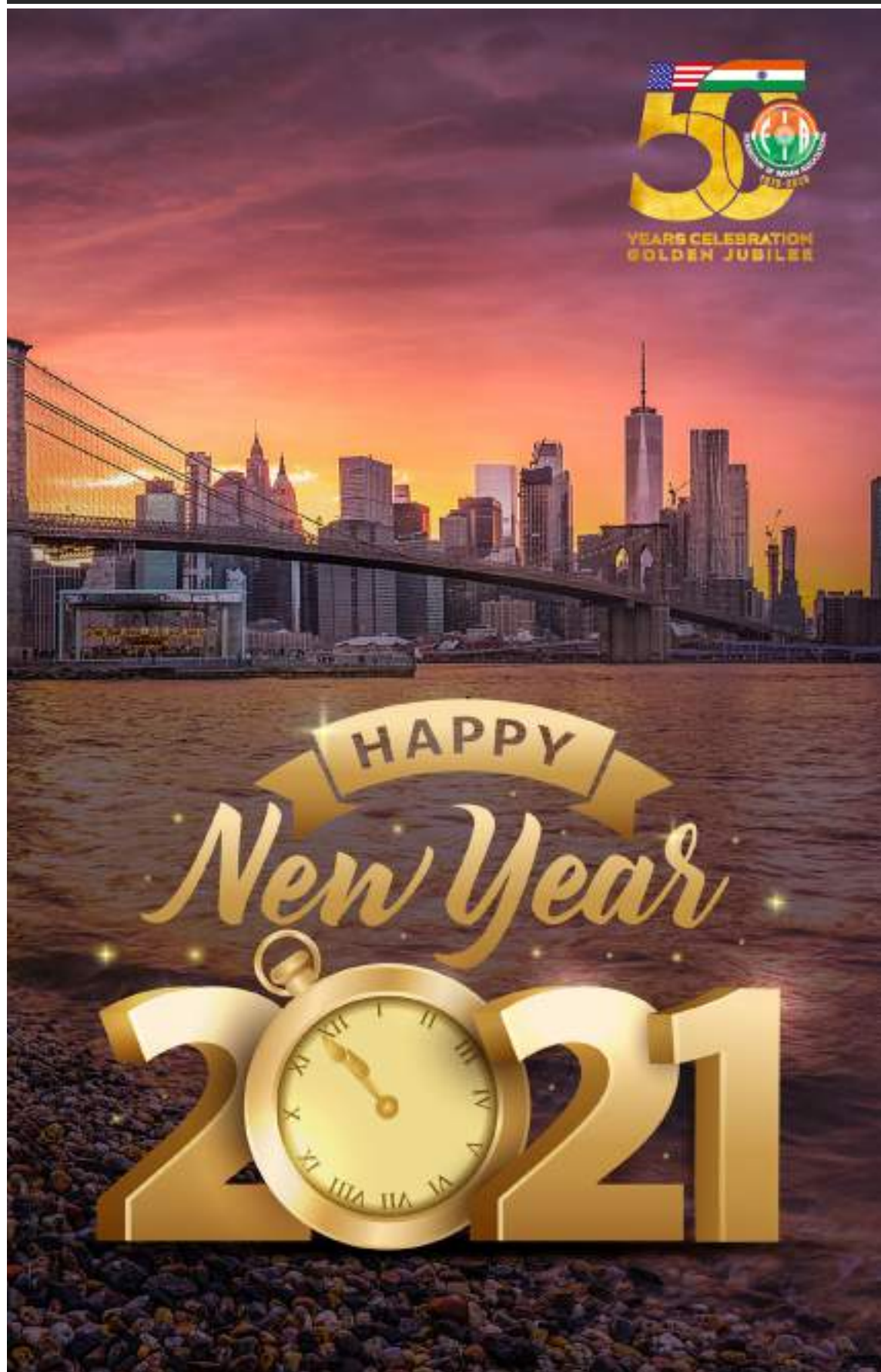


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Renowned Immigration Attorney and FIA Member Michael Phulwani Dies at 84



FIA Hosts Annual General Body Meetings, Announces 2021 Executive Committee

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 FIA NY-NJ-CT and  
 Community Volunteers

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# RENOWNED IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY AND FIA MEMBER MICHAEL PHULWANI DIES AT 84

By Chandrakant Trivedi

Immigration attorney Michael Phulwani passed away on December 26, 2020 after a short illness. He was 84, and is survived by his daughter - Priya, a granddaughter, sisters - Savitri and Asha, and brother - Prakash.

