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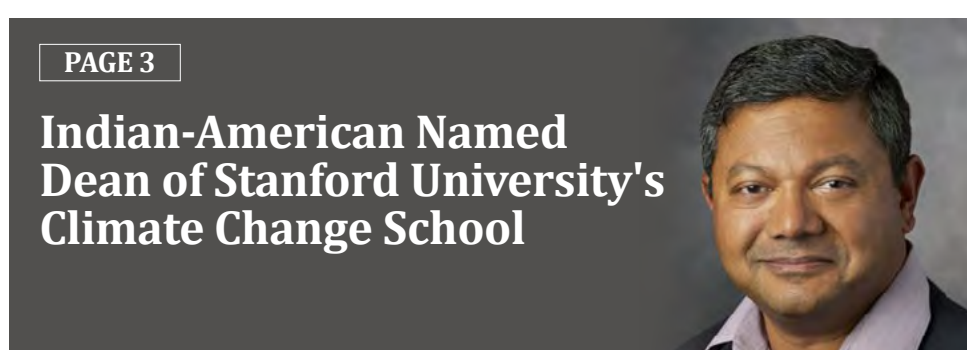
Issue: 63

Federation of Indian Associations NY-NJ-CT-NE. 501(C)3. The Largest Non-Profit Grassroot Umbrella Organization in the Eight-state of NY-NJ-CT-NE



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JOE BIDEN MESSAGE FIA, SAYS HE IS PRESIDENT FOR ALL AMERICANS

President Joe Biden in a letter to Federation of Indian Associations expressed hope that Americans will work together to find a common ground to make it a more just, prosperous and secure nation, as it celebrates the Asian Heritage Month.

The letter written to FIA - New England President Mr. Abhishek Singh said he believed that we are better positioned than any country in the world to lead in the 21st century not just by the example of our power but by the power of our example.

FIA under the able leadership of Chairman Ankur Vaidya, FIA tri-state President Mr. Kenny Desai, FIA New England President Mr. Abhishek Singh and the Capitol Hill Event Chair Mr. Himanshu Bhatia organized the unprecedented gathering in Capitol Hill, Washington DC on May 12, 2022. The event saw the participation of over 430 Indian Americans including 16 Congressional members and two US Senators. Not only the five decades long community service of FIA was formally recognized in the presence of seven lawmakers but also formally entered into the United States Congressional Records.

Prominent among them were Senator Cory Booker, and several other Congressmen and Congresswomen, including Raja Krishnamoorthi, Frank Pallone, David Cicilline, Sheila Jackson Lee, Mijie Sherrill, Tom Malinowski, Abigail Spanberger, Vincente Gonzalez, Susie Lee, Hakeem

Sekou Jeffries, Grace Meng, Debrah Ross, Adriano Espaill, Jim McGovern, Matt Cartwright and Jim Langevin.

Many citations with congratulatory messages for FIA were issued by the lawmakers and presented to the FIA office bearers.

FIA Chairman Mr. Ankur Vaidya

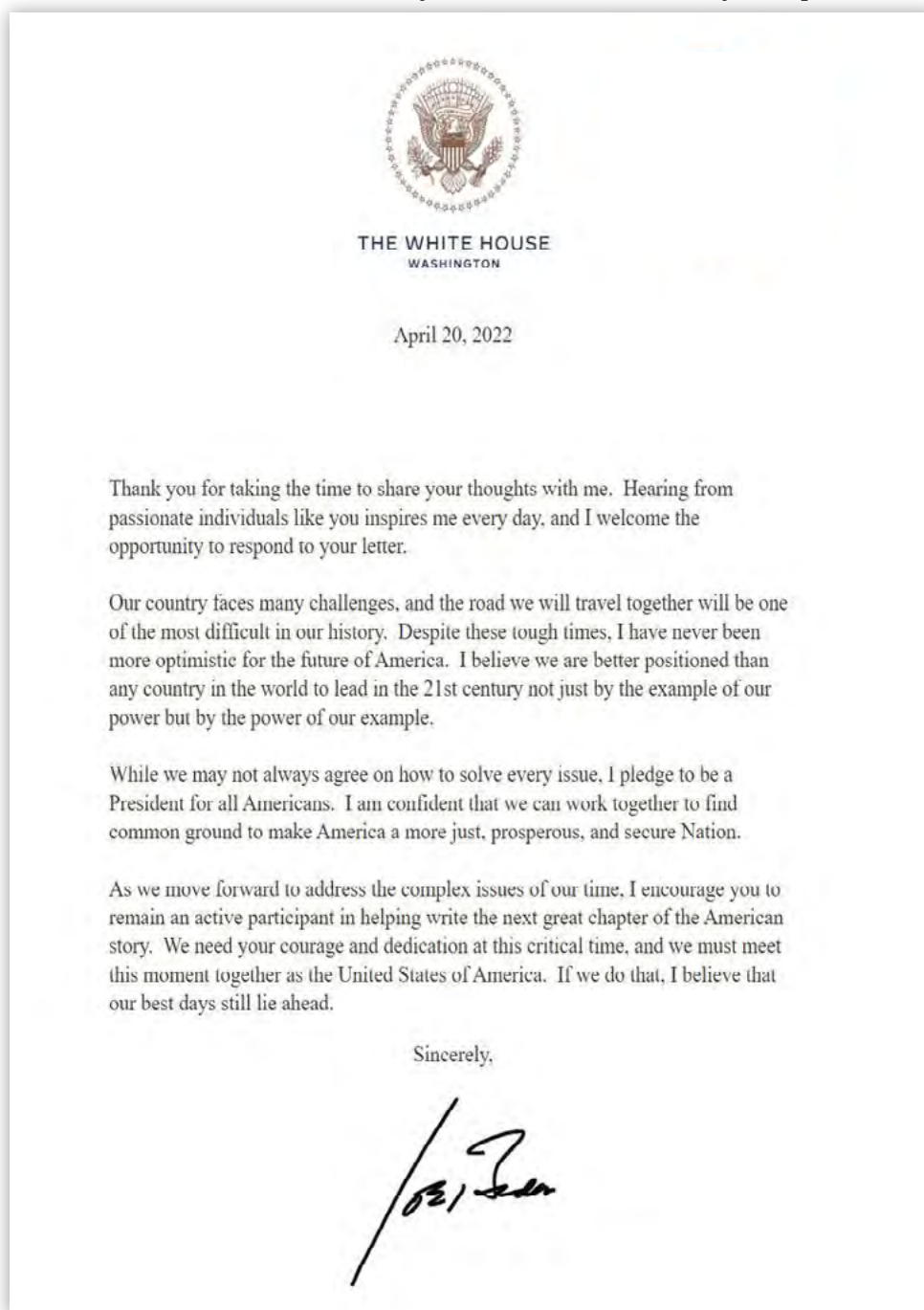
thanked Mr. Satish Pondi and Mr. Mahesh Bhagia for their guidance, help and support to successfully conduct the event. He added, "FIA is planning a grand finale of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' during the week of India's Independence Day this year. This will include the flag hoisting at the Times Square in New York City, Empire State

