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As the United States marks 250 years of independence on July 4, 2026, we celebrate a remarkable journey of freedom, democracy, and innovation. This milestone reflects the vision of the Founding Fathers and the resilience of the generations who shaped our country into a global leader.

In honor of America's semiquincentennial, The South Asian Times is proud to present this special commemorative edition reflecting on our nation's historic achievements, cultural diversity, and technological progress as we celebrate our past and look toward the future.

We invite you to explore the special pull-out section from page 13 to page 72, dedicated to commemorating and celebrating America@250.





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National Edition

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President Donald Trump and PM Narendra Modi at the recently-held G7 Summit in France. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

Trump likely to visit India in early 2027: Rubio

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he looks forward to returning to India to set up a Presidential visit early next year.

Washington: In a significant development, the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said the Trump administration is working towards President Donald Trump's visit to India in the early part of next year, underscoring the growing momentum in India-US ties as the two countries move closer to concluding a bilateral trade agreement.

Rubio said he expected to travel to India before the end of the year to prepare for the President's visit. "I look forward to returning before the end of the year and setting up a Presidential visit in the early parts of next year," Rubio told IANS.

Asked if Trump's visit could take place next year, Rubio replied: "We're hoping. That's what we're working towards sometime early next year to have the President come." Rubio said the India-US relationship was in a strong posi-

tion following the recent meeting between Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the G7 Summit.

"I think it's going fantastic. I mean, it's very strong," he said. "We had a great meeting with the Prime Minister. The President did at the G7."

The Secretary of State also expressed optimism about the ongoing trade negotiations between the two countries. "We're hoping to finalise a trade deal. We're on the last inches of getting it done, and it's very positive," he said.

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Mayor Mamdani to give speech marking America@250

New York: Mayor Zohran Mamdani is set to deliver a 'major address', marking the 250th anniversary of American independence, at New York City Hall on Friday. According to media reports, the New York City Mayor will deliver his remarks "surrounded by recently naturalized citizens," from a desk used by George Washington in 1789, when he was inaugurated as the country's first president in New York. This desk is older than the Resolute Desk and was used by Washington when it was located in Federal Hall, the first Capitol building for the United States.

The speech will reflect on New York City's role in the nation's history and its identity as America's symbolic gateway, CBS News reported, citing City Hall officials.

Mamdani, a democratic socialist, has seen his political prominence rise after successfully backing three congressional candidates in House races last week, with two of them ousting incumbent lawmakers. He has maintained a "productive" relationship with President Donald Trump and met with him twice inside the Oval Office.



NYC mayor's address will reflect on New York City's role in US national history. (Photo courtesy: X@NYCMayor)

INS Sudarshini in NY for 250th anniversary



INS Sudarshini set course towards New York to participate in the SAIL4th 250 New York and SAIL Boston events. (Photo courtesy: X@indiannavy)

New York: Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sudarshini reached New York to participate in the SAIL4th 250 New York and SAIL Boston events, reaffirming India's commitment to maritime partnership and reflecting its enduring seafaring heritage.

Indian Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra, and Commander Ravikanth Nandoori, Commanding Officer INS Sudarshini, will welcome esteemed guests at the tall ship in Brooklyn, New York, on July 5.

The Indian Navy said on X, "Next stop New York! Lokayan26 - Strengthening Maritime Ties. Carrying forward the timeless spirit of seafaring and India's rich maritime heritage, INS Sudarshini set course towards New York to participate in the SAIL4th 250 New York and SAIL Boston events reaffirming India's enduring commitment to maritime friendship, cooperation, goodwill, and mutual trust among nations."

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USA enter FIFA World Cup R16

The US men's national team turned in a gritty performance, defeating Bosnia and Herzegovina 2-0 in the World Cup round of 32. It was the FIFA co-host team's first win in a World Cup knockout round game since 2002. History was made as all three co-hosts - Canada, Mexico and the USA - have successfully advanced to the Round of 16.

(Photo courtesy: X@FIFAcorn)



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Trump likely to visit India in early 2027: Rubio

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Rubio said Washington was also looking forward to another meeting of the Quad leaders in the near future. "We look forward to re-engaging again in another Quad meeting very soon," he said.

Describing India as one of America's closest partners, Rubio said: "India is such a close partner and ally of the United States, and the relationship between the Prime Minister and the President couldn't be closer, which I think is really important in diplomacy."

President Trump last visited India in February 2020, when he and Prime Minister Modi addressed the "Namaste Trump" rally in Ahmedabad before holding bilateral talks in New Delhi. Since returning to office, Trump and Modi have maintained regular engagement as both governments seek to deepen cooperation across trade, defense, technology and the Indo-Pacific.

India-US ties on strong footing: Sergio Gor

Meanwhile, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor dismissed claims that India-US ties are under strain, asserting that the bilateral relationship remains "on strong footing" and urging critics to "look at the facts" rather than online commentary.

Gor said that the relationship continued to remain on a strong footing. "The relationship is on

strong footing," Gor said, urging critics to "look at the facts" rather than online commentary.

Highlighting defense cooperation, Gor also said India continues to conduct more military exercises with the United States than any other country. "India still has more exercises with the United States than any other country by far. Every single month, there's something happening, whether it's Indian troops coming here or US troops going into the region," he said, adding that another Indian Navy delegation is scheduled to visit the United States in the coming weeks.

Trade talks with US in final stage: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi: The India-US bilateral trade agreement (BTA) talks have entered the final stage, with most key issues having been sorted out and both sides working towards a deal that gives New Delhi an advantage over its competitors, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said.

Goyal said he does not foresee any major hurdles in concluding the US trade agreement despite recent legal and policy developments in Washington. "We don't see any difficulties with the US," Goyal said, adding that "concessions and other elements have largely been finalised." He said India has consistently sought preferential market access over competing nations, a position

that has been understood by the US administration.

Following the US Supreme Court's decision to strike down tariffs imposed under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), Goyal said Washington is now working on an alternative mechanism that would preserve India's competitive advantage. He added that US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer has acknowledged India's position during the negotiations.

INS Sudarshini in US for 250th anniversary

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Earlier, INS Sudarshini undertook a series of high-level engagements, including hosting Indian Ambassador to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra and Lieutenant Governor of Maryland Aruna Miller, during its port call at Baltimore. The crew also participated in the Baltimore City Parade.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the ship arrived at the Port of Baltimore, underscoring India's rich maritime heritage as well as the enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Indian and US navies.

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Publisher's message



Dear readers and friends,

As the United States prepares to mark 250 years of independence on July 4, we are witnessing an unprecedented national celebration. The semiquincentennial has evolved into a significant period of reflection and festivities that began on New Year's Eve 2025 and will continue throughout 2026.

Over the past two and a half centuries, the United States has emerged as a global leader in economic, military, and technological sectors. This success is deeply rooted in the contributions of talented individuals from around the world. Among these, the Indian American community has been particularly influential, driving innovation in Silicon Valley, leading Fortune 500 companies, and advancing critical

research in medicine and technology.

The partnership between India and the United States has similarly flourished, maturing into a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership. This collaboration spans defense, trade, and space exploration, underscored by the "Mission 500" goal to increase bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. Recent commendations from President Donald Trump regarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership further highlight the strength of this international bond.

To commemorate this historic milestone and the diversity that defines the American success story, The South Asian Times (TSAT) is proud to present a special 84-page "America@250" edition. We intend for this edition to serve as a collectible resource for you and future generations.

The South Asian Times has been consistently connecting the communities since its conception. On behalf of our team, I would like to thank our readers and supporters for their continued partnership. We hope you enjoy this special edition, and welcome your comments and suggestions.

Best regards,
Kamlesh Mehta
The South Asian Times

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IIT Bombay, SUNY Old Westbury partner to focus on engineering education, research

New York: On June 26, 2026, during a virtual meeting between the Director of IIT Bombay, Prof. Shireesh Kedare, and the President of SUNY Old Westbury, Dr. Timothy E. Sams, held in the presence of the Union Minister of Education, Government of India, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan; Secretary of Higher Education, Government of India, Dr. Vineet Joshi; Ambassador of India to the United States, Amb. Vinay Mohan Kwatra; the two institutions announced the following:

The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) and the State University of New York at Old Westbury have agreed to partner in the development of new educational and research opportunities that would be offered on the Long Island, New York, campus.

Through a letter of intent signed by Prof. Shireesh Kedare and Dr. Timothy E. Sams in the presence of



(From left) IIT Bombay Dean of Alumni and Corporate Relations Prof. Upendra V. Bhandarkar, IIT Bombay Director Prof. Shireesh Kedare, Consul General Binaya S. Pradhan, SUNY Old Westbury President Timothy E. Sams and SUNY Old Westbury Associate Provost and Dean of Research & Innovation Dr. Michael Kavic celebrate the agreement.

(Photos courtesy: SUNY Old Westbury Communications)

Consul General Binaya S. Pradhan, the two institutions will begin work towards creating new academic offerings at all levels in science and engineering focused on emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, while also developing plans for collaborative research

activities.

"IIT Bombay is excited to work with SUNY Old Westbury, whose leadership is committed to quality education and is forward-looking in its outlook," said IIT Bombay Director Prof. Shireesh Kedare. "Considering that our strengths are

complementary, we believe that our partnership has the ability to scale great heights."

"IIT Bombay is recognized as a world-class institution," said SUNY Old Westbury President Timothy Sams. "We are excited to establish a direct partnership that advances teaching, innovation and excellence in disciplines like physics and engineering with a goal of creating a robust IIT Bombay presence on our campus so that together we can prepare the next generation of leaders who will fuel success across our region, state, nation and world."

Early areas of cooperation are expected to include visits by and exchange of faculty members and researchers between the institutions, joint research activities, and the development of joint conferences or symposia.

These early-stage efforts will be conducted while the development of new degree programs takes

shape. Both President Dr. Timothy E. Sams and Director Prof. Shireesh Kedare expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government of India, the Embassy of India, the Consulate General of India in New York, and especially to Consul General Binaya S. Pradhan for their continued support to facilitate this collaboration.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Vinay Kwatra underscored the importance of strengthening academic and technological collaboration between the two prestigious institutions and fostering deeper partnerships in research, innovation, and higher education. Secretary of Higher Education of India, Dr. Vineet Joshi, called the partnership between IIT Bombay and SUNY Old Westbury a new and proud chapter in the India-US partnership in higher education and research and one of the most consequential.

Rotary Club of Hicksville South celebrates 17th Anniversary Awards Gala

Woodbury, NY: The Rotary Club of Hicksville South (RCHS) celebrated its 17th Anniversary Appreciation Awards Gala and 18th Installation Ceremony on June 23, 2026, evening at the elegant Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury, New York. The memorable event marked the transition of leadership from Outgoing President Tahira Sharif (2025-26) to Incoming President Sandhya Bhatia (2026-27) while recognizing outstanding Rotarians and welcoming a record number of new members.

The evening began with a lively cocktail reception, networking session, and an impressive art exhibition. Guests had the opportunity to view original artwork dis-

played and generously donated by PDDG and Past President of RCHS Qudus Mohammed, an accomplished writer, poet, lyricist, and artist. Several pieces were auctioned during the evening to raise funds for the club's charitable initiatives.

Following the reception, guests gathered in the main ballroom where the formal program commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Rotarian Roger Singh. The audience was then treated to a beautiful Chinese Folk Dance performed by members of the New York Chinese Qipao Association, Inc., coordinated by Rotarian Nishi Bahl of Panache Entertainment, setting an elegant and festive tone for the evening. In his welcome remarks, Kamlesh

Mehta reflected on the club's remarkable 17-year history of community service and humanitarian impact. He congratulated Outgoing President Tahira Sharif for her successful year of leadership and welcomed Incoming President Sandhya Bhatia, expressing confidence that her leadership would take the club to even greater heights.

The evening's keynote address was delivered by Ling Xu, Senior Vice President and Director of Retail Banking at Flushing Bank, who inspired attendees with remarks on leadership, service, and community engagement.

Past Presidents of RCHS in attendance included Dr. Urmilesh Arya, Roopam Maini, Nilima Madan, Rizwan Qureshi, Mizan Rahman, and Aleya Jung.

The Gala was expertly organized by Nilima Madan and Roopam Maini, who served as Gala Chair and Co-Chair, respectively, and also co-emceed the evening's program.

The club honored several distinguished members for their exceptional service and contributions: Hall of Fame Award: Rizwan Qureshi; Lifetime Achievement Awards: Anu Gulati and Mizan Rahman; Bansi Bhai Memorial Award: Shashi Malik and Dalip Malik; Vyas Dev Sharma Award: Aleya Jung; Leadership Award: Dr. Neeru Bhambri; and Outstanding Service Award: Nishi Bahl and Saeed Hassan.

Renu Jain and NayanMitra present Sufi poetry with a jugalbandi of music and art

Hempstead, NY: Renu Jain "Laali" presented "Kalaam", a collection of Sufi poetry through her music on June 20 at the Pandit Jasraj Auditorium of Vedic Heritage H a n u m a n



Renu Jain
(Photo courtesy: Renu Jain)

Temple. Her soulful singing was appreciated by scores of community members and music connoisseurs alike. Though she has been singing publicly for some years, this was her first solo performance.

The program also featured NayanMitra's spiritual art. The collaboration between him and Renu Jain helped the audience dive into the deep-rooted philosophy of Sufi poetry and its representation not only through Renu's music but also in live painting by NayanMitra as inspired by Renu's renditions. Some members in the audience readily bought those paintings to savor them at leisure.

The event aimed to promote creativity, unity, and appreciation of diverse artistic traditions. "We are delighted to bring the community together through our vision of cultural enrichment and artistic expression," said Renu Jain. "This event reflects our commitment to fostering creativity, understanding, and community engagement."



The installation ceremony for Incoming President Sandhya Bhatia and the 2026-27 Executive Committee was administered by New York State Senator Steve Rhoads. (Photo courtesy: RCHS)



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Global sickle cell disease expert Dr. Akshat Jain delivers keynote address at EHGCN 2026 India



Dr Akshat Jain

(Photo courtesy: Dr Akshat Jain)

Kolkata: The Eastern Hematology Group's 10th Annual Conference (EHGCN 2026), held at the Hyatt Regency in Kolkata, welcomed internationally recognized pediatric hematologist and global sickle cell disease expert Dr. Akshat Jain (USA) as a distinguished keynote faculty member. Dr. Jain delivered a highly anticipated address titled "Precision Therapy for Sickle Cell Disease: Gene Editing and Clinical Pathways – Practical Insights for Indian Clinicians," drawing significant interest from hematologists, physicians, researchers, and trainees from across India.

Widely regarded as one of the leading voices in the field of

inherited blood disorders, Dr. Jain serves as Director of the Sickle Cell Disease Program and Director of the Inherited Bleeding Disorders and Thrombosis Program at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital in California, USA. His invitation to address EHGCN reflects his growing international influence in advancing innovative therapies for patients with sickle cell disease (SCD) worldwide.

During his keynote presentation, Dr. Jain highlighted the remarkable progress achieved in the treatment of sickle cell disease over the last decade, emphasizing the transition from symptom management toward potentially curative therapies.

Dr. Jain provided a comprehensive overview of the first FDA-approved gene therapies for sickle cell disease and discussed their implications for patients worldwide. He also outlined practical pathways for integrating these advances into clinical practice, particularly in resource-variable settings such as India.

A major theme of Dr. Jain's lecture focused on strengthening scientific collaboration between the United States and India in the fight against sickle cell disease.

India bears one of the largest global burdens of sickle cell disease, with millions of individuals affected or carrying the sickle cell trait. Dr. Jain emphasized that while groundbreaking therapies are transforming care in high-income countries, ensuring equitable access for patients in India and other low-

and middle-income nations remains a critical challenge.

He called for:

- ▶ Expansion of newborn screening programs
- ▶ Improved transition-of-care models
- ▶ Development of regional centers of excellence
- ▶ Collaborative clinical research networks
- ▶ Increased participation of Indian institutions in global clinical trials
- ▶ Innovative financing strategies to improve access to advanced therapies

"Scientific innovation must ultimately translate into patient access," Dr. Jain noted. "The future of sickle cell disease care will depend not only on technological breakthroughs but also on our collective commitment to ensuring these therapies reach the communities that need them most."

One of the most appreciated aspects of the session was Dr. Jain's emphasis on real-world implementation. Drawing from his experience treating patients in the United States and collaborating globally, he presented practical case studies demonstrating patient selection, counseling, fertility preservation considerations, long-term monitoring, and multidisciplinary care models associated with gene therapy.

Attendees praised the session for translating complex scientific concepts into actionable clinical guidance relevant to Indian practice.

Four Indian Americans named to Carnegie's Great Immigrants list for 2026

New York: Four Indian Americans, including cybersecurity executive Nimesh Arora and Harvard professor Mahzarin Banaji, have been named to the Carnegie Corporation of New York's prestigious Great Immigrants, Great Americans list for 2026.

The other Indian-American honorees are Harvard Medical School professor Dr. Sanjiv Chopra and Vertex Pharmaceuticals President and CEO Reshma Kewalramani.

The 2026 class comprises 25 naturalized US citizens from 21 countries and was announced as the United States prepares to mark the 250th anniversary of its independence.

The honorees will be recognized as part of the Carnegie Corporation's annual Fourth of July Great Immigrants, Great Americans campaign, which celebrates immigrants' contributions to the United States.

Arora, chairman and CEO of

Palo Alto Networks, was born in Uttar Pradesh. Banaji, a Hyderabad-born social psychologist at Harvard University, is known for her pioneering work on implicit bias.

New Delhi-born Chopra is an internationally recognized liver disease specialist and educator at Harvard Medical School, while Mumbai-born Kewalramani heads Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

Last year, Indian-origin civil rights advocate Manjusha P. Kulkarni and Yale University astrophysicist Priyamvada Natarajan were among the honorees.

Previous Indian-origin recipients include Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee, public health expert Ashish Kumar Jha, economist Gita Gopinath, NASA scientist Kamlesh Lulla, former US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen, and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai.

Indian Americans of Nassau County celebrate 250th Anniversary of America

By Mizan Rahman

The 250th Anniversary of the United States of America was celebrated with great pride, patriotism, and community spirit by the Indian American community of Nassau County at Levittown Hall in Hicksville, Long Island, New York, on July 1, 2026.

Marking this remarkable milestone in American history—the nation's Semiquincentennial celebration honoring 250 years of independence, democracy, freedom, and opportunity—the event brought together more than 30 elected and public officials representing Nassau County and various townships across Long Island. The hall was filled with community leaders, professionals, and residents who gathered to celebrate the enduring ideals and promise of the United States as a land of freedom, diversity, and opportunity for all. Organized under the banner of the Annual Leadership Meeting, the event was a resounding success and reflected the strong commitment of the Indian American community to civic engagement, public service, and the celebration of



(Photo courtesy: Mizan Rahman)
Seen in the photo: Violeta Dusz, Shashi Malik, Deepak Bansal, Bobby Kalloote, Gus Tsiavoris, and John Ferretti.

