The upcoming Digital India Act will reportedly classify various online intermediaries such as social media platforms, e-commerce, and fact-checking portals as different categories and come out with specific regulations for each of these categories.

The new law is likely to prescribe different kinds of intermedi-

aries because their regulation has to be different. Intermediaries considered to be bucketed as social media platforms, e-commerce platforms, AI platforms, fact-checking platforms, etc.

There are no pure intermediaries anymore, so the adjudication and our understanding of it has to go beyond intermediary liability. These changes will make an impact on social media companies and end users too.

## Digital Currency

Imagine your all currency notes get converted into digital form. The Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot launched by the RBI in the retail segment has components based on blockchain technology. CBDC is a legal tender issued by the RBI in digital form. It is the same as the fiat currency, and is exchangeable one-to-one with the fiat currency. Only its form is different — it is not paper or polymer like physical cash. It is a fungible legal tender, for which holders need not have a bank account.

## Multilingual Internet

Multilingualism becomes an ex-

remely crucial aspect to bring the next one billion users on the network. There are more than 7,000 languages used across the globe. In India, we have 22 scheduled languages.

The Government of India has prepared the policy for Multilingual Internet and Universal Acceptance.

It is believed that the next billion Internet users will likely come from non-English speaking countries, providing access for these users will require more than supporting internationalized or multilingual content.

Localized domain names and email addresses are the key pillars. In order to promote Universal Acceptance in the world, ICANN along with UASG are going to celebrate UA-Day on 28th March every year as proposed by me. The first ever UA-Day is going to be celebrated globally in 2023 with the main event in India. This will accelerate the process to bring the non-English population online. All businesses, websites and services have to accommodate email addresses in different languages like अजय@डाटा.भारत - email ID in Hindi.

I am sure that in the future there will be two kinds of organizations: Technology Businesses and Technology Enabled Businesses and Organizations, without which it will be difficult to sustain for the long term and make an impact for any business or Government.

I believe technology has aided civilization in a variety of ways, the most notable of which are health care, education, and communication. It has also changed the way people enjoy themselves, participate in politics, and work. Society and technology are inextricably linked and will continue to evolve in 2023.



(Image: Digital India)

**"I dream of a digital India where high-speed digital highways unite the Nation; 1.3 billion connected Indians drive innovation; technology ensures the citizen-government interface is incorruptible"**

अजय नारायण

## Best Internet Ever

In 2023, we could look at mass impact through 5G adoption. High throughput and low latency have made 5G an exciting trend to watch out for in 2023.

In October 2022, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 5G in India and unveiled various 5G use cases of various Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) in education, health, worker safety, smart agriculture, etc. For enterprises, both large and small, 5G will play a vital role in extracting value in sectors like manufacturing, automotive, gaming, education, and industries through digital twins, smart manufacturing, immersive content, etc.

## Digital Hygiene

Digital Hygiene is a phrase that refers to the practice of maintaining your tech devices, protecting your digital information, and safeguarding your electronic assets.

Digital hygiene will be more important than ever for everyone including architects, designers, and digital creators. I have many reasons to believe that cyber attacks will increase in 2023 and people need to protect themselves more than ever before. Most of these attacks take advantage of known vulnerabilities that have not been remediated. Improvements in pen-testing will provide organizations with near real-time identification of issues and confir-



**Dr Ajay Data** is an award winner techno commercial Founder & CEO of multiple technology companies.

Currently, he is also the chair of the Administrative Group of the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (USAG).

Twitter: @ajaydata

NUTANVARSH ABHINANDAN

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By Maj Gen Sudhakar Jee

India with her \$3.4 trillion GDP is the world's fastest growing economy, and an engine that has the second largest contribution to the global growth in 2022. India's market cap is expected to rise to \$11 trillion by 2032.

Thus, the year 2023 will be critical and hence merit focus on major strategic challenges.

The problems for India are many and varied. On the social front it includes fighting poverty, corruption, illiteracy, unemployment to improve the poor Human Development Indices while on the security front it ranges from cross-border terrorism, to the ongoing proxy war in the Union Territory of J&K, the extended stand-off along the border in the north and east with China, Left Wing Extremism (LWE), and the strategic rivalry amongst the competing global powers in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

The new forms of 'Unrestricted Warfare', the global recessionary trends and the Pandemic are other challenges to name a few.

### Global Security Environment

The current global strategic landscape is marked by a growing political and economic polarization between the US and the European Union on the one hand and Russia, China and North Korea on the other while the world continues to face economic hardships and global recessionary trends.

Russia may be on the forefront of the war but China is winning it without firing a single bullet. As dependence of the world power on China continues to grow, it has become more assertive, expansionist with unilateral policies at the peril of world peace.

Challenges for India are many but she will have to keep a close tab of few of these issues demanding immediate strategic focus.

### Radicalization

Polarized views are the order of the day in the democratic world but the cocktail of freedom of speech mixed with religious extremism is becoming a cause of concern for governments world over from the US to Europe to India. Digital tools like 'Deep Fake' have added another dimension to the problem.

In view of India's multiculturalism, and multi-ethnicity, there is a crying need for self-discipline amongst the citizens. Those haywire in thought process must understand that it is the country which gives them the identity and the freedom and things are not the other way round.

### Vulnerability of the Indian Economy

With changing times and technology milieu, cyber and electromagnetic attacks on security establishments, strategic assets, power transmission grids, aviation industry, cyber infrastructure, health-care industry, banking system, railways, critical supply chains, space and research organizations, and on critical technologies by adversaries has potential to partly cripple the Indian Economy.

Thus, it calls for the need of an integrated structure of counter measures to include Influence Operation (IO), Information Warfare (IW), with offensive Cyber capability at the earliest.

### De-coupling with China

Even the United States has not been able to achieve this but it does not share boundaries with China. India's biggest geographical neighbor with a long undetermined international boundary poses a direct strategic threat. Despite the concentrated efforts in the recent past, the trade gap of India with China is close to \$70 billion in favor of China.

### Narco-Terrorism

Situated between 'Golden Crescent' in the west, and 'Golden Triangle' in the east, youthful India with its high unemployment rate, long borders and coastline is highly vulnerable to smuggling of drugs and narcotics. Narco-terrorism is a double edged menace which not only threatens the health and wellbeing of the youth but also finances the anti national element at its cost. Hence, a proactive approach is needed to tackle challenges on this front.

### Af-Pak: The fountainhead of 'Global Terrorism'

Pakistan has witnessed a 51 percent rise in terrorist attacks since Taliban has again come to power in Afghanistan in 2021, says a



On the back of favorable domestic policies and a focus on boosting investment and jobs, India is expected to become the third-largest economy by 2027 after the US and China, by beating Germany and Japan. At the global stage, India assumed the important mantle of G-20 Presidency on December 1. She is also slated to host the SCO summit in 2023

(Image: Trends Research Advisory)

report by the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies, a leading Islamabad-based think tank.

The recent meeting of the national security advisors of India, and central Asian countries in New Delhi also pondered over the threat emanating from Afghanistan, which is again being used to fund, plan, and organize terrorist activities across the globe.

As the international community has been too distracted with the Ukraine war to notice, unless there is renewed focus on Afghanistan and Pakistan, ugly surprises may be waiting to hit the world in 2023 and beyond.

### China and third term of President Xi

China has been applying Xi's doctrine 'Fan Fa You Wei', an aggressive projection of Chinese power to exploit adversaries' weaknesses in the political, media and legal systems and attacking political vulnerabilities of the democracies world over. Moreover, Xi's new strategy articulates a focus on "winning the local wars" in context of regional contingencies such as Taiwan, the South China Sea, and the border dispute with India.

### Indian Ocean Region

The Sea Lanes of the Indian Ocean

extends from Strait of Hormuz to Strait of Malacca over a distance of 5325 Km. 60 percent of the global trade, and 70 percent of the world's petroleum traffic flows from the IOR. Over 80 percent of China's oil and gas imports pass through IOR.

With the world's busiest sea lanes, IOR has become the center of global geopolitics. India, China, and the US are not the only players but it is strategic for countries like France, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Australia, Brazil, etc. also. Thus, the Indian Ocean is being pushed towards a much more multipolar and complex strategic environment, creating new flashpoints.

### Indian Nuclear Doctrine

India and China swear by the policy of 'No First Use' and 'No-use of Nuclear Weapons against Non Nuclear States'. But Pakistan's nuclear doctrine is centered fundamentally on first use, and it is also oriented primarily towards defeating India's conventional superiority in the event of conflict.

At the 20th Congress, Xi used the phrase "powerful strong strategic deterrent capabilities system," that was missing from his previous speeches and work reports. Fear is that China is, perhaps, striving to achieve a launch-on-warning

(LOW) nuclear posture, meaning to launch at an adversary upon detecting an incoming missile.

The change in policy and building of at least 250 missile silos in three missile silo fields in Yumen, Gansu province, near Hami in Xinjiang province, and Haggin Banner, Ordos City, Inner Mongolia supports the policy shift. China is also increasing its nuclear warhead stockpile from 350 to 1000 by 2030.

### Conclusion

There are forces inimical to India in the world trying to target the mother of democracy glowing as a bright spot. Hence, India would do well to take a look at its strategic challenges in a holistic manner and implement them proactively in 2023.



**Maj Gen Sudhakar Jee, VSM**, is a former colonel of the Mahar Regiment who superannuated in 2020 after more than 37

years of active service. He has commanded troops in varied terrain, climate, and conflict zones. Currently, he is pursuing a doctoral thesis on the India-China border dispute.



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# 2022: A Year of Changing Perceptions

By **Hector Kenneth Kumar**

The circle of life turns another chapter as we come to the end of what officially marks the first post-pandemic year.

2022 held much promise, as we emerged out of a 2-year blackhole characterised by strangely named viruses and lockdowns that virtually crippled economies, but did 2022 really live up to the promise?

In India 2022 was rather an unremarkable year with no real place holder that could call this year apart from any other. The one continuum that refuses to change in this country is the whole rigmarole of elections, we seem to be in the midst of one almost every six months. So much so that even during the pandemic, India kept on with its electoral dance.

The results set the template for the busy electoral season in 2023 leading upto the big fight in 2024 where Narendra Modi will be looking to win an unprecedented third term in power. The way things are going today the momentum for Modi looks very much in step. The biggest reason for this is that Modi has wiped out the single biggest narrative of caste-based politics to unite the biggest demographic in the country-the Hindus into one single virtually unstoppable voting bloc.

carries the stamp of office with it. This year, the government has effectively talked up the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) bill that seeks a common civil code for all citizens irrespective of religion. The bill introduced as a private members bill in the upper house carries the terse backing of the government especially since the UCC remains the only unfinished item on the big ticket promises of the BJP before it came to power.

The UCC will render bodies like the Muslim personnel law board toothless and laws of Sharia applicable in certain cases to Muslims will also cease to exist. To test the waters at least two Indian states governed by the BJP are contemplating laws to bring about a uniform Civil code. One state that has often been held up as an example is Goa, the state that has had a quasi-Civil code in place in the form of the Portuguese Civil Code. A fine print reading of the code however shows several lacunae in the law given that it is inherently biased to people of Catholic faith and certain Hindus, whom the Portuguese rulers wanted to appease.

The formation of a Universal UCC should come about through lengthy effective parliamentary and legal debate, but given how many laws have been rammed through by sheer majority, there is no guarantee of this. Critics argue that this goes hand in hand with the saffron party's ultimate goal of



**The underlying thread in India is very much saffron in colour, although many may call it brute Conservative majoritarianism and the opposition may dub it politics of hate and division, the fact is that today's India is unilaterally thinking saffron. Unlike its parent company the RSS the BJP plays its cards more subtly. Like the saying goes, "You campaign in poetry, you govern in prose", so it is with the new BJP. (Image: PIB)**



(Image: PIB)

The underlying thread in India is very much saffron in colour, although many may call it brute Conservative majoritarianism and the opposition may dub it politics of hate and division, the fact is that today's India is unilaterally thinking saffron. Unlike its parent company the RSS the BJP plays its cards more subtly. Like the saying goes "You campaign in poetry, you govern in prose", so it is with the new BJP.

Their prose is subtle and smooth and with an absolute majority in parliament

making the Muslims a side-lined oppressed minority with no stakes in governance of the nation. In the recently concluded election to two states just one Muslim MLA was elected to the assembly, a sign that perhaps this saffron clout is slowly achieving its goal on the ground.

With the rapid spread of information on social media and WhatsApp this narrative gets doubly amplified in the hearts and minds of the people. To that end another subject that has dominated newsreels is the

contentious parts of Indian history or rather the interpretation of Indian history. For those of us, who went to school in the 70s and 80s, Indian history was the version that was authored by the likes of Romila Thapar and such.

Although one can recall reading up on the great Indian kings, a special place in our minds was always reserved for the Mughals from Babar to Bahadur Shah Zafar. It is perhaps true that some stories from our rich historical tapestry may have been left out and the story of our freedom struggle told solely from one lens.

The motive today is to drive home what is being dubbed 'Our true history'. To change the so-called 'English Public School' historical perspective much emphasis has been given to the reviving of old heroes as new found icons. The giant bust of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose in his Army uniformed salute is one such reminder that perhaps India of yore chose its heroes wrongly and time now to open the pantheon to more deserving ones.

Gone are the days where we can just acquiesce to the stories drilled out by just one side, instead we must now accept that our education was perhaps bereft of this aspect and agree to learn better. A shining example of this came from Assam, where Ahom General Lachit Borphukan got his due place in the lexicon as the state pulled out all the stops to celebrate his birth anniversary.

As we move into top gear, 2023 is going to be characterised by two threads. The first being that at least 6-7 states in India will be

going to the polls to elect a new assembly and the second is that at the end of the year India will be hosting the G-20 summit marking its place in the global leadership stakes.

Expect the first one to be no different from all its predecessors with name calling, communal wrangling and realpolitik dominating the election milieu. What direction the voter takes in many ways will set the narrative for the general election for 2024. The Congress party that seems lost between a leader who in his 52nd year is still searching for elusive connection with the voting public and a party chief who in his 80th year is expected to galvanise a party torn to shreds in election after election.

The BJP with Narendra Modi at the helm looks like it will direct the narrative and if that narrative is saffron then so be it. With Narendra Modi set to play host to worlds elite the BJP and its massive mechanism can be expected to roll over all opposition in a full court press for a third term for Prime Minister Modi after his expected success at the G-20.

Year 2023 and 2024 will define the Indian epoch for many years to come, and will firmly paint India in a singular colour that defines all its diversity - Saffron.



**Hector Kenneth Kumar**, a Chevening Scholar - 2001, is a senior journalist based in New Delhi. Twitter: @hk\_365

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# Indian Spirituality to lead the way in 2023

Indian understanding of Dharma is different from Religions of the West

By **Bal Ram Singh**

Spirituality is in the vogue these days, if not for its own sake, then it being an escape from other terms that tends to define humans from time to time. When people are tired of material pursuits, they tend to galvanize towards the spiritual domain.

When people become old, done with family and social responsibilities, they tend to move towards spirituality and God. Also, when religious practices and doctrines become untenable in the light of science and intellectual examination, people at any age, young and old, tend to become spiritual.

And, finally, even those who have examined life through intellectual and philosophical pursuits without much clarity, they tend to start following a spiritual path for their own peace of mind.

al things in this universe. When the meaning of Dharma is appropriately understood, one has no choice but to turn to the nature to experiment and acquire the true meaning of Dharma.

This is a legacy of India or Hindus that must be understood even by those who call themselves Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs (the followers of the Dharmic traditions) and also by those who want to know more about dharmic traditions, because the fundamentals of these thoughts and traditions derive from such an understanding of Dharma. India's fundamental principles moored in Dharma remain eternal, the basic foundations of its traditions strong, and essence of its practices fairly universal.

Reducing Dharma to the concept of religion, a concept developed in the Western world and Middle East over two thousand years ago, does not serve the society well today. Religion is limited to organization of society around spiritual life, and becomes very rigid, and most of the time unquestionable. In contrast, dharma is multitudinal which allows questioning, even opposing the values proposed, testing them by individuals rather than organized groups, and requires objectivity by suggesting freedom from kama (desire), kro-

dha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (infatuation), mada (pride), and matsara (ego). These features allow the basic scientific approach of systematic analysis, non-falsifiability, and objectivity.

A list of common and contrasting features of Dharma vs. Religion are given below:

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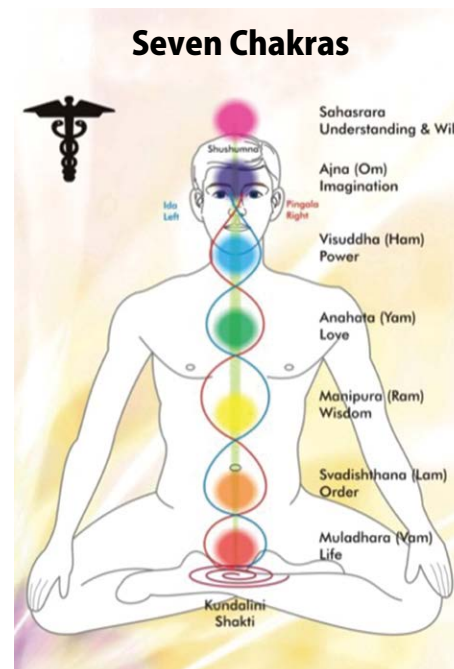
Religion	Dharma
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spirituality</li> <li>• Organized</li> <li>• Necessarily involves God</li> <li>• Socially organized</li> <li>• Prescriptive</li> <li>• Generally emphasis on rights</li> <li>• Exclusionary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spirituality</li> <li>• Freedom to practice</li> <li>• Does not necessarily involve God</li> <li>• Self organized</li> <li>• Subscriptive</li> <li>• Generally emphasis on duty</li> <li>• Evolutionary</li> </ul>

(Image: Provided)

At some point, spirituality referred to the Spirit or soul in Christianity, which considers Spirit to be the force behind the soul. From Indian philosophical perspective the Atma as in Jivatma is the manifestation of Par-

matma, which is not needed to be created or destroyed, as it is an extension of Pramata-ma or the Brahm, thus comes the Vedic ideas of Aham Brahmasmi (I am the Brahm) and Ekoaham Bahushyami (I am the one manifested in many ways). In this way, Atma is similar to the Soul, except it not being created rather being manifested. And, Spirit, may in fact refer to the Prana, the power or the energy that runs universe, including human body.

I had once an opportunity to ask this question to the Shankaracharya of Jagannath Puri, who said that the source of Prana is Atma, and by derivation Parmatma. Thus, spirituality, in fact, refers to Adhyatmic in Indian traditions. There is an entire philosophical framework created whereby Atma and body are interconnected to Karma via the Yoga Chakras of the Yoga philosophy.



(Image: Provided)

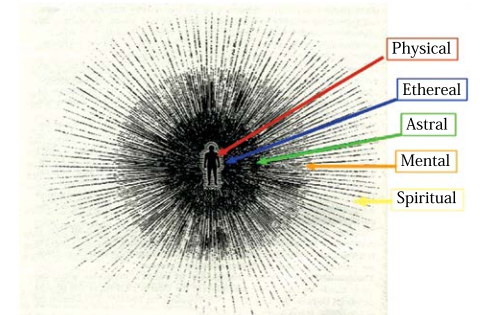
One of the most amenable vehicle currently available in the world in the acceptance of Yoga philosophy and practice. The basic concept propounded in Bhagavadgita is "Yogah kamashu kaushalam", is important concept that can be linked to the practice of Yoga to demonstrate the practice of karma theory. Patanjali Yogsutra brings out the definition of Kriyayoga or the Yoga of action, and also the concept of Ishvara which is a state of mind that lends one to be untouched by the karmaphala. In other words, the concept of karma can be readily explained in the practice of Yoga, which will also allow people to realize the state of Ishvara.