Building lit in Indian tri-color's 200' flag flown from a plane on the eve of India's Independence with a mega India Day Parade on August 21st followed by a Grand Gala Banquet Reception at a historic venue in lower Manhattan."

Mr. Kenny Desai expressed his excitement on leading the unprecedented festivities under his leadership and creating history for FIA in his tenure. He stated his excitement for being at the helm of many unprecedented and historic accomplishments starting from the Parvasi Bhartiya Sanmaan, the Congressional Honour and with the rigorous planning and production of attempting for two Guinness World Records attempts on August 21st.

He was confident that achieving it is mandatory for FIA and for our community. The success in Guinness World Records attempts, which will place FIA (the 50-year-old community non-profit) in a very elite portfolio of globally recognized non-profit community organizations with such distinct and very unique accomplishments.

Indian Americans are now an inalienable part of the mainstream community life in the United State of America and such accolades for the community highlight our contribution and presence. Mr. Abhishek Singh said such a "historic celebration" will take the journey forward in improving the India-US relationship and will be a new beginning of pride and respect for all.



FIA Honours Bollywood Musician Pyarelal with Lifetime Achievement Award

The legendary music composer raised the tempo of the ceremony with his live performance

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) in association with Sai USA Inc. conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award to Mr. Pyarelal R. Sharma of the famed Indian composer-duo Laxmikant-Pyarelal for his outstanding service to the Indian Film Music.

The duo is considered amongst the most successful composers in the Hindi Film industry and composed music for over 750 films from 1963 to 1998.

The award was given during a live concert held on earlier this month on Sunday, 15th May 2022 at Cure Insurance Arena, Trenton New Jersey. Mr. Pyarelal performed with his orchestra accompanied with famous playback singers Amit Kumar, Kavita Krishnamurti, Sadhana Sargam, Sudesh Bhosale, Mohammed Salamat and Priyanka Mitra. The show was presented

by famous film stars -- Zeenat Amaan, Padmini Kolhapure and Rati Agnihotri -- of the Indian film industry.

The FIA President Mr. Kenny Desai presented the award to the legendary music composer Mr. Pyarelal R. Sharma.

It was an eclectic evening filled with enthralling performances and the audience compromising of different age groups.



Indian Consulate & Ahimsa Foundation Celebrate Lord Mahavir, India's Independence

The International Ahimsa Foundation, situated in the tri-state area, along with the Indian Consulate in New York, hosted an event celebrating Lord Mahavir, the 24th Tirthankara of the Jain religion. The event also commemorated India's year-long endeavor, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (75 years of Indian independence), which took place on May 15, 2022.

A trailer of the movie "Tirthankar Mahavir, Ahimsa-the Ultimate Dharma" on the life and teachings of Lord Mahavir was played for the scores of attendees at the event. "The ballroom was full at the Indian Consulate with more than 200 people," Dr. Neeta Jain, founder and president of IAF told *Desi Talk*. "Another 50 or so people watched the live coverage on television downstairs because there was no more space left," she added.

Among the speakers, at the event, was Dr. Jain, India's Consul General in New York Randhir Jaiswal, Congresswoman Grace Meng, D-NY, Padma Shri recipient Dr. Sudhir Parikh, chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media and ITV Gold, which publishes *Desi*

Talk, Professor of Religion Jeffrey Long from Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania and Israel's Deputy Consul General Israel Nitzan. Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, D-NY, also attended but could not stay to give a speech.

Dr. Jain dwelt on Lord Mahavir who was born in 599 BC during the program entitled, "Non-Violence "A Message of Lord Mahavir" on his 2,620th birth anniversary. She noted the 5 basic principles of Jainism – non-violence, truthfulness,

thing is that (Lord Mahavir) was born in 599 BC, and he gave a message that is true till today. His message was very simple, do not harm plants, animals and human beings," Dr. Parikh said. "These are great examples of how to live." He also considered the Jain message of non-violence as key to India attaining its independence from British rule under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership; of the advances made in freedom for African Americans under Rev.

Photo: newsindiatimes



non-stealing, self-control, and non-possession. She stressed on teaching children the 5 Jain principles to make the world a better place.

Dr. Parikh thanked those present and thanked Dr. Jain for the honor of speaking. "The great

Martin Luther King's leadership, and the end of apartheid in South Africa under Nelson Mandela. "Let us hope it will help solve the problem in Ukraine," Dr. Parikh added.

Congresswoman Meng appreciated the diversity of the

gathering and called it a special day to remember Lord Mahavir's teachings as they relate to Ukraine and the May 15, 2022 massacre of 10 African Americans in Buffalo by an 18-year-old white man. "It is so important for us to stand together as diverse communities against hate," Rep. Meng said.