In his career of over 40 years, Phulwani became a household name in the field of U.S. and Canadian immigration. He was chairman of FIA's Immigration Committee. He, along with Chandrakant Trivedi, secretary, led a dedicated and determined delegation to Washington, D.C.(1983-84) to urge U.S. Congressmen and Senators consider family as the vital factor in enhancing peace, prosperity, happiness and harmony. To that extent, FIA submitted many petitions, in cooperation with other ethnicities as well.

The Indian American community is indeed indebted and grateful to Phulwani, who, along with his FIA colleagues, was resolutely and successfully able to retain the family reunification privileges intact in the Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Bill.

In 1984, Phulwani along with FIA was instrumental in hosting an appreciation dinner to honor the powerful house Judiciary Committee chairman Peter Rodino at Hilton Meadowlands, NJ. He was ably supported by Ram Gadhavi, Chandrakant Trivedi and Laxmi Anand.

Phulwani has helped many organizations, businesses, and travelers in resolving diversified immigration related matters. He was deeply associated in converting the joint committee to the formation of the Federation of Indian Associations in 1977-78, a historic achievement.

He graduated from Rajasthan University and was the president of the Rajasthan Parishad as a proud member association of FIA. He addressed many immigration related seminars hosted by FIA and was a great asset in drafting memorandums to local, regional and national as well as to the Indian government highlighting grievances.

He joined several other immigration lawyers to serve the community. His prolific experience, expertise and presence of mind had earned him vast clientele and admirers. He was a pioneer in imparting and sharing immigration issues on Vision of Asia. He continued a rapport with the vast and vibrant Indian community through TV Asia, ITV, News India Times, India Tribune and other media, educating people. He also contributed immensely in helping Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan-USA for travel visa to facilitate inviting prominent leaders and celebrities from India. In recognition of his distinguished long standing community service, prolific experience and brilliant expertise many associations honored him. The FIA presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award (2008). He also received the prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Award and NJ Law Journal award. He was proficient in English, Hindi, Urdu, Sindhi and Gujarati.

Phulwani was born in Karachi, now Pakistan, on



FIA deliberating at office in Washington, D.C. From left, Joy Cherian, Surendra Saxena, Michael Phulwani and Chandrakant Trivedi.



At an immigration seminar in New York City. From left, Thomas Abraham, Sen. Chuck Schumer, Michael Phulwani and his colleague, Allen Kaye.



FIA delegation in Washington, D.C.

September 26, 1936 to parents Dayavanti and Chainrai. The family migrated to India in 1948 and settled in Jaipur, Rajasthan. He did his BA in the year (1955) and LLB (1957) from Rajasthan University. They were four brothers and two sisters. He came to the USA in 1965. He won in Supreme Court to practice law in 1974 and established himself as the eminent immigration attorney with offices in New York, New Jersey and Bombay (India). Lately he was practicing from his home office in Maywood, New Jersey.

Phulwani was cremated in the presence of limited family members on December 28, 2020. We pray Almighty God to rest his soul in eternal peace and give strength to his family members to bear this huge loss. Om shanti.



# FIA HOSTS ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETINGS, ANNOUNCES 2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ANIL BANSAL TO CONTINUE AS PRESIDENT ALONG WITH PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**ANIL BANSAL**  
FIA President



**HIMANSHU BHATIA**  
Fia Exe. Vice President



**SAURIN PARIKH**  
FIA Vice President



**HAREESH SHAH**  
FIA 2nd Vice President



**PARVEEN BANSAL**  
FIA Secretary



**SMITA MIKKI PATEL**  
FIA Joint Secretary



**AMIT RINGASIA**  
FIA Treasurer



**ALOK KUMAR**  
FIA Imm. Past President



**MAHESH DUBAL**  
FIA Jt. Treasurer

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut held its annual general body meeting on Sunday, December 27, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and citing the health and safety of all of its members, FIA chose the hybrid approach for this year's annual general body meeting. The unique meeting was well-received and attended by representatives of over 57 member organizations, community leaders, and the board of directors and trustees via a conference call on a virtual platform.