The consequences of kriya or karma lead to evolution of one's true self into realization of oneself into Ishvara through development of shama (control of mind), dama (control of senses), uparati (following one's own essential nature), titiksha (practicing endurance), shraddha (steadfastness on the sacred path with devotion and love), and samadhan

(liberation from doubts and desires) which can be attained by activating the six chakras (mooladhar, swadhisthan, manipur, anahat, vishudhi, and ajna) through yoga.

There is an idea of the "panchkosha system" whereby humans have their existence from annamaya (physical, inorganic minerals), pranmaya (energy or air, plants as examples), manomaya (mind, animals), and gyanmaya (intellect, humans) koshas (sheaths), and can evolve further into anandmaya (bliss or angelic, devas) kosha.

The acceptance of the physical nature of human being, in addition to the pranmaya kosha, manomay kosha, and gyanmay kosha, allows us to look into scientific observations with sympathy, and provide further ideas to advance or evolve the physical nature to higher levels of human existence.



(Image: Provided)

Furthermore, the concept of physical and subtle bodies – ethereal, astral, mental, and spiritual, along with the concept of chakras and nadi (energy channels) allows to explain the operational aspects of reincarnation. The chakra system allows experiential observation through yoga practice making it a real-world observation. Karma can be performed at any level of the physical or subtle bodies, and those get cross-crypted in other bodies through the junctions of the chakras where all the bodies cross each other.

With such intricate details of theoretical frameworks of Indian philosophy that provides many practical avenues of practice spirituality, both in terms of Yoga and Ayurveda (linking minerals, plants, and animals to angelic or deva state through human knowledge, in the Panchakosha system) practices and their examination through scientific lens of today, the Indian spirituality in 2023 is well on its way to lead the society all over the world, provided Indians play their crucial role!



**Bal Ram Singh** is a Professor and the President of the Institute of Advanced Sciences, Dartmouth, Massachusetts, researching on Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedic education, and Vedic social and political traditions. He is also adjunct faculty at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.

In India, Dharma is considered to contain some of the religious concepts, but it has a broader view of human nature

## What exactly is Spirituality

The word is derived from spirit, which comes from the Latin word, spiritus (breath; spirit), from Proto-Indo-European, "to blow, breathe". In other words, the spirit is the basis of life, something equivalent to Prana in the Sanskrit or Ayurvedic language. Spirit is also taken as the soul or even a ghost in religious terms. There is a concept of "Holy Ghost" in Abrahamic religions of the trinity tradition of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

In India, Dharma is considered to contain some of the religious concepts, but it has a broader view of human nature. According to sage Kanāda, who provided the idea of the atom around 700 BC, Dharma is that which governs the birth or begin to rise and ultimate accomplishment i.e. death of everything.

*Yato bhuyadaniḥśreyasasiddhiḥ sa dharmah (Vaiśeṣika Sūtra 1.2)*

This is not just a secular definition of Dharma, but a scientific one. It incorporates all those forces that govern appearance and disappearance of material and non-materi-



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By **Rajesh Mehta & Sunny Sabharwal**

India has been the engine of global growth in the past decade. 2022 specifically was a year of many achievements. India became the world's fifth largest economy by overtaking the United Kingdom. A 2022 report by Morgan Stanley has predicted the Indian economy is poised to become third largest in the world by 2027.

Here are few hits and misses of Indian economy in 2022 and the way ahead:

### Growth and Global Opportunity

Average GDP growth of 5.5 percent in the last decade makes India one of the fastest growing economies in the world. GDP growth rate which was 8.7 percent in 2022. The major sectors contributing to the growth were manufacturing which grew by 9.9 percent, construction with growth of 11.5 percent, and trade, hotels, and trans-



(Image: 3DS Systems)

port sectors which grew by 11.1 percent. Sunrise sectors such as defence, fintech, agri-tech and biotech follow closely.

In 2022, India has already surpassed Britain and is expected to leave behind Japan and Germany to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027 and will have the third-largest stock market by the end of this decade as per Morgan Stanley. India's share in global trade is projected to double by 2031. The year 2022 will be a memorable one for India as its remittance flows soar to \$100 billion from \$89.4 billion in 2021, growing at the rate of 12 percent as per World Bank. Interestingly, these projections are made when

ly, the 'China-Plus-One' approach is bringing more manufacturers to India. Government policies such as Make in India and Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) have supported this growth.

Many global companies including Apple have commenced manufacturing in India, shifting from China. Google also plans to commence making Pixel handsets here. Major Defence companies like Lockheed Martin & Saab are increasing manufacturing here. The corporate sector has built large capacities owing to corporate tax cuts, investment incentives and rising infrastructure spending by the government.

The Indian growth story isn't

S&P Global is forecasting world GDP growth to slip to 2.2 percent in 2023 from 3.4 percent in 2022.

This growth of the Indian economy is attributable to two key factors: limited economic activity in China and Europe, and rise in domestic demand in selected sectors. Our exports grew by about 23 percent year-on-year in Apr-Jul 2022.

Once business in China and Europe regains traction, we shall be facing tough competition and keeping up the growth momentum can be challenging. Secondly, our growth has been concentrated in the organized sector.

### Make in India, Make for the World

The world is eyeing India as the rising leader in the manufacturing sector. China is still struggling with a raging pandemic, real estate bubble and geopolitical issues. Russia is spending considerable time and resources in establishing its presence in Europe and the World. The United States is also struggling with inflation and a poor growth outlook. Resultant-

just about essentials or basic commodities. The ultra-luxury cars segment, priced above \$250 million, also saw a whopping growth of 50 percent in 2022.

### Start-ups: Get, Set, Go

India is full of bright minds and the feats achieved by these individuals makes our nation proud. The rapidly expanding start-up ecosystem is a perfect example of this. The Global Innovation Index 2022 ranked India 40th from 46th in 2021. The sectors which majorly contributed to this Information Technology and Communication, space technology, agri-tech and fintech. The 'Make in India' initiative along with other startup schemes of the Government has supported this growth.

### Leader in Space technology

Indian Space-tech has gained recognition for launch of foreign satellites and the production of inexpensive spacecraft. While India's contribution to the global space-tech industry is around 2 percent, the sector is expected to grow to \$13 billion by 2025 at a CAGR of 6 percent as per an E&Y report. Major contributors to the industry are startups with their investments reaching \$68 million.

### Green Hydrogen

Another noteworthy move of the government is in the area of Green Hydrogen. India is poised to become the "Middle-East" of green hydrogen in the future. But there are few misses also. These are the sectors and areas where India needs to tighten her belts.

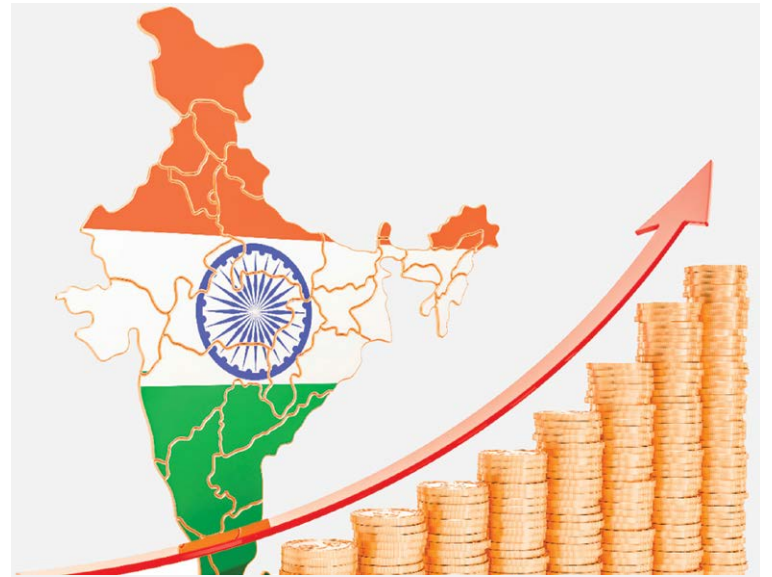
### Air Quality

WHO has highlighted that air pollution is a major public health emergency in India—requiring immediate and sincere action. The World Air Quality Report 2020 ranked India as the third most polluted country with 22 of the world's 30 most polluted cities and Delhi tops the list. It is saddening that despite the lack of vehicular pollution, the concentrations of PM2.5 at some places in rural India are thrice their urban levels due to stubble and burning of dung as fuel.

### Demography: Dividend or Burden

India is on the brink of becoming the most populous country in the

# The road ahead for Indian Economy in 2023



**A young population with strong banking, and infrastructure as well as burgeoning tech space are fuelling India's \$5 trillion dream. India can capitalize on the opportunities which shall come its way due to poor economic conditions in China and Europe. (Image: Deccan Herald)**

world. India will account for 20 percent of the worldwide increase in the working-age population over the two decades from 2020.

However, starting from 2020, the term "layoffs" has never been out of the news. In 2022 alone, the world have seen catastrophic layoffs in the IT sector. Moreover, India's unemployment rate increased to 7.8 percent in October 2022 from 6.4 percent in the previous month.

Mass firing of employees has led to the emergence of 'moonlighting'. Earlier, this used to be an option for people who wish to earn extra money but now has become a necessity for people, especially in the tech sector. Though, in western nations it is quite common, the concept is finding it difficult to establish foot in India. But the people's verdict is out and moonlighting is supported.

### Poverty

India has been marred by the evils of poverty, population explosion and poor education. Since 2005, India has seen up to 415 million people escape poverty. While significant progress has been achieved by the governments over decades, 25 percent of India's population is classified as "multidimensional poor". At 229 million, we still have the largest number of poor people in the world. Undernourishment, poor sanitation, a lack of access to clean water and housing, continue to be major obstacles to lifting people out of poverty.

### Import dependence

India is the world's third largest crude importer and satisfies her 85 percent needs through import. The nation is losing forex with the falling Rupee and decline in exports. Given India's meagre presence in global trade - only 1.8 percent in merchandise trade and 4 percent in services, there is a lot of room to improve.

2022 has not been one of the greatest years for the Indian economy and it has also not been the worst. India can do much better in 2023, if she solely focuses on the economy. The G-20 being held in the presidency of India, western world trying to diversify supply chains from the China and Ukraine war has given India a lot of opportunities, which needs to be harnessed in 2023.



**Rajesh Mehta** is a leading International Consultant in the field of Market Entry, Innovation & Public Policy, and **Sunny Sabharwal**, a Chartered Accountant by training, works as an Associate Professor of Practice at Jindal Global Business School.

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# New Year 2023: Some Thoughts for Indian Immigrants

By Neera Kuckreja Sohoni

In 2022, celebrating 75 Years of U.S. relations with Independent India, the U.S. Government commended the remarkable contributions of the Indian Diaspora, highlighting the significance of Indians whose talents in various fields have enriched this country.

Immigrants from India come here to study, work, live, learn, and earn. They use their talent and resources to join or start enterprises and become rich, in turn helping to grow the economies of America and India. After enjoying and benefiting from the opportunities America offers, not only iconic Indians but also the 'saharan' or common Indians - work diligently to return the favors to the adopted country.

The history of Indian immigration is a saga of extreme courage, hardship, exploitation, and anguish over the challenges of assimilation. Behind every success story, lie generations of painful labor by unknown Indian immigrants. The first Hindu Prime Minister in Britain, the first Sikh to become a Deputy Prime Minister in Canada, the first Indian to head a major American corporation, or the first Indian to become the Governor of a state in America - were able to do so on the backs of generations of diligent Indian immigrants who were path breakers of their times.

After 1965, educational exchange programs, new temporary visas for highly skilled workers, and expanded employment-based immigration channels opened pathways for skilled and educated Indian immigrants, many of whom brought family. From 1980 to 2019 unsurprisingly, the Indian immigrant population in the United States increased 13-fold. While most Indians obtained lawful permanent residence or 'green card' through family reunification channels, a sizable number did so through employment preference.

**America is generally welcoming towards immigrants, at least those who come in legally. It is especially partial to talented immigrants who deliver on their promise by working their tails off, eventually assuming positions of power in the economy, society, and politics. It is true, like other Asian Americans, we face the "bamboo ceiling" at work and reverse racism through affirmative action regulating college admissions**

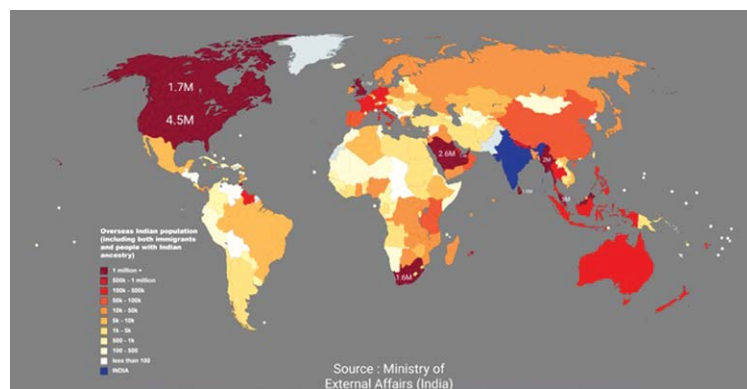


**Barring a rare Indian who came here as the indentured domestic staff of British colonial officials, Indian immigration to the United States began in the early 19th century with Indian laborers working primarily in the agriculture, lumber, and railroad industries and settling along the West Coast. Their numbers remained small because Indians and other non-European migrants were targets of exclusionary laws enacted during 1917-1924, which banned their coming. The Luce-Celler Act of 1946 established a measly annual quota of 100 Indian immigrants which ended only with the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. (Image: Scroll.in)**

We also frequently encounter negative stereotyping not only by Whites but also by Blacks and other minorities. Indian elected members in Congress are referred to as the 'samosa' caucus, comedians often mimic our accents, and spelling bee contests are dismissively viewed as exclusively Indian turf based on our legacy of an educational tradition that relies more on memory and regurgitation of learnt text, rather than on intelligent grasp and independent critique of imparted knowledge.

That kind of denigration may hurt but it is valuable in that it encourages us to treat other ethnic groups fairly, with respect. It also helps us to address our ingrained caste-based biases.

The baggage of caste distinctions unfortunately is not necessarily left behind when we migrate here - as highlighted by recent complaints in Silicon Valley registered by Indians of lesser caste against the Brahmin and upper caste segments of the tech community.



Distribution of Overseas Indians world over (Image: Reddit)

Whatever their past upbringing, Indian immigrants need to uphold the tenets of equal treatment and equal justice, which drew us to this land of opportunity and wealth. While America is not innocent of corrupt practices, Indian propensity to break the law and use influence and other means to achieve our ends is world famous. Our tendency to cut corners, avoid paying taxes, exploit poor and uneducated immigrant labor, and underpay the caregivers we hire locally or import from India is proof that we need to serve America better. Equally, we must eschew improper means to circumvent Indian laws regulating various sectors of the Indian economy.

That we are not shy to interfere in and manipulate electoral politics is clear from the recently released Twitter files which point to how, along with other executives, two top Indians leading Twitter as Chief Executive and Content Manager willingly set aside free

speech, a constitutionally guaranteed right of Americans.

Media's changing role from a watchdog to a lapdog of ruling parties has become a global concern and shameful characteristic of all democracies. When governments cajole and compel powerful digital platforms to suppress, shadow ban, or permanently exclude opposing views such as Twitter did to Trump and other conservatives, it impacts electoral outcomes.

By falsely but successfully mobilizing popular support for a candidate or party its management and executives favor, a private company such as Twitter, Google, CNN, NBC or other, ends up appropriating the power of a casting vote. Consequently, when we decry Modi for his suppression of India's secular democracy and for crushing the media and a free press, let us examine our own trespasses in subverting our host country's democracy and its fourth estate.

**2023 is predicted to be India's glorious year. McKinsey & Co's chief executive recently stated that it is not India's decade, but it is India's century. With multinational companies looking for new supply chains, and India ready with its large working population and talented tech pool, investors expect India to emerge as a manufacturing hub and growth engine for the global economy**

Much is made of 'pravasi' Indians for earning through hard work the goodwill of world's major powers that are hosts to immigrant Indians. But even more important to the 'India Rising' story, are the remittances from our earnings abroad and funds deposited in attractive Indian savings instruments that have added to India's gross domestic product and enabled it to achieve an improved Balance of Payment.

As we step into the New Year, while relishing and celebrating our success as a minority that has reached unprecedented heights in American politics, economy, media, academia, medicine, science, and other spheres, we need to candidly assess our innocent or intended interference with the rule of law. We need an indefatigable courage to stand up for the U.S. and the Indian democracy, and call out those Indians who are comfortable with manipulating the system and thwarting the constitution. Working at the pinnacle of their field, those who choose to undermine our conventionally lauded standing as a "model minority" have no place in the Indian community's Hall of Fame.



**Neera Kuckreja Sohoni** is a published author based in California. A Ph.D. in Economics from Pune

University, she was an affiliated research scholar at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Stanford University.

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# Gandhian way becomes more relevant by each passing year

Gandhi may have died but Gandhism will live forever

By Naresh Dadhich

Every new year we talk about what will survive this year. Leaders, Celebrities, inventions, nations, jobs, businesses, ideas and legacies. Some survive for a few years and gradually diminish while others continue with their utility.

Mahatma Gandhi will survive in this new year as he has survived for so many years. Rather, he is becoming more relevant today than he was during his time. In his lifetime he struggled to make India politically free.

After his assassination Gandhi's contribution was evaluated not only in the context of Indian freedom struggle but also in the wider context of humanity. The Indian government launched a project in the 1950s to collect Gandhi's writings and that was officially completed in 1969 in his centenary year. The collected works contain around 15 million words and that shows the range of subjects on which Gandhi has his opinion, suggestions and analysis.

He was a multidimensional person. And, many books are still being written on his deeds, personality and ideas. But, what is

celebrities and others. His experiments with truth and his metamorphosis from a timid boy to a world leader was amazing and inspirational. He worked tirelessly against injustice of any kind. He fought on two continents and two different countries fighting against racialism and colonialism.

He applied unique techniques: application of nonviolence on a large scale movement against the state, to fight against injustice. His deeds were commendable. Although he was a trained lawyer who studied in England, and started earning a good amount as a practitioner lawyer in South Africa. When he returned to India in 1915, and plunged into active politics, he started living a life of a poor peasant and gradually gave up all dresses and adopted loin cloth as the only dress.

Gandhi's simplicity, determination, affectionate personality bereft of any trace of malice against anyone, attracted many followers and he is still revered and will continue to be revered for ever.