Consul General Jaiswal said he has a special connection to Lord Mahavir because he was born in the same town, Trishala, in Bihar. The Consulate celebrates Mahavir Jayanti every year, he noted, but this year it was even more important as it was part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, India's 75th independence year.

"When we celebrate the independence and freedom of a modern nation, it is also about nourishing and celebrating ancient values, thoughts and traditions," CG Jaiswal said. The many challenges of climate change and the lack of unity, alongside the modern technologies, the wealth and teachings from various parts of the world needed to be recalled to move forward. "Walk on the path of Lord Mahavir so that we can build a better tomorrow," Jaiswal said.

Indian-American Named Dean of Stanford University's Climate Change School

Arun Majumdar, currently the Jay Precourt Provostial Chair Professor, a member of the Departments of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering, and a Senior Fellow and previous head of the Precourt Institute for Energy -- will begin his new role on June 15.

He has been chosen as the inaugural dean of Stanford University's new climate change and sustainability school.

Mr. Majumdar joined Stanford in 2014. He was the founding director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E) and currently serves as the chair of the advisory board to the US Secretary of Energy.

"I am deeply honoured and humbled by the opportunity to serve as the inaugural dean," Mr Majumdar said in the release.

"Building on the extraordinary leadership of transitions deans, Kam Moler and Steve Graham, we will not only harness the

intellectual horsepower of our students, faculty and staff across our campus, but we will also partner with external organisations around the world to co-develop innovative solutions and identify new insights through research and education," he said.

"As is often said, we do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children. We must collectively figure out how to create a future where humans and nature thrive together," Mr. Majumdar said.



Photo: energy.stanford.edu

“Outrage in Community”: Indian-American Lawmakers on Student's Bullying

The Indian-American lawmakers write to the CISD Texas Superintendent Brad Hunt & the school Principal Greg Axelson

All four Indian-American members of the current US Congress have expressed deep concern over the recent incident of an Indian-origin boy being assaulted at a school in Texas, the video of which has gone viral online.

In a rare joint statement on Monday, Indian-American Congressmen Ami Bera, Ro Khanna, Raja Krishnamoorthi and Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal said, "We are writing to express our deep concern about the recent incident of bullying

which occurred at Coppell Middle School North in the Coppell Independent School District (CISD). As you know, a widely circulated video of the incident shows only 14-year-old boy being assaulted and eventually "choked out" in an alleged wrestling manoeuvre that could have resulted in serious injury."

"This video has sparked widespread outrage in the Indian-American community. As Indian-American members of Congress and representatives of our diverse communities, the possibility of a young Indian-American being targeted in this

manner is extremely disturbing," they said.

The letter was addressed to Superintendent of Coppell Independent School District (CISD) in Texas Brad Hunt and Principal of Coppell Middle School Greg Axelson.

"We understand that in a May 15, 2022, statement to the community, Dr. Hunt emphasised that bullying, both verbal and physical, as well as physical acts of aggression are never acceptable and do not align with who we are at CISD and our core values," said the Indian-American Congressmen.

This is for the first time that all four Indian-American lawmakers have written a joint letter.

"The recent incident of bullying at Coppell Middle School North targeting a young Indian-American student is unacceptable and has touched a nerve across the nation," Congressman Ro Khanna said in a tweet.

Online Petition: The family of the assaulted boy has started an online petition and so far, it has generated over 30,000 signatures.

URL for video: <https://bit.ly/3MJAA61>

American Family of Indian Descent and Origin Seeks Justice for Son

Who Was Brutally Assaulted at his School in Texas

In their efforts to seek justice for their middle-school aged son, the Pritmani Family has retained legal counsel. The Pritmani young teen was brutally attacked by another student during lunch while at school in an unprovoked assault that was captured on video. He was choked multiple times and knocked to the ground by the other student at Coppell Independent School District. The video went viral and immediately generated widespread outrage and support from ALL ETHNICITIES AROUND THE WORLD.

An online petition for "Justice 4 Shaan, Peace and Protection for All Our Kids" has already generated over 300,000 signatures. <https://www.change.org/p/assaults-at-schools-protect-the-victi>

The family has demanded that legal counsel for the family of the child initiating the assault immediately cease and desist circulating unfounded, deceptive, and defamatory statements about their son while investigations are underway. Inexplicably, the school suspended the victim for three days, while the aggressor received only a one-day suspension.

Given the unprecedented racial tensions currently afflicting our country as evidenced in the recent horrific murders in Buffalo, New York and Laguna Woods, California, the Pritmani Family, in their search for justice for their son, hope that this instance, once again, highlights the importance of all adults--including the local school district and representatives--act responsibly to educate and protect all children and unify all communities regardless of ethnic origins and nationalities.

<https://www.facebook.com/100394892687304/videos/2805753653054024>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XO48Sq2BN4>

All press inquiries should be directed to Punam Patel Grewal, Spokesperson for Pritmani Family.

Screen grab of the online petition

US Commission Recommends to Process all Green Card Applications within 6 Months

Presidential advisory commission has unanimously recommended that the US President Joe Biden to process all applications for green cards or permanent residency within six months, a proposal that, if implemented, will bring relief to hundreds of thousands of Indian-Americans, including those who have been waiting for decades.

The recommendations of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (PACAANHPI) are to be sent to the White House now for approval. If adopted, it is likely to bring cheers to the hundreds and thousands of Indian-Americans and those waiting, some even for decades, for a Green Card.

In A First, White House Officials Meet Indian-American Documented 'Dreamers'

For the first time, White House officials met with a group of documented 'dreamers,' largely Indian-Americans, to listen to their concerns about aging out and suggest that constructive steps should be taken to save them from having to leave the nation where they have spent practically their entire lives.

The estimated 250,000 "documented dreamers" grew up legally in the United States but face deportation when they turn 21.

"We look forward to seeing positive policy change, both

administrative and legislative, to end aging out," said Improve the Dream, a youth-led grassroots organization that is fighting for the cause of the documented dreamers.