America's rich multicultural heritage.

Hon. Joseph G. Cairo and Bobby Kumar Kalotee served as the Chairpersons of the event, providing leadership and vision for this historic gathering.

The Host Committee consisted of an extraordinary group of dedicated community leaders, professionals, elected officials, business leaders, physicians, attorneys, faith leaders, and volunteers whose collective efforts made this celebration possible. Their commitment and service exemplify the very spirit of America—a nation built through the contributions, sacrifices, and aspira-

tions of people from diverse backgrounds who continue to strengthen the fabric of our democracy.

As America commemorates its 250th anniversary, this celebration served not only as a tribute to the nation's remarkable journey since 1776, but also as a reaffirmation of our shared values of liberty, equality, opportunity, civic responsibility, and unity. It was an evening of reflection, pride, and hope for the generations yet to come.

(The author is a Rotarian, community leader, writer, photographer, and a financial advisor by profession, Long Island, NY)



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‘Our country was built by immigrants, and today’s ruling preserves that promise’

New York: New York Attorney General Letitia James released the following statement after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld birthright citizenship and rejected the president’s attempt to deny citizenship to children born in the United States:



Attorney General Letitia James
(Photo courtesy: ag.ny.gov)

“Birthright citizenship is a constitutional guarantee that has defined this nation for generations. Our country was built by immigrants, and we draw our strength from those who come here seeking a better life. Today’s ruling pre-

serves that promise for generations to come.

“I am relieved for the children who will never know how close the American dream came to being taken from them, and for the families who will never have to explain to a child why the country they were born in

refuses to accept them.

“Every person born in the United States is an American. That was true yesterday, it is true today, and we will never stop fighting to make sure it remains true tomorrow.”

NYC is living proof of the power of birthright citizenship: Mamdani

New York: In response to the Supreme Court’s decision to reaffirm birthright citizenship and strike down the Trump administration’s executive order denying citizenship to children born to immigrant parents without legal status or on temporary visas, Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani released the following statement:

“Today’s Supreme Court ruling affirms a promise that was written into our Constitution more than 150 years ago: if you are born on American soil, you are an American citizen, no matter the color of your skin, where your parents were born, how you worship, or the language you speak at home. This should never have been in doubt. The federal administration sought to



Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani
(Photo courtesy: Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani/Facebook)

rewrite one of the clearest guarantees in our Constitution in an effort to decide who belongs in this country and who does not. Today, the Court rejected that effort.

“New York City is living proof of the power of birthright citizenship. The children of immigrants are our teachers, nurses, construction workers, small business owners, artists, public servants and neighbors. They are New Yorkers, and they are Americans.

“So, to every immigrant family across the five boroughs: hear me clearly. You belong here. Your children belong here. No court can erase your humanity. No political agenda will change what we know to be true: this country’s diversity is our greatest strength. As long as I am mayor, New York City will defend your rights, protect your dignity and stand shoulder to shoulder with you in the fight for a better America.”

NYS pumps in \$106 M+ to expand childcare capacity across the state

New York: Governor Kathy Hochul announced more than \$106 million in awards through the Childcare Capital Construction Funding Program to support 37 projects that will create and expand access to quality childcare across New York State. The awards will support shovel-ready capital projects in every region of the state, helping communities increase the availability of licensed childcare while providing modern, safe and accessible spaces for children and families. These critical projects are expected to create, preserve or expand up to 5,000 childcare seats for New York families.

“Access to affordable, high-quality childcare is essential for children, families and New York’s economy,” Governor Hochul said.



(Photo courtesy: Office of Governor Hochul)

The Childcare Capital Construction Funding Program provides funding for projects that create new childcare capacity or expand existing licensed, registered and permitted childcare programs. Funding may be used for design, construction, reconstruction, renovation and equip-

ment purchases needed to increase the availability of quality childcare across New York State. The program is overseen by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY).

This announcement brings the total amount of capital awards for childcare made under Governor Hochul to over \$150 million, with the last round of funding supporting an estimated 5,500 seats at childcare providers for New York families.

This announcement will award \$106.5 million to 37 projects across the state following a competitive award process to create, preserve, or expand up to 5,000 additional seats.



NYC Health+Hospitals/Gouverneur marks inaugural graduation for in-house resident education program. 25 nursing home residents earned certificates of completion from Gouverneur University. (Photo courtesy: NYC Health+Hospitals)

New portal to help NYC small businesses, community organizations promote free summer events

New York: Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani launched a new online portal that allows community organizations, small businesses, cultural institutions and other groups to promote free summer events for young New Yorkers on the City’s “Summer in NYC” website. Since launching at the end of May, the Summer in NYC website

received more than 228,900 visits.

Summer in NYC is a brand-new, interactive website that connects young New Yorkers and their families with free and low-cost summer programming in neighborhoods across the city. Users can search by age, ZIP code, interests and travel distance to find activities ranging



(Graphic courtesy: NYC Mayor's Office)

from photography and painting classes to basketball leagues, soc-

cer programs and other extracurricular opportunities. The site also includes information on free summer meals and citywide World Cup watch parties and celebrations.

“New York is at its best when our neighborhoods come alive in the summer,” said Mayor Mamdani. “Every block party, basketball clinic and ballet class gives a young

person somewhere to belong and something to learn. That’s how we build a safer city – by investing in our communities. If you’re hosting a free event this summer, we want New Yorkers to find it. Use this portal, share what you’re offering and help us make this a summer every young New Yorker can be part of.”



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AI, economic security on agenda as Modi meets Takaichi



Japanese PM Sanae Takaichi was accorded a ceremonial reception at the Forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan. (Photo courtesy: X@MEAIndia)

New Delhi: Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi arrived in New Delhi this week for a three-day official visit aimed at strengthening India's ties with Japan across economic, strategic and technological sectors. Union Minister Jitendra Singh received her at the airport.

Takaichi also held delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday before participating in the Japan-

India Joint Economic Forum. More than 100 Japanese business leaders, including several chief executive officers, are expected to attend the forum.

The visit marks the first bilateral summit between PM Modi and Takaichi since she assumed office last year. Economic security is expected to dominate the discussions, with both countries likely to focus on making supply chains more resilient in sectors such as semiconductors and critical minerals.

The leaders are also expected to exchange views on regional and global developments, including the conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia, as well as the evolving situation in the Indo-Pacific. Japan has repeatedly described India as an indispensable partner in promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law.

Artificial Intelligence is expected to be one of the key areas of discussion during the visit, with India and Japan likely to issue a separate joint statement on AI cooperation. The leaders are also expected to discuss cooperation in semiconductors, advanced battery technology, pharmaceuticals, bio-gas, etc.

'A terrorist is a terrorist': India delivers blunt message at UN

United Nations: India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Parvathaneni Harish, has given a strong message against terrorism at the UN General Assembly during the adoption of the Ninth Review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS). He asserted that terrorism can never be justified under any circumstances and called for a united global response against the menace.

Addressing the General Assembly, Harish underlined India's long-standing position on counter-terrorism and said, "A terrorist is a terrorist!! We must work hand in hand to root out the murderous ideology without finding any grievance to justify terrorism."

Reiterating India's zero-tolerance approach, he said the international community must unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. He also renewed India's call for the adoption of the



UN envoy Parvathaneni Harish reiterated India's zero-tolerance approach towards terrorism. (Photo courtesy: X@IndiaUNNewYork)

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), noting that India had first proposed the convention a decade before the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted in 2006.

Calling the nearly three-decade delay a setback to global counter-terrorism efforts, Harish said, "The time has come to demonstrate political will to conclude the CCIT."

Listing India's priorities under the Ninth Review, Harish

said the international community must reject double standards in combating terrorism and ensure that perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors are held accountable.

He stressed that countering terror financing should remain central to global efforts and called for better financial intelligence sharing, stronger implementation of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards and action to ensure that no jurisdiction serves as a safe conduit for terror financing.

Bill to sack jailed ministers may be tabled during Monsoon Session



New Delhi: A bill proposing the automatic removal of a minister, chief minister, or prime minister after 30 days in judicial custody is likely to be introduced during the Monsoon Session of Parliament, beginning on July 20.

According to media reports, the Joint Parliamentary Committee examining the legislation is expected to approve

The Monsoon Session will begin on July 20.

(Photo courtesy: Sansad TV)

the amended draft at its meeting on July 17, paving the way for its introduction in Parliament.

Under the proposed law, if a minister is accused of an offense punishable by imprisonment of five years or more and remains in custody for 30 days, they will be removed from office - either by the President or Governor, or automatically - on Day 31.

The Opposition has objected to the bill, arguing that it is

undemocratic, anti-federal, and violates the principles of natural justice, as it mandates action based solely on detention rather than a conviction.

The updated bill will be the 130th Constitution Amendment Bill, which Union Home Minister Amit Shah introduced in August last year. It was referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee following Opposition protests. Most Opposition parties, however, boycotted the JPC.

ECI begins voter verification in 5 states

New Delhi: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in five states—Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Meghalaya—to update and verify voter records ahead of future elections. As part of the exercise, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will conduct door-to-door verification of registered voters.

There are a total of 19,78,94,740 voters in these five States as of May 12. The final voter lists for these States post the SIR process will be published on October 7. The house-to-house enumeration will end on July 29 and the draft rolls will be published on August 5.

In the five states where the exercise starts on June 30, the final rolls will be published on October

10. Voters and others are given a month's time from August 5 to file claims and objections, while those will be disposed of by October 3.

Among the five states going to SIR, Maharashtra has the highest number of 9.86 crore voters as on May 12, followed by Karnataka 5.55 crore, Jharkhand 2.64 crore, Delhi 1.48 crore and Meghalaya 23.43 lakh. The SIR, which started with Bihar in June last year, has been completed in 13 states and union territories so far, following which the electoral rolls have been reduced by about 10.5 per cent or 5.83 crore.

The SIR in Nagaland and Tripura will start on August 5 and September 9 and with the publication of the electoral rolls on November 22 and December 23, respectively, the exercise would come to an end.



5.55 crore voters, spread across 34 electoral districts in Karnataka, will be verified through SIR. (Infographic courtesy: X@ceo_karnataka)

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CELEBRATING **250 YEARS** OF FREEDOM & DEMOCRACY

As the United States marks 250 years of independence on July 4, 2026, we celebrate a remarkable journey of freedom, democracy, and innovation. This milestone reflects the vision of the Founding Fathers and the resilience of the generations who shaped our country into a global leader.

In honor of America's semiquincentennial, The South Asian Times is proud to present this special commemorative edition reflecting on our nation's historic achievements, cultural diversity, and technological progress as we celebrate our past and look toward the future.

We invite you to explore the special pull-out section from page 13 to page 72, dedicated to commemorating and celebrating America@250.





Message



“This year, as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and commemorate America’s 250th birthday, we reflect on our nation’s founding ideals and the people and partnerships that continue to strengthen them. Among them is the ever-growing relationship between the United States and India—the world’s oldest and largest democracies.

“In 2023, I led the largest and most senior Senate delegation to India. India was my first congressional delegation (CODEL) as Senate Majority Leader, underscoring my commitment to this vital partnership.

“As America celebrates 250 years of independence, I am especially proud to represent New York’s vibrant Indian American community. Indian Americans embody the values that have fueled our nation’s success for two and a half centuries: hard work, entrepreneurship, innovation, and a belief in the promise of America. Their contributions have helped shape every facet of our society—from medicine and science to technology, business, education, and public service.

“I look forward to continuing to strengthen the ties between our two countries, advancing our shared democratic values, and supporting Indian Americans, whose achievements have enriched our nation and will continue to do so for the next 250 years.”

- U.S. Senator Charles Schumer



Celebrating 250 years of freedom and the South Asian diaspora’s role

By Team@TSAT

This is a monumental milestone: July 4, 2026 is the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Across all fifty states, U.S. territories, and global embassies, a massive, multi-year celebratory framework is already unfolding, promising to be the most inclusive and expansive commemoration in American history.

Formally orchestrated by the nonpartisan U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (America250), the countdown has ignited thousands of local, state, and national initiatives. Unlike the Bicentennial in 1976, which heavily spotlighted traditional historical reenactments, America 250 is intentionally designed to reflect a modern, pluralistic society. The multi-year campaign invites cultural institutions, civic groups, and community organizations to showcase their unique contributions to the evolving American tapestry, centering on the core pillars of liberty, justice, and the ongoing pur-



(Photo : AI generated)

suit of a more perfect union. While Philadelphia and Washington D.C. will anchor massive national civic gatherings, the structural heartbeat of America 250 lies in grassroots community programs that bridge historical reflections with forward-looking aspirations for the next generation.

For the vibrant South Asian American community, this upcom-

ing milestone carries profound cultural and historical weight. Over the past several decades, immigrants from the subcontinent and their descendants have transitioned from a nascent community into an indispensable engine of American progress. From pioneering innovations in Silicon Valley and leadership roles in health-care and academia, to dynamic

political engagement and rich contributions to the culinary, digital, and visual arts, South Asians have deeply enriched the nation’s socio-economic fabric.

As part of the July 4 celebrations and the broader march toward 250, South Asian community organizations, cultural centers, and media platforms are stepping forward to curate their

own narratives within the American story. The Semiquincentennial provides a historic platform to document this unique journey, honoring early trailblazers who fought for citizenship rights while celebrating the modern generation shaping mainstream American policy, entrepreneurship, and holistic wellness initiatives.

The alignment between American founding ideals and South Asian heritage runs deep. The foundational principles of democracy, pluralism, and freedom resonate profoundly with the philosophical traditions of the subcontinent. As the nation reflects on its complex 250-year journey—acknowledging both its historic triumphs and its ongoing struggles to fulfill its founding promises—the diaspora brings a unique perspective rooted in resilience, community solidarity, and a strong cultural work ethic.

Ultimately, the America 250 celebrations represent far more than a look back at the summer of 1776; they serve as a dynamic launching pad for the future. By fully participating in this national milestone, the South Asian community affirms its shared ownership of the American experiment, ensuring that the diverse voices of today will permanently shape the democratic landscape of tomorrow.



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The idea that holds the world

Why the American experiment endures at 250

As the nation celebrates its semiquincentennial, we in the Indian diaspora reflect on the unique polity, the cultural mosaic, and the boundless geography of opportunity that keeps America a global magnet.

By Team@TSAT

The fabric of America is woven from the threads of those who left somewhere else behind. As the United States prepares to celebrate its semiquincentennial—America 250—this milestone offers a profound moment of reflection, especially for the vibrant Indian American community in New York. For a community that has deeply enriched the cultural, economic, and civic landscape of the Empire State, the question resonates with a unique power: What truly makes America unique, and why does it remain an irreplaceable magnet for the world?

The answer does not lie in a single characteristic, but rather in a delicate, radical experiment that combines an enduring political architecture with an evolving cultural identity.

1. The architecture of the ideological polity

Unlike nations defined by shared bloodlines, ancient ancestry, or geographic isolation, America was founded on an idea. It is a polity constructed not on the premise of who your ancestors were, but on what you believe the future should look like.

At the core of this magnet is a constitutional framework designed to balance absolute freedom with systemic stability. For immigrants coming from societies where bureaucracy can be rigid or governance unpredictable, the American system offers a unique proposition: a government of laws, not of men.

- **The Blueprint of Liberty:** The separation of powers, the checks and balances between branches of government, and a deeply entrenched Bill of Rights ensure that individual liberty is protected from the whims of the majority.
- **The Right to Dissent:** True freedom is measured by the right to disagree with power. In America, freedom of speech and the press are not just legal statutes; they are cultural pillars.
- **The Meritocratic Promise:** While the system is imperfect, its foundational promise is that your trajectory should be determined by your talent and work ethic, rather than your caste, creed, or family name.

For the Indian diaspora, which values education and professional excellence above all else, this pre-

dictable, rule-of-law framework acts as a fertile soil where ambition can take root without artificial ceilings.

2. Beyond the melting pot: The cultural mosaic

For generations, sociologists used the term "melting pot" to describe American assimilation—the idea that diverse cultures blend into a single, homogenous identity. But New York has always known better. The reality of America's uniqueness is closer to a cultural mosaic or a "salad bowl," where individual ingredients retain their distinct flavors while contributing to a magnificent whole.

Nowhere is this truer than in New York. From the bustling streets of Jackson Heights in Queens to the tech hubs of Manhattan and the quiet suburbs of Long Island, the Indian community has not had to erase its identity to become American.

[Heritage: Deeply Rooted]
+
[Opportunity: Freely Given]
=
[The Hyphenated Identity]

America's true magic is its capacity for the hyphenated identity. You do not have to choose between being Indian and being American; the system allows you to be fully both. You can celebrate Diwali in Times Square, cheer for the Yankees, advocate for local school boards, and maintain deep ties to your ancestral homeland all at once.

This is a radical departure from many global models of citizenship, which often demand total cultural uniformity. America thrives because it recognizes that diversity is not a threat to unity; it is the very source of it.

3. The true geography of opportunity

Why does the world still cross oceans to get here? Because Amer-

America remains a magnet because it is a place where you can bring your dreams, your culture, and your ambitions, and find a society that says: Bring them. We are incomplete without you.



(Photo courtesy: AI generated)

ica remains the global capital of reinvention. It is a society that doesn't just tolerate risk; it celebrates it.

In many parts of the world, failure is a permanent social stigma. In the American economic ecosystem, particularly in entrepreneurship and technology, failure is often viewed as a necessary badge of experience. This cultural permission to try, fail, and try again creates an unparalleled engine of innovation.

Predictable Laws

Capital & Risk-Taking

Boundless Innovation

The Indian American community has mastered this landscape. Representing one of the most highly educated and high-earning demographic groups in the country, Indian Americans have ascended to the highest echelons of corporate leadership (leading global giants like Alphabet, Microsoft, and Adobe), pioneered groundbreaking medical research, and transformed the culinary and artistic landscape in their adopted country.

This success is a two-way street: India gave its diaspora the foundation of education, resilience, and family values; America provided the merit-based arena where those traits could translate into historic achievements.

4. The shared democratic conscience

There is a natural, spiritual kinship between India and Ameri-

ca that explains why the diaspora adapts so seamlessly to American civic life. India is the world's largest democracy; America is its oldest. Both nations were forged in the crucible of anti-colonial struggle. Both nations are fundamentally pluralistic, grappling with the beautiful, messy, and loud realities of managing diverse populations under a single flag.

When Indian immigrants participate in a New York town hall meeting, vote in local elections, or run for public office, they are not learning democracy from scratch. They are applying a deeply ingrained democratic conscience to a new geographic canvas.

This shared ethos creates an invisible bridge. The struggles of the American Civil Rights movement, heavily influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance, paved the way for the Immigration Act of 1965, which opened the doors for the modern Indian diaspora. The stories of these two nations are inextricably linked by a mutual quest for human dignity and self-governance.

5. The unfinished symphony

As we start celebrating America 250, it is vital to avoid blind exceptionalism. America's uniqueness does not mean it is flawless. The nation faces profound challenges: political polarization, economic disparities, and the ongoing struggle to ensure that the American Dream is accessible to all its citizens, regardless of their zip code.