The current Board member Chandrakant Trivedi paid a tribute on behalf of the FIA fraternity to FIA veteran and distinguished community leader, Michael Phulwani, who passed away on December 26, 2020.

Parveen Bansal, General Secretary, 2020 Executive Committee, presented his annual report in a digital format, summarizing over 20 events and activities FIA conducted during the calendar year. A tribute to FIA's emeritus Chairman late Ramesh Patel was also cited in the report.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, over 11 events, including Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu's reception, events surrounding FIA's flagship India Day Parade, women empowerment celebration, Long Island Diwali Gala, visa

assistance camps, among other events had to be called off. While facing the dire impact of the pandemic, including its fundraising activities, FIA has continued with the challenges faced, to serve and uplift the community in these unprecedented times.

Among the unique initiatives introduced during the challenging year was assistance to first responders which include serving meals in local hospitals and to NYPD, including front line heroes, hot meals in the International Diwali Soup Kitchen Drive in the U.S. and India, Bi-Weekly Diaspora newsletter which will complete one year in January 2021; historic flag hoisting ceremony at Times Square on India's Independence Day, accommodation assistance in partnership with the Consulate General of India in New York to find accommodations for the students from India who were stranded in the U.S. due to COVID-19 travel ban; OCI & visa Town Hall; and several other events on the hybrid as well as exclusively virtual platforms. For its work during the pandemic, the FIA, along with its core members, was recognized as COVID Heroes by Brooklyn Borough President, Hon. Eric Adams.

Amit Ringasia, Treasurer, 2020 Executive Committee, presented the fiscal year's financial reports prepared

by KP-CPA LLP. In the report, he also mentioned several lost opportunities for fundraising due to COVID-19 and thanked all the members and supporters for their contributions to fund all the events during these difficult times.

President Anil Bansal addressed the hybrid gathering and mentioned several of FIA's first and historic events including the international hot meal drive of the Diwali Soup Kitchen, which started with the goal of 1,000 meals and ended up serving over 10,000 meals in the U.S. and India. He applauded the team for the success of the historic flag hoisting at Times Square which received global accolades and commended the volunteer editorial team of the Diaspora Bi-weekly for its efforts. The FIA community newsletter which started from 2,300 emails, has now surpassed the reach of over 58,000 community members. President Bansal expressed his confidence in the ambitious goal of the e-newsletter's reach to cross over a hundred thousand emails by end of 2021. He applauded his team's effort to end the challenging year on a high note with many firsts under the belt of FIA and concluding the year 2020 positively for the non-profit. He expressed his optimism and resolve for the next year and mentioned that FIA 2021 team is prepared to "hit the ground running" and will continue

with its traditional and flagship events as expected by the community. Under his leadership and presidency, Bansal vowed to deliver FIA's 50-year celebrations with the much-anticipated grandeur and zeal that is expected, including the gala celebration spread out over three days. He thanked his executive team, the board of trustees, and member organizations for their support and hoped that FIA's chairman emeritus, late Ramesh Patel, is watching from heaven and his values will continue to guide the FIA in the right direction.

Membership Committee Chair and past resident Alok Kumar provided an update on all the new organizations that have been added in August under the FIA umbrella.

Election committee chair Jayesh Patel along with Vice Chairman of the Board Bipin Patel and current Board member Srujal Parikh announced the predated selection made (due to the pandemic) in the April 2, 2020 meeting of the 2021 president and the executive committee.

The 2021 executive committee consists of Anil Bansal continuing as the President, Himan Bhatia continuing as

Executive Vice President, Saurin Parikh will continue as the Vice President, Haresh Shah is included as the 2nd Vice President, Parveen Bansal continuing as General Secretary, Interim Jt. Secretary Smita Miki Patel was officially nominated as the Jt. Secretary for 2021, Amit Ringasia will continue as the Treasurer and Mahesh Dubal will join the 2021 team as the Jt. Treasurer to serve under the new 2021 Executive Committee.