Over 250,000 children and young adults are living in the United States as dependents of long-term non-immigrant visa holders (including H-1B, L-1, E-1, and E-2 workers). These individuals grow up in the United States, attend American schools and graduate from American universities. Since they have maintained legal status, documented dreamers are not

eligible for protection under Deferred Action for Childhood

Arrivals (DACA) or the work authorization that comes with it.



Dita Bhargava announces run for Connecticut State Treasurer

Dita Bhargava, a Connecticut Democratic activist, confirmed her candidacy for State Treasurer on May 19, 2022.

Bhargava, who was unanimously elected in January of 2017, as Vice Chair of the Connecticut State Democratic Party, is seeking her party's nomination in the primaries for Treasurer scheduled for August 9, 2022. Her announcement comes soon after current Connecticut Treasurer Shawn Wooden revealed he would not be seeking re-election.

"I have received dozens of calls and emails from people urging me to get into the race," Bhargava said in an email blast.

"These are volatile times that require significant and complex investment decisions. Now more than ever, Connecticut needs a Treasurer who has the background and experience necessary to run the office and maximize its impact. We need a Treasurer who understands

finances, understands the social governance impact that office can have on corporate America, and will represent the highest standards of public service," Bhargava said. "I've spent 25 years working in finance on Wall Street and the past 10 years working to help hold corporate America to a higher standard on issues that impact Connecticut residents in their everyday lives," she added as she also praised Wooden for his accomplishments.



Kris Kolluri to head Gateway Development Commission

Kris Kolluri, an Indian-American transportation specialist, has been appointed to lead one of the country's major infrastructure projects. Kolluri's candidacy as CEO was unanimously approved by the Gateway Development Commission (GDC), which was founded in 2019 to coordinate regional initiatives impacting New York and New Jersey. The meeting ended with a 7-0 vote, according to *Desi Talk*.

"I very much appreciate the GDC Commissioners' confidence, and I look forward to coming to an agreement," Kolluri said in a statement sent to *Desi Talk* referring to the multi-million-dollar project for the redevelopment of the Portal North Bridge and a new Hudson River tunnel. "I am excited to work with them and our federal partners collectively to build the most urgent infrastructure project in the nation."

The Gateway Program — which includes the redevelopment of the Portal North Bridge and a new Hudson River tunnel — is one of the nation's most pressing infrastructure needs, a press release from the Governors said.

The Gateway Development Commission, a partnership

between New York, New Jersey and Amtrak, is tasked with coordinating delivery of the Gateway Program with its partner agencies, including the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and NJ TRANSIT.

"With his extensive resume, Kris Kolluri brings an extraordinary record of public service and I am confident he will serve New York and New Jersey well as Chief Executive Officer of the Gateway Development Commission," Governor Hochul said. "The Gateway Hudson Tunnel is critical to the Northeast corridor serving more than 800,000 passengers daily and is a key component of our plan to build back stronger than ever," Hochul noted.

Photo: courierpostonline



The Atom: A Perfect Read for All, Available on Amazon

Reader-friendly narrative explores how Atom is 'Only Self Priming Entity in our Universe'

In this reader friendly book, the author Vijay Pawar leads us on an interesting, simple and yet highly informative journey to learn about the Atom. This book looks at the Atom in a unique perspective. Rather than delving deep into quantum Physics or the theory of everything or other theoretical aspects, the author has postulated the Atom, as being the "Only Self Priming Entity in our Universe".

This book is all about justifying the concept. Students of Physics and general readers alike, will love to read this simple explanation of how the Atom rules each and every aspect of our daily lives. The book comprehensively covers various aspects of the Atom, its sub-atomic particles and its inherent intricate and

intrinsic properties which have been instrumental in shaping everything that is the Universe.

The Author, Vijay Pawar, having pursued his MS from the University of Cincinnati in Ohio, USA spent many decades in the field of Nuclear Physics research. He designed "nuclear radiation measuring meter" for which he holds a US patent. After returning to India, he had started his own small-scale electronics manufacturing unit where he has developed several electrical and electronic products. Many of them were introduced by him for the first time in India.

For further queries on the book please write to:

vpawar1936@gmail.com

URL: <https://amzn.to/3LUgLYB>



CALL FOR HELP

Game isn't over till last ball is bowled: Ray

Ray Raphy -- an energetic, athletic and above all a kind and generous human being -- met with a serious road accident earlier this month on Saturday, May 7th. With multiple fractures, broken jaw, neck and head injuries. Ray had to be airlifted to a Trauma centre, for what was just the beginning of a long road to recovery. In the week following the incident, doctors have worked round the clock and Ray has undergone multiple life-saving surgeries and procedures. While he has been stabilized, Ray and his family are now staring at a long and unpredictable road to recovery involving rehab, therapy, etc. Time is the healer and Ray will need all the time and prayers from friends and family to get back to his old self.

Ray is an avid sportsman - from cricket to soccer, ever smiling and optimistic - he is a pillar of the local cricket club, which he

has helped mold into one of the best teams in the Connecticut, New York. A guy with a big heart, he is always engaged in making contributions to better the community, of which he is such a



big part! His passion for cricket does not end with the team that he plays for. He has also devoted his time and effort to organize and promote women's cricket in the community. Be it organizing

events or raising funds for local charities you will always find Ray, the leader, at the forefront.

"The game is not over till the last ball is bowled" - Ray's most inspirational message to his teammates in every tough game! And now Ray is showing that same fighting spirit to stay positive and get back on the path to health and fitness. During his time of need it is now our turn to support Ray and do everything we can to help him during this fight of his life! We can't wait to see Ray back on the field.

This fund raiser is initiated by Ray's friends. Ray's spouse, Bindu Philip, is the intended beneficiary and has been set up to withdraw the funds, to be primarily used for Ray's rehabilitation, therapy and ancillary health related expenses

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/ray-raphy>

THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS



Photo: indiawest

Head of Singapore Airlines' low-cost carrier Scoot, Campbell Wilson, has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Air India. Wilson has 26 years of experience in the aviation industry. Campbell Wilson, has resigned from his current position at Singapore Airlines.