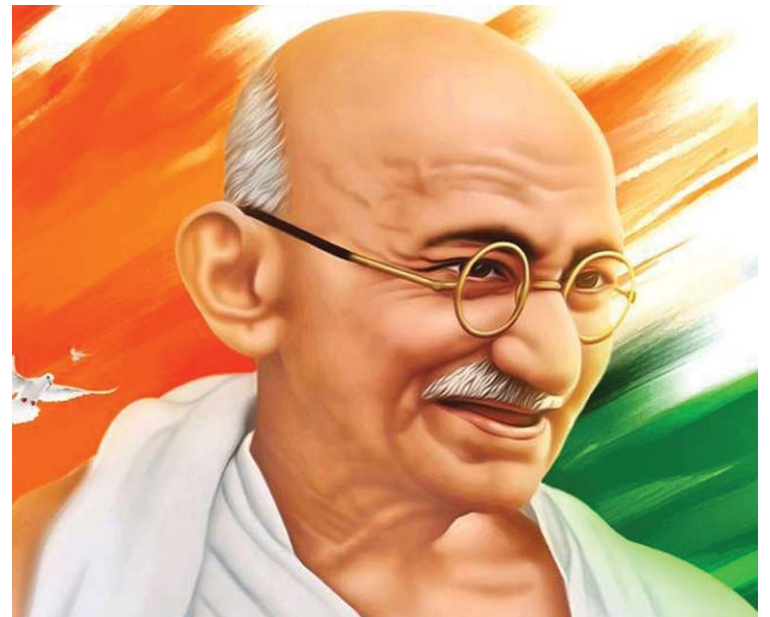
The legacy of Gandhian ideas is priceless and will continue to torch the light of truth, morality, peace and simplicity in the life of thousands all around the world. Gandhi was not a trained philosopher and

sometimes back. He grew with truth and voiced what is revealed by the truth.

The use of the term "Gandhism" for Gandhian ideas started when Gandhi is reported to have declared that "Gandhi may die but Gandhism may live forever." He said this soon after the conclusion of Gandhi- Irwin Pact and before the.

Gandhism, if we use this term, stands for truth and nonviolence and there was no rigidity for him in their application. Even his closest associates could not make any forecast of how Gandhi would act under a particular set of circumstances. Gandhi himself has insisted that Ahimsa might be applied differently in differing circumstances and situations.

One can very well agree with Acharya J.B Kripalani when he says, "isms come into existence, not at the initiative of those in whose names they are preached and promulgated, but as the result of limitations imposed upon the original ideas by the followers. Lacking the creative genius, the followers systematize and organize. In so doing they make the original doctrines rigid, inelastic, one-sided and fanatical depriving them of their original freshness



No fixed theory guided his thoughts and actions. He always strove to keep his mind open and he very often differed with himself. There was no rigidity with him and his life was an unending experiment. His doctrine is called Gandhism but Gandhi himself had told the members of the Gandhi Sangh at Saoli in March 1936: "There is no such thing as 'Gandhism' and I do not want to leave any sect after me." (Image: Jagran)

an way that is neither rigid nor formal nor final.

Gandhi's originality lies in the application of principles of truth and nonviolence on a mass scale covering the whole of life, individual and social, moral and material. The principles of truth and nonviolence were primarily part of spiritual and religious life and had been previously applied on an individual scale to mould personal life and acts. So Gandhi is relevant in his ideas in the new year.

Every year, we hope that the world will become a more peaceful and happier place to live but as the year comes to an end, we realize that the world has not moved an inch towards peace, rather it has become a place full of strife and violence.

The war between Ukraine and Russia has proved again that nations are not yet ready to solve their differences in peaceful ways and are still barbarian enough to indulge into violence and war. It is widely believed that climate change is mostly the result of human violence against nature. The growing consumerism resulting in inequality, depression, resource crunch and unhealthy competition to earn more has made human life difficult.

More such problems we face, the more Gandhian ideas become

relevant. In the new year, we will have to resolve that we will try to follow the advice of Mahatma Gandhi as far as possible to avert disaster looming large in the future on account of unbridled consumerism. What is needed is, not to straitjacket Gandhi in some rigid thinking but to choose a "Gandhian" approach towards life.

The approach is simple. Try to solve problems between nations or groups or individuals or individuals against the state in a nonviolent way as far as possible. Try to minimize needs, and live a life of a minimalist. Be self sufficient in economic affairs at the village level itself. Make equality and freedom as the basis of any political system. Gandhi's legacy is not confined to politics only, he is relevant in other fields also.



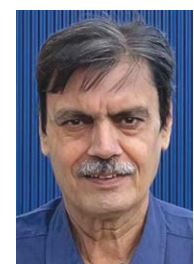
Recently inaugurated Gandhi Statue at UN headquarters (Image: Twitter/ @antonioguterres)

that of Mahatma Gandhi that will survive or rather be celebrated in the new year. Is it personality, his deeds, his ideas, his legacy or his doctrine - Gandhism. His personality is a curious mixture of social reformer, political agitator, a saintly behavior and a preacher of truth and nonviolence. Gandhi inspired many including political leaders,

was not an academician. He has said, "I am not built for academic writings, action is my domain." His ideas were not consistent. Gandhi opined that "consistency is a hobgoblin." He claimed that he was consistent with the truth and did not bother whether his opinion matched with the opinion he expressed on the same subject

and flexibility, which are the signs of youth."

So instead of Gandhism, we can say that it is only a "Gandhian way and outlook". When his staunch followers interpret his ideas they make his ideas and technique rigid, and it becomes "Gandhism". There is, therefore, no such thing as Gandhism. It is only the Gandhi-



**Prof. Naresh Dadhich** is former Vice-Chancellor, Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota, India. He retired as a professor from the Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.



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## Lata Mangeshkar on Rolling Stone's 200 Best Singers of All Time



Veteran playback singer Lata Mangeshkar died in February 2022. (Photo courtesy: [newsonair.com](http://newsonair.com))

Late singer Lata Mangeshkar has featured at the 84th spot in Rolling Stone's 200 Best Singers of All Time. The list also stars the late Pakistani singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

South Korean singer-songwriter Lee Ji-eun, better known by her stage name IU, is also a part of the list. BTS' youngest singer Jungkook also features in the list.

Rolling Stone, talking about Lata wrote, "The crystalline, eternally girlish voice of 'the Melody Queen' is a cornerstone of Indian pop music, with a global influence

spread via Bollywood films, whose golden era she defined.

Lata was the empress of playback singers, the vocal magicians who perform songs for actors to lip-sync in lavish movie musicals, recording over 7,000 such songs,

by some estimates."

Known as the Indian nightingale, Lata died in February 2022 at the age of 92. She sang many songs in her career and recorded them in over 36 languages. She lent her voice to actors such as Meena Kumari, Jaya Bachchan, Rakhee, Sharmila Tagore, Sridevi, Kajol and Madhuri Dixit among many others.

Born in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, she is the recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award and Bharat Ratna for her exceptional contribution to the field of music. Her name also appeared in Guinness World Record as the most-recorded artist between 1948 and 1987.

## Jeremy Renner in 'critical but stable' condition after accident



Actor Jeremy Renner was severely hurt in a weather-related accident. (Photo: Wikipedia)

Hollywood actor Jeremy Renner is in "critical but stable condition with injuries suffered after experiencing a weather related accident while ploughing snow recently," his spokesperson said.

Renner, a two-time Oscar nominee, is the star of the returning

Paramount+ series 'The Mayor of Kingstown' and Marvel's 'Hawkeye' series on Disney+ as well as the Avengers and Captain America films. His spokesperson said that his family is with him now and he is "receiving excellent care."

According to the Reno Gazette-Journal, Renner has a home in the area, near Mt. Rose-Ski Tahoe. The region saw a winter storm hit on New Year's Eve that resulted in 35,000 homes across Northern Nevada's Washoe, Carson, Douglas, Storey and Lyon counties to be without power as of this morning, according to the paper.

Renner scored a Best Actor Oscar nomination in 2010 for The Hurt Locker, and landed a Supporting Actor Oscar nomination the next year for 'The Town'.

## Ram Charan, Jr NTR, Rajamouli to attend Golden Globes 2023

SS Rajamouli's 'RRR', starring Ram Charan and Jr NTR won two nominations at Golden Globes 2023. The award ceremony will take place on January 11, 2023, in Los Angeles.

Rajamouli along with lead actors Jr NTR and Ram Charan will attend the award ceremony. For the uninitiated, 'Naatu Naatu' from the film has been nominated for Best Original Song, while 'RRR' has been nomi-

nated for Best Foreign Film.

'RRR' went on to collect over Rs 1200 crore worldwide and is still running in selected theatres across the globe. The film has been submitted in 14 categories at Oscars 2023.

Golden Globes 2023 is considered as a pre-cursor to the Oscars. Team 'RRR' will attend the award ceremony in Los Angeles, California on January 11. Golden Globes 2023 will take place at The Beverly Hilton on January 11 from 6.30 am to 8.30 am.

Meanwhile, the film will also be screened in the US on January 9 as part of the Beyond Fest. 'RRR' is a fictional story based on the lives of two Telugu freedom fighters, Alluri Seetharama Raju and Komaram Bheem. The two characters are played by Ram Charan and Jr NTR, respectively. The film, which is set in the 1920s, was released in five languages.



Filmmaker SS Rajamouli with RRR's lead actors Ram Charan (left) and Jr NTR. (Photo courtesy: Instagram/RRR)

## Anupam Kher announces new film with 'The Kashmir Files' director

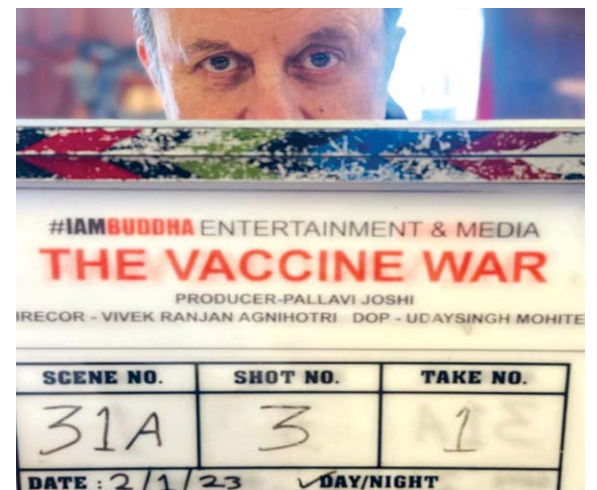
Veteran Bollywood actor Anupam Kher announced his 534th film 'The Vaccine War'. Taking to Instagram, Anupam shared a picture which he captioned, "Announcing my 534th film!!! #TheVaccineWar directed by @vivekagnihotri.

The film marks the fourth collaboration between Vivek Agnihotri and Anupam Kher after movies such as "Buddha in a Traffic Jam", "The Tashkent Files" and "The Kashmir Files".

The movie is scheduled to be released on August 15, 2023 in 11 languages: Hindi, English, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bhojpuri, Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Urdu and Assamese.

As per the makers, the story is based on true events and on very important people, which makes Vivek Agnihotri draw in a prominent star cast for the characters and has kept them a secret.

Produced by Pallavi Joshi, 'The Vaccine War' presents a narrative on Indian scien-



'The Vaccine War' is scheduled to be released on August 15. (Photo courtesy: [Twitter@AnupamPKher](https://twitter.com/AnupamPKher))

tists and on the people who have sacrificed their days and nights for over two years to develop the vaccine during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The makers of the film began shooting of the film in December last year.

## Salman Khan's fan travels 1100 km to wish him on birthday

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan recently met one of his fans from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, who travelled all the way to Mumbai on his bicycle to meet him on his birthday. He impressed the actor as he traversed about 1100 km.

His picture with the 'Dabangg' actor is going viral; there is a board on his cycle

that reads: "Chalo unko duwaae dete chale. Jabalpur to Mumbai, deewaana mai chala."

A Salman Khan fan page shared the picture and wrote: "Jabalpur-resident Sameer pedalled 1100 km to Mumbai to meet Megastar @beingsalmankhan."

The actor celebrated his 57th birthday on December 27.



Superstar Salman Khan with his fan from Jabalpur. (Photo courtesy: Instagram/Salman Khan)

On his birthday, Salman shared a picture on his Instagram handle, waving at his fans. He wrote in the caption: "Thank you all..."

The actor also hosted a birthday party for his family and friends. The party was attended by Shah Rukh Khan, Iulia Vantur, Tabu, Pooja Hegde, Sangeeta Birlani, Sonakshi Sinha, Kartik Aaryan, among others.

On the work front, Salman will next be seen in 'Tiger 3' with Katrina Kaif and 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan' with Pooja Hegde.



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# With 39 flops, 2022 was Bollywood's annus horribilis

Bollywood witnessed many ups and downs in the year 2022. From the after-effects of Covid-19 to the 'Boycott Bollywood' trend, the Indian cinema industry rode over its worst phase this year. Several A-listers like Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan and Ranveer Singh drew controversy through their personal and professional choices. As the curtains came down on 2022, here's a look back:

## Few hits, more miss



Actor Akshay Kumar's 'Samrat Prithviraj' will go down as one of the biggest flops of his career.

With five blockbusters, two hits, and 39 flops, 2022 was the worst year in the histo-

ry of Bollywood. According to film analysts, only about 12-14% films became hits in 2022 while the rest were disappointments. The box office collection of Hindi films was somewhere around 4000 crore net before the pandemic. In 2022, it came down to around 3000 to 3200 crore net. Big ticket movies like 'Bachchan Paandey', 'Jersey', 'Runway 34', 'Heropanti 2', 'Dhaakad', 'Samrat Prithviraj', 'Shamshera', 'Laal Singh Chaddha', and many others turned out to be disasters.

## Rise of South cinema

The magic of southern cinema continues to spread across India, bringing in a larger share to the overall revenue of the entertainment space than ever before. 'KGF: Chapter 2's Hindi-dubbed version raked in Rs 435 crore as overall box office collections. And that is not the isolated example of pan-India box office success of films from the south. 'RRR' and 'Pushpa: The Rise Part-1' also entered the Rs 100-crore club in terms of collections. While RRR earned Rs 265 crore, Pushpa: The Rise Part-1 made close to Rs 106 crore.

Movies in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada broke all view-



Stills from the movies 'Pushpa: The Rise' and 'Kantara'.

ership records on Amazon Prime Video in 2021 where 50 per cent of the audience was from outside their respective home states. According to the Confederation of Indian Industry, 62 percent of the overall box office collections in 2021 came from South Indian films.

## Boycott Bollywood trend

Bollywood was boycotted, controlled, vilified and abused on social media numerous times during 2022. These campaigns were driven by Twitter handles, websites and social media "influencers" – and were usually timed around the release of specific films. Actor Akshay Kumar's 'Raksha Bandhan', Ranbir Kapoor's 'Brahmastra', Vijay Deverakonda's 'Liger' and Ajay Devgn's 'Thank God' bore the brunt of the trend

'Laal Singh Chaddha' was boycotted because of Aamir Khan's 2014 film 'PK', which, according to fringe groups, had made fun of Hindu deities. Many trade analysts noted that Bollywood biggies failed this year due to this trend.

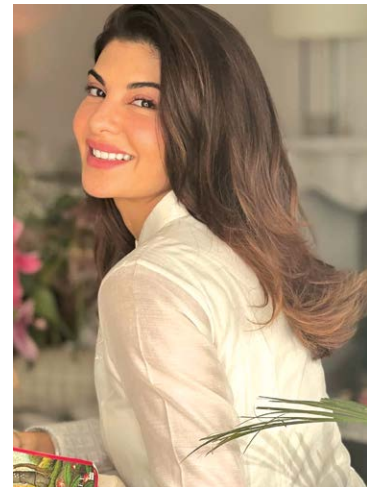


The boycott calls for 'Laal Singh Chaddha' impacted the film's box office business. (Photo: Twitter)

The boycott calls for 'Laal Singh Chaddha' impacted the film's box office business. It collected Rs 11.7 crore on the first day, the lowest opening for an Aamir Khan film in the last 20 years.

## Actors in the eye of storm

The antics of actor Ranveer Singh turned into a national issue when he posed naked on a carpet for PAPER Magazine and paid tribute to iconic US actor Burt Reynolds. Singh, who is known for his freakish sense of fashion, was soon slapped with police complaints and FIRs.



Actors Jacqueline Fernandez and Deepika Padukone

Several police complaints were filed against both Deepika Padukone and Shah Rukh Khan for the choice of outfits' colors and dance steps in 'Besharam Rang' song from their upcoming film 'Pathaan'. Following the backlash, the Central Board of Film Certification advised the makers to make changes to the film, including songs.

Actors Jacqueline Fernandez and Nora Fatehi were summoned by the Enforcement Directorate for their relationship with conman Suresh Chandrashekar, who is presently in Delhi jail in a Rs 200 crore money laundering scam.

(All images courtesy: Instagram and Twitter)

## The Kashmir Files controversy

'The Kashmir Files' was screened at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) which was held

in Goa last month. However, things turned ugly at the closing ceremony of IFFI, when the head of Jury Nadav Lapid addressed the audience and called the film 'propaganda, vulgar'. As the controversy grew, some people came in support of Lapid, while others accused him of being insensitive towards the suffering of Kashmiri Pandits. Things settled with Lapid apologizing.



## The year of underdog films

The year 2022 was a rather unusual one for the Indian film industry. For the first time ever, two films – 'RRR' and 'KGF Chapter 2' – crossed Rs 1000 crore at the worldwide box office.

On the other hand, biggies like 'Laal Singh Chad-

dha', 'Samrat Prithviraj', and 'Vikram Vedha' failed to even recover their investments. Small films, with budgets ranging from just Rs 5 crore to a little over Rs 25 crore, raked in 10-20 times their investment at the box office alone.



'KGF: Chapter 2' collected Rs 980 crores at the Box Office.

## Legends who departed

From musical legends to popular actors, Bollywood lost many celebrities in 2022. On February 6, Lata Mangeshkar, 92, the voice of generations of Hindi film heroines from Madhubala to Madhuri Dixit and many more, ended a long standing melodious career.

Popular musician, rapper, songwriter and actor Sidhu Moosewala was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Punjab's Mansa district in May.

Music composer Bappi Lahiri passed away on February 15 of obstructive sleep apnea. He will always be remembered for Disco Dancer and other such hits.

Famous playback singer Krishnakumar Kunnath died a tragic death while performing at a live music event at Nazrul Mancha auditorium in South Kolkata on May 31

Veteran comedian Raju Srivastava died in September. He was working out at a Delhi gym when he had a massive heart attack.



Bollywood's nightingale Lata Mangeshkar and popular Punjabi rapper fell silent in 2022.



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## Meet Heeta Thakkar – A young climate change activist



Heeta Thakkar is founder & president of Zero Waste Schools. In photo with NY Governor Kathy Hochul (Image provided)

Heeta Thakkar, a student at the Bronx High School of Science is a young teen who is dedicated to saving our environment and making a change, Heeta is the founder & president of Zero Waste Schools. Observing the effects of climate change as she grew up, she took control of the voice she had to bring light to these issues to people who could make a change.

As a climate change activist, Heeta and her organization are doing various activities to make our world a cleaner place. Heeta is working with the New York City Department of Education, the largest school system in the world, to ensure proper waste management systems within all NYC schools, and participation from students and faculty alike in these programs. Further, Heeta and her organization are participating as keynote speakers, and even setting up workshops for students at the NYC Department of Education Youth Climate Summit. She is also working with New York State lawmakers to pass laws in the state assembly and senate to combat food waste and food insecurity from supermarkets and grocery

stores. By this Heeta hopes to help not only the environment but New York's homeless and food-insecure populations.