Chairman Ankur Vaidya applauded Anil Bansal for his corporate-driven approach and leadership and the 2020 executive team to not miss a beat due to the pandemic and continue serving the community and by doing so making FIA proud. He mentioned the requests that the board has been receiving from the organizations outside of the tristate area for inclusion in FIA under its umbrella and that board is performing an in-depth review to assess this inclusion and legality of community organizations from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. He also mentioned the ongoing process of updating the over a decade old bylaws to bring them to terms with the current times and adapt them apt to the modern-day challenges and operating procedures.

He thanked the board of trustees and the member organizations for their participation and support and said he was looking forward to a successful 2021 for all member organizations and community members.

Current Board Member and advisor to the chairman, Padma Shri Dr, Sudhir Parikh addressed the gathering. He commended the efforts of the president and the executive team while paying his respects to the late Mr. Phulwani. He credited the excellent progress of the organization even under such challenging times to the vision of its late Chairman Ramesh Patel and to the current Chairman Ankur Vaidya.

President of (newly inducted) SKN Foundation Dr. Naveen Mehrotra addressed the gathering and committed to working with FIA for a productive year ahead.

The FIA-Tristate is one of the oldest and largest non-profit grassroots umbrella organizations comprising diversified Indian Associations in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut and soon expanding into few more North East States in the U.S.

# SAPTAK: UNPARALLELED ANNUAL MEGA FESTIVAL OF CLASSICAL MUSIC IN AHMEDABAD

By Chandrakant Trivedi

The Saptak Festival of Music is an annual 13-day Indian classical music festival held in Ahmedabad each year since 1980. It is organized by Saptak School of Music and it takes place from January 1 to 13 every year and it is attended by hundreds of music connoisseurs from all over the world. It includes classical music with incredible varieties from Hindustani, Carnatic, Ghazals etc., as well as classical dance performances by renowned dancers - emerging talents and established performers feature in this one of a kind increasingly popular mega event. Besides pure classical music, it also includes performances of folk music, classical dance forms, semi classical forms, such as thumri, bhajan sangeet, etc.

The festival was started in 1980 by Tabla Nawaz Pandit Nandan Mehta and his wife Manju Mehta, Rupande Shah, Bharti Parikh, Hetal Mehta and D.D Trivedi, with the inauguration by Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar (sitar) and Pandit Kishan Maharaj (tabla). The one day event in 1980 expanded and blossomed into the performance of more than 130 musicians in 15 sessions (13 nights+2 afternoon bethaks) spread across 13 days by the year 2010.

The session starts with emerging talented performers. As the evening progresses some of the most renowned performers in Indian classical music take the stage. The keen rasikas often leave in the early hours of the morning with Raag Bagheshri, Malkauns or Lalit

still humming in their ears. It is indeed a celebration of music in its pure form. The admission is by invitation only.

While audience gets treated to vintage khayal they also have an opportunity to experience the dhrupad gayaki, thumris, Rajasthani or Gujarati folk music, light classical, bhakti, instrumental recitals of sitar, sarod, santoor, sarangi, shehnai, flute, Mohan veena and percussion recitals on the tabla, Pakhwaj, Mridangam and Fusion.

So many classical singers and dancers of national and international repute, as well as listeners have given new dimensions, promotion and popularity to this mega festival Pandit Ravi Shankar, Kishan Maharaj, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia (flute), Ronu Mazumdar (flute), Pandit Shivkumar Sharma (santoor), Ustad Amjad Ali Khan and his sons, Ayaan Ali Khan and Amaan Ali Khan (sarod), Smt. Girijadevi (vocal), Rajan Sajan Mishra (vocal), Padma Vibhushan Pandit Jasraj (vocal), Nikhil Banerjee (sitar), Allarakha and Zakir Hussain (tabla), Birju Maharaj (Kathak dancer), Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (Mohan veena), and so many other talented great musicians had made Saptak a truly historical authentic classical festival. This year due to unusual and precarious corona pandemic situations, organizers will have to resort to virtual performance planning. Let us hope that Saptak, which has expanded its activities in musical workshops and other arena, in near future expand its horizons further.