Photo: thebridge

India men's badminton team defeated 14-time champions Indonesia 3-0 in a dominating fashion on Sunday to claim their first ever Thomas Cup title at the Impact Arena in Bangkok, Thailand. India has now become the 6th country to win the prestigious title.



Photo: indianexpress

Elisabeth Borne to become France's first female prime minister in 30 years.



Photo: bbc

India's Nikhat Zareen has won the Women's World Boxing Championships in Turkey, becoming only the fifth Indian woman to be crowned world champion. The boxer beat Thailand's Jitpong Jutamas 5-0 in the flyweight division of the championship.

New York raised its COVID-19 alert level from "medium" to "high" on Tuesday, 17th May, 2022, as infections continue to go up in recent weeks.



शोहळ अस्तित्वाचा

चला तर मग भेटूया ऑगस्ट ११-१४ २०२२ ला अटलांटिक सिटी, न्यू जर्सी मध्ये.
तुम्ही आम्ही मिळून रचू एक नवा इतिहास आणि होऊ एका ऐतिहासिक घटनेचे साक्षीदार

KEY INITIATIVES & PROGRAMS



BMM 2022 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Prashant Kolhatkar – Convener BMM 2022 | Vidya Joshi - BMM NA President

Amar Urhekar – Co Convener / Vihar Deshpande – Treasurer / Punit Marathe – Co Convener

Atul Athavale - MV President / Amol Purav – Facility / Sandeep Dharam – Programming / Pooja Shirodkar – Food

Vilas Savargaonkar – Fund Raising / Raj Pofale – Marketing / Mukul Dakwale – Project Management

Komal Chaukkar – Secretary / Sona Bhide – Treasurer / Mohit Chitnis – BOT / Hema Rachmale - EC



BIZCON BUSINESS CONFERENCE **@BMM2022**

AUG 11, 2022

A unique platform for Marathi professionals
with networking opportunities,
entrepreneurial ideas, seeking investors,
mentors...and many more...



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DISCUSSION**



**OPULENT
SHARKS**



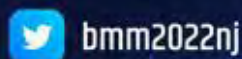
Keynote Speaker
DEAN OF HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL
PADMASHREE
DR. SHRIKANT DATAR



**Founder, Chairman and
Managing Director, Persistent Systems**
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Atlantic City Convention Centre, NJ 08401

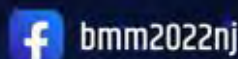
<https://bmm2022.org/business-conference>



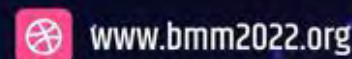
bmm2022nj



bmm2022nj



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www.bmm2022.org

**By the way, have you purchased your BMM 2022 tickets yet?
Purchase your tickets at**

<https://bmm2022.org/registration>

The stage is set and our BMM Team and New Jersey is excited and looking to welcome you all with our open heart in Atlantic City during Aug 11th-14th and give you a memorable experience for lifetime.

So, what are your waiting for? Let us know how we can help. We already have over 250 volunteers ready to create a memorable experience for you at the convention!!

Community News

Those who have been refused a F-1 Student Visa before will not be able to get a slot when the appointment applications open this summer, Minister Counsellor for Consular Affairs at the US embassy, Donald L Heflin said on Wednesday, 11th May. Mr. Heflin stated during a 45-minute live chat on the website of the US Consulate General in Delhi that the summer season for student visas will begin in June and the first half of July.

Pre-opening Sri Sai Balaji Temple, Monroe, NJ

A pre-opening event was held at the new and the first of its kind temple being constructed at Monroe, New Jersey, Sri Sai Balaji Temple, on May 15th 2022. It was attended by people from different states of India. The primary objective of the temple is to integrate North and South Indian Hindu traditions into one Sanatam Dharma under the inspiring leadership of Shri Suryanarayana Maddula and Dr. Pankaj Mohan, along with Rama Krishna ji and Ramesh ji.

FIA's Chairman Mr. Ankur Vaidya and Past President Mr. Alok Kumar also attended the event.

Phase-1 of the temple will be initiated after Pran Pratistha in the week of June 13th, bringing together a diverse Hindu community with a focus on cultural training for the children and spiritual learning for adults. The Phase-1 temple has Hindu deities idols in the main hall. It also has 10 classrooms for cultural learning, large spaces for pravachans and bhajans, besides a kitchen and a cafeteria.

Phase-2 of the Temple will be a 25-foot Lord Hanuman Idol that connects the center to the larger Hindu Temple (Phase-3). The Phase-3 of the temple would be one of the largest Hindu temples in New Jersey with all Idols including a unique integration of Sri Vidya.



Restaurant, doughnut shop, bank among new business plans in Edison

The township Zoning Board of Adjustment will hear proposals for a restaurant in the southern area of the township and a two-story structure in the northern section to contain a bank and doughnut shop next week.

Liyun Properties is seeking approval to convert a residential and commercial property at 1851-1855 Route 27 and 142 Prospect Ave. to a restaurant in the southern section of the township, Liyun Properties bought the property for \$1.7 million in October 2019.

India Square - Passaic New Jersey

In a historic moment for the city, the Mayor of Passaic City, New Jersey, renamed Gregory and Main Avenue as India Square in honor of the Indian Community.

This comes after 3 years of collective efforts led by Mr. Bharat Rana, a well-known community leader, along with Rana Samaj, Clifton's Senior Association, BAPS Swaminarayan Temple and Passaic's Senior Association.

The event took place on May 15th, 2022, from 11am to 4pm. Over 350 people from the community gathered to celebrate the event. FIA Past President and Trustee Mr. Anandbhai Patel came to support the event and congratulated all the organizations involved. Mr. Rana thanked everyone for their unwavering support.