Heeta is also a board director for Young Future Leaders, a youth advisory committee to the NYC Mayor's office and other city municipalities, where Heeta and other youth advocates help bridge the gap between government and the youth, as well as implement other programs throughout NYC to help the city in various ways. The committee works closely with city agencies, where Heeta and other Young Future Leaders advocate for better policies and the youth's needs.

Currently, Heeta is working with the Department of Youth and Community Development.

With interest in studying political science and economics, she hopes to go to Washington DC's Georgetown University. Heeta's plans for the future fall into public service, looking to be a politician in her local New York Community, giving back and helping others around her as she does today. As for the change she hopes to inspire, her biggest goals are deviating household waste collection from landfills and promoting waste-to-energy conversion plants throughout the United States, and the globe.

## 'Kavi Sharma' is 2023 American Girl of the Year doll

American Girl unveiled its 2023 Girl of the Year on Thursday, and in a brand first, the title goes to a South Asian doll. Kavi Sharma, an Indian American from New Jersey, loves to sing, dance and hang out with her friends. Just a short train ride away, her favorite place to visit is New York City — specifically Broadway. Kavi, who takes weekly classical Indian dance classes, and her tight-knit family also celebrate their culture through holidays, food and clothing.

"As we ring in a new year, we're excited to have Kavi Sharma take center stage in our popular Girl of the Year lineup," Jamie Cygielman, general manager of American Girl, said in a news release. "Just like all our beloved characters, Kavi's culturally relevant and aspirational stories help inspire kids to shine bright in their own way and be proud of who they are."

A journal detailing her life accompanies each Kavi doll, and later in 2023, a separately sold hardcover book written by The New York Times bestseller Varsha Bajaj will delve deeper into Kavi's backstory.

"The story is important to all the young girls who will see parts of their lives represented," Bajaj said. "Stories can be both mirrors and windows, allowing readers to see themselves and others who are dif-



The South Asian doll takes centerstage in toy company Mattel's subsidiary American Girl's lineup

(Image : American Girl/Instagram)

ferent from them, and I hope that Kavi's story is a welcoming window for girls who might be unfamiliar with Kavi's world."

Kavi's storyline was developed by a team of advisers that included Bajaj, choreographer and dance studio owner Rina Shah and 13-year-old Indian American dancer Arusha, according to American Girl.

Her storyline is also accompanied by a partnership with the Broadway Education Alliance's Camp Broadway program, which aims to make theater arts accessible and relevant for kids.

American Girl, a subsidiary of toy company Mattel, debuted its first Girl of the Year in 2001.

### NATIONAL COMMUNITY

## VP Kamala Harris names Rajeev Badyal to National Space Council advisory group

Rajeev Badyal, an Indian-American, is one of 30 individuals chosen by US Vice President Kamala Harris to serve on the Users Advisory Group for the National Space Council (UAG).

The Project Kuiper initiative, which aims to launch a constellation of Low Earth Orbit satellites to deliver low-latency, high-speed broadband connectivity to unserved and underserved communities worldwide, is currently led by Badyal at Amazon.

Badyal will assist the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to maintain a strong and responsible US space enterprise and preserve space for present and future generations as a chosen member of the UAG, according to a statement from the White House.

According to the statement, the UAG will offer advice and recommendations to the National Space Council on issues pertaining to space policy and strategy, including but not limited to government policies, laws, regulations, treaties, international instruments, programs, and practices in the civil, commercial, international, and



Rajeev Badyal

national security space sectors.

The members are presently awaiting Bill Nelson, Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, to officially appoint them (NASA).

Badyal was the vice president of Satellites at SpaceX prior to joining Amazon. From Oregon State University, he holds a master's degree in electrical and computer engineering.

## MIT scholar Shiva Ayyadurai in fray for Twitter CEO's job, writes to Musk

Indian-origin MIT scholar Shiva Ayyadurai has expressed his interest in the job of Twitter CEO.

Ayyadurai applied for the job through a tweet addressed to Musk, where he has written that he holds four degrees from MIT and has created seven high-tech software companies, and is the 'inventor' of email.

Mumbai-born Ayyadurai grew up in a Tamil Nadu village before shifting to the US.

His MIT degrees are — an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering and computer science; a Master's degree in visual studies from MIT Media Laboratory on scientific visualization; Master's degree in mechanical engineering.

His claim to have invented email is disputed as a computer engineer named Ray Tomlinson is widely believed and acknowledged to be the inventor.

Justifying his method of applying for the Twitter job, Ayyadurai wrote: "Thanks for your support on my recent tweet @elonmusk re: the CEO position



Shiva Ayyadurai  
(Image courtesy: Twitter)

@Twitter. I believe anyone wanting THIS role must be fully transparent and publicly post their qualifications. My experience began when I invented email at age 14, long before I earned 4 degrees from MIT."



# IMPORTANT 2022 EVENTS THAT AFFECTED THE INDIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

## A record 130 Indian-Americans were appointed in Biden administration



(Image Courtesy: TAB)

More than 130 Indian Americans were appointed to key positions by the Biden administration in 2022. This is way beyond the Donald Trump administration appointing around 80 Indian

Americans.

Indians have a huge footprint across America not only in terms of the social and economic sphere but also in bureaucracy and diplomacy.

Indians' achievements are remarkable given the fact they just form one percent of the USA's population. The dominance of Indian Americans in bureaucracy surprised everyone.

Biden appointed Indian Americans to almost all departments and agencies in his administration. His speech writer is Vinay Reddy, his key advisor on Corona is Dr. Ashish Jha, his advisor on environmental policy is Sonia Aggarwal, special assistant on criminal justice is Chirag Bains. Kiran Ahuja is the head of the Office of Personnel Management, Neera Tanden is President's senior advisor, and Rahul Gupta is his director of drug policy.

Joe Biden has also nominated several Indian Americans to key ambassadorial posts.

## Flushing Ganesh temple concluded Maha Kumbhabhishekam

The Ganesh Mandir in Flushing, NY, which has served devotees for over four decades, concluded in August 2022 an 8-day Maha Kumbhabhishekam as prescribed in the scriptures to re-energize the abode of Lord Ganapati. Consecration of the key deities and restoration at the Ganesh Mandir concluded with the spectacular Maha Kumbhabhishekam held from August 31 to September 7, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for devotees to witness.



(Photo credit: Ashok Vyas)

## Bidens host largest-ever Diwali reception at White House

President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden on Monday hosted a Diwali reception at the White House in what they called the largest since the People's House started celebrating the festival during the George Bush administration. More than 200 eminent Indian Americans attended the reception at the East Room, a venue that has witnessed some of the landmark events related to the India-US relationship, including the signing of the nuclear deal and the joint press conference by then-US President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in November 2008.



(Image courtesy: Joe Biden/Facebook)

## Hindu Americans condemned and demanded rescission of hateful resolution by Teaneck Democrats

Almost fifty-five Hindu American organizations representing more than 155,000 residents of Bergen County, NJ and surrounding areas signed a coalition letter condemning a hateful resolution recently passed by the Teaneck Democratic Municipal Committee (TDMC) in September 2022. The resolution recklessly and falsely labeled almost every major Hindu American organization in the United States, including Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, Sewa International, and others, as a fascist organization that promotes hate and terrorism without providing any of those organizations the opportunity to be heard. The resolution obviously outraged Hindu Americans who saw this as a vicious, false, and provocative act by Democratic Party activists in Teaneck to demonize the entire Hindu community, their activities, their beliefs, and their political participation in New Jersey.

## Hindu Heritage Month recognized across US cities in 2022

With continued efforts of the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) more than 20 cities in the Bay Area of California, at least seven cities in Washington, and several cities and counties in Virginia issued Hindu American Awareness and Appreciation Month proclamations, part of the global Hindu Heritage Month campaign as well as separate proclamations recognizing the holiday of Diwali. Volunteers across the country took great pride in attending in-person council meetings with their families and community members to receive proclamation certificates, sharing part of their culture and tradition with elected officials.



(Image provided)

## Midterms: Samosa Caucus in Congress expands with Shri Thanedar's election



(Image courtesy: The Intercept)

US midterm elections in November 2022 added a member to the "samosa caucus", as the Indian Americans in Congress call themselves, with the election of Shri Thanedar to the House of Representatives from the Democratic Party stronghold of Detroit. He became the fifth Indian American member of Congress to join current members of the "samosa caucus" - all Democrats namely - Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ro Khanna, Ami Bera, and Pramila Jayapal.

## Gujarati family freezes to death near US - Canada border

In a bid to chase the American Dream but in the wrong way a Patel family from a small village in Gujarat resorted to illegal immigration via human traffickers and ended up perishing in the extreme weather conditions near the Canada border in January 2022. The family



of four including a child and teenager was found dead in the province of Manitoba, a few yards north of the frontier with Minnesota.

## Indians in NYC celebrated Diwali becoming a school holiday from 2023



(Image provided)

Indian community rejoiced when New York Mayor Eric Adams, along with Indian-origin state Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar and Department of Education chan-

cellor David Banks announced in October 2022 that Diwali will be a public school holiday in New York City from 2023 onwards.

Rajkumar brought forth the legislation in the NY State Assembly for Diwali to replace 'Anniversary Day' as a public school holiday, calling the latter "an obscure and antiquated day" compared to the festival of lights.

Mayor Adams called the decision a "long overdue acknowledgment of Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist communities," adding that the state had already recognized Eid and Lunar New Year as public holidays.



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# INDIAN AMERICAN NEWSMAKERS OF 2022

From helping American tech giants to heading top B-schools, taking up powerful positions in Biden Admin to winning accolades for their outstanding contributions – Indians hogged the limelight all through the last year.

Featuring a select few ....

## Gita Gopinath



(Image courtesy: *businesstoday.in*)

First Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Gita Gopinath made it to the wall of former IMF chief economists. According to IMF, Gopinath was appointed as the First Deputy Managing Director of the global monetary institution on January 21, 2022. She oversees the work of the staff, represents IMF at mul-

tilateral forums, maintains high-level contacts with member governments and Board members, media and other institutions, leads the Fund's work on surveillance and related policies and oversees research and flagship publications. Prior to becoming the First Deputy Managing Director of the IMF, Gopinath was appointed as the Chief Economist of the fund from 2019-22.

As the Chief Economist of IMF, she was in the news for the 'Pandemic Paper' on ending the coronavirus pandemic and global vaccination targets. The 'Pandemic Paper', co-authored by Gopinath, led to the creation of the Multilateral Task Force comprising the leadership of IMF, World Bank, WTO, and WHO for ending the pandemic. This paper also led to the establishment of a working group with vaccine manufacturers for identifying trade barriers, and supply bottlenecks and accelerating the delivery of vaccines to low and lower-middle-income countries.

## Nikki Haley

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley hit the headlines for saying she could seek a bid for the presidency in 2024 during a speech at the Republican Jewish Coalition Annual Leadership Meeting, potentially setting up a challenge with former President Donald Trump for the Republican nomination.

Haley, also a former U.S. Ambassador in the Trump administration, has been considered a potential presidential candidate for years and became an outspoken critic of Trump after leaving his administration. Haley said if she chose to run, then she would do everything she could to win. "If my family and I decide to continue our life of service, we will put 1,000% into it and we'll



(Image courtesy: *Artnet*)

finish it. For now, I'll say this. I've won tough primaries and tough general elections. I've been the underdog every single time," she said. Haley added: "When people underestimate me, it's always fun. But I've never lost an election. And I'm not going to start now."

## Aruna Miller



(Image courtesy: *TOI*)

Indian-American Aruna Miller, the Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor of Maryland, along with governor candidate Wes Moore won

the gubernatorial race Maryland in November midterm elections. She became the first Indian-American lieutenant governor as well as the first south Asian woman to serve in the key position in America.

Born in Hyderabad, Miller moved to the US with her parents when she was seven and grew up in New York. She earned a BS degree in civil engineering from the Missouri University of Science and Technology and worked as a transportation engineer for local governments in California, Virginia, and Hawaii. She moved to Maryland in 1990, where she worked for the Montgomery county department of transportation.

## Shefali Razdan Duggal



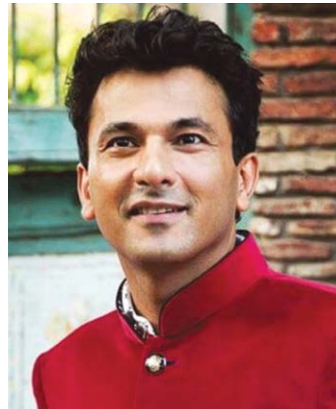
(Credit: *www.shefalirazdanduggal.com*)

Shefali Razdan Duggal, 50, an Indian-American political activist was appointed as the country's next envoy to the Netherlands.

Duggal is an experienced political activist, women's rights advocate, and human rights campaigner. She served as National Co-Chair of Women for Biden, and as a Deputy National Finance Chair at the Democratic National Committee.

A Kashmiri Pandit, Duggal was born in Haridwar and moved with her family to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the age of two.

## Chef Vikas Khanna



(Image courtesy: *awesomeindia.in*)

Michelin star celebrity chef Vikas Khanna was ranked amongst the top 10 global chefs in the world by Gazette Review, becoming the only Indian chef who has made it to the prestigious list.

The Gazette Review ranked Khanna sixth, with British chef Gordon Ramsey leading the list.

The 50-year-old Amritsar-born and New York-based Khanna is known for taking Indian cuisine across the globe and on the world food map.

He is the only Indian-origin chef who has made it to the list along with great names in the industry. Others on the list include Anthony Bourdain, Paul Bocuse, Alain Ducasse, Emeril Lagasse, Marco Pierre White, Heston Blumenthal, Wolfgang Puck and Jamie Oliver.

## Harini Logan

Indian origin teen Harini Logan Iwon Scripps National Spelling Bee 2022. The 13-year-old eighth-grader from San Antonio, Texas, who competed in the last fully in-person bee three years ago and endured the pandemic to make it back, spelled 21 words correctly during a 90-second spell-off.

Harini, one of the best-known spellers entering the bee and a crowd favorite for her poise and positivity, won more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes.

The 13 finalists in Scripps Spelling Bee Competition were Sahasrad Sathish, Ekansh Rastogi, Vikram Raju, Abhilash Patel, Aliyah Alpert, Sahana Srikanth, Kirsten Santos, Nit-



(Image courtesy: *indiatoday.in*)

ya Kathiravan, Vihaan Sibal, Saharsh Vuppala, Surya Kapu, Harini Logan and Shijay Sivakumar.

## Sushmita Shukla

Sushmita Shukla was appointed First Vice President, COO of Federal Reserve Bank of New York in Dec 2022.

Shukla, 54, was appointed by the Board of Directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York effective March 2023. As First Vice President, Shukla, who has an MBA from New York University and a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Mumbai, will be the New York Fed's second-ranking officer.

Together with the Bank's President and Chief Executive Officer, Shukla will establish, communicate, and execute the strategic direction of the organization and will also serve as an alternate voting member of the Federal Open Market Committee.



(Image courtesy: *Free Press Journal*)

## Salman Rushdie



(Image courtesy: *Sun Sentinel*)

India-born controversial author Salman Rushdie was attacked and suffered an apparent stab wound to the neck when a man stormed the stage as he was getting ready to deliver a lecture during an event at Chautauqua Institution in Western New York in August 2022.

Rushdie, 75, faced Islamist death threats after writing 'The Satanic Verses' and was forced into hiding for nine years. A year after the book's publication, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini called for Rushdie's execution for publishing the book for its blasphemous content.

Since the 1980s, Rushdie's writing has led to death threats from Iran, which has offered a \$3 million reward for anyone who kills him.

He has won the Booker Prize for his novel 'Midnight's Children.'



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# NEW YEAR

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

**GARY SIKKA**

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## GOP's McCarthy pressured to 'figure out' speaker race



The House is at a standstill as McCarthy has failed, one vote after another

(Image: The Toronto Star)

**Washington:** House Republicans are at a crossroads as leader Kevin McCarthy has failed over and over again to become House speaker, but he remains determined to persuade enough right-flank holdouts to vote for him and end a stalemate with no end in sight.

What started as a political novelty, the first time in 100 years a nominee has not won the gavel on the first vote, has devolved into a bitter Republican Party feud and deepening potential crisis.

McCarthy is under growing pressure from restless Republicans, and Democrats, to find the votes he needs or step aside, so the House can open fully and get on with the business of governing. His right-flank detractors appear intent on waiting him out, as long as it takes.

"No deal yet," McCarthy said late Wednesday before the House abruptly adjourned. "But a lot of progress."

The House, which is one-half of Congress, is essentially at a stand-

still as McCarthy has failed, one vote after another, to win the speaker's gavel in a grueling spectacle for all the world to see. The ballots have produced almost the same outcome, 20 conservative holdouts still refusing to support him and leaving him far short of the 218 typically needed to win the gavel. In fact, McCarthy saw his support slipping to 201, as one fellow Republican switched to vote simply present.

"I think people need to work a little more," McCarthy said Wednesday as they prepared to adjourn for the night. "I don't think a vote tonight would make any dif-

ference. But a vote in the future could." When the House resumes at noon Thursday it could be a long day. The new Republican majority was not expected to be in session on Friday, which is the anniversary of the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol. A prolonged and divisive speaker's fight would almost certainly underscore the fragility of American democracy after the attempted insurrection two years ago.

"All who serve in the House share a responsibility to bring dignity to this body," California Democrat Nancy Pelosi, the former speaker, said in a tweet.

## Evacuations ordered as California storm knocks out power

**San Francisco:** Officials in California ordered evacuations in a high-risk coastal area where mudslides killed 23 people in 2018 as a huge storm barreled into the state Wednesday, bringing high winds and rain that threatened widespread flooding and knocked out power to more than 100,000 people. The storm was expected to dump up to 6 inches of rain in parts of the San Francisco Bay Area where most of the region would remain under flood warnings this weekend.

"We anticipate that this may be

one of the most challenging and impactful series of storms to touch down in California in the last five years," said Nancy Ward, the new director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Powerful winds gusting to 85 mph or more forced the cancellation of more than 70 flights at San Francisco International Airport and downed trees and power lines. The new storm left more than 100,000 customers in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Coast without power.



The city distributed so many sandbags to residents that supplies temporarily ran out (Image: Belfast Telegraph)

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One would have to go back hundreds of years to find a monarch who reigned longer than Queen Elizabeth II.

Her death in September was arguably the most high-profile death this year, prompting a collective outpouring of grief and respect for her steady leadership as well as some criticism of the monarchy's role in colonialism. She likely met more people than anyone in history, and her image — on stamps, coins and banknotes — was among the most reproduced in the world.

The year also saw the assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who was fatally shot during a campaign speech in July.

Here is a roll call of some influential figures who died in 2022:

#### JANUARY

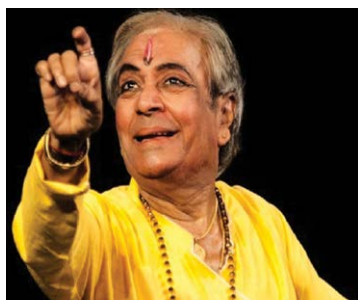
##### Sheikh Saleh bin Mohammed al-Luhaidan, 90



(Image: Contents101)

An influential Saudi cleric who once served for years as head of the kingdom's Shariah courts and whose ultraconservative views sparked outcry. Jan. 5.