# PRESIDENT TRUMP CONFERS MOST- PRESTIGIOUS LEGION OF MERIT AWARD ON PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



By Chandrakant Trivedi

The Federation of Indian Association of the Tristate of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut fraternity joins the global Indian community in congratulating India's Prime Minister Hon. Narendra Modi who was honored by President Donald Trump with the most prestigious Legion of Merit Award. This award is in recognition of the prime minister's steadfast leadership and vision for India's emergence as a global power and exemplary contribution made by him for the advancement of the U.S.-India strategic partnership and promoting global peace and prosperity as per the statement of the Ministry of External Affairs. This award was received by India's Ambassador to U.S. H.E Taranjit Singh Sandhu on December 21 at the White House, presented by National Security Advisor Robert C.O'Brien.

The Legion of Merit in the highest degree of the chief commander is a prestigious award conferred by the president of the United States, typically upon heads of state, heads of government of other countries. At the ceremony, the Legion of Merit was also awarded to the Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, and former Prime Minister of Japan, Shingo Abe.

It is indeed very amazing and extremely creditable to notice a 180-turn in the U.S. government's policy in assessing the incredible leadership quality of Modiji. In 2004-2005, the US. the government canceled the visa for Modiji, who was then the chief minister of Gujarat, to travel to the U.S. Thereafter Modiji never attempted to procure a U.S. visa, but with the historic win by NDA in 2014 India's Parliament election, Modi became the prime minister, and with his visionary and dynamic leadership, brilliant statesmanship and developing strong and cordial relationship with all world leaders, Modi has made his own brand of leadership, exhibiting patriotism, determination dedication, and diligence.

Modiji's unprecedented reception at the world-renowned Madison Square Garden, New York in 2014 by Indian Americans and subsequently at other locations in the U.S., followed by the historic 'Howdy! Modi's reception in Houston, Texas in 2019, which President Trump glorified by his gracious presence, repeatedly recognizing Modiji as a distinguished global leader. More than 50000 attended that rally. The zenith of the Trump-Modi relationship was seen at the "Namaste Trump" event at Motera Stadium in Gujarat, India on February 25, 2020, where over 100,000 people greeted President Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, and Modiji wholeheartedly.

President Trump has extended his warm friendship to India and Modiji many times by standing with India as economical, political, and other needs deterring anti-Indian forces at bay.

Another notable irony is that in the year 2005 in a forum attached to the Madison Square Garden, AIANA (Association on India in North America ) successfully organized a public meeting to oppose the U.S. government's decision to cancel Modiji's visa to the U.S. In the same Madison Garden in 2014, the same Modiji, as the prime minister of India, met top leaders of the U.S. Congress and mesmerized a global audience by his vision and oratory. This Modi magic works.

Prime Minister Modiji has also received many prestigious international awards: Order of Abdulaziz al Saud by Saudi Arabia in 2016; State order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan 2016; Grand Collar of the state of Palestine Award 2018; Order of Zayed Award by United Arab Emirates 2019; Order of St. Andrew by Russia 2019; and Order of the Distinguished Rule of Nishan Izzuddin by Maldives 2019.

# MAKAR SANKRANTI: A JOYOUS, RELIGIOUS, POPULAR FESTIVAL

By Chandrakant Trivedi



Makar Sankranti is a very religious, social, traditional and joyous festival in India, celebrated on January 14 each year. As the name suggests Makar Sankranti signifies the transit of the sun in Capricorn/Makar Rashi. Sankranti means transmigration of the sun from one Rashi (constellation of the zodiac in Indian astronomy) to the next. The sun turns Uttarayan (northerly movement) during Sankranti and follows a positive course, i.e., from south to north of the equator. According to Hindu tradition and philosophy, the six months of Uttarayan (January to June) represent a single day of gods, therefore all kind of worship, charities, religious activities and donations are believed to be more rewarding and helps in better destiny during this period.