SUBSCRIBERS' SECTION

SEIZING THE 'MOMENTS' IN YOUR 50S

'Life is not the about of breaths you take. It's the moments that take your breath away'

Coco Chanel once said that "one can be gorgeous at 30, charming at 40 and irresistible the rest of your life." I'm on the road to being the latter, as I have surpassed the 50 milestone. Half a century old, and I am raring to go!

The best thing about the 50's is that you cease to care! Care about what people think. How should I change their perception? How can I impress them? Is it the right thing to do? An endless list of doubts enters your mind, fleetingly. You realize their uselessness and brush them aside. The desire for validation and recognition diminishes and becomes inversely proportional to your self-esteem.

The downsides? There are plenty. The mirror is no longer your best friend. You look at it to check out your lipstick and forget that you once preened and posed prettily in front of it. You stand in front of it, checking out your stomach muscles. Can they be counted upon to suck in that bulge? Sadly, no matter how much you draw in your breath, there isn't an iota of difference. The tummy bulges out defiantly and that voice scolds you "who told you to eat the brownies and the potato chips?"

The 50's make you aware of life's harsh truths too. You have to give away those relics relegated to an obscure corner of the cupboard. They won't fit you, ever. You are now officially the local Aunty, whether it's the maid, delivery boy or vegetable seller. Kama, Loreal, Clinique won't change that, ever! You spend extra time looking for your reading glasses and there's that twinge in the knee when you do yoga or try doing it!

Hush-puppies and Skechers are on your list. So are

vitamins, anti-hair-fall miracle shampoos, and those sweet-scented creams. Creams and lotions for the face, under eyes, body, hands, feet, hair... have I mentioned everything? That's another thing, you do occasionally forget things.

It's also time to look ahead, eat that pizza, drink that extra glass, order a bigger clothing size, stop feeling guilty and let all those years of experience make you wiser and more confident. You have all the time to curl up with a book, watch a romantic movie, sob at the ending and still dream. You know what you want and you can ask for it or ensure that you have it. No explanations, no questions. You have earned it.

The nest is empty, but it's time to nurture yourself

and realize that what's most important is You! It's time that your investments in relationships are now laid to rest. They will soon reap benefits. If they don't, move on. It's stupidity not to learn from your mistakes.

Focus on yourself. Remove toxicity, you don't have to suffer fools gladly. Embrace yourself with your perfections and flaws. Remember Kareena Kapoor's line, "*Main apni favourite hoon!*" (I am my own favourite!).

The greys may be more, the lines deep and you start looking more like your mother. You still enjoy dressing up in vibrant colours, and dancing to the beat of 80's music. You love compliments, and spend time changing your display picture with flattering old

pictures. Your girl-friends are your family, and those coffees with them therapy. And your husband and you are comrades, after all you have soldiered through so much. As they say, through thick and thin, though it's the other way round now. Seems more appropriate.

Vanity will never disappear, nor your zest for life. 50s or 60s, women, you rock! And if anyone says anything contrary, just ignore him / her. Be unapologetic and deaf to criticism. It's time to take your chances and tick off the items on your bucket list.

As the gorgeous Will Smith in Hitch says, "Life is not the about of breaths you take. It's the moments that take your breath away." Seize those moments.



MODERN LOVE: MUMBAI



SONIA DATE

A welcome respite from the usual blood and gore, hi-voltage dramas and documentaries. Watch it to feel good. Do you remember how you felt when you kept your head out of the car window on a warm summer evening to caress your hot face or the first bite of a humble orange ice lolly that quenches your thirst? Light, airy, and fresh — that sums up this refreshing series of 6 love stories.

As for the characters, it is engaging to watch new people and some old forgotten ones weave a spell with the director's perspective. Different takes on love that make you smile and feel

positive. So much so that you are ready to forgive your loved ones and believe in the power of people.

When I watched Sarika, all I could think of was the great bard's line, "Age cannot wither her." Can we please see more of her? Fatima's appeal was in her impish expression teamed with vulnerability, a perfect cast for a Kashmiri girl. Yeo Yann and Meiyang Chang charm you with their natural portrayal of Chinese immigrant mother and son. I liked all the actors, maybe because they fit their roles perfectly.

Some stories seem a trifle slow and long-winding, but later on, one realizes that this is because we have been spoiled with a diet of fast-paced action and are surrounded by devices that fuel a short attention span.

Lastly, the series validates the fundamental truth: we are all romantics and anything that caters to a feel-good emotion is always welcome.

Photo: apnews

AMAZON ORIGINAL SERIES

**Modern Love
Mumbai**

amazon
MAY 13 | prime video

HOUSE OF GUCCI

When you are presented with a movie by Ridley Scott featuring Adam Driver, Lady Gaga, Al Pacino, and the House of Gucci, you are left with no choice. I wanted to watch this movie at my own pace, hence the late review.

The famous couture brand, with its signature logo and red and green colors, was founded in 1921 by Guccio Gucci in Florence. The movie is about the family's dispute over control of its fortunes and the murder of Maurizio Gucci.

After the movie's release, there were media reports about the family's displeasure, and the filmmakers were accused of commercializing the family's story. "We can talk about everything, but there is a borderline that cannot be crossed," a second cousin in the family retorted.

In a movie about a luxury brand, it is inevitable that the viewer is awe-struck by high fashion ranging from clothes, bags, jewellery, and shoes, opulent homes, extravagant lifestyles and luxurious settings.

The person who steals the limelight is Lady Gaga, who plays Patrizia Reggiani, Maurizio Gucci's wife. Her journey from an ambitious gold digger to a shattered and helpless woman is commendable. She carries her role with aplomb, strutting with confidence and a vixen-like charm that is hard to resist. Adam Driver, who was impressive in Marriage Story, is the hapless husband who is putty in his wife's hand, but later shows shades of grey. Jared Leto plays the fumbling and inept cousin, Pablo Gucci. With his shrill

voice and selfish and entitled mannerisms, he is more of a caricature of an eccentric and useless heir.