##### Birju Maharaj, 83



(Image: Jagran Josh)

A legend of classical Indian dance and among the country's most well-known performing artists. Jan. 17.

##### Meat Loaf, 74

The rock superstar loved by millions for his "Bat Out of Hell" album and for such theatrical, dark-hearted anthems as "Paradise By the Dashboard Light," "Two Out of Three Ain't Bad," and "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)." Jan. 20.

#### FEBRUARY

##### Lata Mangeshkar, 92



(Image: NewsOnAir)

A legendary Indian singer with a prolific, groundbreaking catalog and a voice recognized by more than a billion people in South Asia. Feb. 6.

##### Bappi Lahiri, 69



(Image: Zoom TV)

A popular Bollywood singer and composer who won millions of fans with his penchant for feet-tapping disco music in the 1980s and 1990s. Feb. 15.

#### MARCH

##### Shane Warne, 52



(Image: Reuters)

He was regarded as one of the greatest players, most astute tacticians and ultimate competitors in the long history of cricket. March 4.

##### Madeleine Albright, 84



(Image: Open Magazine)

A child refugee from Nazi- and then Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe who rose to become the first female secretary of state and a mentor to many current and former American statesmen and women. March 23.

#### APRIL

##### Orrin G. Hatch, 88

The longest-serving Republican senator in history who was a fixture in Utah politics for more than four decades. April 23.

#### MAY

##### Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, 73



(Image: AKIPress News Agency)

The United Arab Emirates' long-ailing ruler and president who oversaw much of the country's blistering economic growth and whose name was immortalized on the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. May 13.

#### JUNE

##### Mark Shields, 85

A political commentator and columnist who shared his insight into American politics and wit on "PBS NewsHour" for decades. June 18.

##### Sonny Barger, 83

The leather-clad fixture of 1960s counterculture and figurehead of the Hells Angels motorcycle club who was at the notorious Rolling Stones concert at Altamont Speedway. June 29.

#### JULY

##### Shinzo Abe, 67



(Image: Today)

Japan's longest serving prime minister, he was also perhaps the most polarizing, complex politician in recent Japanese history. July 8. Fatally shot during a campaign speech.

#### AUGUST

##### Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, 62



(Image: Business Today)

A veteran stock market investor and Indian billionaire nicknamed India's own Warren Buffett. Aug. 14.

##### Dr. Nafis Sadik, 92

A Pakistani doctor who championed women's health and rights and spearheaded the breakthrough action plan adopted by 179 countries at the 1994 United Nations population conference. Aug. 14.

##### Mikhail Gorbachev, 91



(Image: BBC)

The last leader of the Soviet Union, he set out to revitalize it but ended up unleashing forces that led to the collapse of communism, the breakup of the state and the end of the Cold War. Aug. 30.

#### SEPTEMBER

##### Queen Elizabeth II, 96



(Image: TWU Lasso)

Britain's longest-reigning monarch and a rock of stability across much of a turbulent century. Sept. 8.

#### OCTOBER

##### Anita Kerr, 94

A Grammy-winning singer and composer whose vocal group the



(Image: MusicRow)

Anita Kerr Singers provided the lush backdrop to the Nashville Sound. Oct. 10.

#### NOVEMBER

##### Ibrahim Munir, 85

The former acting leader of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Nov. 4.

##### Archbishop Chrysostomos II, 81

The outspoken leader of Cyprus' Greek Orthodox Christian Church whose forays into the country's complex politics and finances fired up supporters and detractors alike. Nov. 7.

##### Jiang Zemin, 96



(Image: CNN)

He led China out of isolation after the army crushed the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests in 1989 and supported economic reforms that led to a decade of explosive growth. Nov. 30.

#### DECEMBER

##### Pelé, 82



(Image: CNBC)

The Brazilian king of soccer who won a record three World Cups and became one of the most commanding sports figures of the last century — as soccer's most prolific scorer with Brazilian club Santos and the Brazil national team. Dec. 29.



**Parker's  
Indian Cultural Unit  
Committee Members**

*Seated (left to right):*  
Founders: Dr. Indravadan Shah,  
Dr. Saroj Shah, Dr. Ram Pardeshi

*Standing (left to right):*  
Dahya Bhai Patel, Dr. Hira Lal Patel, Dilip Tolat,  
Lina Scacco, Rekha Tolat, Sujata Seth, Mukund  
Mehta, Dr. Harshad Shah, Mohan Ramaswamy



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**Parker's  
Medical & Nursing Staff**

*Seated (left to right):*  
Neelam Chand, CNA, Satvir Kaur, RN HD,  
Nurse Mgr. Harpreet Khahera, RN, Head  
Nurse Anthony Auguste, RN, Rinsey George, CNA

*Standing (left to right):*  
Dr. Sandeep Mehrishi Attending Pulmonologist, Colleen Ariola  
Director of Nursing, RN, Dr. Arpan Phillip Assistant Director -  
Medicine, Dr. Ram Pardeshi Attending Psychiatrist, Susan  
Costello Clinical Dir Subacute & LTC, Dr. Igor Israel Medical Director,  
Dr. Pushendra Sharma Attending Geriatrician, Dr. Vimalson Monickam  
Attending Geriatrician, Verna Sinclair Clinical Director Staff Educator



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By **Sulekh C Jain &  
Dr Palakh Jain**

You open any WhatsApp group of the Jains nowadays and what is trending is "Save Shri Sammed Shikharji". Every Jain household is lending thought to this cause which is close not to the heart but soul of every Jain – by birth or by karma.

Jainism is a religion existing since time immemorial. Jains constitute less than one per cent of India's population but contribute the maximum to personal taxes. Jains have contributed immensely to the growth of India since ancient times. Jains are a minority community. However, they never ask but share their resources and wealth for the welfare of the nation as a whole.

Jains constitute the richest community with a strong belief in the doctrine given by Lord Mahavira – Jiyo aur Jeene do (Live and Let Live). History talks of the practice of non-violence preached and lived by Jains. Even during the bloodshed of the 1947 partition, Jains were not harmed by the Muslim community. The Muslim community said that the Jains have never encroached upon our property



The holy place is located on Parasnath Hills, the highest mountain in Jharkhand state. (Photo courtesy: Twitter)

etc. Hence, we will let them live in peace even when the two nations were experiencing bloodbath at every nook and corner. This is not all, Jains are known to be philanthropists, the most successful business community, and connoisseurs of art and culture.

Today the issue is to Save Shri Sammed Shikharji – the most sacred pilgrim of Jains. It is believed that 20 out of the 24 Tirthankars have attained Moksh/Nirvana/ liberation from this place. If the government doesn't interfere in the religious places of other religions, then why those of Jains – just because they are followers of peace and a minority in India? Also, the uncanny underlying issue is that the Jain community was not consulted before taking this decision at any point. It is a forced deci-

sion that is against the Constitution of India which shouts about the freedom to practice religion.

This sacred place is under threat because the "Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change" has issued a notification dated 02.08.2019 vide no. S.O. 2795(E) under the Gazette of India interalia notifying an area to an extent varying from zero kilometers to 25 kilometers around the boundary of Parasnath Wildlife Sanctuary in Dhanbad district the state of Jharkhand as the Parasnath Wildlife Sanctuary "Eco-Sensitive Zone".

It is also understood that vide said Gazette Notification, the intent of the government is to permit Eco-Tourism and other non-religious activities at the ancient holiest Jain Teerth "Shri Sammed Shikharji"

"Parasnath Hill" (Census 2011 village code 352856 of 16,035 acres) and Madhuban (Census Village code 352856 of 794 acres), Pirtani in the district of Giridih of Jharkhand. Through this notification, not only the sanctity of the sacred place under threat but also the religious sentiments of the Jain community is hurt at large.

Such an act of conversion of a holy place in democratic India raises questions. The Jain community is appealing for the following in the most peaceful way possible:

- De-notify the boundary area around the Parasnath Wildlife Sanctuary

- Declare Shri Sammed Shikharji as "meat and liquor sale-free area"

To provide basic facilities such as registration of pilgrims, medical facilities, security

check posts with scanners etc to maintain the sanctity and independent identity of Shri Sammed Shikharji.

A hill where Jains do not walk with shoes is today infiltrated with tourists who are destroying the sanctity of the sacred place by eating meat and drinking alcohol – the two taboos in the Jain tradition. A nation that fails to preserve its cultural and religious roots cannot go far. It is time that the appeal by the Jains is taken seriously by the government authorities.

(Dr Sulekh C Jain is the Founder/Co-Founder of more than a dozen organizations and institutions in North America that deal with Jainism. Dr Palakh Jain is Associate Professor at Bennett University and Independent Director on Board of NSE Listed Company)

## Jain monk dies while fasting for Sammed Shikharji

**Jaipur:** A 72-year-old Jain monk who was on a fast against the Jharkhand government's decision to declare Shri Sammed Shikharji as a tourist place died on January 3 in Jaipur, according to a community leader.

Police said after participating in a peace march in Jaipur against the decision, Sugyeysagar Maharaj sat on

the fast at Sanghiji temple in Sanganer area of the city. He was a native of a village in Banswara district of Rajasthan.

"He was on an indefinite fast, and had not eaten anything since December 25. He passed away in the morning and the funeral was conducted at noon," SHO of Malpura Gate police station Satish Chand said.

## China didn't observe pacts with India on border issue: Jaishankar



Foreign Minister S Jaishankar said India had agreements with China not to mass force in the border areas. (Photo courtesy: ndtv.com)

**New Delhi:** China did not observe agreements with India on border issues and that is why there is a "tense situation" between the two neighbors, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has pointed out as he explained how Beijing tried to "unilaterally change LAC".

During an interview to Austria's national broadcaster ORF, Jaishankar said India had agreements with China not to mass force in the border areas.

However, China did not observe those agreements, "which is why we have the currently tense situation that we do", he said while responding to a question. "We had an agreement not to unilaterally change the Line of Control (LAC), which they (China) have tried to unilaterally do," he said.

Replying to a counter question on what if China also says that India did not observe the agreements, Jaishankar said it's difficult for Beijing to say that as the "record is very clear".

Indian and Chinese troops clashed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 and the face-off resulted in "minor injuries to a few personnel from both sides", according to the Indian Army.

## Demonetization decision gets SC's seal of approval

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court affirmed the Central government's 2016 decision to demonetize currency notes of Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 denominations.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Justice S A Nazeer and comprising Justices B R Gavai, A S Bopanna, V Ramasubramanian, and B V Nagarathna pronounced the judgment on a clutch of petitions challenging the Centre's 2016 decision to demonetize currency notes of Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 denominations. Pronouncing the majority judgment, Justice Gavai said that the decision-making process cannot be faulted merely because the proposal emanated from the Central government. Justice Gavai added that there was consultation between the Centre and the RBI for a period of six months.

"We hold that there was a reasonable nexus to bring such a measure, and we hold that demone-



The government had decided to demonetize higher denomination currency notes in 2016. (Photo : news9live.com)

tization was not hit by the doctrine of proportionality," said the majority judgment.

Justice Nagarathna said examining Section 26(2) would not mean to sit over the merits of demonetization and thus it is well within the lakshman rekha as drawn by this court.

The bench said there has to be great restraint in matters of economic policy and the

court cannot supplant the wisdom of the executive with its wisdom. Justice Nagarathna differed from the majority view, and delivered a dissenting judgment. During the hearing, the Centre had told the Supreme Court that the November 2016 decision to withdraw legal tender of Rs 500 and 1,000 currency notes was one of the critical steps in the series of transformational economic policy steps and this decision was taken after extensive consultation with the RBI and advance preparations.



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# MAJOR MILESTONES THAT SHAPED INDIA IN 2022

The year 2022 began with Indians breathing Covid-free air after facing two years of restrictions. It saw many events, achievements, decisions, disputes, and raging controversies. While some saw shifting of political equations, some saw India leaving a strong global footprint with its robust foreign policy and assertive diplomacy



(Credit: jagranjosh.com)

As we usher in 2023, let's look back at the major milestones that shaped India this year:

## G20 Presidency



(Credit: Twitter@narendramodi)

In a historic moment, India formally assumed the G20 Presidency from December 1 and will convene the G20 Leaders' Summit for the first time in the country in 2023.

As a nation deeply committed to "democracy and multilateralism", India wants to play an important role by finding pragmatic global solutions for the wellbeing of all, and in doing so, manifest the true spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or the 'World is One Family'.

## Assembly elections



(Credit: hindustantimes.com)

The states of Goa, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Gujarat went to election in 2022. While the BJP won five states, Congress received victory only in Himachal Pradesh. The biggest surprise came from Punjab where the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) emerged victorious, dislodging Congress.

AAP also won the Delhi Municipal corporation election ending BJP's dominance of 15 years in the civic body.

## India-China clashes



(Credit: SAT file)

More than 200 Chinese soldiers transgressed the Line of Actual Control and clashed with Indian troops in the Yangtse area of Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9. While there were injuries on both sides, no fatalities were reported from the Indian side.

## India-Pakistan barbs at UN

While India's foreign minister S Jaishankar described Pakistan as the "epicenter of terrorism," his Pakistani counterpart labeled the Indian PM as "the butcher of Gujarat".

India and Pakistan have made cross-accusations on the promotion of terrorism in recent days describing the comments of Islamabad as "uncivilized," in what is a new episode of tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors.

## Bharat Jodo Yatra



(Credit: Twitter@RahulGandhi)

**The Karnataka High Court upheld the ban on hijab by the educational institutes on March 15, 2022. The court ruled that hijab is not an essential religious practice under Islam and, hence, is not protected by the Article 25 of the Constitution setting out the fundamental right to practice one's religion**

A mass movement started by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to mobilize party cadres and the general public by taking a journey on foot from Kanyakumari, the southern tip of the peninsula, to the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, spanning 3,570 kilometers over 150 days.

The yatra garnered massive support, including former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan joining hands with him.

## Central probe agencies

It was an unprecedented year for the Enforcement Directorate and Central Bureau Of Investigation (CBI). Throughout the year 2022, these agencies were involved in raids and arrests across India.

They grilled top leaders like Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Manish Sisodia, DK Shiva Kumar and several others. ED arrested Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut, AAP Minister Satyendar Jain, and former Maharashtra Ministers- Anil Deshmukh and Nawab Malik.

## Morbi bridge collapse

On October 30, a pedestrian suspension bridge over the Machchhu River in the city of Morbi in Gujarat, collapsed, causing the deaths of at least 135 people and injuries to more than 180 others.

## Karnataka hijab row



(Credit: firstpost.com)

The hijab row came to the fore on January 1 at a college in Udupi, where six female students claimed that they were not allowed to enter classrooms wearing the veil. This led to protests across the state and snowballed into a major controversy.

The Karnataka High Court upheld the ban on hijab by the educational institutes on March 15, 2022. The court ruled that hijab is not an essential religious practice under Islam and, hence, is not protected by the Article 25 of the Constitution setting out the fundamental right to practice one's religion.

## The Shiv Sena split

In June, Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde led a revolt against his own party. He along with dozens of MLAs flew to Guwahati. An absolute filmy drama was staged by Shiv Sena leaders which ended with the collapse of the ruling MVA government. Uddhav Thackeray had to resign from the CM post. Shinde took oath as Maharashtra CM with the support of BJP.

## Bilkis Bano case



(Credit: scroll.in)

The Gujarat government approved the premature release of 11 men who were convicted for the gangrape of Bilkis Bano, a pregnant Muslim woman, and murder of 14 members of her family, including her three-year-old daughter during 2022 Hindu-Muslim riots.

The pleas challenging the early release of the convicts are listed to be heard before the Supreme Court on January 4, 2023

## Agnipath protests



(Credit: siasat.com)

In June, the government introduced a short-term recruitment policy, the Agnipath scheme, for Indian youth to serve in the armed forces. The scheme was criticized for failing to provide recruits with permanent jobs or healthcare benefits after they retire.

Violent protests were witnessed in several parts of the country, including Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh as defense jobseekers voiced concerns over job security and pension.



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**New York:** Russia almost won its war in Ukraine before Moscow's military plans fell apart, a Danish intelligence officer said, Newsweek reported.

Quoting an interview with Danish newspaper Berlingske, the head of Russian analysis for Danish intelligence agency Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste

## "Russia nearly won Ukraine War," says Danish Intel

said that Russia could have easily invaded and taken over Ukraine in only two weeks after Vladimir Putin launched the "special military operation".

In the early weeks of the invasion, the officer said that Russia was close to winning the war, but poor decision-making cost Russia adding that the major reason for the losses was Vladimir Putin's ideological convictions, rather than poor intelligence.

"We put a lot of the blame for this on Putin's shoulders," the official said, citing decision-making among a small group of his allies that was not shared with others.



Danish intelligence agency said poor decision-making cost Russia. (Photo courtesy: Sipa USA)

"These are pretty small factors that ended up deciding the outcome," he said, adding that he believes Vladimir Putin is still interfering in the military's conduct of the war.

"He has a general to lead this war. So he shouldn't be sitting there getting input from all these other generals," he told the Danish newspaper saying that he doubts that Russia will be able to launch a winter offensive.

This comes as Russia said 63 of its soldiers had been killed in a Ukrainian New Year's Eve attack on their quarters in the town of Makiivka.

## Israel's Netanyahu sworn in as PM for third term



Benjamin Netanyahu was re-elected as PM on November 1 in the fifth parliamentary elections. (Photo: Wikipedia)

**Tel Aviv:** Benjamin Netanyahu, the longest-serving Israeli leader, has returned to power as the country's Prime Minister at the helm of an extreme-right coalition.

In an official inauguration ceremony at Parliament, lawmakers voted by 63-54 in favor of approving the new government, reports Xinhua news agency.

The new government is made up of an alliance of Netanyahu's conservative Likud party; the pro-settler Religious Zionism which calls for annexation of the West Bank; the Jewish Power party whose leader was convicted of supporting "Jewish terrorism and inciting racism"; and the Noam party, an extreme-right party that opposes LGBTQ rights, as well as Shas and United Torah Judaism, two ultra-Orthodox parties.

"I hear the constant cries of the opposition about the end of the country and democracy," but "we will act to make Israel a strong and thriving global power", Netanyahu told Parliament ahead of the official swearing-in.

Outside Parliament building, hundreds were rallying and protesting against the government, which vowed ahead of its inauguration to expand settlements in the West Bank, implement far-reaching reforms of the judicial system, allocate massive subsidies to its hardline religious allies and pass anti-LGBTQ legislation. Before the recent elections, Netanyahu's allies pledged to pass legislation that will cancel his ongoing trial over charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

Netanyahu, who is leading his sixth government, served as Israel's Prime Minister from 1996 to 1999 and again from 2009 to 2021 before being ousted in June 2021 by a centrist coalition formed by Yair Lapid and Naftali Bennett.

He was re-elected on November 1 in the fifth parliamentary elections held in the country in fewer than four years as no candidate had won enough votes to form a majority coalition in previous elections, causing a lingering political crisis.

## Canada receives record 4.3 lakh new permanent residents in 2022

**Ottawa:** Canada set an immigration record last year by granting more than 437,000 foreigners permanent residency, the government said.