But the defining feature of America—the trait that truly makes it a magnet—is that it is an ongoing project. It is a country designed to be amended. The

founding documents did not claim that the nation was perfect; they challenged citizens to form a "more perfect union."

Past: Declaration (1776)

Present: Continuous Struggle

Future: A More Perfect Union

Other nations look to their past to define their golden age. America, at its best, always looks to the horizon. It is a country that gives its people the tools to fix its own broken pieces.

Conclusion: The New York vanguard

For the Indian community of New York, America 250 is not just an American anniversary—it is our anniversary. The story of the small business owner in Queens, the software engineer in Manhattan, the doctor in the Bronx, and the student at Columbia University is the quintessential American story.

We came here as keepers of an ancient civilization, and we became architects of a modern superpower. America remains a magnet because it is a place where you can bring your dreams, your culture, and your ambitions, and find a society that says: *Bring them. We are incomplete without you.*

As the fireworks illuminate the New York skyline for America 250, the Indian diaspora stands as a living testament to the enduring power of the American experiment—a community firmly rooted in its heritage, dynamically shaping the American present, and boundlessly optimistic about our shared future.



Message

THOMAS R. SUOZZI
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
3RD DISTRICT, NEW YORK
COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT



Dear Friends:

June 20, 2026

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ideals that have defined our nation and the people who continue to strengthen it.

America's strength has always come from people who bring their talents, values, and dreams to our country and help make it better. The South Asian American community has helped write an important chapter of the American story through hard work, entrepreneurship, public service, and a deep commitment to family, education, and opportunity.

The ties between the United States and the diverse nations and peoples of South Asia continue to enrich our country and strengthen our connections around the world. As we look ahead to America's next 250 years, I am confident that South Asian Americans will continue to play a vital role in our nation's success and help ensure that the promise of America remains strong for generations to come.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Suozzi

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Inspired by Neil Armstrong: How one giant leap led an Indian immigrant to the American Dream

By Team@TSAT

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." When Neil Armstrong spoke those historic words on July 20, 1969, millions around the world listened in awe. Among them was a young engineering graduate in India named Varinder Bhalla.

More than five decades later, as America celebrates the 250th anniversary of its independence, Bhalla still remembers the moment that changed the course of his life.

"That was the day I decided I wanted to come to America," he recalls. "America's achievements in science, innovation, and freedom inspired me."

Bhalla eventually immigrated to the United States to pursue higher education and build a career in engineering. Like many immigrants of his generation, he arrived with ambition, determination, and a belief in the American Dream. What followed, however, was not only a successful professional career but also decades of community service, civic engagement, and humanitarian work.

One of Bhalla's earliest public initiatives came in the early 1980s, when Indian Americans



Varinder Bhalla, who interviewed US President Gerald Ford in 1985 for a voter registration drive, looks back on his American journey of engagement and community service. (Photos courtesy: Varinder Bhalla)

were not recognized within minority-business programs designed to expand economic opportunities for small-business owners. After a lengthy campaign involving federal officials and minority-business organizations, minority status was granted, helping open doors to contracting opportunities offered by government agencies and major corporations, creating expanded opportunities for Indian American entrepreneurs in the years that followed.

At a time when the Indian American population in the United States was still relatively small, Bhalla also became involved in immigration advocacy. As Vice

President of the Association of Indians in America (AIA), he helped lead a grassroots campaign opposing provisions of the proposed Simpson-Mazzoli immigration legislation that would have prevented immigrants from sponsoring family members in India to immigrate to the United States. Petition drives organized throughout the New York metropolitan region gathered nearly 12,000 signatures, which Bhalla delivered to the House Judiciary Committee in Washington, D.C.

Recognizing that political participation was essential for the future of the growing Indian American community, Bhalla later launched

a nationwide televised voter-registration campaign. The initiative featured interviews with elected officials and former President Gerald Ford and encouraged Indian Americans to become active participants in the democratic process. Today, Indian Americans serve as elected officials, community leaders, business executives, and engaged voters throughout the country.

While embracing opportunities in America, Bhalla never forgot his roots in India. In 1985, he joined prominent Bollywood personalities, including Dilip Kumar, Saira Banu, and Kabir Bedi, to raise funds for victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy. He later founded the AWB

Food Bank, an initiative that collects surplus food and distributes it to those in need. Over the past three decades, the organization has provided more than 20 million meals to underprivileged individuals.

As the nation marks 250 years of independence, Bhalla's life stands as a reminder that the American story continues to be written by generations of immigrants who arrive seeking opportunity and, in turn, help strengthen the communities they call home. For Bhalla, Neil Armstrong's giant leap did more than make history – it helped launch a journey of service spanning two continents.

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

America's greatest gift to immigrants is not wealth, it is dignity

When people hear my story, they often call it an American success story. I understand why. I came to the US from India in 1977 with little more than hope, built a business in the steel pipe industry, and found opportunities I could never have imagined growing up in Old Delhi.



But let me clarify, no one succeeds alone. My journey belongs equally to my parents, my brother, my wife, my children, our employees, our customers, and to a country whose institutions gave immigrants like us the chance to prove ourselves.

Sunil and I have shared responsibilities,

At that time jobs were scarce in India, opportunities limited, and the future uncertain for youths. Yet, we would hear stories from visiting US relatives not just about prosperity but about a society where hard work seemed to matter more than background.

Those stories planted a seed.

In 1977, my family made the life-changing decision to immigrate. America did not hand us success. It handed us an opportunity.

My brother, Sunil Jain, and I entered the steel pipe business in the New York metro area. We went door to door trying to convince people to buy from us. Some people wondered what two immigrant boys knew about steel pipes. But many others listened. They gave us a chance.

That willingness—to judge people by their effort rather than where they came from—is one of America's greatest strengths. Over time, our business evolved from supplying plumbing and heating distributors to serving America's energy and infrastructure sectors. Today, our company supports industries that help build and power communities across the country.

ties, decisions, and challenges alike. Long before we entered business, however, our parents had already laid the foundation. My father, Virendra Jain, taught us integrity. My mother, Shakuntala Jain, taught us resilience, humility, and quiet strength. Those values became the true capital with which we began our lives in America.

I cannot separate the contribution of my wife, Renu Jain, from my own. When we married in 1980, she came her with an M.Tech from IIT Delhi. Brilliant and accomplished, she found a good job quickly. Later, however, she stepped back from her career to focus on our growing family. That decision was not a sacrifice that diminished her. It became the foundation upon which our family flourished. As our business expanded, Renu became the person my sons and I relied upon most for financial judgment.

Today, our sons, Rajat and Anuj, manage our family office and oversee investments that prepare the next generation for the future.

As our blessings grew, so did our responsibility.

Through the ARJ Charitable Foundation Trust, Renu and I have tried to support causes that reflect the values we cherish—education, spiritual growth, and service to those less fortunate. Whether supporting schools, children's education, or community organizations, our belief has remained simple: prosperity finds its highest purpose when it improves someone else's life.

Born a Jain, I am deeply inspired by Jain philosophy, but I also find spiritual strength in Hindu traditions. To me, faith is less about labels than about living with compassion. The Jain principle *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma* extends beyond physical actions. It must guide our words and even our thoughts. That belief has shaped not only my personal life but also the way I conduct business and relationships.

I find myself reflecting less on what I have achieved than on what this country has made possible. America's greatest gift to immigrants is not wealth. It is dignity.

It is the freedom to work honestly, to worship according to your conscience, to raise your children with hope, and to believe that tomorrow can be better than today.

That promise has welcomed generations of newcomers, each adding something of their own while preserving the values they brought from home.

My family's story is only one among millions.

(As told to Parveen Chopra)

Anil Jain
CEO, VASS Pipes & Steel Co

SBI is privileged to contribute to enduring India-US partnership

On this historic semiquincentennial, SBI New York is proud to join the nation in commemorating 250 years of American independence, resilience, innovation, and enterprise. This landmark anniversary celebrates a remarkable journey of progress, prosperity, and democratic values that have shaped the United States and inspired people around the world.



As the financial capital of the United States, New York has for long served as a global center for commerce, finance, and innovation, while strengthening the economic relationship between India and the United States. For decades, SBI New York has been privileged to contribute to this enduring partnership by serving the banking needs, facilitating cross-border trade and investment, and supporting businesses that connect the two economies.

Our presence in New York reflects the shared aspirations of the two vibrant democracies committed to growth, entrepreneurship, and international collaboration. Through trusted financial services and enduring relationships, we remain dedicated to fostering stronger commercial and institutional ties while creating lasting value for our customers and other stakeholders.

As we commemorate this historic moment, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to excellence, integrity, and service.

SBI New York extends its warmest congratulations to the people of the United States on this extraordinary occasion and wishes continued peace, prosperity, and success.

Amit Verma
Country Head, State Bank of India
US Operations, New York

America: The land of the free.....

I am writing to share some reflections on the unique value of freedom and democracy in the United States.

Having traveled to over seventy-five countries across all seven continents—including all G-7 nations and numerous developing countries—I have observed that while many international cities like Dubai, Shanghai, St. Petersburg, Beijing, Moscow, Singapore, and Hong Kong are examples of remarkable beauty and luxury, they often lack the profound sense of liberty found in America. Although those other metros are frequently characterized by disciplined civic systems and organization, they also maintain various



restrictions on personal choices and individual expression.

The unparalleled beauty of the American experience lies in its commitment to democracy and a

life free from government micro-management. This environment allows individuals the broad freedom to pursue their own interests and lifestyles.

Since immigrating to the United States over 40 years ago and beginning my career as a diamond and gemstone trader, I have experienced firsthand that America is truly a land of opportunity. It is a system that rewards arduous work while maintaining lofty standards of accountability.

Our forefathers instilled democratic values so deeply that the United States stays steadfast as the world's oldest democracy. The principles of governance guided by President Lincoln's simple but

profound words - "of the people, by the people, and for the people" - are the core practicing values of our political ecosystem. Freedom of expression, the right to education, the right to justice, freedom of religion and the pursuit of happiness remain fundamental liberties, enshrined in the first 10 Amendments of THE US Constitution. These are integral to the American identity.

I would like to congratulate everyone on the 250th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States. I express my deep gratitude to and salute the land of freedom and the home of the brave!

Kamlesh C. Mehta
Eminent Jeweler & Publisher of
The South Asian Times

The unparalleled beauty of the American experience lies in its commitment to democracy and a life free from government micro-management. This environment allows individuals the broad freedom to pursue their own interests and lifestyles.



State Bank of India
New York

HONOURING



**YEARS OF A NATION BUILT
OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE,
FOR THE PEOPLE**

State Bank of India, New York extends its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the people of the United States on the historic occasion of the 250th Anniversary of American Independence. May the enduring ideals of liberty, democracy, and shared prosperity continue to inspire generations to come.

United States of America: From Republic to Superpower

How did the United States rise from a young nation on the Atlantic coast to become the world's most influential military, economic, and political power?

By **Parveen Chopra**

By the time the guns fell silent after the Spanish-American War in August 1898, America had ceased to be merely a nation. It had become an empire in waiting—and within half a century, the world's first true superpower.

The making of a giant

On August 12, 1898, the United States and Spain agreed to a ceasefire, bringing an end to a conflict that had lasted barely four months. In military terms, the Spanish-American War was brief. In historical terms, it changed the balance of global power forever.

The United States emerged victorious, taking control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, while Cuba became independent under American influence. Within months, Hawaii was annexed as well. Almost overnight, a country that had spent more than a century looking inward suddenly possessed territories stretching thousands of miles across the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Historians often describe this as the moment America stepped onto the world stage. The U.S. Department of State calls 1898 "the birth of a superpower," arguing that the war permanently ended America's long tradition of diplomatic isolation. The Council on Foreign Relations similarly identifies the Spanish-American War as the first of three transformative conflicts—followed by World Wars I and II—that elevated the United States into the world's dominant power.

Yet the story of America's rise did not begin in Cuba.

Nor did it begin with World War II, as is commonly believed.

Its foundations had been laid decades earlier – sprawling factories, expanding railroads, booming steel mills, and ambitious shipyards that quietly transformed a young republic into an industrial colossus.

The U.S. Department of State calls 1898 "the birth of a superpower," arguing that the war ended America's tradition of diplomatic isolation. The Council on Foreign Relations identifies the Spanish-American War as the first of three transformative conflicts—followed by World Wars I and II—that elevated the United States into the world's dominant power.



Colonel Theodore Roosevelt (extreme right) with other high-ranking officials of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment: Tampa, Florida (1898) (Photo courtesy: <https://www.floridamemory.com/learn/classroom/learning-units/spanish-american-war/photos/>)

A Republic that wanted distance from the world

When America declared independence in 1776, few imagined it would one day command military bases across the globe or influence decisions in capitals thousands of miles away.

Its first leaders envisioned something far more modest.

The young republic was weak, deeply divided, and surrounded by powerful European empires. Britain still dominated Canada, Spain controlled Florida and vast territories in the West, while France maintained ambitions in North America.

For America's founders, survival depended less on military adventures than on avoiding them altogether.

In his Farewell Address of 1796, President George Washington urged future generations to

avoid permanent alliances with foreign nations, warning that Europe's endless rivalries could entangle the fragile republic in conflicts that served no American interest.

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is... to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with

perfect good faith. Here, let us stop. It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world."

His advice shaped U.S. foreign policy for decades.

Rather than competing for colonies overseas, American leaders concentrated on building the nation at home. That did not mean the country lacked ambition. Instead of looking across oceans, it

looked across the continent.

The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 doubled the country's territory. Florida followed. Texas was annexed. Oregon was secured through diplomacy. The Mexican-American War added vast western lands stretching to California. Between 1783 and 1853, the United States more than tripled in size, creating one of the largest nations on Earth.

At the same time, James Monroe—a Revolutionary War veteran and the last president of the Founding Fathers' generation—announced what became known as the Monroe Doctrine in 1823.

Its message was simple but bold: European powers should no longer establish colonies or interfere in the Americas.

Ironically, the United States lacked the military strength to enforce this declaration. Britain—whose navy ruled the seas—was largely responsible for deterring European intervention.

Still, the Monroe Doctrine revealed something important. Even while avoiding global politics, America had begun imagining itself as the dominant power in the Western Hemisphere.

The ambition existed. Only the capability was missing.

The Civil War forged a stronger nation

The greatest obstacle to American power came not from Europe but from within. In 1861, the Civil War erupted between the Union and the Confederacy. For four dev-



Confederate prisoners captured in the Shenandoah Valley being guarded in a Union camp, May 1862. (Photo Courtesy: <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/military/civil-war/photos/>)



astating years, the country fought itself in what remains the deadliest conflict in American history.

More than 600,000 soldiers died. Entire regions were devastated.

However, the war also led to profound consequences that would later enable America's rise.

The Union's victory preserved the nation as a single political entity, abolished slavery, and accelerated industrial development.

Railroads expanded rapidly to support military logistics. Factories increased production of steel, textiles, and weapons. Modern banking systems evolved to

Coal production increased by nearly 800 percent.

Railroad networks expanded by more than 500 percent.

Factories multiplied across cities like Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Detroit.

Steel replaced iron.

Oil replaced whale fuel.

Electricity revolutionized manufacturing.

Millions of immigrants arrived from Europe, providing the workforce needed to fuel explosive industrial growth.

By the mid-1880s, the United States had overtaken Britain as the world's largest manufacturer of steel and industrial goods. Its economy surged ahead of every major European power.

Industrialists such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan, and Cornelius Vanderbilt built business empires that reshaped global commerce.

American companies began exporting machinery, manufactured goods, and technology across the world.

influence.

As historian Michael O'Hanlon argues in *To Dare Mighty Things*, the United States did not accidentally become a world power after Pearl Harbor. Rather, it consciously pursued great-power status decades earlier by expanding its navy, investing in military capabilities and embracing an increasingly international role.

By the 1890s, the ingredients of superpower status were already in place:

- A vast continental territory.
- Enormous natural resources.
- The world's fastest-growing industrial economy.
- Rapid technological innovation.
- A modernizing navy.
- A population exceeding 70 million.

Only one ingredient remained absent.

A defining moment.

History would soon provide one.

1898: The war that changed everything

By the late nineteenth century,

faced mounting public and political pressure.

In April 1898, Congress declared war.

Few expected the conflict to redefine the international order.

The war that made America a world power

The Spanish-American War lasted just 114 days. Yet few conflicts have altered the trajectory of a nation so dramatically.

When the fighting ended on August 12, 1898, Spain's centuries-old empire had collapsed. The Treaty of Paris, signed later that year, granted Cuba independence while transferring Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines to the United States. Almost simultaneously, Washington annexed Hawaii, giving it a strategic foothold in the Pacific.

For the first time in its history, America governed territories thousands of miles from its own shores.

The transformation was breathtaking.

Only months earlier, the United States had largely been regarded as a continental power—strong within North America but peripheral to the diplomatic struggles of Europe and Asia.

Overnight, it possessed naval stations spanning two oceans, overseas colonies, and strategic positions linking Asia to the Americas.

"Speak softly and carry a big stick, you will go far."

— President Theodore Roosevelt

The nation's foreign policy had fundamentally changed.

The U.S. Department of State describes 1898 as the moment when America acquired "almost all the attributes of a great power"—its population, industrial output, geography, economic resources, and military potential now rivaled or surpassed those of Europe's leading empires. What had changed was not merely America's strength but its willingness to project that strength beyond its borders.

Yet this new role sparked fierce debate at home.

Many Americans celebrated the victory as evidence that their country had come of age. Others saw something more troubling.

Writers, including Mark Twain and industrialist Andrew Carnegie, joined the Anti-Imperialist League, arguing that ruling overseas territories betrayed America's founding principles of liberty and self-government. How, they asked, could a nation born from resistance to empire become an imperial power itself?

Their criticism highlighted a contradiction that would shadow American foreign policy for generations.

The United States increasingly presented itself as a champion of freedom while simultaneously governing millions of people who lacked full political rights under American rule.