On Makar Sankranti day, taking a dip in the holy water of rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Kaveri, Narmada, Godavari, Saryu etc., is considered very auspicious as it is believed to purify mind and body. This year, the Prayagraj Kumbh Mela will also initiate on Makar Sankranti day. Seeking blessings from one's own parents by touching their feet is considered auspicious and rewarding. Surya (sun) is regarded as father and it plays a vital role in the Janma Kundalini (birth horoscope). Offering Arghya/ Jal to Suryanarayani and reciting Aditya Hridaya Stotra or Suryashtak gives good health and wards off enemies. Donating money, grains, white sesame seeds (safed til), rice and jaggery, distributing khichadi, are considered charities on this day. Reciting Maha Mrutyunjay Mantra, Vishnu Sahastranam, Shani Chalisa, Shani stotra, Hanuman Chalisa, also considered rewarding.

Makar Sankranti is celebrated in various parts of the Indian subcontinent with different names. In Gujarat Makar Sankranti is a two-day fabulous celebration - January 14 as Uttarayan and January 15 Vasi Uttarayan. It is primary for flying kites. Most of the family members go to their roofs with friends to enjoy kite flying the whole day. Even at night they enjoy flying tukkal. They also have a traditional lunch of undhiyu-puri, fafda, jakbi khaman, til tikkis, sweets, tea, coffee, etc. The entire surrounding is filled up with kites and people shouting "e kypo che, "e lapet" etc., and create excitement.

The government has declared a public holiday and most of the offices and shops remain closed to participate in kite flying. For the past 30 years, the Government of Gujarat has been organizing a kite flying competition in Ahmedabad in which many local, national and international kite flyers participate. Shri Modiji also participated when he was the chief minister of Gujarat.

Kite flying in big cities is an event to behold. Besides Gujarat, Rajasthan and Mumbai also enjoy kite flying. Jaipur also has a wonderful kite flying festival.

Makar Sankranti is also regarded as a harvest festival throughout India. Farmers start working on Rabi Fasal. In Punjab and neighboring states it is celebrated as Lohri; in South India it is celebrated as Pongal, with some regional variations. There is also a belief that if somebody dies on Makar Sankranti day, he/she gets moksha. In Mahabharata, Bhishma Pitamaha chose Makar Sankranti day to end his life. Makar Sankranti is thus a religious, social and joyous festival with rich traditions and history.

When the FIA hosted the GANA Gujarati convention in 2006, kite flying was done in open space inviting young, old and people of other ethnicities to witness. Also til-gul was served.



# MICHAEL PHULWANI: A GREAT IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY AND A GREATER FRIEND

By Yash Paul Soi



My dear friend and brother Michael Phulwani peacefully went to his heavenly abode on December 26, 2020. He was 84. He

received his law degree from India and was working in India, but had dreams of achieving impossible dreams. Therefore, he migrated to America in 1964 in search of an adventurous life and to fulfill his dreams like many of us. Of course, in the beginning, the first challenge is to survive and look for any job to support yourself, because in those days you were allowed to bring in only \$8 as foreign exchange. And to add to his difficulties there was the challenge of recognizing your qualifications by prospective employers. Anyway, he was determined and got a job as an employee in J.C. Penney. After much difficulties he finally got his law degree recognized in the states of New York and New Jersey and developed a successful law practice in the U.S. and India.

I started the first Indian media in this country in 1969 on Radio Station WHBI 105.9 FM by the name "Amar Taj Geeta Mala," like "Binaca Geet Mala" in India. The program was heard in the tristate area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. So, Michael contacted me in 1976 to advertise his law practice on our radio program, and we became good friends.

Later, we started meeting and our favorite topic was Mother India and how to enhance and promote India's rich culture, values and traditions. Also, a lot of non-profit organizations formed by various Indian regional groups and community organizations and temples often approached me to announce their functions on my radio program as community announcements. So, I was able to establish good contacts with these organizations. Michael and I started to talk to the head of these organizations along with other like-minded people, and after sometime we formed a group and we started meeting regularly at the Indian Consulate to talk about forming an umbrella organization whose main goal will be to promote Mother India and all regional organizations will become members of these organizations.