The government had set a target to welcome 431,645 new permanent residents in 2022, and the immigration ministry said Canada has reached that target to make it the largest annual intake of people in Canadian history.

The tally for last year is about 9 per cent higher than 2021, when Canada surpassed the previous record set in 1913, and comes as Canada seeks to bring in 1.45 mil-



The government had set a target to welcome 431,645 new permanent residents in 2022. (Photo courtesy: immigration.ca)

lion new permanent residents by 2025-end.

Immigration is a key part of the solution as Canada focuses on

addressing acute labour market shortages, the ministry said. People with permanent residency permits can typically apply for citizenship after five years.

Immigration accounts for almost 100 per cent of Canada's labour force growth and by 2036 immigrants will represent up to 30 per cent of Canada's population, up from 20.7 per cent in 2011, the statement said.

P M Justin Trudeau's government has relied on immigration to boost the Canadian economy and support an ageing population since coming to power in 2015.

## South Korea warns of ending military pact if North violates airspace

**New York:** South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol has said he would consider suspending a 2018 inter-Korean military pact if North Korea violates its airspace again, Yonhap news agency reported, citing his press secretary.

Yoon made the comment after being briefed on countermeasures to North Korean drones that crossed into the South last week, calling for building an "overwhelming response capability that goes beyond proportional levels," Yonhap said.

Inter-Korean relations have been testy for decades but have grown even more tense since Yoon took office in May pledging a tougher line against Pyongyang.

Yoon has criticized the military's handling of the drone incident, in part blaming the previous administration's reliance on the 2018 pact banning hostile activities in the border areas.

## UK's Prince Harry says he wants his father and brother back



Prince Harry said Buckingham Palace had refused to publicly support him and his wife. (Photo: Wikipedia)

**London:** Britain's Prince Harry said his troubled relationship with the royal family "never needed to be this way" and he wants to get his father King Charles and his brother "back", in an excerpt from an interview with broadcaster ITV released recently.

"It never needed to be this way," he said in the clip. "They've shown absolutely no willingness to reconcile," he said. "I would like to get my father back; I would like to have my brother back."

Harry and his wife Meghan, officially known as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, stepped down from royal duties in March 2020, saying they wanted to forge new lives in the United States away from media harassment.

They have since criticized how they were treated as members of the royal family, including an accusation by Harry that his brother William, Prince of Wales, screamed at him during a meeting to discuss his future.

In a separate interview with CBS News in the United States, Harry said Buckingham Palace had refused to publicly support him and his wife, while at the same time the institution was briefing against them.

"When we've been told for the last six years, 'We can't put a statement out to protect you,' but you do it for other members of the family, there comes a point when silence is betrayal," he told journalist Anderson Cooper.

Both interviews will be broadcast on Jan. 8, two days before the publication of Harry's autobiography titled "Spare".





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## Forensic report reveals Imran was hit by 'fragments, not bullets'



Imran Khan was injured by gunfire aimed at his open-top container truck. (File photo)

The forensic report of the attack has now revealed that

the former premier was hit by three bullet fragments and a metal fragment.

"One sealed parcel containing four plastic containers, two deformed bullets (items B8 and B11), one small metallic piece (item B9), and one bullet jacket (item B10) were recovered from the body of Imran Khan," stated the report, issued by the Punjab Forensic Science Agency.

According to the report, shots were fired from the left side of the truck in Wazirabad when the march was heading towards Islamabad, reports The Express Tribune.

Ten bullet shells fired at Khan's truck were found at the crime scene and had also been sent for investigation.

## Pakistan Taliban issues threat to Shehbaz Sharif, Bilawal Bhutto



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. (Middle East Monitor)

Islamabad: The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has announced that it is considering taking concrete steps against the two major parties of the ruling coalition - the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), according to a media report.

A statement issued by the TTP said that "if these two parties remain firm on their position and continue to be slaves of the army, action will be taken against their leading people", The Express Tribune reported.

"People should avoid getting close to such leading people," added the statement.

The TTP claimed that the whole world is aware that the "Jihadi field of TTP is only Pakistan and our target is the security agencies occupying the country", the report said.

It added that it has not taken

action against any political party for a long time, but "unfortunately... [Foreign Minister] Bilawal Bhutto Zardari gave the United States the status of mother to quench the thirst of his mother's love", adding that by doing so, "he openly declared war against TTP".

"Although Bilawal sir is still young, this poor man has not yet witnessed the state of war," the statement added, The Express Tribune reported.

The TTP added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also "pushed the whole party into this war going against TTP for the sake of pleasing the US".

Without taking any names, the TTP also gave a message to the religious leadership and said that there is no scope for action against them in TTP's policy, "but we also request you to refrain from activities against us".

## Sri Lanka registered 700,000 International tourists in 2022

Colombo: Last year ended on a good note for Sri Lanka's tourism sector as the arrivals of international visitors to the country topped the 700,000 mark despite the ongoing economic and political crisis, local media reported.

According to official statistics, December saw a total of 91,961 tourists arriving in the island

nation, recording the third-highest monthly arrivals in 2022, taking the total number of visitors last year to 719,978, reports Xinhua news agency.

Industry stakeholders said the Tourism Ministry expected to close the year with at least 800,000 tourists, for which several initiatives and promotional campaigns were carried out in

potential source markets in the fourth quarter.

Based on the data released by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, India topped the list with 17 percent of the total tourist arrivals.

Russia ranked second accounting for 13 per cent and Britain became the third largest source market with 12 per cent.

### BUSINESS

## Air India bans passenger for 30 days for undignified behaviour on NY-Delhi flight

New Delhi: Air India has banned the passenger for 30 days who behaved in an inappropriate and undignified manner on the New York-Delhi flight.

An Air India spokesperson on Wednesday said, "Air India has taken a very serious view of the incident, where a passenger behaved in an unacceptable and undignified manner on the New York-Delhi flight that caused extreme distress to a fellow passenger.

"A police complaint has already been lodged and Air India is committed to assist the law enforcement agencies as well as regulatory authorities."

The airline said that it has reported the matter to the aviation regulator DGCA for further action.

The airline said that it has constituted an internal committee to look into the lapses by the airline crew.

DGCA had sought a report from Air India into the incident which came to light weeks after a drunk man urinated on a woman co-passenger in the business class of an Air India flight in November last year. The matter was revealed after the woman reportedly wrote to the group chairman of Air India, N. Chandrasekaran.

The incident reportedly occurred on November 26, the drunk passenger allegedly urinated on a co-passenger in her 70s in the business class of an Air India flight from New York to Delhi. The lights had been dimmed after a meal.

The woman complained about the matter to the crew and told them her clothes, shoes and bag were soaked in urine. Reports said that the crew allegedly gave her a set of clothes and slippers and told her to return to her seat.

## Third of global economy will be in recession this year: IMF

Washington, Jan 2 (IANS) International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Kristalina Georgieva has warned that a third of the global economy will be in recession this year and 2023 will be "tougher" than 2022 as the US, EU and China will see their economies slow.

"We expect one third of the world economy to be in recession," the BBC quoted Georgieva as saying to CBS News.

"Even in countries that are not in recession, it would feel like a recession for hundreds of millions of people," she added.

The IMF chief further warned that China, the world's second largest economy, will f

"China has slowed down dramatically in 2022 because of this tight zero-Covid policy. For the first time in 40 years China's growth in 2022 is likely to be at or below global growth. That has never happened before.

For the next couple of months, it would be tough for China, and the impact on Chinese growth would be negative, the impact on the region will be negative, the impact on global



International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Kristalina Georgieva. (Photo: Twitter)

growth will be negative," she said.

The warning comes as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, rising prices, higher interest rates and the new wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in China weigh on the global economy.

In October 2022, the IMF had cut its global economic growth outlook for 2023 due to the war in Ukraine as well as higher interest rates as central banks around the world attempted to rein in rising prices, the BBC reported.

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# MESSI TO FEDERER, 10 MOST SIGNIFICANT GLOBAL SPORTS EVENT

*With seven goals and three assists, Lionel Messi won the Golden Ball for the best player of the tournament as Argentina won the FIFA World Cup 2022. Rafael Nadal crying during Roger Federer's farewell became the picture of the year*

1. Beijing successfully hosted the Olympic Winter Games from February 4 to 20 and the Paralympic Winter Games from March 4 to 13. Chinese President Xi Jinping attended the opening and closing ceremonies and declared both events open.

China notched nine gold, four silver and two bronze medals to rank third, with the number of gold and total medals marking record highs in its Olympic Winter Games history. Sitting atop the medal standings with 61 medals, of which 18 were golds, the host nation also set new records in its Paralympic Winter Games history.

The legacy of Beijing 2022 went far beyond the arena. When Beijing won the Olympic bid in 2015, China aimed to engage 300 million people in winter sports. And by October 2021, over 346 million Chinese people had participated in winter sports or related leisure activities since 2015, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

2. On June 5, Rafael Nadal of Spain defeated Casper Ruud of Norway in straight sets to win his 14th French Open championship, becoming the first player in the Open era to win 22 Grand Slam men's titles. In September, Roger Federer was in tears as he bid farewell to tennis, while Nadal was alongside the Swiss player, also in tears.



(Photos: Twitter)

3. China claimed 18 gold, two silver and eight bronze medals at the 19th FINA World Championships held between June 18 and July 3, leveling with the US on the gold medals table and finishing second in the medals tally.

4. Three new world records were created at the World Athletics Championships in Eugene, the US. On July 22, Sydney McLaughlin of the United States set a new women's 400m hurdles world record with 50.68 seconds. Two other world records were also shattered, with Swedish star pole vaulter Armand Duplantis clearing 6.21m and Nigeria's Tobi Amusan clocking 12.12 seconds in the women's 100m hurdles.

5. "Ouvrons Grand Les Jeux", meaning "Games Wide Open", was unveiled on July 25 as the shared slogan for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. A Phrygian cap named the Phryges was unveiled on November 14 as the official mascot for Paris 2024. Both the Olympic & Paralympic Games use the same design with slight differences.

6. On September 25, Kenya's two-time Olympic champion Eliud Kipchoge clocked two hours, one minute and nine seconds to win the 2022 Berlin Marathon, beating his own world record set in 2018 by 30 seconds.

7. On October 1, the United States captured its fourth consecutive title at the FIBA Women's

World Cup with an 83-61 victory over China. The silver medal for China's women represented the nation's best finish in the global showpiece since 1994.

8. On November 15, Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, 19, was confirmed as the year-end world No. 1, becoming the youngest year-end ATP No. 1 since the ranking system was introduced in 1973 and the first player outside the Big Four - Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray - to end the season as world No. 1 since 2003.

9. Spain overtook the US to become the new No. 1 team in the FIBA men's world rankings released on November 18. Spain is only the second team to top the rankings since 2010, ending a 12-year run of the United States holding the top position.

10. The 2022 FIFA World Cup ended in dramatic fashion with Argentina beating France through a penalty shootout in the final and winning the trophy for the first time in 36 years.

With seven goals and three assists, Argentina's Lionel Messi won the Golden Ball for the best player of the tournament. French striker Kylian Mbappe won the Golden Boot for the tournament's top scorer with eight goals.

## A YEAR OF MANY FIRSTS FOR INDIAN SPORTS

*The year 2022 was a year of many firsts and historic achievements by Indian athletes on the world stage*

### 1. Neeraj Chopra stamps his mark

For Chopra, things only got better. The Olympic champion won yet another silver at the 2022 World Athletics Championships in Oregon, giving India its best performance at the event to date. This is only the second medal India has won on the world stage since Anju Bobby George's bronze medal in the long jump at the 2003 World Athletics Championships in Paris.

Neeraj qualified for the Diamond League Final in Zurich after placing second in the Stockholm meet and first in the Lausanne leg, the first-ever victory by an Indian in the Diamond League. He became the first Indian to win a Diamond League title after an outstanding performance in the Swiss city.

Neeraj Chopra repeatedly broke the national record during this time, and his most recent personal best throw of 89.94 metres came in the Stockholm Diamond League competition.

### 2. Commonwealth Games in Birmingham

Shooting, which has contributed to the majority of India's medals at the Commonwealth Games to date, was removed from Birmingham 2022's schedule, making it unlikely that India will bring home an impressive haul.

However, Indian athletes rose to the occa-



(Photos: Twitter)

sion and came away with 61 medals, including 22 golds, 16 silvers, and 23 bronze.

With the women's team earning a gold medal and the men's team taking home a silver, Lawn Bowls, a sport that had previously received little attention from Indian sports fans, came to light.

Eldhose Paul earned India's first triple jump gold at CWG 2022 after defeating fellow countryman Abdulla Aboobacker to give India its first-ever 1-2 finish at the Games. Murali Sreeshankar won India's first silver medal in the men's long jump.

The Indian hockey teams and women's cricket teams also bagged medals.

The highlight of the competition was steeplechaser Avinash Sable, who finished with a silver medal in the men's 3000m steeplechase and set a new national record.

### 3. Maiden Thomas Cup badminton win

At the Thomas Cup 2022 held in Bangkok, Thailand, the Indian men's badminton team, captained by Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy, Kidambi Srikanth, and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, helped write yet another chapter in Indian sports history.

Indian shuttlers put up a professional performance to defeat Indonesia, the competition's reigning champions and most successful team with 14 championships, in the decisive match 3-0 to win their first Thomas Cup championship.

### 4. Nikhat Zareen becomes boxing world champion

Nikhat Zareen, the fifth Indian woman to win

the title after the legendary MC Mary Kom, Laishram Sarita Devi, Jenny RL, and Lekha K. C., defeated Thailand's Jutamas Jitpong, a Tokyo Olympian, 5-0 in the Women's World Boxing Championships 2022 final.

She is also the only one besides Mary Kom to become a world champion abroad.

### 5. India defeat Spain 1-0 to win FIH Women's Nations Cup

India clinched the inaugural FIH Women's Nations Cup title with a 1-0 win over Spain in the summit clash. The win sealed India's berth in the 2023-24 Pro League. Gurjit Kaur scored the all-important goal in the sixth minute from the penalty corner as the Commonwealth Games bronze medalists ended the eight-nation tournament with five wins on the trot.



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**Pune:** On the eve of the first T20I against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, India skipper Hardik Pandya promised to back the young players in his new-look squad. And he did that by handing debuts to Shubman Gill and Shivam Mavi and the latter made a brilliant start to claim 4-22 and helped India to a two-run win in a last-ball thriller.

Mavi, 24, made great use of the slow-paced Wankhede pitch to claim his maiden four-fer, becoming only the third Indian to do so on debut. But Gill could score only seven runs and left India and Hardik Pandya to solve another

opening conundrum.

Gill will expect Pandya to give him another opportunity in the second T20 match at the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium here on Thursday.

India on their part will expect a better performance from the top order as Gill, Suryakumar Yadav and Sanju Samson failed to fire at the Wankhede, getting out while trying to force the pace against the Sri Lankan slow bowlers.

Their shot selection was not up to their usual standard and the team management will expect better efforts from them here as that will help India take an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

While the Indian top-order failed, Deepak Hooda and Axar Patel came up with brilliant rear-



India won by two runs in a last-ball thriller.

guard efforts to help the team post something the bowlers can defend.

Led by Pandya, the Indian bowling unit executed its plans

and managed to restrict Sri Lanka to 160 in 20 overs. Though in the end the match was too close to comfort, Pune presents the team

with an opportunity to rectify the mistakes. With Sri Lanka needing 13 off the final six balls of the match, India somehow managed to scamper home off the last delivery.

For Sri Lanka, top-order batting is an issue to tackle for them. Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Dhananjaya de Silva and Charith Asalanka all failed to fire.

It was only due to a brilliant effort by skipper Dasun Shanaka, who, too, scored with 45, and Chamika Karunaratne, who landed some lusty blows including a couple of sixes, to propel Sri Lanka to the verge of victory. But in the end, they fell agonisingly close, two run outs in the final over resulting in the fine efforts of the lower-order going in vain.

## Rishabh Pant to be airlifted for surgery: BCCI

**New Delhi:** India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who recently sustained injuries following a car accident, will be brought to Mumbai from Dehradun in an air ambulance for the surgery and subsequent procedures for ligament tears, the BCCI said.

On December 30, early in the morning, Pant suffered multiple injuries when his car collided with a road divider and caught fire on the Delhi-Dehradun highway. The horrific car accident happened between Manglaur and Narsan in the Haridwar district in the state of Uttarakhand, when the cricketer was on his way to his hometown Roorkee by driving his Mercedes car.

The 25-year old was initially taken to Saksham Hospital Multispecialty and Trauma Centre, before being admitted to Max

Hospital, Dehradun, where he is currently receiving treatment for his injuries.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India have made all the necessary arrangements to shift India wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant to Mumbai. Rishabh, who is currently receiving treatment for his injuries at Max Hospital, Dehradun following a car accident on 30th December, will be brought to Mumbai in an air ambulance," the BCCI Secretary Jay Shah said in a statement.

The statement further said that Pant will be admitted to Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital and Medical Research Institute in Andheri West, Mumbai and will be under the direct supervision of Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala, Head - the Centre for Sports Medicine, and Director - Arthroscopy & Shoulder Service.

Pardiwala is an eminent surgeon in the Indian sporting ecosystem and has previously operated on cricketers Jasprit Bumrah, Shreyas Iyer, reigning Olympics gold medallist in Javelin throw Neeraj Chopra, badminton players like Parupalli Kashyap, Saina Nehwal, and wrestler Vinesh Phogat among others.

"Rishabh will undergo surgery and subsequent procedures for ligament tears and will continue to be monitored by the BCCI Medical Team throughout his recovery and rehabilitation."

"The Board will make every effort to aid and expedite the recovery process of Rishabh and will provide him with all the support he needs during this period," it added.



India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant.

## FIH Hockey Men's World Cup: India in high spirit



India are placed in Pool D against Spain, England, and Wales.

**Bengaluru:** Indian Men's Hockey Team are set to open their campaign at FIH Odisha World Cup against Spain on January 13. With just a few days left for the start of hockey's biggest tournament, forward Sukhjeet Singh candidly spoke about the mood at the team camp.

The Indian Men's Hockey Team arrived in Rourkela on December 27, 2022, and have been training hard at the new 'jewel' of hockey, the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium over the past week to prepare for hockey's most esteemed competition. Sukhjeet, who will compete in his first-ever World Cup, expressed gratitude to Indian Men's Hockey Team Chief Coach Graham Reid for his constant support.

"I am extremely delighted and thankful to Chief Coach Graham Reid who gave me this opportunity to be a part of the squad, after seeing my performances over the past year. I am really excited to play as not only is this the biggest stage of the sport, but the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar-Rourkela 2023 is also being played on our home ground. It is always truly exciting to play hockey in front of Indian fans," Sukhjeet said.

Sukhjeet, made his Senior team debut in February 2022, in the FIH Men's Hockey Pro

League 2021/22 encounter against Spain, and scored a goal in the match. Since then, he has earned 16 caps for India and has scored four goals for the nation. Sukhjeet opened up on the bonding between all the players in the squad and said that everyone is excited for their opening match against Spain.

"There is true team spirit among everyone in the camp. We all are really pumped up to get the ball rolling in our first game against Spain. Everyone is feeling positive and is supportive of each other. There is a real sense of unity which is exciting to see," he said.