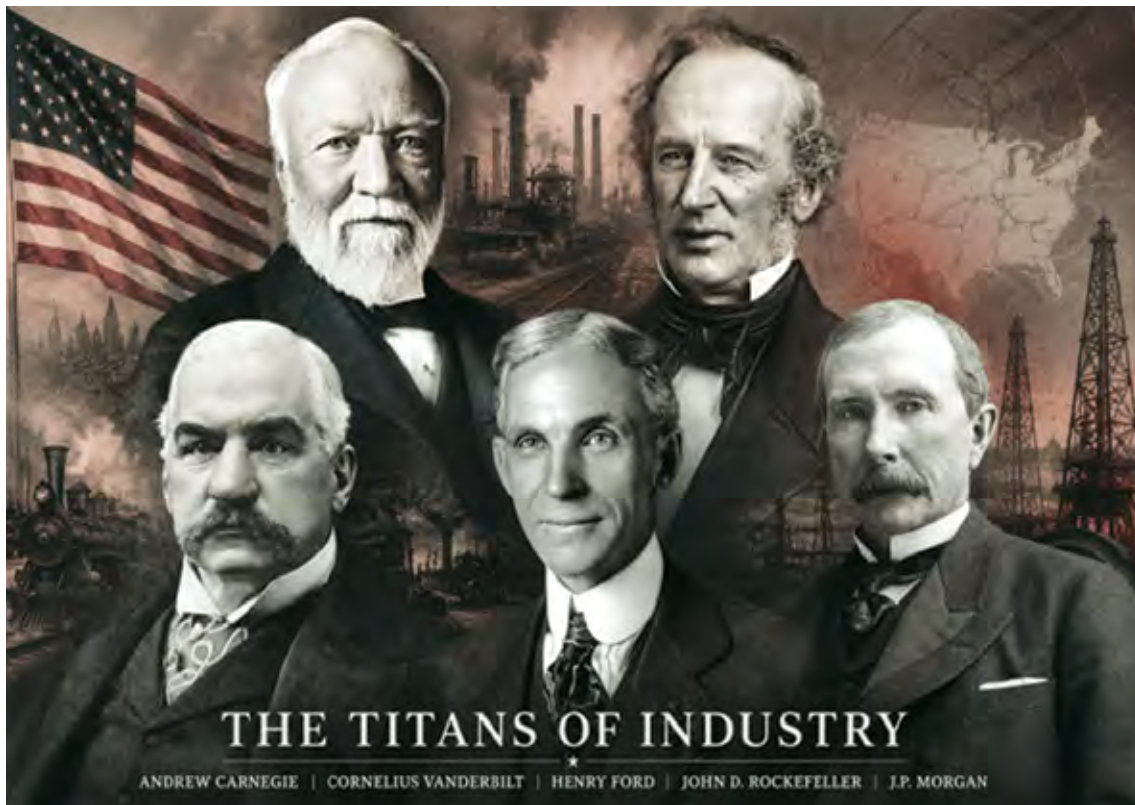
Despite the controversy, there was no turning back.

The age of American global engagement had begun.

The Roosevelt Doctrine: Power must be seen

If the Spanish-American War opened the door to global influ-

(Continued on page 22)



Industrial giants Cornelius Vanderbilt, John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, and Henry Ford reshaped the American economy, laying the foundations of the nation's rise as a global power. (Photo courtesy: Pinterest)

finance the war.

By 1865, America possessed not only a stronger federal government but also an industrial infrastructure unmatched outside Europe.

The Civil War had unintentionally prepared the United States for something much larger than national reconstruction—it had prepared it for global competition.

The industry created an economic giant

If one event transformed America's political future, another transformed its economic destiny—the Industrial Revolution.

Between the end of the Civil War and the close of the 19th century, the United States experienced one of the fastest economic expansions in human history.

Wealth generated new ambitions. Military strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan, whose influential 1890 book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* argued that great nations depended upon powerful navies and overseas bases, profoundly influenced American policymakers.

If Britain ruled the seas through naval supremacy, Mahan argued, America could do the same.

His ideas resonated with politicians who believed the nation's economic power demanded matching military strength. Congress responded by funding modern battleships capable of operating across oceans.

Shipyards expanded. The U.S. Navy modernized.

America was preparing—not necessarily for war—but for glob-

Spain's once-mighty empire had fallen into decline.

Its remaining colonies—including Cuba and the Philippines—were experiencing growing independence movements. Meanwhile, American newspapers filled their front pages with stories of Spanish brutality in Cuba.

Public sympathy for Cuban rebels grew rapidly.

Then, on February 15, 1898, the battleship USS Maine exploded while anchored in Havana Harbor, killing 266 American sailors.

Although later investigations suggested the explosion was likely accidental, sensational newspapers immediately blamed Spain. The rallying cry—"Remember the Maine!"—swept across America.

President William McKinley, initially reluctant to wage war,



Theodore Roosevelt supported the construction of the Panama Canal, linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. (Photo courtesy: Wikipedia)

(Continued from page 21)

ence, Theodore Roosevelt strode through it with unmistakable confidence.

Few presidents embodied America's new ambitions more completely.

Roosevelt believed that economic prosperity alone could not secure national greatness. Great nations, he argued, required formidable armed forces—particularly a navy capable of operating across the world's oceans.

His philosophy became famous through a simple maxim:

"Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far."

The phrase captured Roosevelt's approach to diplomacy: negotiate peacefully whenever possible but ensure that military strength stood firmly behind every conversation.

He wasted little time putting that philosophy into practice.

One of his most consequential achievements was supporting the construction of the Panama Canal, completed in 1914. Linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the canal dramatically reduced the time required for American naval and commercial ships to move between the country's eastern and western coasts.

More than an engineering marvel, the canal became a symbol of America's growing strategic reach.

Roosevelt also expanded the Monroe Doctrine through what became known as the Roosevelt Corollary, asserting that the United States had the right to intervene in Latin American nations to maintain stability and prevent European powers from doing so.

Whether welcomed or resented, the message was unmistakable:

The Western Hemisphere had become America's sphere of influence.

The Great White Fleet announces America's arrival

Roosevelt understood something that modern strategists still recognize: Power is most effective when others can see it.

In 1907, he ordered 16 gleaming white battleships to embark on an extraordinary 14-month voyage around the world.

Known as the Great White Fleet, the expedition visited six continents and more than 20 ports. Crowds numbering in the hundreds of thousands gathered to watch while foreign governments



The battleship USS Connecticut, flagship of the Great White Fleet, pictured in 1908 during its historic round-the-world voyage that showcased America's growing naval power. (Photo courtesy: USC Libraries)

carefully measured the implications.

The voyage demonstrated that the United States possessed not only modern battleships but also the industrial capacity, logistics, and naval expertise required to sustain operations across the globe.

It was a floating declaration that America had joined the ranks of the world's great powers.

Behind the symbolism lay remarkable industrial strength.

The same steel mills that produced railroads and skyscrapers now supplied armor plates for battleships. The same factories manufacturing machinery could rapidly produce weapons.

Economic power and military power had become inseparable.

Economic strength becomes strategic strength

By the dawn of the twentieth century, America's rise was no longer driven solely by territorial expansion. Its greatest advantage lay in its economy.

Industrial production surged at an unprecedented pace.

Steel, oil, electricity, and mass manufacturing transformed the United States into the world's workshop.

Companies pioneered assembly-line production, increasing efficiency while lowering costs.

American inventions—from electric lighting to telephones and automobiles—spread rapidly across international markets.

The country's abundant natural resources amplified this advantage.

Rich deposits of coal, iron ore, and oil fueled industrial expansion,

while fertile farmland made America one of the world's largest agricultural exporters.

Meanwhile, immigration continued supplying millions of workers, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

Unlike many European powers, whose economies strained under colonial competition and military rivalry, the United States enjoyed the security of two vast oceans and relatively friendly neighbors.

Geography became one of America's greatest strategic assets. Protected from invasion, it could devote enormous resources to economic development.

As historian Paul Kennedy later observed, economic capacity ultimately determines military capacity.

America was proving that principle with astonishing speed.

World War I and II: From observer to global arbiter

When Europe descended into war in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson initially insisted that the United States remain neutral. Most Americans agreed.

The devastation unfolding across the Atlantic seemed distant, and Washington's longstanding tradition discouraged involvement

in European conflicts.

Wilson even won re-election in 1916 under the slogan: "He kept us out of war."

But neutrality became increasingly difficult to sustain.

German submarines attacked merchant vessels carrying American passengers and goods.

Then came the Zimmermann Telegram, intercepted by British intelligence, revealing Germany's proposal for a military alliance with Mexico against the United States.

Public opinion shifted dramatically.

In April 1917, Congress declared war.

Although American troops arrived relatively late, their manpower, industrial output and financial resources proved decisive. Fresh American forces helped halt Germany's final offensives and strengthened the exhausted Allied armies.

When the guns finally fell silent in November 1918, the United States found itself in an unfamiliar position. It had helped decide the outcome of Europe's greatest war.

President Wilson arrived at the Paris Peace Conference not merely as another national leader but as the architect of a new international vision.

His famous Fourteen Points proposed national self-determination, open diplomacy, and the creation of the League of Nations, an international organization designed to prevent future wars through collective security.

Many of Wilson's ideas reshaped twentieth-century diplomacy.

Ironically, however, the Unit-

ed States itself never joined the League. The Senate rejected membership, fearing that international commitments would erode American sovereignty.

Once again, isolationist instincts prevailed.

America had demonstrated immense global influence. Yet it remained uncertain whether it wished to lead the world permanently.

That question would not remain unanswered for long.

Within two decades, another, even more devastating conflict would force the United States to embrace a role from which it could never again retreat.

America played a decisive role in World War II by serving as the "arsenal of democracy" through massive industrial mobilization and supplying vital materiel to the Allies, followed by its active entry into the conflict to wage a pivotal, two-front war in both the European and Pacific theaters, putting an end to Hitler's malevolent acts and ambitions.

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"The world must be made safe for democracy."

– President Woodrow Wilson, asking Congress in 1917 to join World War I.

As **America** celebrates its

250th

anniversary,

we honor the ideals that have shaped the nation and the
diverse communities that have contributed to its
SUCCESS.

// We proudly recognize the *Indian-American community* for its lasting
impact on American society and celebrate the growing friendship and
partnership between India and the United States. //

Jaspreet Mayall, Co-Managing Partner

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Message



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007



July 4, 2026

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to extend greetings to the readers of *The South Asian Times* for its special edition commemorating the 250th anniversary of American independence.

I am deeply honored to serve as the first South Asian Mayor of a city that is the proud home of a thriving population of Indian New Yorkers who have had a lasting positive impact on our metropolis. Founded in 2008, *The South Asian Times* is a weekly publication committed to informing the Indian diaspora in the five boroughs and beyond. This landmark edition will highlight celebrations, events, and monuments across the country and acknowledge the strong bonds between the United States and India. For nearly two decades, this newspaper has embodied journalistic excellence, and I applaud it for its continued efforts to support Indian New Yorkers. Together, we will continue to ensure that our global city remains accessible and welcoming for all who call it home.

On behalf of the City of New York, please accept my best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

Zohran Kwame Mamdani
Mayor

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

A journey of opportunity, excellence, and gratitude

India, the country of my birth, gave me a strong educational foundation. The United States, the country of my adoption, gave me the wings to soar and the opportunities to fulfill my dreams.

I came here as a young cancer surgeon after completing my medical education at Baroda Medical College and my specialty training at Tata Memorial Cancer Centre in India. At the time, I had already secured a position in the UK and was preparing to leave for England. However, several friends encouraged me to consider the United States, sharing with me their experiences of a nation that values talent, rewards hard work, and provides limitless opportunities for growth.

With only eight dollars in my pocket but a wealth of determination and ambition, I arrived in America. The support and encouragement of friends helped me begin a journey that would exceed even my highest expectations. I started my career as a surgical resident at Downstate Medical Center in New York and subsequently joined its fac-



(Photo: The SA Times)

ulty. Over the years, I served as Professor of Surgery and had the privilege of teaching and mentoring medical students, residents, and fellows.

One of the proudest moments of my academic career was my induction into Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA), the prestigious national medical honor society. I also served as

Chief of Surgery at the Veterans Administration Hospital. These experiences reinforced my belief in the fundamental strength of the American system: it recognizes talent, dedication, and achievement, regardless of where one comes from. Here, opportunities were determined not by origin, but by merit and commitment.

After a decade in academic surgery, I joined Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. There, I helped develop fellowship training programs. The famed institution provided an environment where I could continue to expand my horizons in clinical care, education, and leadership. I later served as Director of the National Training Council in Head and Neck Oncology for 10 years, helping train the next generation of head and neck surgeons across America.

My work at a leading tertiary cancer center also opened doors to leadership positions in numerous national and international professional organizations, including the New York Surgical Society, the American Head and Neck Society, and the American

Association of Endocrine Surgeons.

What distinguishes the United States is its extraordinary ability to provide opportunities for individuals willing to work hard and contribute meaningfully to society. America remains a beacon of hope for immigrants from every corner of the globe and stands as a powerful testament to the promise of a nation built by generations of newcomers. As we celebrate 250 years of America's independence, I reflect with profound gratitude on the roles both India and America have played in my life.

India provided me with the values, discipline, and educational excellence that shaped my character and professional foundation. America provided opportunities, freedom, and environment that enabled me to realize my full potential.

Dr Ashok R. Shaha

Allan H. Selig Chair in Head and Neck Surgery,
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Professor of Surgery, Weill-Cornell Medical College

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Success and then community building

When I arrived in the United States in 1973 as a young student from India pursuing a Ph.D., I carried little more than education, determination, and faith in the opportunities that America offered. Like millions of immigrants before me, I came seeking knowledge and a better future. What I found was a nation whose commitment to freedom, merit, innovation, and opportunity allowed dreams to become reality.

After completing my doctoral studies, I began my professional career as a Research Metallurgist at the University of Denver and later at Brookhaven National Laboratory. I subsequently joined Business Communications Company, where I advanced from Director of the Advanced Materials Group to Vice President. Driven by an entrepreneurial spirit, I later founded Innovative Research and Products, fulfilling a lifelong dream of building and leading my own company.

While professional success was rewarding, I believed that true achievement also meant giving back to the community and helping others succeed. Over the past five decades, I have devoted significant time to community service and



institution-building. I helped establish and lead several organizations that have strengthened the voice and visibility of Indian Americans, including the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), which organizes one of

the largest India Day Parade outside India every year; the National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA); the Indian American Kerala Center; the South Asian Council for Social Services (SACSS); the National Indian American Association for Senior Citizens (NIAASC); and the Jagdish Bhagwati Chair for Indian Political Economy at Columbia University.

Perhaps my most enduring contribution has been my leadership of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), founded in New York in 1989. Today, GOPIO serves as a global network connecting people of Indian origin across dozens of countries while promoting civil rights, community development, youth engagement, and stronger ties between India and the countries where our diaspora resides.

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, I reflect with gratitude on a nation that enabled an immigrant student to become a scientist, entrepreneur, community leader, and advocate for future generations. My story is only one among millions, but it represents the enduring promise of the American Dream—that with hard work, perseverance, and service to others, opportunity can be transformed into achievement, and achievement into lasting impact.

Dr. Thomas Abraham
GOPIO International Chairman



Dr. Thomas Abraham with President Ronald Reagan when he invited the Indian community leaders for the first time to the White House in 1986.

Our promised role in America's growth story

As the United States commemorates 250 years of independence, we reflect on the remarkable arc of our own journeys — having landed on these shores carrying little more than education, ambition, and an abiding faith in the American promise. For the Indian diaspora, the American Dream has never been a passive aspiration. It has been a covenant we honor through diligence, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to the communities that welcomed us.

My journey from India to America mirrors that of a generation. We came as students, engineers, physicians, scientists, and entrepreneurs, shaped by family, education, and civic responsibility. In America, we found a society that rewarded merit, embraced pluralism, and offered the freedom to dream without limit. In return, we have offered our intellect, our enterprise, and our deepest loyalty to the nation we now call home.

The significance of the Indian diaspora's contribution to the fabric of America has moved well beyond representation; it has become foundational. Indian Americans today lead some of the world's most consequential enterprises — Microsoft, Google, Adobe, IBM, and Starbucks among them. We staff the nation's hospitals, anchor its universities, drive its research laboratories, and increasingly shape its public discourse, philanthropy, and governance. Though we are less than one and a half percent of the population, we account for a disproportionate share of America's innovation output, tax contribution, and entrepreneurial energy.



I believe, with deep conviction, that the Indian American community will emerge as a defining driving force in America's growth engine over the next fifty years. Three realities make this inevitable. First, our enduring commitment to STEM, medicine, and enterprise positions us at the heart of the industries that will define the future — artificial intelligence, biotechnology, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing. Second, our cultural emphasis on education, family, and long-term thinking equips the next generation to lead with both excellence and conscience. Third, the deepening India-US strategic partnership offers America a generational ally and a trusted bridge to the world's most dynamic democracy.

On this landmark anniversary, I salute the country that made our journey possible. The Indian American story is, ultimately, an American story — one of gratitude, contribution, and a shared belief that the next chapter of this great republic will be its most extraordinary yet.

Ankur Vaidya
Chairman, FIA Tristate

Achieving and giving back

Indeed, I feel very fortunate as I look back on my life in New York. To be a leader and to have achieved so much material success and goodwill was quite honestly beyond the parameters of what I could have ever dreamed of accomplishing. The most exciting thing for me is to live in New York in the stunning Hudson Valley on an estate which is full of old oak trees close to Manhattan, which remains the number one city in the number one country in the world today!

I think having my three amazing children living here close to me is another success marker. We are close and love being with each other. They are super successful and thriving and each is at the pinnacle of their lives.

How did I get here?

Three things have defined my success:

1. *Hard work with no shortcuts. Do it once and get it right.*
2. *Trust your instinct on what you need to do in every moment of your life.*
3. *Always be kind and help people, don't think about what you will receive in return! Just give according to your ability to give and help another person. The greater good should always be our mission and focus.*

On another fun note, all my children are getting married to amazing partners. This is a different kind of success I am enjoying — well-adjusted children that grow from feeling prioritized from a young age.

To me, a successful life journey and success come down to creating enough resources through hard work to provide for oneself and one's family but to further really be able to give back and help others and not just keep needing more for ourselves.



Last year, through The Giving Back Foundation, we created UpliftNY25 in Central Park. Here, we were able to have 5,000 people gather and do yoga and eat together a

free lunch under the trees and listen to music and enjoy peace of mind. We are going forward with this program in different towns, in different cities and The Giving Back Foundation is distributing the book '3 Tips: The Essentials to Peace, Joy and Success'. This book is now available in 14 languages, and we hope it will bring peace to troubled minds because peace is the new wealth and we want to make sure everyone understands this in a troubled world.

I wish all the readers blessings from above, success and love - as they enjoy their life on this planet!

"We are to the universe only as much as we give back to it" is my mantra for lasting success.

Om Shanti!

Meera Gandhi
Founder of The Giving Back Foundation

America innovates for the world

Before the United States gained independence, its people – including founding father Benjamin Franklin – were testing big ideas. American innovation has advanced in many directions since then, from medical breakthroughs to placing a man on the moon. Here's a look at US inventions that have improved everyday life around the world.

Anesthesia

(1846, William T.G. Morton)

The first demonstration of anesthesia, using ether, revolutionized surgery, allowing for longer, more complex procedures and, ultimately, a deeper understanding of human anatomy. Ether paved the way for modern anesthesia techniques and the emergence of the specialized field of anesthesiology.

Telephone

(1876, Alexander Graham Bell)



Alexander Graham Bell with one of his inventions.
(Photo courtesy: Underwood & Underwood/Library of Congress)

Bell's invention of the telephone, with its instantaneous voice transmission over long distances, was revolutionary to communication. Widespread adoption of the telephone meant that real-time conversations often replaced letters and telegrams, which could take days or even weeks to arrive, and new business models — such as telemarketing — also emerged.