In 1977, the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) was formed and the executive committee was elected (Thomas



Abraham, Yash Paul Soi, Sureshwar Prasad Singh, J.S. Premi and Michael Phulwani as our official attorney). Michael was one of the pioneers of FIA who incorporated FIA on December 5, 1977. In 1978, the first executive committee applied for the non-profit, tax exempt 501(c)(3) status and successfully received the approval from IRS. Michael as our official attorney later remained active for many years, and as a matter of fact filed briefs on behalf of the Federation of Indian Associations in the U.S Congress including Simpson Mazzoli Bill in 1984 requesting critical important inclusion of a unification clause for the families of people of Indian origin.

In 2008, when I became FIA president for the second time, we honored Michael with the Life Time Achievement Award for his dedicated Service to the Indian community. He was also honored by the New Jersey Law Journal with the Life Time Achievement Award for his commitment to serve the community with professional integrity. Michael is the author of "Guide to U.S Visas." He was a frequent lecturer on U.S immigration laws nationwide in the U.S. and especially

in India. He regularly wrote articles on U.S immigration laws first in India Abroad and later in News India Times.

As a matter of fact, in 1980, I invited him to join me on my Radio Program, Amar Taj Geet Mala to guide people as to how to use legally U.S. immigration laws to apply for various categories of immigration visa. And then for three years both of us together did an immigration program on TV ASIA to educate and inform all across the U.S. as to how they can apply for their immigration by using various categories according to their education and work experience. He earlier did an ITV special program, "Immigration and You," for many years. He was one of the managing partners of the law firm Nachman, Phulwani & Zimovcak and did an invigoration show with Mr. Nachman on TV Asia.. He had been practicing immigration law for 40 years. He is survived by his lovely daughter who is an endocrinologist, brother who is also a doctor and two younger sisters. Michael, we are going to miss you. May Almighty God Bless his Soul  
OM SHANTI

# ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES FOR COVID 19 VACCINES IN NEW JERSEY AND NEW YORK.



New Jersey hospitals began issuing the state's first vaccines to healthcare workers during the last week of December. In the first four days, 2,149 of the state's 650,000 healthcare workers received their first dose of the two-dose Pfizer vaccine, according to a press release from the Governor's office. They will receive their second dose in about three weeks.

The state is administering vaccines in stages. Healthcare workers and long-term care residents are in the 1a category — people with the most potential to be exposed to the virus. They are expected to be vaccinated through January and February.

Essential workers are in the 1b category and residents over the age of 65 and those with high-risk medical conditions are 1c. The general public will come after that.

"The timing of the progression among the groups depends on the supply of vaccines to our state," said Judith Persichilli, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health.

Officials have said vaccines may be available to the general public in April or May at mega-sites, which will serve as "vaccination hubs," Persichilli said in the press release, "with the hope of vaccinating 2,400 people a day at each location." The sites are expected to open in mid-January, at first to healthcare workers in the 1a category. The other categories will follow after that.

The sites will be located at:

- The Meadowlands Complex in East Rutherford, Bergen County.
- Rockaway Townsquare in Morris County.
- The New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in Edison, Middlesex County.
- The Moorestown Mall in Burlington County.
- Rowan College of South Jersey in Sewell, Gloucester County.
- The Atlantic City Convention Center in

Atlantic County.

Meanwhile, New York State will distribute the COVID-19 vaccine in phases based on need and risk. The state has opted into the federal government's Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program for the vaccination. Under the federal program, employees of CVS, Walgreens and other select pharmacies will vaccinate residents and staff in long-term care facilities including nursing homes, much like they do for the flu vaccine.

New Yorkers who are more likely to be exposed to the virus, and who are more likely to become seriously ill if they get COVID-19, will be offered the vaccine first. Both the federal government and New York State have developed plans to ensure that everyone will be able to get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as large quantities are available, at no cost no matter where they live.

Thousands of health care providers will be able to offer vaccination, including doctors' offices, retail pharmacies, hospitals, and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) of priority groups. The State Department of Health will share additional information on where New Yorkers can get vaccinated as more vaccine doses become available.

New York has based its COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration process on 10 guiding principles.