Watch it for Lady Gaga and the charming Al Pacino.

Salma Hayek has a small but important role. Watch it to agree with a line, now an idiom from William Congreve's play, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."

Photo: IMDB



A - 359746



★★★★★

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JAYESHBHAI JORDAAR

(2022 / Comedy / Drama / Cinema Release)

RELEVANT SOCIAL MESSAGE WRAPPED IN HUMOUR AND ENTERTAINMENT!

Cast Ranveer Singh, Shalini Pandey, Jia Vaidya, Boman Irani, Ratna Pathak Shah

Director/Writer Divyang Thakkar



Photo: Jayeshbhai Jordaar Trailer

Analysis

Every man doesn't need to be Jordaar in the typical overpowering masculine way.

Every film doesn't need to be jordaar in the larger-than-life format.

Jayeshbhai Jordaar is a film trying to break stereotypes, makes many points at a time and strikes a chord emotionally.

Hats off to Ranveer for playing a hero who cries, never raises a hand or voice, can't even stand up to his misogynistic father and yet achieves so much.

Even though it seems over the top at times, the sheer number of issues it manages to rake up, all wrapped in humour, while keeping you engrossed and entertained, is worth appreciating.

The first half is full of chuckling moments and the end offers many overwhelming teary-eyed moments.

If a film manages to move me to tears, it's a winner for me.

Female infanticide is the centre of it all but there are

so many issues it rakes up. Gender equality, gender stereotypes, misogyny, domestic violence, regressive rural diktats, child marriage, loveless marriages, taboo of physical intimacy etc. Despite all this being woven in the story, there is not a single heavy moment.

The film does get preachy a couple of times but mostly it's sarcastic and laced with humour.

With a run time of just 2 hrs, it's over before you realise it.

Performances

Ranveer is brilliant. In such an adorable understated role, he wins all hearts. He is someone who always aces at dialects and that is evident here too. His ability to slip into the characters (that includes his form and body language) and the conviction with which he plays them is admirable.

Shalini Pandey as Mudra looks perfect with her innocence & naïveté.

Jia Vaidya as Siddhi is a firecracker just like her

favourite number in the film.

Boman Irani and Ratna Pathak are great as Jayeshbhai's parents.

An Important Note

Remember that the aspect that we were most doubtful about, the offbeat image of our central protagonist, especially in case of a heart throb like Ranveer, is the very statement that the makers want to convey. Hats off to our firebrand actor who never shirks away from a role

whether abhorrently negative or so damn non-heroic.

Recommendation

With its heart in the right place, its humour quotient, overwhelming portions, and the relevant social message, the film wins all hearts. Throw in a great cast and I think the film is definitely worth a watch!



DHAAKAD

(2022 / Action Thriller / Cinema Release)

THIS FILM COULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH MORE... SADLY AN OPPORTUNITY LOST!

A deadly agent Agni (Kangana) is out against human traffickers Rudraveer (Arjun) and Rohini (Divya)

Cast Kangana Ranaut, Arjun Rampal, Divya Dutta, Saswata Chatterjee, Sharib Hashmi

Director/Writer Razneesh Razy Ghai



Photo: indianexpress

Though this industry in India seems to be actually ruled by star power, I have always believed that a film is only as much as its maker is.

Writing and direction are the most important aspects for me and the reason that I have always written their credits above the cast in my reviews.

And sadly, those are the aspects that pull back this otherwise "could have been great" film that boasts of so many firsts.

The Good

It is refreshing and impressive to see a hardcore action thriller with a woman protagonist who doesn't share the centre stage or glory with any male partner, a heroine who does not get any help from a knight in shining armour at any point of time, a heroine who is beaten to pulp

with as much rigour as a hero would have been.

The film is an absolute smack in the face of male dominated action genre in our industry. Aptly named *Agni*, Kangana is absolutely on fire.

What she does share in appreciable proportion is footage with her other two leads - Arjun Rampal and Divya Dutta. They both get a fair share of focus and together the trio pitch in good performances.

Kangana showcases commendable action chops with many high-voltage action sequences. She looks in great form and quite at ease.

Arjun Rampal looks menacing and uses his raspy baritone to the best.

Divya Dutta looks absolutely smashing as the loathsome human trafficker.

Saswata Chatterjee and

Sharib Hashmi lend good support.

The Bad

But what holds back these actors from delivering better and what holds back these performances from pushing the film higher is shoddy writing and direction.

When the film begins with a terrific action sequence, it looks as promising as the trailer was. But then you see the film gradually descending. Despite extreme violence, blood, gore and darkness, I surprisingly failed to feel fear. A disconnected screenplay which kept delivering one sequence after another failed to make any emotional connect. Lack of good music did not help either. That irritating and repeated lullaby did get on the nerves though.

I couldn't help compare this with another film with human trafficking at its core - *Mardaani*. At many points it had sent chills down the spine. And what a superb

menacing act by Tahir Raj Bhasin, without any gory violence.

Kangana and her action are the main reason that makes it worth your while. Dialogues by Ritesh Shah also helped us in dreary phases and gave that much needed stimuli at regular intervals.

But in the last act, the film goes totally downhill and haywire.

Tired and glad that it was over. I left the cinema totally heartbroken to see a potentially stylish and slick action film being let down by bad script and direction.

Recommendation

I could prompt Kangana fans to go and watch. She will make it worth your while.

I could possibly expect action junkies to try this one.

Rest to take their own call.