Hearing Aid

(1898, Miller Hutchison)

The "Akouphone" — the first portable hearing aid using a carbon transmitter (consisting of a microphone, amplifier, headphones,



Miller Hutchison invented the first portable hearing aid. (Photo courtesy: George Grantham Bain/Library of Congress)

and a battery) — moved beyond passive ear trumpets to amplify sound with electricity. In 1971, four engineers (three Americans, one Japanese) co-invented the Intel 4004, a microprocessor that led to small, customizable hearing aids and eventually to digital and app-based models made by Danish and Belgian firms.

Assembly Line

(1901, Ransom Olds)

The introduction of the assembly line revolutionized manufacturing by significantly increasing production while reducing

costs, paving the way for mass production of affordable consumer goods, particularly automobiles.

Airplane

(1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright)

The Wright brothers are credited with inventing the first successful airplane (the "Wright Flyer") and achieving the first controlled, sustained flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. They also developed many of the basic principles and techniques of aeronautical engineering. A subsequent "aerial age" brought additional types of aircraft, global travel, and military advances.



The Wright brothers are credited with inventing the first successful airplane.
(Photo courtesy: <https://www.wright-brothers.org>)

Cardiac Defibrillator

(1930, William Kouwenhoven)

The first defibrillator, though large and cumbersome, changed how doctors treated heart attacks. Rather than resuscitating patients with cardiac massage, they could now restore normal heart rhythms using electrical shocks. Early success led to smaller, safer defibrillators.

In the 1960s, cardiologist Frank Pantridge, from Northern Ireland, invented a portable version that operated from car batteries. By the 1980s, automated external defibrillators (or AEDs) had significantly improved emergency care.

Microwave Oven

(1945, Percy Spencer)

Initially intended for radar technology, the microwave oven was the brainchild of an engineer who noticed a candy bar in his pocket melting rapidly as he worked with a live radar set emitting microwave signals. He discovered the radar's compact cavity magnetron tube was responsible for heating the chocolate. His melting candy bar led to the consumer appliance that revolutionized food preparation.

Radiocarbon Dating

(1946, Willard Libby)

Dating the ancient world with atomic precision

Also known as carbon-14 dating, radiocarbon dating determines the age of organic materials (bones, wood, plant fibers) that are up to 60,000 years old. It works by measuring the amount of radioactive carbon-14, which decays over time, remaining in a sample. Scientists have used radiocarbon dating to understand prehistory by establish-



Paul Zoll with an early external cardiac pacemaker.
(Photo courtesy: <https://www.zoll.com>)

through in treating irregular heart rhythms. While it was bulky, it demonstrated the potential for electrical stimulation to regulate the heart and was a first step toward an implantable device developed in 1958 by Swedish physicians Åke Senning and Rune Elmqvist. In 1960, three American innovators (surgeons William Chardack and Andrew Gage, and engineer Wilson Greatbatch) made a commercially viable, implantable pacemaker.



A stylized replica of the point-contact transistor invented at Bell Labs in 1947.
(Photo courtesy: Wikipedia/Bell Labs)

ing timelines for events, like the end of the last ice age and the start of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

Transistor (1947, Bell Labs)

One of the 20th century's most groundbreaking inventions, the transistor replaced bulky, power-hungry vacuum tubes, enabling the development of small, fast, energy-efficient electronics. The transistor laid the groundwork for modern computers, cellphones, and the internet.

Pacemaker (1952, Paul Zoll)

The first cardiac pacemaker, designed by U.S. cardiologist Paul Zoll, was a break-

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,
that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

- Thomas Jefferson

*Heartiest Congratulations
and best wishes on*

AMERICA
250



With best compliments from

Mukund Padmanabhan



Email to AI, US inventors stay on top

Creativity stems in part from a pioneering spirit, which continues to spur freewheeling ingenuity among American inventors. In the words of US business mogul Philip Anschutz, "research how and why things are, and imagine how they might change."

Organ Transplant (1954, Joseph Murray and David Hume)

Two surgeons jointly performed a kidney transplant between identical twins in Boston — the first successful human-to-human organ transplant — opening the door for future advancements in transplant medicine and providing hope for patients with failing organs. Liver, heart, and pancreas transplants were successfully performed by the late 1960s, while lung and intestinal organ transplants were begun in the 1980s.

Robotics (1954, George Devol)



George Devol, the father of robotics.
(Photo courtesy: <https://www.invent.org>)

The concept of robotics dates back centuries, but the first modern programmable industrial robot, the Unimate, was invented by George Devol in 1954. Another American — physicist, engineer, and entrepreneur Joseph Engelberger, known as the "Father of Robotics" — later commercialized and popularized the Unimate, leading to the establishment of the first robotics company, Unimation.

Artificial Intelligence (1955, John McCarthy)

McCarthy was an American mathematician and computer scientist widely celebrated as one of the founding "fathers of artificial intelligence". He famously coined the term "artificial intelligence" in 1955 and introduced "artificial intelligence" for a 1956 summer research proposal to differentiate the study of machine intelligence from the field of cybernetics. While McCarthy is credited as the founding father who established AI as a formal discipline, the foundational roots and modern advancements of the field are shared by several other critical pioneers.

Laser Technology (1960, Theodore Maiman)

With their focused beams of light, lasers cut, weld, correct vision, treat tissue, communicate, and entertain (via light shows). In medicine, lasers are commonly used in delicate surgeries, including LASIK eye surgery, plus cancer treatments and dermatology. In fiber optics, lasers transmit data through optical fibers that carry high-speed internet.



Alan Kay with the prototype of Dynabook.
(Photo courtesy: Marcin Wichary from San Francisco/wikipedia)

Laptop (1968, Alan Kay)

The concept for a portable computer called the Dynabook emerged even before the personal desktop computer was launched. The Dynabook was significant because it promised a portable, child-friendly computer and heavily influenced later laptop designs.

Internet Protocols (1970, Vinton Cerf and Robert Kahn)

The invention of TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) provided the backbone for a web of interconnected computer networks — hence the name "internet." This architecture enabled a 1973 research project initiated by the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to evolve into the global communication and information infrastructure we use today.

Email (1971, Ray Tomlinson)

As the internet grew, email became a globally used communication tool, connecting people and organizations worldwide. The first email, sent by Ray Tomlinson to himself in 1971, contained a test message, likely "QWERTYUIOP" or something similar. Tomlinson would also become the first to use the "@" symbol to separate the recipient's name from their location in email addresses.



The first email was sent by Ray Tomlinson to himself in 1971. (Photo courtesy: Andreu Vea, WiWiW.org/wikipedia)

Personal Computer (1971, John Blankenbaker)

The Kenbak-1 was a stored-program computer, running different programs by loading them into its memory, a key feature of modern personal computers. It was specifically designed for individual use, unlike earlier computers that were built for large organizations or used only by specialized personnel, and it inspired further innovation — leading to powerful and versatile microcomputers.

GPS (1973-93, US Department of Defense)

People all over the world rely on the Global Positioning System (GPS) today, originally developed as satellite navigation for the U.S. military, to see a road map on a smartphone, hail a rideshare service, log miles on an exercise program, or tell time.

Cellphone (1973, Martin Cooper/Motorola)

The first practical cellphone was invented by Motorola engineer Martin Cooper, who made the first publicized handheld mobile phone call April 3, 1973. Ten years later, the first commercially available handheld cellphone, the DynaTAC 8000x, was released. It introduced the concept of personal, mobile communication, changing how people connected and how businesses operated.

Smartphone (1992, Frank Canova/IBM)



Frank Canova invented the world's first smartphone, the IBM Simon.
(Photo courtesy: Frank Canova/wikipedia)

The world's first smartphone, the IBM Simon, by Frank Canova featured a touchscreen and a range of functionalities beyond the ability to make phone calls. Combining the features of a cell-phone with those of a handheld computer, smartphones allow phone calls, emails, texts, video chats, and social media posts, revolutionizing how people connect and work.

Social Media (1997, Andrew Weinreich)



SixDegrees.com was the first social networking website that started in 1997.
(Photo courtesy: <https://www.andrewsroadmaps.com>)

Six Degrees, the world's first social media site created by Andrew Weinreich, allowed users to create profiles, connect with friends, and send private messages, setting the stage for MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms. The invention of social media has subsequently been used as an innovative tool by businesses, marketers, and media. It facilitates crowdfunding campaigns and creates vast amounts of data, spurring analysis for multiple uses, including machine learning.

Streaming Media (1990-2000, various US companies)

Streaming media was created gradually, beginning in the 1990s, when Xerox PARC demonstrated live video streaming over the internet. RealNetworks and Microsoft launched their own innovations and are credited with popularizing online streaming. The video-streaming site YouTube, founded in 2005, offered a platform for user-generated content, and Netflix launched its streaming service in 2007. Since then, streaming has become the dominant method for consuming media, with numerous competing services offering content.



Message



Office of the County Executive
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York 11501



June 20, 2026

Dear Friends,

It is my honor to extend my greetings to the readers of *The South Asian Times* as we all celebrate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States of America.

This country has undergone a remarkable journey since the Founding Fathers declared our independence and set us on our historical course. Our pursuit of the principles of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness, along with the hard work of people of all backgrounds, has allowed our nation to flourish into the success that it is today.

On behalf of all our Nassau County residents, thank you to *The South Asian Times* for fulfilling its journalistic duty. This publication has brought the people of our region together by providing a voice for its readers and covering topics that keep our residents informed.

Please accept my best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. Blakeman

Nassau County Executive

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Community leader and achiever with India in his heart

With a passion for promoting Indian culture, India-US relations and undertaking community service, I have carried on voluntary work for the past four decades, leading apex Indian American organizations.

I was born in 1936 in Sindh, now in Pakistan. I studied in Baroda and began my professional career as architect in Lucknow. Coming to the US in 1977, I established myself as an architect and designer, reaching the top echelons. I retired some years ago as Assistant Director of New York City's Housing Authority Office of Facility Planning and Administration.

As architect and designer, I have literally been able to leave my "mark" on NYC landmarks such as JFK airport, LaGuardia airport, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Citi Bank building, and New York City Housing Authority, the world's largest public housing facility.

With focus to gain momentum and achieve cordial relations with American establishments, I got appointed to prestigious institutions including Metropolitan



Lal & Kavita Motwani with President Bill Clinton

Museum of Art's Multi Cultural Development Advisory Committee in New York. I was also the first to organize Diwali Festival and Ramayan Dance-Drama at the Met.

I served the cause of Indian community through long and active association with 6 most consequential community organizations in the US: Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), National Federation of Indian Associations (NFIA), Federation of Indians in America (FIA-Tristate), known for organizing the annual India Day Parade in New York City, Alliance of Global Sindhi Organizations, Society of Indo-American Engineers and Architects,



Lal Motwani greeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and Sindhi Circle.

I was coordinator for FIA's first India Day Parade in 1981. As NFIA President, I spearheaded the largest delegation to Washington DC to attend the US Congressional luncheon, White house briefing, a national seminar on women empowerment and reception. I also campaigned against hate crimes against Indians in America. I was also active in raising funds for HHH (Heart and Hand for the Handicapped), and was its Vice President for two terms.

The Government of India conferred on me the highest award for NRIs, "The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman" in 2020. Other awards

include New York State Governor's Award of Excellence (2002), New York City Distinguished Service Award Manager (2001) for dedicated and exemplary service to the people of New York in a year of profound crisis, King of Queens 2013. Community service brought me other awards: The Jewels of India and Pride Of India Award, both in 2013 in recognition of my service in improving India-US ties by Indo American Friends Group & Indo American Business Chamber, as well as "Bharat Gaurav Lifetime Achievement Award" from Sanskriti Yuva Sanstha, presented by Mrs. Mamta Sharma, NCW Chairperson, Govt. of India.

Lal K. Motwani

Chairman, Alliance of Global Sindhi Associations, Inc. (AGSA) 2024-Present
President, Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), International 2023-25
Chairman, National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA) - 2013-2015
President, Society of Indo-American Engineers and Architects (SIAEA) - 1999-2001



Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Gratitude and a pledge to strengthen America's values

The 250th anniversary of US independence is a profound milestone for naturalized citizens like me, inviting reflection on both our history and our future.

Growing up in India, I came to see the United States as a beacon of democracy, opportunity, and pluralism. The ideals of liberty and justice were values I admired from afar. Yet standing in a federal courtroom in Brooklyn to take the Oath of Allegiance transformed those abstract ideals into lived reality. This anniversary celebrates that transformative journey and affirms a nation defined not by a single ancestry, but by a shared commitment to enduring prin-

ciples. As an American of Indian heritage, I view this anniversary through the lens of synthesis. India and the United States are both vast, vibrant, and deeply diverse democracies that affirm the dignity and potential of the individual.

When I immigrated, I brought with me the cultural heritage, traditions, and values of my motherland. What I found in America was a society that allowed—and even encouraged—me to weave those threads into the broader national tapestry. The story of America's 250 years is, in many ways, a story of immigration and adaptation, shaped by millions who have continually renewed and enriched



the nation's cultural and intellectual life.

Reflecting on the past two and a half centuries also inspires deep

appreciation for the ongoing pursuit of a "more perfect union" envisioned in the Constitution. The United States has never been a finished product, and it never will be. It is a nation that continues to confront its flaws, face its divisions, and expand the meaning of freedom with each generation. For a naturalized citizen, that capacity for growth is one of America's greatest strengths. It reminds us that citizenship is not merely a legal status, but an active and participatory commitment. Taking part in civic life, voting, and serving one's community are ways of honoring the sacrifices and struggles of those who built, defended,

and sustained this republic for over 250 years.

The 250th anniversary is not only a time to honor history, but also a call to look ahead. The American Dream endures, renewed by those who choose to belong. For a naturalized citizen, celebrating this occasion is both an expression of gratitude and a pledge to help keep America a beacon of freedom and opportunity for generations to come.

Dr. J. Ganesh Bhat, M.D.
Chancellor, Xavier University School of Medicine, Aruba;
Founder and Managing Partner, Atlantic Dialysis Management Services, New York

Celebrating unity, leadership, and diversity

In 2026, the United States celebrates its 250th birthday, marking two and a half centuries since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This historic milestone is more than a commemoration of the nation's founding—it is an opportunity to reflect on the ideals, leadership, and diverse contributions that have shaped America into one of the world's most influential democracies.

America's success has been built upon enduring principles of liberty, equality, opportunity, and self-governance. Throughout its history, visionary leaders have guided the nation through periods of challenge and transformation. Abraham Lincoln's leadership during the Civil War preserved the Union and advanced the cause of freedom through the abolition of slavery. George Washington established the foundations of democratic governance, while Franklin D. Roosevelt led the nation through economic hardship and global conflict. Their ability to inspire hope, unite citizens, and make courageous decisions in difficult times helped strengthen the nation and reinforce its democratic values.

Equally important to America's story are the millions of immigrants who came from every corner of the world seeking freedom, opportunity, and a better life. Their determination, hard work, and entrepreneurial spirit have fueled economic growth and enriched the



nation's cultural fabric. Immigrants have made transformative contributions to science, medicine, engineering, education, business, and the arts, helping the US become a global leader in innovation and creativity.

Among these communities, Indian Americans have emerged as one of the nation's most accomplished and influential groups. Their contributions span technology, healthcare, education, law, public service, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. Indian-born innovators and executives have played key roles in shaping Silicon Valley and leading some of the world's most successful companies.

As National President of the Association of Indians in America (AIA), I am especially proud of the organization's nearly six decades of service. AIA has been a pioneer in promoting cultural understanding, civic engagement, and immigrant integration. Through advocacy, educational

America's success has been built upon enduring principles of liberty, equality, opportunity, and self-governance. Throughout its history, visionary leaders have guided the nation through periods of challenge and transformation.

initiatives, community service, and philanthropic efforts, AIA has helped generations of Indian Americans become active participants in American life while preserving their cultural heritage. The organization's efforts to bring greater recognition to Diwali and promote cross-cultural understanding exemplify its enduring commitment to inclusion and community building.

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary, it also celebrates the strength that comes from its diversity. United by shared values and common aspirations, Americans can look to the future with confidence, inspired by the achievements of the past and committed to building a brighter, more inclusive future for generations to come.

Nilima Madan
National President, Association of Indians in America (AIA)

My American Dream: Having a voice that matters

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, I am reminded of how fortunate I have been to live the American Dream.

I came here as the daughter of Indian immigrants (Arvindray and Shah), who believed deeply in the values of education, hard work, and service to others. Like many immigrant families, we arrived with hopes rather than certainty, trusting that in America, opportunity would be available to those willing to work for it.

That belief shaped my life. I pursued a career in medicine and earned the American Board of Radiology certification through training at Cornell and Memorial Sloan Kettering. For over 25 years, I've had the privilege of caring for women and helping detect breast cancer at its earliest and most treatable stages. Every patient encounter has reminded me of the profound responsibility and privilege of being a physician.

Yet some of my most meaningful contributions occurred beyond the reading room. As a nationally elected representative of the Women Physicians Section of the American Medical Association, I had the honor of representing the voices of more than 75,000 women physicians nationwide and advocating for policies that improved the lives of physicians and patients alike.

I advocated for insurance coverage of annual screening mammography for all women beginning at age 40. I have witnessed firsthand the difference that early detection can make. I was also proud to help advance transparent family leave policies for medical students and resident physicians.



I believe physicians also have a responsibility to improve the systems that affect entire communities. America gave me the opportunity not only to practice medicine, but also to have my voice heard and to help shape policies that improve lives.

To me, the American Dream is more than professional success. It is an opportunity to have your voice count for something meaningful. It is the ability to speak up, advocate for others, and create positive change. To be an immigrant and to have the opportunity to impact so many lives—that is the American Dream.

As we celebrate America@250, I remain grateful for the freedoms, opportunities, and responsibilities that come with being an American. I am proud of my journey, proud of the contributions of the Indian American community, and optimistic about the generations that will continue to shape America's future.

Dr. Ami Arvindray Shah, MD
Breast Imaging Radiologist, New York

(Photos: The SATimes)



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Message

Binaya S. Pradhan

Consul General of India
New York

June 5, 2026

The Consulate General of India, New York extends its warm greetings and felicitations to *The South Asian Times* on the publication of its special landmark edition commemorating the 250th Independence Day of the United States of America.

Since its inception in 2008, *The South Asian Times* has distinguished itself as a respected and award-winning publication serving the Indian-American and South Asian diaspora with professionalism, consistency and value-based journalism. Its contribution to community engagement, informed public discourse and the celebration of diaspora achievements is truly commendable.

We also appreciate the publication's focus on the evolving identity and contributions of the Indian-American community within the broader American narrative. The Indian diaspora has been a vibrant bridge between India and the United States, contributing to the fields of business, technology, healthcare, education, culture and public service.

As India and the United States continue to deepen their partnership, initiatives such as this special edition help highlight the shared democratic values, people-to-people bonds and growing friendship between our two nations.

We congratulate *The South Asian Times* on this important initiative and wish the America@250 landmark edition great success.