"We have heard that the tickets in Rourkela are all sold out so we know the stadium will be jam-packed. So, it also feels good to see the enthusiasm among fans," Sukhjeet added.

India are placed in Pool D against Spain, England, and Wales, and Sukhjeet believes that while the oppositions are tough, having played all three teams over the past year will help India in preparing for the challenges.

"In our Pool, we have Spain, England, and Wales. We played against Spain and England in the Pro League last year. We also faced off against Wales at the Commonwealth Games 2022. So, we will be looking back at those performances and pick out the positives and negatives to prepare ourselves accordingly," he said.

# Manōbala: Restoring Mental Health



## Everyday Ayurveda



### By Bhaswati Bhattacharya

MPH MD (Family Medicine)  
PhD (Ayurveda - BHU)

Ancient Bharatiya traditions places prime emphasis on development of manōbala (bala=strength, manas=the feeling/ emotional mind) for starting anything new. All successful Ayurvedic medical prescriptions quietly calculate all disease prognosis, 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

doesn't mainstream society put more premiums on the development of manōbala?

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 through the media. Sports coaches, music teachers, and arts teachers were our earlier link to emotional development, but these are 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.

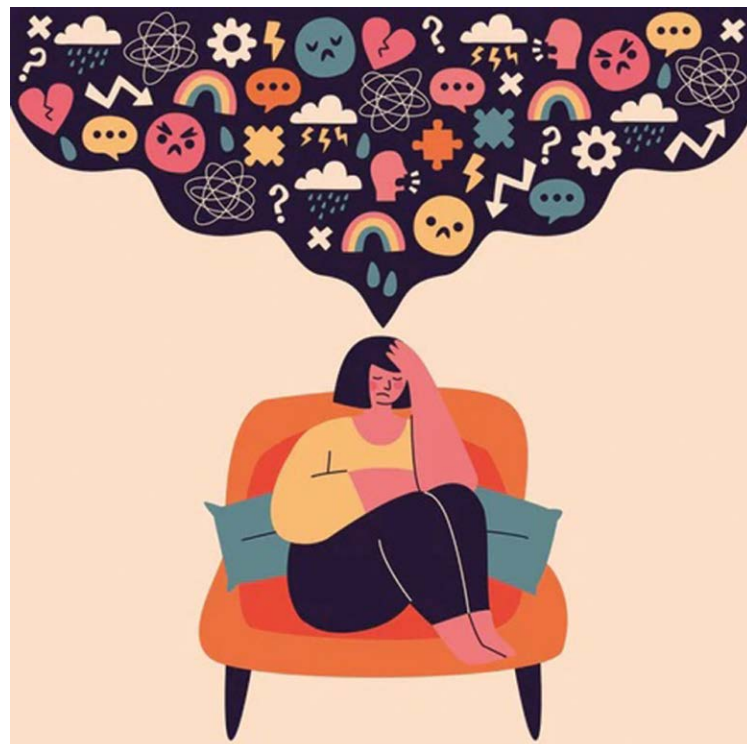
Worst of all is the labeling of bhakta (blind Hindu follower) or Hindutva radical on anyone that supports ancient Indian rituals or cultural thinking that we all have the power of God within us, and we are unabashed worshippers of the endless (sanatana) cycles of nature.

Of all who denigrate ancient Bharatiya values, known as hinduphobia/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 few steps through which one can practice to enhance manōbala:

### Breath

The first key to mental health



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 through the media. Sports coaches, music teachers, and arts teachers were our earlier link to emotional development, but these are low priority today compared to exam prep. (Image: Auric)

is early morning breathwork. Conscious breathing techniques developed in yoga demonstrate how to develop 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's 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 bio-electric heart. This connects all inputs of 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 natural earth are essential for reconnecting with the slow drone pulse of the earth.

Ancient Bharatiya wisemen 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!

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## Shalabhasana, the Locust Pose: For strengthening of Lower-back muscles

By Atul Vyas

Weakness of back muscles is one of the major causes of back ache. The muscles of the back are built up in layers around the skeleton. These muscles are involved with stabilizing and moving the torso. Around each of the spinal joints, there is a group of muscles. End of each muscle is firmly attached to a different bone, either directly or by means of a tough band of fibrous tissue called tendon. Muscles usually are in pairs: when one muscle contracts, the opposite muscle relaxes.

The muscles which are close to the joints between the vertebrae are clusters of small muscles that contract to allow for subtle alterations of movement. These muscles are known as stabilizers, because of their central role in positioning of the spine.

The long strong muscles which are superficially visible and control the major movements of the trunk are called mobilizers, and the other group of muscles are 'erector spinae,' and abdominal muscles across the front and side of the body.



A weak muscle easily come in spasm even with little strain or stress (Image: Yoga)

These muscles need a good supply of blood. If a muscle goes into spasm in reaction to pain or strain and becomes contracted, its blood supply is reduced. If this lack of supply continues, the muscles may become weak and less elastic. So muscles need exercise in order to stay strong.

If they have been contracted for long periods to maintain a certain posture e.g. sitting at desk, regular stretching and exercise is must as it not only distress and relaxes these muscles but maintain their health and tone.

A weak muscle easily comes in spasm even with little strain or stress.

This muscle spasm in back muscles causes back ache and is a major cause of backache. There are many exercises for strengthening weak back muscles. One of them is "Shalabhasana or locust pose".

Unlike any other yoga poses which are done slowly, locust pose is done by making one single powerful muscle contraction similar to that of locust jumping. This brings together thought, breath, movement and prana. But beginners should use breath and slow movements.

### Technique for Beginners

- Lie down on your stomach with arms by your side
- Keep arms underneath your thighs
- Inhale slowly and raise one leg off the ground, keeping it straight unto your comfortable limit
- Hold for five seconds then lower it
- Repeat the same with the other leg
- Repeat it with both the legs simultaneously

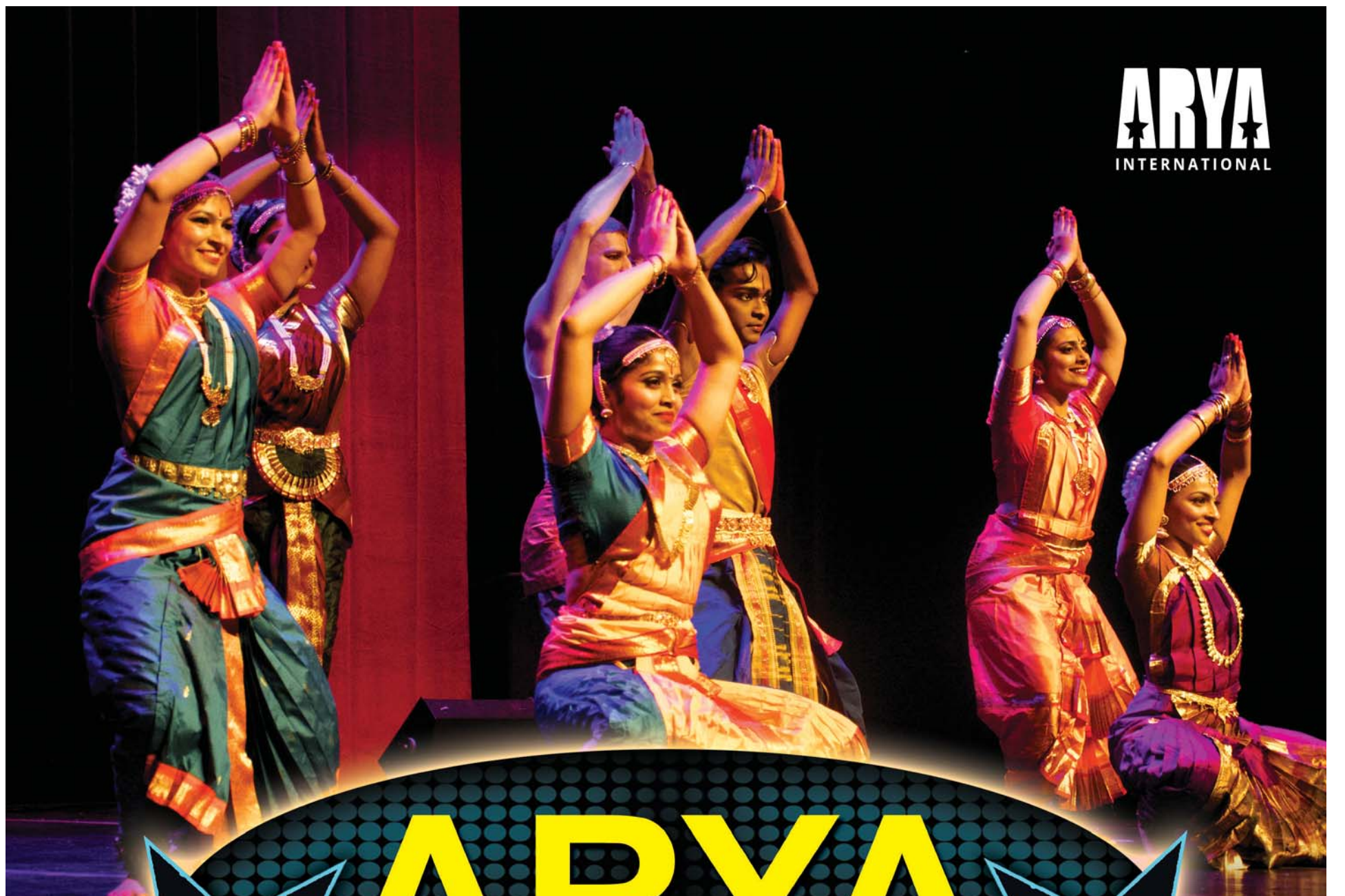
### Benefits

- This pose strengthen lower back and buttock muscles
- It tones liver, pancreas, and kidney
- Relieves constipation
- It develops strong will power
- Spine becomes elastic
- Relieves pain in sacral and lumbar regions
- Benefits prostate gland and keep it healthy



his illustrious mother Daya Vyas, the first lady yoga guru of India.

**Atul Vyas** likes to be called a "Yoga Scientist". He is a celebrity yoga trainer and has trained several top Hollywood and Bollywood stars. He has trained for years under many eminent yoga gurus including



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# The iconic Palladio expands in Jaipur to include nine-room villa

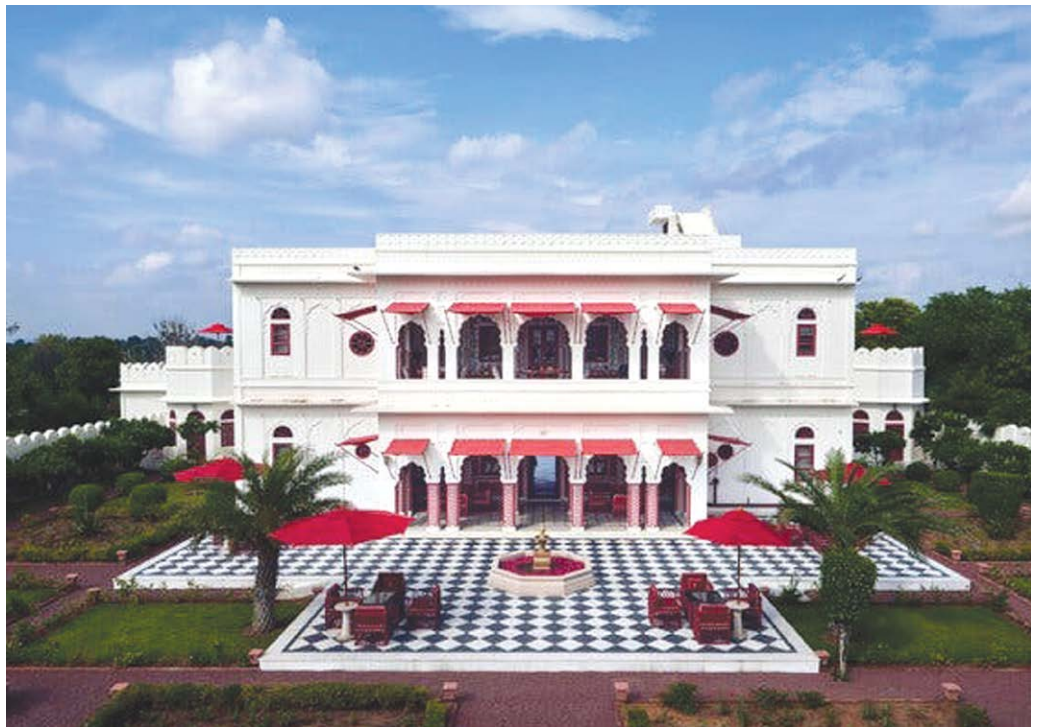
For years, Jaipur enthusiasts have flowed through the Pink City on a well-trodden circuit that includes lunch at Caffé Palladio and drinks at Bar Palladio: the former, a candy-colored affair where Sicilian plates are served on a terrace awash in shades of mint and citrus; the latter, a vision in sapphire where guests sip Palladio martinis — made with lemongrass and lime — on tented daybeds beneath paintings of flora and fauna. Now, visitors are adding a stay at Villa Palladio to their itineraries.

With the nine-room hideaway, which opened in the suburb of Jamdoli Chouraha in September, the Italian Swiss owner, Barbara Miolini, has introduced a vivid crimson to her color palette. “Because my background was in hotels, it was always a dream of mine,” says Miolini, who arrived in Jaipur in 2005 via St. Moritz and Venice, where she worked on Villa Cipriani in Asolo. When she heard about the turreted manor 25 minutes from Jaipur, the pas-

toral location spoke to her. “I was missing nature,” she says. “You can say hello to the horses in the morning, but if you want to go to dinner or a bar, you can have both.”

After securing the two-acre property, located in a forested region where leopards lope nearby, Miolini worked with the Dutch-born fashion designer Marie-Anne Oudejans, who helped design her cafe and bar. The walls, pillars and archways are a patchwork of scarlet stripes, plaid patterns, and chevron motifs, while latticed marble *jali*, hand-painted florals and palm trees and stained glass break up the monochromatic feel. Miolini commissioned umbrellas in Venice, linens in Lake Como and block-printed bedding and lamps from local artisans in Jaipur, filling the villa with an Italian-meets-Rajasthani flair. Take it all in from the jasmine-scented pavilion that runs alongside the 43-foot swimming pool.

(Source: *The New York Times*)



(Image courtesy: *The New York Times*)

## MELVIN DURAI'S HUMOR COLUMN

### Friendships Can Boost Your Happiness

It doesn't take long in childhood to learn the importance of friendships, especially if you have no siblings. Even if you have siblings, you may squabble with them or grow tired of playing with them. The problem with siblings is that they're always around, helping themselves to all the good stuff, finishing the Oreo cookies before you've had a chance to hide them.

Friends, on the other hand, are never around long enough. They may come to your home for a few hours at a time and you may go to theirs. If they're school friends, you may see them every day in class, eat lunch with them, and call them when you get home, sharing all the school gossip, such as who has a secret crush on whom, who was caught smoking in the restroom, and who has done poorly in every test but Covid.

In your college years (or young adult years), your friendships are much deeper. You may share an

apartment with your friends, share the electric and water bills, share tales of dates gone bad. I remember those good old days, when my friends and I shared utilities as well as futurities.

During this period, you begin to appreciate all the benefits of friendships, including these:

**1. Companionship.** Friends give you company, ensuring that you don't have to chat much with your cactus plant or your cat. (The cat sits beside the cactus on the window ledge and gives it advice on being more prickly.) Friends share food and drinks with you, watch movies and sports with you, even take walks with you and listen to all your dreams, making you believe that they're not farfetched. Even the one about beating Serena at tennis one day may come true as soon as she turns 90 and needs a walking stick.

**2. Assistance.** Friends can help you with all sorts of practical

things. Do you need help moving a heavy sofa? Call a friend. Do you need someone to water your plants while you're on vacation? Call a friend. Do you need a ride to the airport? Call an Uber. But seriously, a true friend will do almost anything for you, even drive you to the airport without complaining about the price of gas. (Scowling at Tesla drivers doesn't count.)

**3. Encouragement.** When you've suffered a loss or disappointment, a friend will console you and give you a shoulder to cry on. A friend will encourage you and give you a fresh perspective. They'll tell you that you didn't fail the exam—the exam failed you. It must have been a flawed exam, poorly worded or unfairly biased against people who don't like to study.

Research has shown that people with many friends are not just happier, but they're also healthier. But despite all these benefits, many of us do not make friendships a priority. I'm certainly guilty of this. I made lots of friends in my younger years, but over the last decade or so, I've developed only a few deep friendships—and most of these friendships have four legs and a tail.

I've been thinking about friendships after reading a recent *New York Times* article by Catherine Pearson entitled “How Many Friends Do You Really Need?”

Pearson cites a 1993 study that led British anthropologist Robin Dunbar to conclude that humans can have meaningful friendships with only 150 people at most. A

meaningful friendship, apparently, is one in which you won't feel awkward greeting your friend if you run into them in a public place. By that standard, I have no more than about 30 friends—the two-legged kind. But as for close friendships, the number is far fewer, and I'm embarrassed to count. Does my next-door neighbor qualify as a “close” friend? We never watch movies together, but if I peer out of my kitchen window, I can see what's on his TV.

Thankfully, Pearson refers to other research that indicates that three to six close friendships may be ideal. According to Professor

Jeffrey Hall of the University of Kansas, it takes about 200 hours to develop a close friendship.

I certainly spent more than 200 hours with my college friends, but I've lost touch with several of them since then. I could give all sorts of excuses, but the truth is this: I haven't made friendships a priority. I haven't done enough texting, calling or visiting.

Maintaining friendships takes effort, and I've been a little too lackadaisical about it. But not anymore. I'm going to start reaching out to them, telling them how much they mean to me.

I sure hope they remember me.



## Laughter is the Best Medicine



**Mahendra Shah** is an architect by education, entrepreneur by profession, artist and humorist, cartoonist and writer by hobby. He has been recording the plight of the immigrant Indians for the past many year in his cartoons. Hailing from Gujarat, he lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Heartiest congratulations  
and best wishes to



## Parveen Chopra

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*American Centre for  
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#### January 7, 2023

Ruled by number 7 and the planet Neptune, you are responsible, affectionate, creative, simple and a research-oriented person. You have lot of in-built talents and you can easily impress others with your dedication and hard work, but you need to control your tendency to dominate and overspend.

This year success in whatever you do will keep you happy. Past investments will fetch you handsome returns and long pending judicial disputes will settle in your favour. Unexpected gains in cash and kind from near ones and friends throughout the year. Stress and tension might lead to some minor health problems. The latter half of the year will see you getting closer to a spiritual person who will make a remarkable difference on your thinking and personality. The months of August, November, March and June will prove to be significant.

#### January 8, 2023

Ruled by number 8 and the planet Saturn. You are ambitious, energetic, authoritative, systematic, and a sober person. You possess remarkable talent and conviction to fight against any adverse



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## ANNUAL PREDICTIONS: FOR THOSE BORN IN THIS WEEK (JANUARY 7-13, 2023)

conditions with courage, but you need to check your tendency to behave highly stubborn and jealous at times.

This year rewards and appreciation for scientist, lawyers, writers, and women professionals associated with advertising and marketing seems certain. Financial gains will increase as the year progresses making you spend more on luxuries and other comforts. Health matters will cause concern, therefore do not ignore medical advice whenever necessary. A better understanding with your family members will ensure happiness, peace and prosperity at home. The months of July, December, January and May will prove to be highly beneficial.