**Safety:** New York State will only endorse and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine if it is determined to be safe and will only be used according to the indication under which it received its authorization or license. This includes continued monitoring and reporting of adverse events after the vaccine is licensed and administered.

**Effectiveness:** New York State will only endorse and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine if it is demonstrated to be appropriately effective in the populations intended for use.

**Expert approved:** New York State will rely

on the advice and counsel of recognized clinical experts and scientists to review and approve the safety and effectiveness of every vaccine that is authorized by the federal government for distribution.

**Equitable & clinically driven distribution:** New York State's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan will be based on standards that prioritize people at higher risk of exposure, illness and/or poor outcome. Unrelated factors, such as wealth or status, will not influence distribution.

**Transparency:** Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the state's daily public presentation of facts and reliance on science and medical expertise helped build public trust and confidence in government action. New York State will continue to be transparent regarding all aspects of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution, administration, and monitoring process to ensure New Yorkers are fully informed.

**Use of Data:** Coordination of a successful vaccination program will require robust tracking, data and analytics capabilities. New York State will use powerful data and information technology platforms to guide all parts of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution and administration process to maximize safety, accuracy, and efficiency and meet all federal reporting requirements — all while maintaining patient privacy.

**Privacy and Patient Safety:** New York State will ensure all vaccination processes prioritize patient safety, and all information systems guarantee patient privacy. Vaccination does not take away the importance of other public health measures that have served us well in the fight against COVID-19. New Yorkers will be urged to continue to practice social distancing, mask wearing, hand washing, and other measures.

**Partnership, Coordination & Public Outreach:** New York State recognizes that coordination with local organizations and community providers is essential to



the safe and successful distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. The state's outreach efforts will especially focus on reaching underserved, hard to reach, and vaccine-hesitant populations, as well as those at highest risk for COVID-19 infection and poor outcomes.

**State Leadership:** New York State expects federal engagement on vaccine vetting, distribution, administration, and funding. However, regardless of the level of federal engagement, New York State will take all necessary steps and require local coordination with the state's centralized approach to ensure an efficient and organized vaccine distribution.

**NEW YORK TOUGH:** Throughout this COVID-19 crisis, New Yorkers have shown

that there is nothing we cannot do if we work together as one community. Our approach to the COVID-19 vaccine will be tough, strong, united, disciplined, and loving.

The first New Yorkers to receive the vaccine as part of Phase 1 will be: high-risk hospital workers (emergency room workers, ICU staff and pulmonary department staff); nursing home residents and staff; federally qualified health center employees; EMS workers; coroners, medical examiners and certain funeral workers; staff and residents at OPWDD and OMH facilities; and staff at New York State OASAS facilities.

The program began on December 21, 2020. New York has dedicated doses

from the initial allotments to this program and will dedicate future allotments to help complete the program and ensure all residents and staff at long-term care facilities are vaccinated. There are 618 nursing homes across the state that are participating in the program.

The priority populations expanded the week of December 28, 2020 to include: Urgent Care Center employees' individuals administering COVID-19 vaccines, including local health department staff, and residents of OASAS facilities

In the first week of January, the state expects to open criteria to ambulatory care health care workers and public-facing public health workers.



## Gujarat Conclave Investment and Tourism

**SHRI V JAYBHAI RUPANI**  
Chief Minister, Gujarat

**SHRI NITINDHAI PATEL**  
Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat

**SHRI JAWAHARBHAI CHAVDA**  
Tourism Minister, Gujarat

**SHRI NATUBHAI M. PATEL**  
President, Gujarat Chamber of Commerce & Industries

**DARLEY NEWMAN**  
American Producer, TV Host & Writer

**SUE SHAPIRO**  
President, Shapiro Travel Resources

**SUSAN GERINGER**  
President, Geringer Global Travel

**NIRAJ ANTANI**  
Ohio House of Representatives

**MR. RANDHIR JAISWAL**  
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DATE: **SUNDAY, JANUARY 10<sup>th</sup> 2021** | TIME: **11:00 AM to 2:00 PM EST** | ZOOM ID: **926 6243 7337**

For information: [info@fianynjct.org](mailto:info@fianynjct.org) | [www.fianynjct.org](http://www.fianynjct.org)

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