Binaya S. Pradhan
(Binaya S. Pradhan)

Consulate General of India

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Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Touching engineering research, Wall Street, and philanthropy – an Indian American journey

I came to America almost 40 years ago, as an engineering graduate student at UCLA, after finishing a B.Tech at IIT KGP. I had never traveled outside India before then, and I can barely believe today that I had the courage then to go on such an adventure. But I did, and it was one of the best things that I ever did for myself.

America was then (and still is) the land of opportunity, and the rewards are well worth the risk. Not that success is handed to you on a platter in America – you have to work for it. And any successes that one achieves is built

on a mountain of failures. But for those who are resilient enough to pick themselves up after a fall, and learn from their failures, this land offers multiple opportunities to try and try again till one succeeds.

Many things have changed in the last 4 decades – 40 years ago, top students were more likely to pursue academic careers whereas today they are more likely to pursue entrepreneurial careers. However, the premise on which America was built 250 years ago, is still the same. This is still the land of hard working smart and driven people who define the leading



(Photo: The SATimes)

edge of all things novel. It is still the destination of choice for young people from all over the world.

America is a land of immigrants, who bring the best values from their home countries to their new home. However, these immigrants also derive enormous benefit from American values which enshrine the dignity of all labor and the freedom to pursue one's dreams in conventional or unconventional paths. Like other immigrants, I have been influenced by both value systems.

My career path spanning multiple areas (engineering research

at IBM Research to quantitative research at Renaissance Technologies, a Wall Street firm), was driven by the American drive for material success, but my alternate occupation (running a philanthropic organization, Guru Krupa Foundation) was driven by the Indian priority of giving back. I fully identify as Indian American and feel so fortunate to be able to claim the heritage of both of these amazing countries.

Mukund Padmanabhan
Founder, Guru Krupa Foundation

The men who led America

US Presidents since 1789

The presidency of the United States is the most influential office in the world, shaping the nation's history, policies, and global role. Since the country's founding, each President has faced unique challenges and opportunities, leaving a distinct mark on American society. From guiding the nation through wars and economic crises to advancing civil rights and innovation, US Presidents have played a pivotal role in defining the American story.



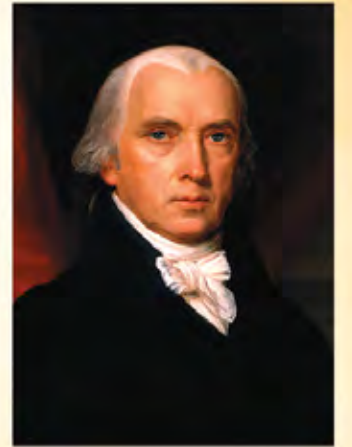
George Washington
1789-1797



John Adams
1797-1801



Thomas Jefferson
1801-1809



James Madison
1809-1817



James Monroe
1817-1825



John Quincy Adams
1825-1829



Andrew Jackson
1829-1837



Martin Van Buren
1837-1841



William Henry Harrison
1841



John Tyler
1841-1845



James K. Polk
1845-1849



Zachary Taylor
1849-1850



Millard Fillmore
1850-1853



Franklin Pierce
1853-1857



James Buchanan
1857-1861



The men who led America: US Presidents since 1789



Abraham Lincoln
1861-1865



Andrew Johnson
1865-1869



Ulysses S. Grant
1869-1877



Rutherford B. Hayes
1877-1881



James A. Garfield
1881



Chester A. Arthur
1881-1885



Grover Cleveland
1885-1889 / 1893-1897



Benjamin Harrison
1889-1893



William McKinley
1897-1901



Theodore Roosevelt
1901-1909



William Howard Taft
1909-1913



Woodrow Wilson
1913-1921



Warren G. Harding
1921-1923



Calvin Coolidge
1923-1929



Herbert Hoover
1929-1933



Franklin D. Roosevelt
1933-1945



★ CELEBRATING ★
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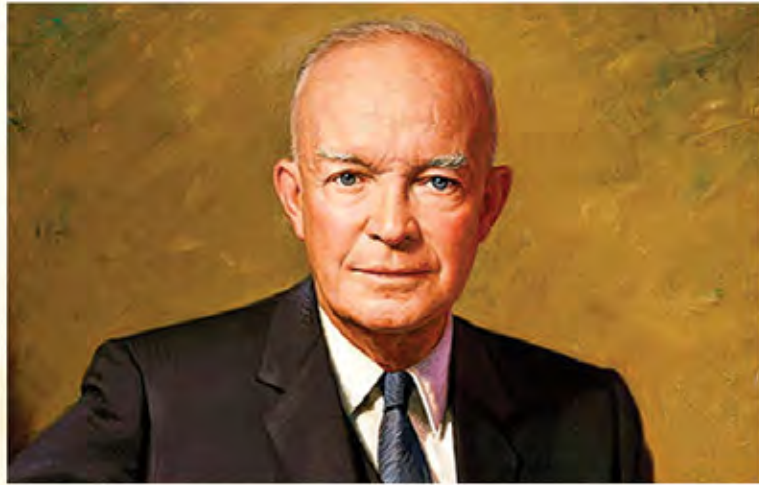




The men who led America: US Presidents since 1789



Harry S. Truman
1945-1953



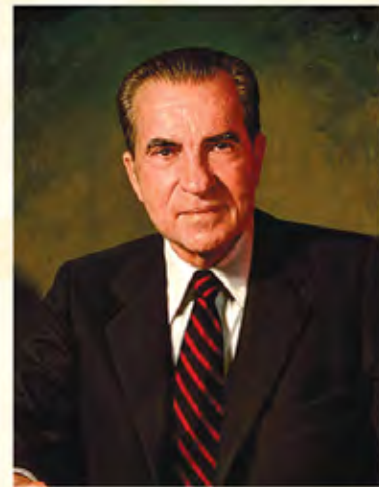
Dwight D. Eisenhower
1953-1961



John F. Kennedy
1961-1963



Lyndon B. Johnson
1963-1969



Richard M. Nixon
1969-1974



Gerald R. Ford
1974-1977



Jimmy Carter
1977-1981



Ronald Reagan
1981-1989



George H.W. Bush
1989-1993



Bill Clinton
1993-2001



George W. Bush
2001-2009



Barack Obama
2009-2017



Donald J. Trump
2017-2021 / 2025-



Joe Biden
2021-2025

For 250 years, the United States has stood as a beacon of freedom, democracy, and opportunity. This timeline honors the Presidents who have served the nation with dedication, helping shape its remarkable journey and inspiring generations to uphold the enduring ideals of liberty, unity, and justice.

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

50 years, one dream: My American journey

"If you have an accent, you are a pioneer in this country."

Fifty years ago, I landed at JFK with a student visa and a suitcase. The next day, I made my way to Liberty Island. Standing before the Statue of Liberty and reading her invitation "Give me your tired... I lift my lamp beside the golden door"—I felt she was speaking directly to me. I climbed all the way to the torch held above her head. This was my introduction to America.

My next stop was Kent State University in Ohio, where I went to pursue my MBA. My sister-in-law had lovingly packed a box of pots, pans, and precious Indian spices for me. I boarded a Greyhound bus, arrived in Ohio — and the box was gone. When I told my American host family, they drove to Kmart and replaced my pots and pans. The one thing they couldn't replace were

my Indian spices, but their generosity and warmth were seasoning enough. That welcome taught me something I have never forgotten about American generosity.

Decades later, the phone rang. It was the President of Kent State University, inviting me to be the commencement speaker. I returned to that same campus — nostalgic, humbled, and filled with emotion — and walked into a basketball arena packed to the rafters with over 8,000 students, parents, and proud families. It was electrifying. The young man who had arrived there as a student was now standing at the podium addressing the next generation. Only in America.

My path took me from a student visa to practical training, from a green card to becoming a naturalized citizen. It culminated in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.



The judge looked out at a room of new American citizens and said: "If you have an accent, you are a pioneer in this country." Those words still resonate. Years later, I was invited to the JFK Presidential Library in Boston to keynote a naturalization ceremony for new immigrants. Standing before a diverse crowd of new citizens, in the very library named for the president who symbolizes America's promise - I was elated. It was an echo of my own journey.

Looking back across five decades, I am filled with gratitude. I have built a life here with my wife and two daughters. I found my people. I found my purpose.

I found my American dream.

MR Rangaswami
Founder, Indiaspora

Making money is a patriotic act in America

On July 4, 1776, America proclaimed freedom and Democracy was born. "Land of the free and home of the brave." America was conceived with the highest ideals about humanity: "all men are created equal." July 4 250 years hence is time to look forward to something that makes us bigger, better, stronger, smarter and richer.

America is famous as a free-market capitalism magnet for the world. We are unique and our national spirit expresses itself in unparalleled courage and generosity, creative innovation and diversity.

Our hospitality and friendliness are universally known to immigrants, students, visitors and investors alike. To be an American means to be able to live in a country where you have religious freedoms and exercise your God-given rights.

The 30th US President John Calvin Coolidge had said the chief business of the American people is business, the chief business of American history is business and that the story of the nation is the story of business history. Independence Day has a special meaning for trade and commerce as America has an undying devotion to entrepreneurship and the limitless opportunities available to build and grow your own "American Treasures."

The Entrepreneur Spirit is alive and doing well still. America ranks number one out of 137 countries listed on the Global Entre-



preneurship and Development Index as of 2018. Companies like Google, Apple, HP, Amazon, Disney all began in a garage. President Trump, an entrepreneur at heart, is blowing the conch shell "Make America Great Again." He is writing history by winning as he is capable of the Impossible - upholding Article One of the Constitution's "stable, profitable environment for private enterprise." Trump will not hesitate to continue standing up for American families, businesses and workers. He is the guardian of every American life. Under his leadership, we are certain to achieve the dream of national rejuvenation and an answer to prayer. Making Money is a Patriotic Act.

A cut in the U.S. corporate tax rate is creating an environment for business like we haven't seen in many, many decades - from creating jobs to boosting productivity to unleashing innovations. This is

a win-win for workers, employers and the economy as a surge in capital investment, higher corporate productivity and profits, and a tight labor market where workers are getting higher salaries, wages and benefits. We're in the Goldilocks zone as the U.S. economy is "Really Ripping" with more job openings than unemployed Americans.

Trump's "America first" Doctrine is required more today than ever. He is the Everest of Disruption. He recognizes that every world leader - including Xi Jinping and Emmanuel Macron seeks to enrich their own countries. He sees the world and the problems in ways other leaders don't see. The world has changed since 2016. The global order is gone. It is time to build a new one. It is good that the leader of the new world is President Trump, the "Churchill of the 21st century," reclaiming America's proud destiny. He is breaking out into "Kumbaya" over trade

with world leaders. He is always a lightning rod; there will be a lot more lightning.

U.S job force has one of the greatest "Work Martyr" working spirit, desire and will to advance with sincerity and ingenuity known in the industrial world. At Prince Organization, we have changed lives creating an atmosphere where people can work hard, further their education, but also have opportunities to have a life as we invest in our associates and the communities we serve in.

A core American belief is "If you take the risk, you bear the consequence." Nowhere but in America could somebody who started with as little as I had come as far as I have. I came here with nothing, and this great nation gave me an opportunity to live the American Dream. The best way to show my gratitude is my commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility inspiring the younger generation. We are proud to be awarded America's most honored business. We fly the flags of best-known brand names in lodging with highest pride, respect and honor.

I would love to see every employee achieve the American Dream of working hard with honesty, owning their own homes, putting their children through college and retiring with respect and dignity. Business is about trust and for us as it has everything to do with ethics or morality, which is our moral as well as our operating compass.

I add my own voice of thankfulness and gratitude for this great

nation of opportunity, promise and hope. I do daily acts of gratitude "Thank You" and being kind, writing a note to you. Being a hotelier has shown me that people are more similar than different no matter where you go. When I visit our hotels, I see God through his creation, the diversity of America.

We do a July 4th weekend celebration where we invite friends, students from my kids Krish and Aryans' school and pass along the Declaration of Independence, with each student reading a sentence of the document until its profound closing phrase that "we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." Reading the Declaration loud helps us rediscover America's unique idealism, its first principles, and its possibilities. This nation knows no shortage of valor.

Enjoy old-fashioned parades, county fairs, dancing, patriotic songs and fireworks. Wishing everyone a very happy, safe, and memorable Fourth of July holiday. Until next year, make everyday count and create the very best memories with those you love. Let your success story be the result of your hard work, righteous good and vision that came to light, your God-given talents that gave you purpose, and the accomplishment and pride that you finished something you set out to do continuing to carry the torch forward!

Sunil Tolani
Prince organization CEO
American Social Entrepreneur



Op-Ed

America at 250: Democracy, innovation, and enduring promise of freedom

Beyond the nostalgia of July 4th lies the story of an imperfect yet highly consequential republic, whose founding promise of individual liberty remains deeply relevant in the burgeoning age of artificial intelligence.

By **M A Hossain**

On July 4, 2026, the United States reached a milestone few nations in history have achieved. The country celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, marking a quarter of a millennium since fifty-six men affixed their signatures to a document that would alter the course of human history.

Anniversaries often invite nostalgia. Yet the semi-quincentennial of American independence is more than a ceremonial moment. It is an opportunity to reflect on an extraordinary political experiment that has survived wars, economic crises, social upheavals, and profound technological revolutions. Whether admired or criticized, the United States remains one of the most consequential nations ever created, not merely because of its power but because of the ideas upon which it was founded.

The world's oldest continuing democratic experiment

Debates over which country deserves the title of the world's oldest democracy are common among historians. Yet there is little dispute that the United States possesses one of the oldest continuously functioning constitutional systems in existence. The Constitution drafted in 1787 remains the foundational framework of the American government today.

That continuity is remarkable. Most nations have experienced multiple constitutional replacements, military interruptions, revolutions, or fundamental regime changes. The United States has certainly undergone dramatic transformations, but its core constitutional structure has endured.

This longevity matters because democracies are inherently fragile. They rely not only on elections but also on institutions, civic trust, and a willingness to resolve disagreements through law rather than force. For two and a half centuries, Americans have repeatedly tested those mechanisms. Sometimes they have succeeded brilliantly; sometimes they have fallen short. Yet the system has persisted.

At a time when democratic institutions face pressure across the globe, the survival of this constitutional experiment remains one of history's most significant political achievements.

Three ideas that changed the world

The philosophical foundation of the United States did not originate in the Constitution but in the Declaration of Independence adopted in 1776. Its most famous sentence remains among the most influential ever written: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Those words introduced three principles that continue to define the American political tradition. The first is life. Human beings possess inherent dignity and rights that governments do not create and therefore cannot legitimately remove without due process. This concept established the moral basis for individual rights and protections under law.

The second is liberty. The founders believed the government exists primarily to secure freedom rather than direct every aspect of citizens' lives. This idea helped shape America's enduring emphasis on individual choice, freedom of expression, religious liberty, and limited government.

The third is the pursuit of happiness. Unlike many political systems that focus solely on collective goals, the American vision grants individuals the freedom to build meaningful lives according to their own aspirations. It is a recognition that personal fulfillment, ambition, and opportunity are central to human flourishing.

From thirteen colonies to global leadership

The history of the United States is, in many ways, the history of expanding the promise contained in its founding declaration. In 1776, America consisted of thirteen colonies clustered along the Atlantic coast. By 2026, it has become a continental nation and a global superpower with unparalleled influence in economics, technology, culture, and international affairs.

The path was neither smooth nor inevitable. The Civil War nearly destroyed the republic but ultimately ended slavery. The women's suffrage movement expanded political participation. The Civil Rights Movement confronted racial segrega-



The American vision grants individuals the freedom to build meaningful lives according to their own aspirations. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

tion and transformed American law and society. Each generation wrestled with the contradiction between America's ideals and its realities.

The nation's greatest achievements often emerged from those struggles. That evolution helps explain why the American experiment continues to resonate globally. Its history is not one of perfection but of continual self-correction.

America's contribution to humanity

American constitutional ideas inspired democratic movements across continents. Concepts such as representative government, constitutional limits on power, freedom of speech, and individual rights influenced political developments far beyond American borders. The United States has also played major roles in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, global health initiatives, and postwar reconstruction efforts. From rebuilding Europe after World War II to responding to natural disasters worldwide, American resources and institutions have often shaped international responses to crises.

Equally important has been America's cultural influence. Its literature, music, films, universities, and intellectual traditions have reached audiences across the globe. American culture became one of the principal vehicles through which ideas of freedom, entrepreneurship, and individual aspirations spread internationally.

The nation that helped build the technological age

If the first century of American history established the country's polit-

ical influence, the second and third centuries cemented its technological leadership.

The airplane transformed transportation and shrank the world. The assembly line revolutionized manufacturing. The microchip became the foundation of modern computing. The laser enabled advances in medicine, communications, and industry. Personal computers changed how people work and learn.

Perhaps no innovation has had a greater impact than the internet. What began as ARPANET in 1969 evolved into the digital infrastructure that now connects billions of people. Commerce, communication, education, and entertainment have all been reshaped by technologies originating largely from American research institutions and companies.

Similarly, the Global Positioning System revolutionized navigation and logistics. What was once a military capability became an indispensable civilian tool used daily by people around the world.

Today, the United States remains at the forefront of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, biotechnology, quantum computing, and space exploration. Silicon Valley continues to symbolize innovation, while American universities and research centers remain among the world's leading engines of scientific discovery.

Celebrating America at 250

The 250th anniversary celebrations reflected both the scale of American history and the diversi-

ty of contemporary America. The congressionally supported America250 initiative seeks to engage communities nationwide through educational programs, exhibitions, and local commemorations. Its emphasis was on grassroots participation and historical reflection.

At the same time, the White House's Freedom 250 initiative included large-scale national events, public celebrations, sporting competitions, and commemorative activities designed to showcase American achievements.

Museums and cultural institutions were also marking the occasion. Smithsonian exhibitions highlighting artifacts such as early computing technology, aviation achievements, and iconic inventions helped to tell the story of two and a half centuries of American development.

The next chapter

Two hundred and fifty years ago, a single sheet of parchment launched an unprecedented political experiment. Few observers in 1776 would have predicted its survival, let alone its global influence.

Yet the United States endures. Its founding principles—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—remain relevant in an era defined by artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and rapid technological transformation. Indeed, they may be more important than ever as societies grapple with questions about freedom, human dignity, and the relationship between technology and democracy.

The anniversary is therefore not merely a celebration of what America has been. It is an invitation to consider what America might yet become.



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The views expressed are not necessarily those of The South Asian Times

Honoring 250 Years of Independence

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India-US Relations

Estrangement to engagement Romance to realism

Moving past Cold War neglect and recent tactical friction, the India-US partnership enters a mature, hard-nosed era of strategic alignment where mutual national interests now outweigh political romance.

By Tarun Basu

In May 1994, Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao visited the US, addressed a joint session of the US Congress and met President Bill Clinton at the White House during which Clinton lauded Rao for leading India through "an absolutely astonishing period of economic transformation" and hoped it will be the beginning of "a very close working relationship as our two countries forge stronger partnership".