#### January 9, 2023

Ruled by number 9 and the planet Mars. You are intelligent, dashing, courageous, enthusiastic and a brilliant individual. Your hard-work and sincerity are appreciated by others but your tendency to behave extravagant and to interfere in the affairs of others attracts enormous criticism at times.

The year is perfect to undertake important changes and make strong decisions. Matters related to property, partnerships and new ventures will get resolved. Some good news can be expected from children towards the last quarter of the year. Renovation, construction and socializing will be major highlight of this year. Concentrate on your efforts and growth and prosperity will follow by

themselves. The latter half of the year will bring in opportunities to travel overseas for business as well as pleasure. Selective speculation will bring gains. The months of September, November, January and May will prove to be highly significant.

#### January 10, 2023

Ruled by number 1 and the Sun. You are smart, intelligent, energetic, friendly and highly dignified person. In any crowd, you can easily draw attention because of your humble outlook and intellectual talks, but you need to check your tendencies towards aggressiveness and short-temper at times.

Your coming year promises financial prosperity and good health. Businessmen will invest in more profitable ventures. Promising contacts will build through social get-togethers and traveling. Your spouse will be quite cooperative and shower her full love and affection upon you despite your erratic behavior towards her. An infatuation within the group will keep you in high spirits for some time but it will not be long lasting. Unexpected help from a distant relative will give a major boost to your career. The months of August, December, March and April will prove to be highly significant.

#### January 11, 2023

Ruled by number 2 and the Moon. You are simple, honest, cooperative, love

peace and harmony. You are a great admirer of art and literature, but you need to control your tendency to behave stubborn, timid and careless at times.

The coming year brings you many opportunities to fulfill your dreams. A pleasure trip to an exotic destination would be high on your agenda. Also during this period, you will establish new contacts and fruitful partnerships. Long expected monetary benefits will accrue. Speculation and unexpected gains will make your financial position much better than expected. Your spouse would be supportive to your concerns and provide you with love and affection, but children might take advantage of your generous behaviour and cause some disappointment. But despite all goodies, minor tensions and stress will always bother you especially concerning health of your parents and increase in household expenditure. August, December and April seem to be significant.

#### January 12, 2023

Ruled by number 3 and the planet Jupiter. You are ambitious, dignified, independent and kind hearted. You are full of new and innovative ideas and simply a perfectionist in whatever work you decide to do, but you need to control your tendency to be whimsical and jealous at times.

The coming year sees new ideas and plans materializing. Perfect year that will improve your earning power and let

you establish important relationships. Spouse will provide love and care, but behave highly possessive and unpredictable. A journey preferably to a distant location towards the yearend cannot be ruled out. Support from your seniors and colleagues, will boost your morale and generate new confidence. Overseas assignments for some will be lucrative. The month of September, November, January and May will prove to be highly result oriented.

#### January 13, 2023

Ruled by number 4 and the planet Uranus. You are active, practical, enthusiastic, authoritative and energetic. You enjoy a good position and respect at your work place, but you need to check your tendency to behave extravagant and dominating at times.

This year you will make good financial gains, provided you take advantage of the opportunities being provided to you. Your charisma and outgoing personality will bring you popularity and win you favours. Spouse and children will look after you well, but be highly demanding at times. Wedding bells for some in the last quarter of the year while others will find romance to keep them in the right spirit and good mood. Home front will be peaceful with family members extending all possible help and cooperation. The months of October, January and June will prove to be important and eventful.

## STARS FORETELL: JANUARY 7-13, 2023

#### ARIES: (Mar 21-Apr 20)



The dynamics of a couple's relationship shift drastically after they get married. Perhaps you'll be prompted to rethink your career path after receiving some discouraging news from the office. Due to unforeseen circumstances, some students may need to temporarily suspend their academic pursuits.

New building and real estate deals may continue to attract lucrative capital. You may have to cancel plans with friends and family. There are times when you just need some quiet time to regroup.

Lucky Number: 11 Lucky Colour: Chocolate

#### TAURUS: (Apr 21-May 20)



Letting go of unfavourable feelings is greatly facilitated by maintaining an optimistic outlook. The dating scene takes an upturn when you and a potential partner get along well. To put it simply, you will become more respected in the professional world and among your contemporaries. The services of a trained career counsellor would be invaluable to the development of some students. When two people invest in real estate together, even minor disagreements can derail the deal. Those who embark on a pilgrimage or spiritual journey may feel a renewed sense of purpose upon their return.

Lucky Number: 2 Lucky Colour: Off White

#### GEMINI: (May 21-Jun 21)



A good week awaits Gemini. Many people may want to work with you and put their trust in you to take care of critical projects at work. With your available means, you should be able to handle your financial situation responsibly. Your heart may soar at the prospect of a new romantic relationship. Staying physically fit requires consistent effort over time. Your business travels will yield fruitful results. Those who have struggled academically in college can anticipate improvement shortly. If you're lucky, you can purchase a new house at a price that fits your budget. Tensions at home are likely to persist due to recent arguments between family members.

Lucky Number: 3 Lucky Colour: Peach

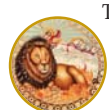
#### CANCER: (Jun 22-Jul 22)



If you're trying to get your financial house in order, this week could be good. Career progression requires serious consideration and decision-making. Cancers can expect a lot of romantic success this week. Even so, family harmony may be an issue for you this week. Tending to responsibilities at home could positively affect interactions with family and friends. Healthier eating habits are recommended for those who want to strengthen their immune systems. The possibility of seeing an old friend and the prospect of entertaining gatherings both lie ahead this week. If a student needs confidential help, they can go see a counsellor.

Lucky Number: 15 Lucky Colour: Crimson

#### LEO: (Jul 23-Aug 23)



The coming week may be a good one for you professionally. Raising output through careful paperwork planning is possible. By taking the initiative and thinking outside the box, Leos can bring harmony back to the home. Before making any promises in business, it's wise to go with one's gut. Staying physically fit is realistic for you. Renting out a portion of your home or entire structure can provide a substantial financial boost. Travelling to a new country can be a once-in-a-lifetime adventure with the right group of friends. But because of your uncertainties, you cannot trust your romantic partner fully.

Lucky Number: 18 Lucky Colour: Lemon

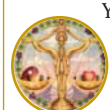
#### VIRGO: (Aug 24-Sept 23)



This is a good week for Virgos to relax and keep their minds clear. Thanks to your hard work, the project will be finished faster, and you'll gain respect as a professional. With a stronger financial footing, you'll be better able to weather business storms. Young Virgos bearing news of achievement or marriage may be a cause of family celebrations. Maintaining one's composure is crucial to keeping the spark alive in a relationship. Those who make an extra effort to study this week will see improved grades. Profitable business travel is possible. Real estate investors will finally begin to see returns on their investments.

Lucky Number: 22 Lucky Colour: Maroon

#### LIBRA: (Sept 24-Oct 23)



You might be able to cut costs by adjusting your strategy. This week at work, keep an eye on who you might be up against. Avoid being condescending or indifferent to the ideas of your coworkers. You believe that your happiness can be restored through a new romantic partnership. A relaxing routine can include doing something both enjoyable and useful. Keep up your regular healthy diet and exercise, and try not to stress out too much. Taking trips that aren't necessary can add unnecessary stress to your life. Exam performance could be negatively impacted if the student's health worsens. Real estate is a safe bet because of its enduring value.

Lucky Number: 15 Lucky Colour: Violet

#### SCORPIO: (Oct 24-Nov 22)



Scorpios may soon experience professional success. If you consult with your elders, they may be able to provide you with insight into your future. Having international connections increases your potential for financial gain. People who are more emotionally invested in relationships may experience an immediate attraction to a new acquaintance. There may be a week when you don't have to think about your health. Those who devote adequate time and energy to studying will perform admirably on assessments. In addition, they may be admitted to the college of their choice. Do not rush into investing heavily in the property you like.

Lucky Number: 18 Lucky Colour: Brown

#### SAGITTARIUS: (Nov 23-Dec 21)



A sudden surge of self-assurance may motivate Sagittarians to spread happiness to those in their immediate vicinity. You could start putting yourself out there more. Start eating better and exercising regularly right away. It may take effort on your part to gain professional recognition. Perhaps this week's cash flow won't be enough. You won't have any extra money for savings, and you might also have to deal with some unforeseen expenses. Prospective students should feel confident about their abilities to do well on entrance exams. Get out of town soon! If you're considering buying some farmland, this week is great.

Lucky Number: 8 Lucky Colour: Electric Grey

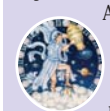
#### CAPRICORN: (Dec 22-Jan 21)



A new position or project will benefit greatly from the input of working professionals. When it comes to making it in business, teamwork is essential. Your significant other may surprise you with a date night. It's hard to beat starting the day off right with a refreshing glass of homemade coconut water or fresh fruit juice. Your dedication to learning more by studying from a distance will ultimately pay off. Take a course to acquire a new tongue or hone your skills in foreign language learning. The family's wealth may grow to be substantial. Be cheerful and adaptable even when you're not at work. A stubborn attitude would only stir up more trouble at home.

Lucky Number: 1 Lucky Colour: Maroon

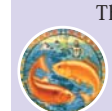
#### AQUARIUS: (Jan 22-Feb 19)



Aquarians may have to put in a little extra effort to succeed this week. To improve workplace relationships and productivity, try changing how you act. Past investments still have the potential to return a profit. It's possible that resolving domestic tensions will yield positive results. You and your partner may find that meeting each other's emotional needs is the source of much happiness in your relationship. To get in shape, you should exercise regularly and consume a diet high in protein and other nutrients. A better time has never existed to enrol in a training course designed to broaden your skill set than right now.

Lucky Number: 4 Lucky Colour: Violet

#### PISCES: (Feb 20-Mar 20)



This week should go off without a hitch for Pisceans in the workplace. Things should be routine at work, and you can expect to see many of your suggestions implemented. Doing business now could lead to substantial gains in income. It was a surefire recipe for future success to pay attention to one's parents. Building strength and stamina is a good idea because these characteristics are highly sought after. Conflicts with the spouse's family are common. To attribute a student's accomplishments to pure "luck" will be naive. The money you make on business trips may depend on your ingenuity. Putting money into real estate now would be wise.

Lucky Number: 6 Lucky Colour: Green



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## YEARLY FORECAST 2023

### HIGH HOPES FOR A GOOD YEAR FOR ALL

#### ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)



The year might offer chances to mend broken relationships, as well as pave the way for new ones. Tackling the same may bring good fortune. Exhibiting caution with expenses may lead to financial stability this year. The dynamics might appear turbulent, but with strong and peaceful conversations, normalcy may be attained. If your work regime is toughened, you may achieve professional success and experience upscaling.

Let your body tell you the best way to improve your health, balancing strengthening the body and calming the mind.

**Lucky Numbers:** 2 & 5

**Lucky Colors:** Peach, Pink, Green

#### CANCER (Jun22-Jul 22)



Working towards your goals may help you succeed in this Year 2023. Working towards your financial goals may pay off this year. Avoid shortcuts and working diligently may add to your wealth. Your presence in the family may be very crucial this year, and your sacrifices might help them prosper. Empathy with rationality will be your ally in these tough times. A realistic approach to work might take you a long way. Tension might affect your health, so train your mind and body. Romance will follow you and help you stay content.

**Lucky Number:** 7, 11

**Lucky Color:** Purple, Green

#### LEO (Jul 23-Aug 23)



Keeping a goal-oriented mind might help you plan your finances well in Year 2023. Avoid making random stock investments. Your family might become your biggest strength this year. Think before acting to maximize fortune. Working diligently and networking is advised this year.

Your attempts to work abroad may bear fruit. Pay attention to your lifestyle habits and improve upon them. Self care should be your main priority this year. Your prospects of marriage are promising, but be cautious of external problems in your relationships.

**Lucky Number:** 18, 22

**Lucky Color:** Maroon, Magenta

#### VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)



Your year 2023 looks promising and may get better with time. Being open to experimental experiences is key to growth. You might face success financially this year, and your wealth may increase significantly. Don't let work consume you, and spend time with your family. Express emotions towards them to show your love. Your work might be stable.

Stay open to criticism, but don't let that discourage you. Sales and marketing might be your allies. Your temperament may affect your health negatively, but it can be controlled and channeled positively, to boost your health. Your love life may remain positive throughout.

**Lucky Number:** 4, 8

**Lucky Colors:** Green, Blue, Orange

#### LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)



Love is the secret to a healthy relationship in 2023. Solving family problems as a team is essential for the betterment of family dynamics, and cherishing their presence. Performing work tasks diligently will help avoid any professional pitfalls. Try diplomacy in workplace confrontations. Maintain a positive attitude and exercise your mind and soul to avoid medical inconveniences. Romantic ups and downs are normal but should be dealt with carefully. Fortune might smile upon you this year, but working for betterment along with it is essential. You might be lucky financially this year. Being cautious with spending is advised though.

**Lucky Number:** 11, 17

**Lucky Color:** Yellow, Cream, Maroon

#### SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)



Experimenting is the key to growth. Your finances might be on your side this year and may keep gradually increasing. Risk taking will bear fruit. Highs and lows on the domestic front can be channeled with love. Providing mutual respect may prove beneficial. Roughness in profession might be expected, but can be countered with diplomacy and hard work. Support your growing health with regular exercise and meditation, maintaining a mind and body synchronization. Third quarter might be important for your relationship, and help you put many lingering things in perspective.

**Lucky Number:** 18,22

**Lucky Color:** Magenta, Purple

#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)



Your goals might get fulfilled. Avoiding frivolous spending from your life might help build a financial corpus, increasing with time. Rigidity in ideals might lead to family disagreements. Resolving them with diplomacy is advised. Your professional prospects are expected to rise. Make the most out of this by taking the lead in office. Stressful situations might negatively impact your health. It is advised you maintain your cool and meditate for a calmer being. Romantic life can experience roughness if not dealt with love and composure. Enjoy the company of your partner.

**Lucky Number:** 1,8

**Lucky Color:** Saffron, White

#### CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 21)



New things and experiences might be encountered. Your finances might help you reach your goals. Your assets might yield successful returns. Family might be stretched thin, with some in your support, and some against. Discussing problems is advised. Your career may be promising, and taking risks might pay off. Good communication may be the key to your success. Your health will help you achieve peace and calm this year. Exercise will help strengthen your body. Taking your relationship to the next level might be a suitable idea. Prioritize your love decision and choose wisely.

**Lucky Number:** 9, 11

**Lucky Color:** All shades of Green

#### AQUARIUS (Jan 22-Feb 19)



The challenges will make the person strong and mature. Be cautious with your spending and plan expenditures accordingly. Recalculate your family dynamics and set new ones, using love and diplomacy. This year might bring a lot of family growth. Your work might provide challenges. Resolve with planning and teamwork. Your efforts may be rewarded. Prioritizing health may bring the best out of yourself, but make sure not to overdo it. Your relationship front will progressively become better, making sure that the love you put in is redeemed. The year will test willpower and reward the most level-headed people.

**Lucky Number:** 5, 9

**Lucky Color:** Silver, Pink

#### PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)



The year 2023 might be headed to a promising start and may remain stable throughout. Finding alternative modes of income might be advised. Regulation of your budget might help you. Your family might give up some support that you enjoy, however, such situations can be countered using respect and love. Planning a career change might be fruitful, and scoring extra professional brownie points might help. If you believe in yourself, your health might not suffer. Yoga may help you feel relaxed. Following your instinct is likely to help you reach the desired goal in your love life. Your partner may develop deeper feelings.

**Lucky Number:** 2, 6

**Lucky Color:** Cream, Peach

#### GEMINI (May 21-Jun 21)



Expect a few changes in life in the Year 2023. The year appears to be financially promising, and your strains might begin to resolve. There is ample room for growth in familial relations this year, which may be followed by maturity and harmony. This year might lead to career growth opportunities. Working diligently might lead to promotions. Exerting control of diet and temperament can help heal and stay healthy, keeping your mind and body in check. You might encounter new romantic pursuits.

Your love life may heal and flourish this year.

**Lucky Number:** 6, 8

**Lucky Colors:** Blue, Grey, Silver

# Equality, Respect and Love for All

By **Jnanpurushdas Swami**  
BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha

**P**ramukh Swami Maharaj treated everyone with equality: rich or poor, young or old, regardless of creed, color, or country.

In 1984, Swamishri was on a spiritual tour of the Navsari district in South Gujarat, India. In one such village, an assembly was held with Swamishri seated on a pedestal. Just then, his eyes caught the sight of a very thin, poor man standing at the back of the assembly with a garland in his hands. He was dressed in rags. The man wanted to offer his garland to Pramukh Swami Maharaj but felt ashamed.

Swamishri saw the purity in his heart and called out, "Come here, brother, take this sanctified flower. Don't be afraid, come nearer."

The man acknowledged Swamishri's compassionate eyes. With shyness creeping all over him, he slowly reached the front, and immediately placed his head in Swamishri's lap, who put his hands on top of the man's head and softly caressed him. Up until now, he had always been treated poorly, people had called him scornfully, they had looked



upon him with despise, and if ever they had touched him, it was only to slap him. But today, it was different. One of the swamis took the garland from his hands and gave it to Swamishri, who in return garlanded

him back. He experienced greatness that he had never felt before. He forgot how society treads him. He stood upright and felt, "I am also a human, after all."

It is said that the greatness of great peo-

ple is known by the way they treat others who are lesser than them.

In 1986, Swamishri was in New Delhi. A meeting had been arranged with the President of India, Gyani Zail Singh, at the Presidential House. But before leaving to meet the President, Swamishri had a few minutes, so he decided to stroll in the garden for a few minutes where he saw two gardeners working.

He called them over and talked to them about their livelihood and families. He asked them if they had any addictions. The gardeners had never been treated so lovingly before. They felt Swamishri's love in their hearts. They vowed to give up addictions and spend time and money for their children.

After the meeting, as they were leaving the Presidential House, Swamishri asked the driver to stop the car at the gate. He rolled down his window and called the gatekeeper. He asked him his name and gave him a brochure about the organization and spoke to him for a few minutes. In his eyes, everyone was equal.

He was always thinking globally and giving importance to others. In that, he saw joy, progress, and happiness for oneself.

## ANUVRAT MOVEMENT

### Let's choose nonviolence for our new year resolution

By **John Di Leonardo**

**W**e're coming into 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—or nonviolence—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 closets. Traditionally, this requires vegetarianism and the avoidance of animal-based fabrics, however, I would contend that in the year 2023, 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.

As noted by Michael Grunwald in *The New York Times* last week, "Earth is in the midst of the worst mass extinction since an asteroid wiped out the dinosaurs 66 million years ago — and this time, the asteroid is us ... if current eat-



Acharya Tulsi Ji

ing and farming trends continue, the world will clear land equal to at least one and a quarter Indias by 2050. That would be a disaster for the climate and wildlife, dooming carbon-rich and biodiverse ecosystems like the Amazon and Congo rainforests."

Thankfully, in the year 2023, 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 Fridays.

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 seriously 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 Humane Long Island would be happy to help too. You can reach us at [www.humanelongisland.org](http://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](mailto:John@humanelongisland.org). (Image provided)



**With appreciation for your business and with warmest wishes for a happy Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year**



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