Score: 2 on 5



Photo: DNA

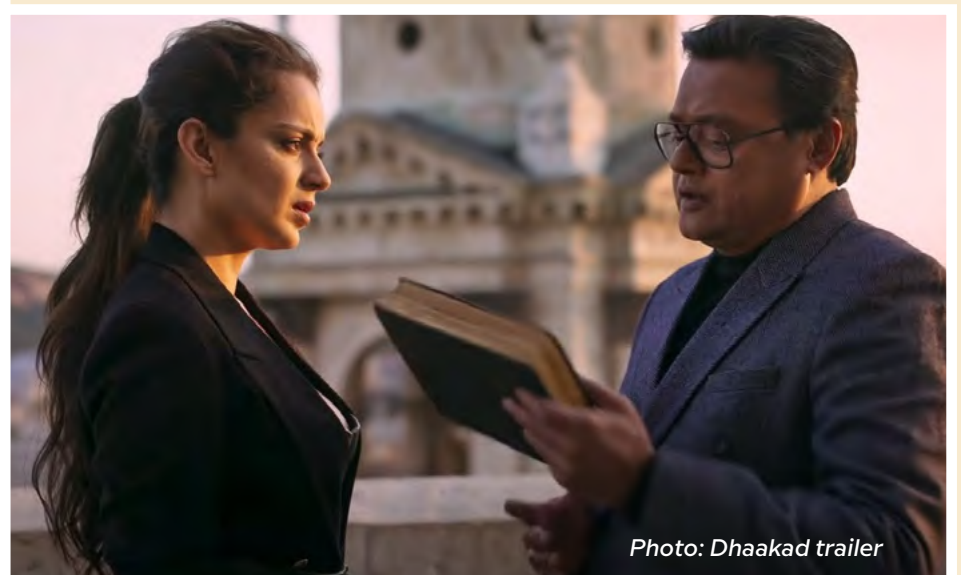


Photo: Dhaakad trailer

Golden Globe winner Fred Ward dies

Fred Ward, a veteran actor known for his gruff tenderness in tough-guy characters in films like "The Right Stuff," "The Player," and "Tremors," has died. No cause or place of death was disclosed per the family's wishes.

"Devastated to learn about the passing of my friend, Fred Ward," tweeted actor Matthew Modine, who co-starred with Ward in "Short Cuts" and Alan Rudolph's "Equinox." "A tough façade covering emotions as deep as the Pacific Ocean. Godspeed amigo."

Ward earned a Golden Globe and shared the Venice Film Festival ensemble prize for his performance in Robert Altman's

"Short Cuts," and played the title character in "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins." He also reached new heights playing Mercury 7 astronaut Virgil "Gus" Grissom in 1983's Academy Award-nominated film "The Right Stuff."

The kind soul

"I mourn the loss of Fred Ward, who was so kind to me when we worked together on 'Remo Williams,'" actor Kate Mulgrew tweeted. "Decent and modest and utterly professional, he disarmed with a smile that was at once warm and mischievous."

Ward is survived by his wife of 27 years, Marie-France Ward and his son, Django Ward.



Deepika Padukone Named Louis Vuitton's First Indian Brand Ambassador

Deepika Padukone has been named as Louis Vuitton's first Indian brand ambassador; the French luxury label revealed.

The 36-year-old Bollywood diva joined Emma Stone and Chinese actor Zhou Dongyu in a series of promotional photos for a new handbag campaign.

Padukone has previously modeled for the brand. In 2020, she became the first Indian actor to feature in a campaign for the label, posing for a mock vintage book cover alongside celebrities including Léa Seydoux and Sophie Turner.

"When you're 18 and have just started earning, you don't even bother looking into a Louis Vuitton store when you walk past it because you know you're never going to be able to afford it," Padukone told Vogue India.

"There are some things that are aspirational and then there are some things that are just completely out of your orbit. My association with Louis

Vuitton is the latter."

"I'm a very practical, pragmatic person in reality, but I keep having to pinch myself because I can't believe this is real. And it speaks to the kind of diversity I hope to see in the future," she added.



Netflix Lays Off About 150 Staffers Across the Company

Netflix is laying off approximately 150 employees across the company, according to an internal memo sent on Tuesday and obtained by The Hollywood Reporter.

The layoffs represent 2 per cent of the streamer's entire workforce, with the majority of them occurring in the United States. Netflix is also restructuring its animation section, which will result in the removal of 70 jobs, as well as decreasing contractor employment across its social media and publishing platforms.

Employees affected are scheduled to get severance pay-

outs beginning at four months, however this time period may be extended based on the employee's position and length of service with the organization.

"As we explained on earnings, our slowing revenue growth means we are also having to slow our cost growth as a company," a Netflix spokesperson stated. "So sadly, we are letting around 150 employees go today, mostly US-based. These changes are primarily driven by business needs rather than individual performance, which makes them especially tough as none of us want to say goodbye to such great colleagues. We're working hard to support them through this very difficult transition."



India becomes first 'country of honour' at Cannes Film

India has been named the first 'Country of Honour' at Marche du Film or Cannes Market which runs parallel to the festival, whose 75th edition began on Tuesday 17th May.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent a message to the Indian delegation walking through Cannes, expressing his delight at India's participation in the festival, which coincides with the 75th anniversary of India-France diplomatic relations.

Six Indian movies will be screened at the Market selected by the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and are not part of the Cannes' official selections.

India has been given an opportunity to pitch five selected movies at the 'Goes to Cannes Section'.

These movies, part of the 'Work In Progress' lab under the Film Bazaar, are 'Baghjan' by Jaicheng Z x a i

Dohutia - Assamese, Moran, 'Bailadila' by Shailendra Sahu - Hindi, Chhattisgarhi, 'Ek Jagah Apni' (A Space of Our Own) by Ektara Collective - Hindi, 'Follower' by Harshad Nalawade - Marathi, Kannada, Hindi, and 'Shivamma' by Jai Shankar - Kannada.

This year Indian actress Deepika Padukone is also part of the jury panel. The jury is responsible for announcing one of the 21 films as the winner of the coveted Palme d'Or.

A number of Indian actors and musicians from the film and music industries are marking their attendance on the red carpet. Pooja Hegde, Aishwarya Rai, Hina Khan, Tamannaah Bhatia, AR Rahman, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Urvashi Rautela and others are marking their presence at the festival.



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