It was in many ways then considered a breakthrough meeting as it was the first between the leaders of the two countries since Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited the White House in 1987 for a meeting with President Ronald Reagan. Rao spoke of "an unprecedented opportunity to free India-U.S. bilateral relations from the distortions induced by the cold war, to look for areas of converging interest in the changed international situation, and work together for our mutual benefit."

But for the American media, steeped in Cold War thinking, India was not newsworthy enough as the country was still viewed through the prism of timeworn cliches and cultural prejudices. Rao was virtually ignored by the US journalists at the joint news conference post the talks. The questions were mostly directed at Clinton on global affairs and the singular question to Rao was about alleged human rights violations in Kashmir. Mainstream American papers blacked out the Indian Prime Minister's visit in their daily coverage.

Over three decades later, when President Trump and Prime Minister Modi met at Evian, France, on the sidelines of the G7 summit in June 2026, it was a vastly different India that the US president was engaging, the discourse was businesslike, though Trump tried to inject some levity into it by repeatedly praising Modi, calling him "so nice, he's like an angel, but actually he's as tough as he's a killer" and said he was ready to defend India as long as Modi was prime minister.

This was their first meeting in 16 months, though the two have spoken on phone nine times in Trump's second presidency. But despite the congeniality on display, bilateral ties remain troubled and various signals and statements from Washington in the last few months have injected - from the Indian perspective - an element



After decades of strained ties, a turnaround came when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi met President Ronald Reagan in Washington in July 1982 to increase scientific, economic and cultural cooperation between the two nations. (Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)

of uncertainty into a relationship which otherwise is classified in official jargon as a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

For decades after India's independence, bilateral ties were characterised by suspicion, especially after India under Jawaharlal Nehru resisted American overtures to be an ideological camp follower against the rising tide of Communism represented by the then Soviet Union. India's non-aligned posture and close defence relationship with the Soviet Union contrasted sharply with Washington's alliances with Pakistan. India's socialist policies and the "Hindu rate of growth" further inhibited American interest in India and high level engagements were few and far between.

"Relations were strained over most of the last decade, partly because of American arms sales to Pakistan and partly because of India's criticism of American foreign policy", The New York Times wrote then.

A turnaround however came when Indira Gandhi visited Washington in July 1982 for a meeting with Ronald Reagan where the two decided to increase scientific, economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries. Then, in June 1983, Secretary of State George Schultz visited India, and said the United States was prepared to approve the sale of military equipment to India. India, which has bought some military hardware from the United States in the past but had relied in primarily on the Soviet Union to provide weapons for its growing military, had sounded out the Reagan Administration about buying \$1 billion in arms, its first major attempt at diversification.

Isolation to Involvement

The world's oldest and largest democracies have steadily transitioned since then from a phase of estrangement during the Cold War to a much deeper engagement characterized by shared values and mutual interests, particularly in response to the rise of China. This relationship has been significantly shaped by high-level visits from both countries, especially since 2000 when Clinton visited India, the first presidential visit in 22 years since Jimmy Carter came to India.

On the Indian side, four visits by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee after two by Narasimha Rao added to the economic momentum. In 1998, India under Vajpayee tested five nuclear bombs, irking the US that had assiduously been seeking to prevent India from turning nuclear. But a series of diplomatic dialogues between Foreign Minister Jaswant and Strobe Talbott, US Deputy Secretary of State, laid the solid foundation for the transformation of India's relationship with the US.

Eleven rounds of the dialogue, held in different places around the world, covered a comprehensive range of issues confronting India in the strategic arena, bilateral relations, and their expectations from each other. The talk cleared apprehensions about India's nuclear policy, economic and strategic aspirations, and security concerns, according to strategic experts.

The 2000 Clinton visit reset the relationship and marked the beginning of a structured dialogue that had been suspended since the nuclear tests. The visit also led to the lifting of some

sanctions against India, indicating a significant shift in Washington's approach. These set the stage for a more cooperative and strategic relationship that has continued to develop over the years.

Since 2000, five successive presidential administrations have worked—with bipartisan congressional support—to expand and strengthen the strategic partnership with India. The growing economic and geopolitical significance of India to the US reflected a deeper alignment that went beyond historical hesitations, marking a new chapter in Indo-US relations. As a result, US investments in India began to rise slowly and trade increased.

But it was not until Prime Minister Manmohan Singh took charge that the India-US relationship began to mature and deepen. By 2004, India as a fast-growing large economy was visible—it touched the trillion-dollar mark in 2007 and \$2 trillion in 2014. But more than the economy and the rising US investments into India, Manmohan Singh and US President George Bush negotiated and

personal relationship with Bush who went on to say, "You and I have worked hard to change the relationship between our countries. India is a great country with an incredibly bright future, and it's in the US interests to have a good, strong strategic relationship with India."

Under Barack Obama, India was described as a "defining partnership of the 21st century". The visit of Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama in January 2015 as guests of India's Republic Day and the bonhomie displayed between Obama and Modi highlighted the growing warmth and partnership in strengthening economies and democracies across different administrations and governments.

Donald Trump's first term deepened defence cooperation despite occasional trade disputes. Joe Biden expanded cooperation in semiconductors, clean energy and critical supply chains. Among the achievements Biden was "proudest" of was his effort to build stronger ties with India, as the two countries worked together more closely than ever before in the



Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's May 1994 meeting with President Bill Clinton successfully pivoted India-U.S. relations away from Cold War tensions. (Photo courtesy: William J. Clinton Presidential Library)

delivered a strategic milestone in the form of the US-India: Civil Nuclear Cooperation, a deal that powered the economic and strategic relationship into newer areas and cemented the bonds between the two democracies. The landmark civil nuclear agreement that concluded in late 2008 led to the end of 34-year isolation of India in the global nuclear domain. It fundamentally altered perceptions on both sides. The US began viewing India as a long-term strategic partner, while New Delhi gradually shed its Cold War distrust of Washington. Subsequent administrations in both countries institutionalised the partnership.

During his two terms, Manmohan Singh made eight visits to the US and developed a remarkable

Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific and on emerging technology.

A senior administration official was quoted as saying at that time that leaders on both sides had shed their "ambivalence" about the relationship, and the US sees engagement with India as "central" to everything it does on the global stage. In fact, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) underlined in a policy paper last year (<https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/IF12903.html>) on the growing importance of India:

"India, the world's largest democracy and most populous country, overtook Japan in 2025 to become the fourth largest economy. India's expanding strategic horizons and increased engagement with international partners;

geography astride vital sea and energy lanes; growing defense and power projection capabilities; and vigorous space, science, and technology sectors have made it an attractive potential partner for U.S. policymakers."

By 2024-25, the relationship had become one of the world's most consequential strategic partnerships.

Trump 2.0 and Transactional Diplomacy

Trump's return to the White House in January 2025 reintroduced a somewhat transactional approach to foreign policy. Unlike traditional American administrations that framed India primarily through strategic considerations, Trump largely views international relationships through a commercial lens.

India, meanwhile, has become far more confident and less willing to accept unequal arrangements. New Delhi seeks partnership without dependence and cooperation without alliance obligations. This divergence is creating a subtle but important shift in bilateral dynamics.

India's strategic autonomy remains a central pillar of its foreign policy irrespective of which government is in power. New Delhi will cooperate closely with Washington while simultaneously maintaining relationships with Russia, engaging with the Global South and preserving independent decision-making. This balancing act frequently frustrates American policymakers but reflects India's own assessment of national interests.

There is little doubt that the India-United States relationship has entered a new and somewhat paradoxical phase. Never before have the two countries been so closely aligned strategically, yet never has the partnership appeared so uncertain tactically.

The bilateral relationship today is characterised by simultaneous convergence and friction. Both countries increasingly view each other as indispensable partners in navigating an unstable international order shaped by China's rise, technological competition, supply-chain vulnerabilities, conflicts in Europe and West Asia, and the fragmentation of global governance. Yet they continue to disagree on trade, market access, tariffs, immigration policies, and the extent to which India should align with American strategic priorities,

especially Trump's warming up to Pakistan.

According to Indian media, the first flashpoint in the relationship was Operation Sindoor, the four-day conflict with Pakistan, when Trump claimed he had brokered the ceasefire, a claim that Islamabad endorsed but New Delhi rejected. Trump has since repeated that claim of bringing peace to South Asia umpteen times, but India has now chosen to ignore it rather than join the issue with him.

The underlying tension, with the differences amplified by the media, was visible at the Evian meeting where Trump and Modi formally shook hands without the customary hug of their previous meetings. The encounter symbolised diplomatic continuity rather than dramatic political change. The optics remained warm, but the substance underscored an increasingly transactional relationship, the leitmotif of Trump's disruptive foreign policy.

The question confronting both countries is whether India-US relations can move beyond personalities and become resilient enough to withstand changing political winds.

The Economics Deficit

Ironically, economics had become the weakest pillar of an otherwise strong strategic relationship. Bilateral trade continues to grow, but disagreements persist over tariffs, agricultural access, digital regulations, data governance and intellectual property.

Unlike security cooperation, trade negotiations involve powerful domestic constituencies in both countries. For India, protecting farmers and small industries remains politically sensitive. For the US, concerns about market access and trade imbalances remain a bipartisan issue. But both sides, nudged by their leadership, are committed to close the deal quickly and set a bilateral trade target of \$500 billion. However, economic friction may become a lasting feature rather than a temporary irritant under Trump, many analysts say.

Technology the New Frontier

If defence defined the previous decade, technology may define the next one.

Artificial intelligence, semi-conductors, quantum computing, biotechnology, space and critical minerals have become central to bilateral engagement. India offers scale, engineering talent and a growing digital ecosystem. The United States offers capital, advanced technologies and innovation networks.

The challenge will be translating political declarations into sustainable industrial partnerships. Competition from China is accelerating this process, but implemen-



When President Trump and Prime Minister Modi met at Evian, France, on the sidelines of the G7 summit in June 2026, it was a vastly different India that the US president was engaging; the discourse was businesslike.
(Photo on X@NaredraModi)

tation remains uneven. Both countries must also navigate growing debates over data sovereignty, digital regulations and technology governance.

These are not merely technical disagreements; they are emerging geopolitical fault lines.

The Russia and China Factors

Perhaps the most persistent source of disagreement remains India's relationship with Russia. India continues to depend significantly on Russian defence equipment and energy imports. Western governments often criticize this dependence, particularly in the context of the Ukraine conflict. India argues that its choices are guided by national interest on energy security rather than ideological alignment.

From New Delhi's perspective, strategic autonomy requires maintaining diversified partnerships. In the pre-Trump period Washington has had largely accommodated this position, recognising India's long-term importance and the balancing role it plays in keeping global oil prices stable. However, the issue periodically resurfaces and remains an underlying irritant.

If there was one factor that was holding the partnership together it was China. Despite fluctuations in trade relations, both India and the United States shared concerns about Beijing's growing economic, technological and military influence.

The Indo-Pacific framework became the principal theatre of cooperation. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) involving India, the United States, Japan and Australia evolved into an important strategic mechanism against China's putative rise. Defence exercises expanded, intelligence-sharing increased, and military interoperability improved substantially.

Yet, the US under Trump has been changing its stance towards China as he has set up a working relationship with Xi Jinping with whom he has promoted the con-

cept of G2 (US and China), and perhaps wants to use partners like the Quad as a hedge in managing this difficult relationship with China.

The Diaspora Advantage

One of the most durable strengths of India-US relations lies outside the government.

The five million strong Indian diaspora has become an extraordinary bridge between the two societies. Indian Americans occupy influential positions in technology, academia, medicine, business and public administration. This human connectivity provides resilience that many bilateral relationships lack.

Unlike traditional state-to-state partnerships, India-US relations increasingly operate across multiple layers: governments, businesses, universities, technology ecosystems and people-to-people networks. This may ultimately prove more important than any summit meeting.

Evian: Symbolism Amid Uncertainty

Against this backdrop, the Modi-Trump meeting in Evian represented a reaffirmation rather than a reset. The discussions reportedly covered economic growth, AI, investment partnerships, maritime security, supply chains and regional crises. The meeting also took place amid heightened concerns over West Asian instability and disruptions to global trade routes.

The significance of Evian lies less in immediate outcomes and more in what it signals. Both leaders recognise that the relationship is too important to neglect.

Neither side wants a rupture. Yet neither side is prepared to subordinate national interests for the sake of maintaining diplomatic harmony.

Differing Perspectives

The transformation of India-US relations over the past quarter century has been remarkable. Yet a closer partnership has not eliminated fundamental differences.

The partnership is no longer about whether the two countries need each other, which is a given. The real challenge now is managing lofty expectations.

Former US diplomat Greg Newsham lists three points to argue why India still matters to the US, and that the Indian commentariat often swings between extremes about the relationship.

First, the appointment of Sergio Gor as US ambassador was a calculated one. Gor can call up the White House anytime and Trump will respond, a privilege that not many ambassadors have.

Second, the visit of the Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, Marco Rubio, last month was not a random one. It was "a gauge of the importance the Trump administration assigns to India".

Third, the India-US military-to-military prelateship is stronger than ever. The two forces conduct frequent exercises, while India has become a maintenance and logistics hub for the US Navy and arms sales are robust. India also gets a degree of special treatment regarding technology exports.

"And at the end of the day, Indian and American strategic interests align — as the world enters a struggle between free, consensually governed nations and expansionist totalitarian ones," avers Newsham, who is a fellow at the Center for Security Policy and Yorktown Institute.

There is no doubt India seeks recognition as an independent great power that wants to keep its international choices open. The United States seeks a reliable partner in preserving a stable balance of power in Asia. These objectives overlap but are not identical. The future trajectory of the relationship will depend on how effectively both countries reconcile their different perspectives.

The age of romance in India-US relations may be ending. The age of realism has begun. As Shubhjit Roy of The Indian Express noted post-Evian: "India understands that Trump needs to be managed for the next three years, and an openly confrontational approach or submissive behavior doesn't work. Modi's approach - credit him with peace efforts while working on a trade deal to limit tariffs - is the best possible strategy".



Tarun Basu is Director, Society for Policy Studies, New Delhi, that runs the digital platform South Asia Monitor. He was Founder and Editor in Chief of IANS news agency, which grew out of India Abroad whose operations he had established in India in 1987. He has travelled with three Indian Prime Ministers to the US - Narasimha Rao, Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh - as part of their invited media delegations. He was also editor-author of the anthology "Kamala Harris and the Rise of Indian Americans" 2021. He can be reached at tarunbasu.sps@gmail.com



The Name Is Bond ETBOND

KUMAR SHAH'S WARP-SPEED BID TO "REWRITE MEDICINE"

Evidence-based medicine and biotechnology constitute twin engines of a multi-trillion-dollar global market. The prevailing expert consensus advances at a measured pace, establishing substantial regulatory and evidentiary barriers that impede rapid adoption of groundbreaking innovations.

Kumar Shah believes that lack of pace is the problem.

Shah is founder of Endocrine Technology LLC, operating under the codename *ETBOND – Extraterrestrial Technology*. His stated mission: compress the timelines of drug discovery, development, and global therapeutic deployment from decades to what he calls "warp speed," without the billion-dollar R&D burden that defines the industry.

"Medicine moves slowly," Shah says. "ETBOND moves at warp speed."

The ETBOND Path

To deliver that acceleration, ETBOND follows five core principles:

1. Zero-Cost Innovation. Use computational leverage and AI to drive breakthroughs without traditional capital intensity.

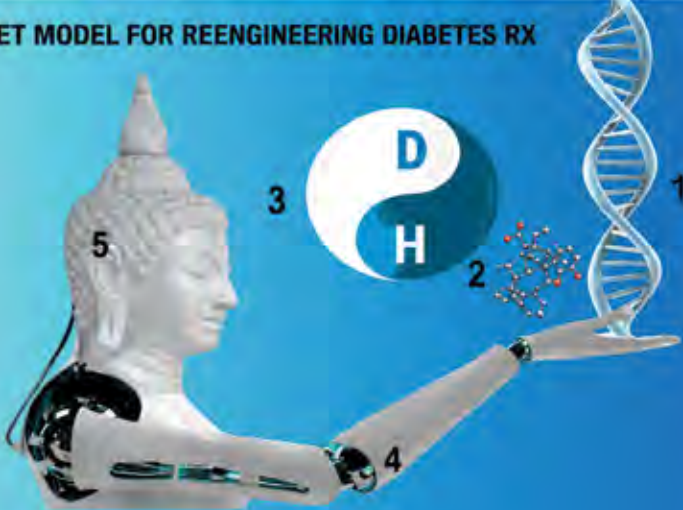


Dr Kumar Shah in his office in Hempstead, NY.



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ETBOND ET MODEL FOR REENGINEERING DIABETES RX



1. Genomic Advances: Chromosome 1Q32
2. Autoimmunity: Factor H
3. Islet Damage: Factor D
4. Vascular Damage: C3 Amplification loop
5. Reengineering Diabetes and its complications

IMAGE SHOWS HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CAN BE APPLIED TO "REENGINEER DIABETES".

Reengineering diabetes targets complications of diabetes and its treatment by inhibiting adverse effects of high glucose on various organs such as heart, kidney, brain, liver etc.

There are 5 steps of artificial intelligence

1. Genetic advances in Genomics and fundamental of immunology
2. Identifications of novel molecular targets Factor H
3. Identification of novel molecular target Factor D
4. Database analysis of literature
5. Knowledge Filtering to remove noise and a drug that targets Factor H and D safely.

- 2. **Target Expert Blind Spots.** Pursue high-impact mechanisms overlooked or dismissed by prevailing consensus.
- 3. **Lead Beyond Nobel Frontiers.** Operate in scientific domains that sit at or beyond the edge of current laureate work.
- 4. **Warp-Speed Development.** Systematically compress discovery-to-clinic and clinic-to-global-access timelines.
- 5. **AI-Native Repurposing.** Fuse existing, validated tools and technologies with artificial intelligence in ways previously impossible.

The result, Shah argues, is a platform designed to deliver life-saving technologies at global scale, far faster than incumbent models allow.

Tuned by Immortals, Built for Earth

ETBOND's internal culture draws inspiration from what Shah calls "immortal masters of the universe." Buddha for first-principles insight. Bruce Lee for speed and adaptability. Bond for execution under pressure. Nikola Tesla for energy and systems design.

Srinivasa Ramanujan for pattern recognition where others see noise.

Shah describes himself as the company's "humble steward." He says the team holds "daily strategy sessions" to map breakthroughs aimed at reducing human suffering worldwide.

For public and investor audiences, the company translates that ethos into a concrete thesis: use AI to unlock new utility from existing platforms, target deprioritized pathways, and radically reduce the time and cost of bringing therapies to patients.

Why It Matters Now

The global biotech and pharmaceutical market exceeds \$1.5 trillion annually. Yet development costs per approved drug routinely cross \$2 billion, with timelines averaging 10-15 years. Shah contends those numbers reflect systemic friction, not scientific necessity.

"Every year of delay is a year of lives lost," he says. "ETBOND exists to collapse that delay."

The company is currently advancing programs that leverage AI-driven analysis of existing clinical data, diagnostics, and drug mechanisms to reengineer diabetes. While specific pipeline details remain confidential, the stated goal is global deployment of accessible therapeutic technologies.

Looking Ahead

ETBOND's model succeeds, it would challenge fundamental assumptions about how fast, how cheap, and how inclusive medical innovation can be. Skeptics will point to regulatory reality and the complexity of biology. Shah welcomes the doubt.

"The caravan of experts moves at a comfortable pace," he says, referencing the industry's incumbents. "We're building the engine to take it to warp speed."

Kumar Shah, M.D. (President)
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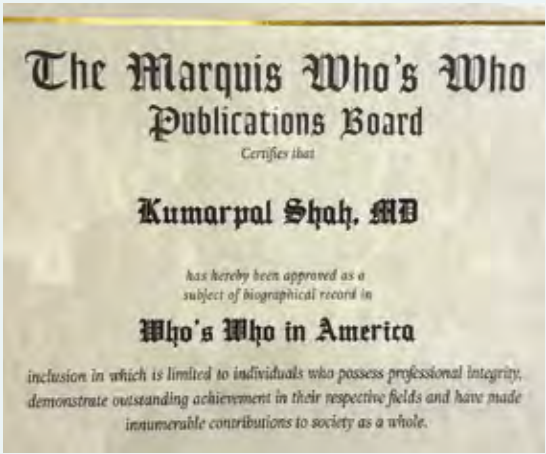
Dr Kumar Shah's Grand Vision for Global Medicine

By Team@TSAT

Based in downtown Brooklyn, Dr. Kumar Shah, M.D., balances the daily realities of a clinical endocrinologist with a remarkably grand vision for global medicine. A Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine specializing in Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism, Dr. Shah operates his practice at 326 Livingston Street. Yet, behind his clinical routine lies decades of pioneering research aimed at disrupting established medical paradigms.

A Foundation in Elite Research

Dr. Shah's research roots run deep. Early in his career, he spent three years conducting clinical research at Montefiore Hospital, which included a pivotal stint in the laboratory of Dr. Rosalyn Yalow, the 1977 Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine. This experience permanently fused his clinical training with a passion for research and development.



Kumar Shah, MD, is a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine specializing in Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism

When he entered private practice in the 1980s, Dr. Shah refused to abandon his research. He pioneered the clinical use of radioisotope techniques and quickly gravitated toward immune modulation science. By analyzing vast amounts of third-party data—advancing on nearly 20,000 publications—he began building the foundations of what he views as a cutting-edge biotechnology framework through his venture, ETBond Technology.

Re-Engineering Diabetes and Fighting Dogma

A major focus of Dr. Shah's current work is "re-engineering diabetes," a novel approach he is slated to present as a keynote speaker in Paris later this month. His the-

ory suggests that diabetes complications are driven directly by immune interactions rather than strictly blood sugar (A1C) levels. By inhibiting these specific immune pathways, he believes complications can be mitigated independently of glucose management.

Operating outside traditional academic institutions, Dr. Shah has largely self-financed his complex research from his clinical practice and savvy stock market investments, including a major financial surge during the COVID-19 pandemic. He acknowledges that his independent status makes securing traditional NIH grants difficult, but it also gives him the freedom to challenge the status quo. As Dr. Shah notes:

"I am fighting established science with a knowledge explosion that simplifies everything. Difficult to prove to experts and physicians—they look through the lens of established science and not from an innovation point of view. This creates blind spots."

A Global Vision

Whether detailing a 150-page book chapter on breast cancer limitations or mapping out applications for 40 diseases, Dr. Shah's driving force remains constant. Driven personally by a love for adventure—inspired by figures like Himalayan mountaineer Amit Bist—he views his medical journey as the ultimate expedition.

Ultimately, his goals transcend downtown Brooklyn. As Dr. Shah summarizes, "My philosophy of life is to save lives on a global scale. And I'm working towards it as one person, but I'm open to forming groups, allowing different people to come in and network and develop proper company." For Dr. Shah, the path forward is clear: stay focused on his patients, secure his patents, and boldly lead with data.

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

A home away from home



Renu Chopra, with her husband, Parveen, and son, Shiv.

As a child growing up in India, I thought going to America would remain a wild dream. I never knew this dream would come true someday.

Life was good back home and one day my husband said he was going to America with a job offer. I was shocked at the thought of uprooting our lives and dismantling my son's schooling. But destiny had a different plan for us, and we rolled with the flow.

We arrived in New York in 2007, and the roller-coaster ride began - trying to get a job, a shot at the green card, schooling for our son while having to face curve balls life threw at us.

Looking at how far we have reached, I must state that this has

been a wonderful country and a land of opportunity as promised.

We did not know a soul here and decided to work each day without looking back at the lives

we left behind. Walking, bussing, taking trains and missing trains, and forgetting stops and piggy-backing our 9-year-old tired from walking many blocks. Yet, life was

truly unfolding. Each day became purposeful, shaped our character and taught our son how to deal with challenges.

We applied for our Green Card and within 3 months it arrived in the mail. Life started getting easier, we purchased a house, gave our son a free ride at Georgia Tech and he is now working in San Francisco.

We have made friends and attended community gatherings and have built a life here. I personally feel if you have a hunger in your belly, you can achieve your life's goals provided you walk the right path in life.

America is a land for dreamers, and many people have had

their dreams come true. We are truly blessed to be one of them. People have been very helpful on our journey this far. I never felt that we left our people behind as we built deeper connections here as well as emotional bonding and being there for each other.

Here in the US people respect all religions and all Indian festivals are celebrated with zest at community gatherings.

I love this country truly and never think of going back. This is my home that has built beautiful memories for me. As America celebrates 250th year of its Independence, I feel blessed to be living to see the day.

Renu Chopra
Marketing Executive - Altice USA

America's open system helps you achieve what you want

I am honored to be a part of the celebration of America's 250th anniversary of Independence. I came here in 1992 after a year in Canada. In both countries, I had a house to live in from Day 1 - my sister's family in Canada and my wife's family in the USA. Because of this good luck, I could fully focus on my medical studies.

The American Dream became possible with the help of numerous noble personalities I met over the years - in India, Canada and in the USA. I also had a chance to work with great mentors. I was learnt that anyone can achieve what they want in this country because of the open sys-

tem that accepts hard-working people from all over the world.

I was able to join teams of top-notch researchers, present novel findings at major national and international meetings as well as publish in major journals.

A change in my work direction happened as I started to give back to the community. I started doing outreach programs to educate communities at large about the advances in medical oncology and hematology. Thousands of interactions with patients, families and community leaders helped me dig deeper into their questions and educate myself beyond the medical field.

I went on to write two books - "Mind-Body Crosstalk" and "A Healthy Triad" to meet some of the needs of the patients. We all know that "Health is Wealth" but because of change in thought processes over the years that "Money is the only Wealth", we have come to a point where chronic diseases are increasing. I propose that we resume healthy lifestyles and mitigate extensive sufferings from chronic problems.

My message is to follow "A Healthy Triad" of Stress Relief, Good Nutrition and Exercise. To make it a Quad, we can add Serving Humanity without a selfish motive (random acts of kindness to others, earning good karma). It gives us very healthy changes at the genetic level. My heartiest thanks to The Almighty, my parents on both sides, all teachers, mentors, friends, and colleagues. I am nothing without them.

Dr Tarun Wasil
Author of "Mind-Body Crosstalk" and "A Healthy Triad"



My heritage and American experience have complemented each other

When I arrived in New York after my marriage, I brought with me the values instilled by my father, the late Wing Commander Raja Ram Rastogi, and the rich cultural heritage of a childhood spent traveling across India with my family. Like many immigrants, I came with hope, determination, and a belief that hard work could create opportunities. What I did not know then was how fully America would embrace my aspirations and provide a path to turn those dreams into reality.

My professional journey began in the technology departments of major Wall Street firms, including Prudential Securities, Lehman Brothers, UBS, and Fidelity Investments.

For ten years, I worked as a Technical Programmer/Analyst, gaining valuable experience and learning first hand that dedication, competence, and perseverance are rewarded in America regardless of one's background. Those years helped shape my confidence and taught me the importance of continuous learning and adaptability.

While I valued my corporate career, I aspired to build something of my own. Eighteen years ago, I founded my healthcare business, developing and executing the business and financial plans that transformed an idea into a successful enterprise.

Entrepreneurship taught me resilience, perseverance, and the courage to embrace uncertainty. It reinforced my belief that the American Dream remains attainable for those willing to work hard, take risks, and remain committed to their goals.



As my career progressed, I felt a growing responsibility to give back to the community that had given me so much. Today, I serve as Chairperson of the National Indo-American Association for Senior Citizens (NIAASC), Vice President of the National Federation of Indian-American Associations (NFIA), Vice President of the New York Chapter of the Association of Indians in America (AIA), and Parliamentarian at the national level of AIA. I am also

actively involved with the Rotary Club of North Shore, Queens Community Board 11, and the Diversity Council of the Boy Scouts of America. In 2018, I had the honor of serving as President of the India Association of Long Island.

Throughout my journey, I have remained deeply connected to my Indian roots through music, dance, theater, and community service. My heritage and my American experience have complemented one another, enriching both my personal and professional life.

After over 3 decades in Douglaston, New York, with my husband, Pradeep, I can say with gratitude that the American Dream is real. It rewards perseverance, encourages service, and offers endless opportunities to build a meaningful life while helping others along the way. My journey is a testament to the opportunities this nation provides and to the enduring power of hope, hard work, and community.

Gunjan Rastogi
Chairperson of the National Indo-American Association for Senior Citizens

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INDIA IS WATCHING ZEE**

Yours Truly

Z

Z STUDIOS Z5 Z TV Z CINEMA

Z ZEST Z BANGLA Z MARATHI Z TELUGU Z TAMIL Z KANNADA

ZEE TV arrived at a time when access to Indian programming overseas was limited. It quickly became more than a television channel—it became a trusted companion for families celebrating festivals, following beloved serials, enjoying music and movies, and staying connected to life in India. As the diaspora expanded, so did ZEE's offerings, introducing programming in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and other languages to reflect India's rich cultural diversity. Recognizing changing audience demographics, ZEE also introduced innovative initiatives such as Made In America in 2017, one of the first English-language reality shows created by an Indian-origin television network in the United States.

With changing viewing habits, ZEE embraced the digital era through the launch of ZEE5 in the United States in 2021. The platform offers an extensive library of movies, original series, television shows, regional content, and sports, allowing viewers to enjoy premium entertainment anytime and anywhere. The introduction of ZEE5 Add-ons further strengthened its position by aggregating multiple South Asian streaming services into a single platform, delivering greater convenience and value to subscribers.

Beyond entertainment, ZEE Media Corporation Limited extends the company's reach through respected news brands including Zee News, Zee Business, and WION, keeping overseas audiences informed on developments in India and around the world. Meanwhile, ZEE Studios continues to bring Indian cinema to theatres across North America, showcasing blockbuster and regional-language films to both diaspora and mainstream audiences.

Today, ZEE is far more than a media company. It is a cultural bridge connecting generations, preserving heritage, and celebrating South Asian identity across borders. As audiences continue to evolve, ZEE remains committed to bringing the best of Indian storytelling to homes across North America while strengthening the enduring bond between India and its global diaspora.

ZEE Entertainment in North America: Connecting generations, cultures, and communities

As the United States celebrates 250 years of independence, it also recognizes the immigrant communities that have shaped its cultural landscape. Among them, the South Asian diaspora has become one of North America's fastest-growing and most influential

communities. For nearly three decades, ZEE Entertainment Enterprises Limited (ZEEL) has played a pivotal role in keeping this diaspora connected to its language, culture, and heritage.

Since launching ZEE TV Americas in 1998, ZEE has grown from a single tele-

vision channel into one of North America's largest South Asian media networks. Today, its portfolio spans more than 18 television channels and digital services across the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean, serving millions through entertainment, news, films, and streaming.

History

GHADR - The echoes of the Indian freedom movement in America

Predating the demand for 'Poorna Swaraj' by 16 years, the Ghadr movement proved that America's multicultural cities were incubators for revolutionary thought. Here is the forgotten history of how Indian immigrants, diaspora lobbyists, and FDR shaped India's road to 1947.

By Bhuvan Lall

On November 1, 1913, Lala Har Dayal, a former Stanford University lecturer dressed in his worn, tattered coat, stood confidently in the middle of the mission-style hall of the newly opened Shattuck Hotel in Berkeley, California. This hotel, the finest in the city, was hosting a significant gathering: the entire top leadership of the Hindustan Association of the Pacific Coast (HAPC), led by Sohan Singh Bhakna, including Kartar Singh Sarabha and Gobind Behari Lal had gathered. The hall was packed.

Alongside Indian farmers, students, laborers, and members of the HAPC, a group of American intellectuals supportive of India's independence movement were present. Har Dayal's network in North America was unmatched. His American friends, publisher Fremont Older, journalist John Barry, Professor Arthur Pope of Berkeley, social activist Charles Erskine Scott Wood, and even Stanford University's President David Starr Jordan turned up for his event.



Lala Har Dayal, ex-Stanford University lecturer, inspired many expatriate Indians living in the US and Canada to campaign against British rule in India during the First World War. (Archival photo)

Despite facing health struggles in recent months, Har Dayal stood confidently. His sharp eyes scanned the crowd carefully, alert for any British Secret Service spies. Then he held the first issue of the Ghadr newspaper - a publication inspired by India's First War of Independence in 1857, and delivered a fiery speech. He proclaimed, "A new era begins in the history of today's India. The power of the 'Pen' will explode like a cannonball. This newspaper is the staunch enemy of the English Empire, and a bugle call for Indian youth. Awake, take up arms, and fight for India's independence."

The first issue of Ghadr, dated November 1st, 1913, described

itself as "the enemy of the English Raj". This radical weekly newspaper was intended to serve as both the prospectus and the voice of the movement. The name Ghadr, meaning 'rebellion' in Urdu, had been chosen by Har Dayal, and he explained, "Our name and work are identical."

The idea of America itself carried symbolic weight for the Indian immigrants. The Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution provided an ideological vocabulary for Indian nationalists like Har Dayal who believed that a revolution would bring down Hukumat-i-Britannia through armed resistance. Soon the Ghadr ki Goonj (the sounds of rebellion) that had its headquarters on the soil of America reached worldwide with over 50,000 volunteers and the largest anti-colonial intercontinental movement in human history began. It came to be known as the Ghadr Party and demonstrated that America's multicultural cities could serve as incubators for Indian revolutionary thought. American authorities largely tolerated the movement's activities in deference to free speech norms, even as British colonial officials lobbied Washington to suppress it. This reluctance to simply do Britain's bidding gave Ghadr activists breathing room they would not have found elsewhere in the British-aligned world.

Years ahead of 'Poorna Swaraj'

The progressive, ultra-liberal, non-sectarian, and gender-neutral Ghadr Party launched in California was the most significant development in the history of Indian resistance to colonial occupation since the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. On 13 April 1915, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (later Mahatma Gandhi) after earning fame as an activist in South Africa arrived at St. Stephen's College in Delhi. Principal Sushil Kumar Rudra and Rev. Charles Andrews spoke about their former student Har Dayal's remarkable initiatives towards India's freedom, including non-cooperation, civil-disobedience and revolutionary activity.

Earlier in 1909, Har Dayal's exceptional oratory skills left British audiences in awe, inspiring a young student at Harrow - Jawaharlal Nehru. Remarkably the Ghadr movement, also the opening salvo in the Indian nationalist endeavor,



On a visit in August 2022, Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu paid tributes to Gadari babas and reviewed the progress of renovation of Gadari Memorial Hall in San Francisco, CA. (Photo courtesy: Indian Consulate, San Francisco)

or, began a year before the world would be engulfed in World War 1 and four years before the Russian Revolution. Ahead of its time, it was eight years before the Communist Party of India's Hasrat Mohani and Swami Kumaranand, moved a resolution for complete independence. The Congress Party adopted its famous slogan for 'poorna swaraj' only in December 1929 at its Lahore session - sixteen years after the Ghadr Party first raised its demand for independence.

Ghadr lit the spark that inspired the revolutionaries in India with ships dispatched from America with arms and ammunition. An alarmed Hukumat-i-Britannia set out to crush Ghadr. Fearing the worst, they banned Har Dayal from India, distanced him from his family, and painted him out of the Indian newspapers. Almost 200 British secret agents, including Somerset Maugham, were dispatched with a licence to kill the globe-trotting Har Dayal, and this led to the creation of MI6. A contingent of British spies arrived in America and Canada to infiltrate the movement. But it was too late. Always ahead of his tormentors, Har Dayal escaped to Europe to covertly guide Ghadr from the continent. The Hukumat-i-Britannia could never frame charges against him.

Next, Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the most fiery voices for Indian independence, arrived in America during World War 1 and helped found the India Home Rule League of America in New York in 1917, to build American public sympathy for Indian independence. These

early diaspora efforts planted seeds that would later bloom into meaningful political pressure. Figures like William Shirer and Reinhold Niebuhr wrote sympathetically about Mahatma Gandhi's campaigns, helping shape American public opinion. Pearl Buck, the Nobel Prize-winning author, used her public platform to argue that American support for colonialism was self-defeating. Jag Jit Singh, president of the India League of America, became one of the most effective lobbyists for Indian independence in Washington. He cultivated relationships with American Congressmen, organized speaking tours, and ensured that Indian voices reached American ears beyond the diplomatic sphere.

From New York lobbyists to the White House

The most significant American intervention came during World War II, and its chief architect was President Franklin D. Roosevelt. FDR harbored a genuine antipathy toward European colonialism. He sent his personal envoy, Colonel Louis Johnson, to India to assess the political situation. He believed that the war against fascism could not be morally coherent if Britain simultaneously maintained empires. In private conversations and state communications, Roosevelt repeatedly pressed British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on the question of Indian independence. Roosevelt pressured Churchill to make meaningful concessions to the Congress Party, writing him a blunt personal letter warning that the failure of the

Cripps Mission was a serious political blunder.

By then Har Dayal had passed away on a cold winter night in Philadelphia on March 4, 1939 while on a lecture tour in America, leaving behind a trailblazer's mark on the world. It's not surprising that fictional characters with a likeness to Har Dayal appeared in major novels, and Paramount Pictures produced a Hollywood film based on his life in 1922, cementing his place in history. He did not live to see India's freedom, however elements of the Ghadr Party merged with Subhas Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Fauj. Finally, largely due to the efforts of Azad Hind Fauj, countless revolutionaries and the freedom fighters of the Congress Party, India won its freedom on August 15, 1947. The United States was among the first nations to formally recognize independent India, and the Indian government received warm congratulations from Washington. The story of American involvement in Indian independence is ultimately a story about how ideas, interests, and international pressure intersect with the will of a people determined to be free.



Bhuvan Lall is the biographer of Har Dayal, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Vallabhbhai Patel. He is also the author of Namaste Cannes, India

on the World Stage and Delhi in the Era of Revolutionaries. He can be reached at writerlall@gmail.com

America at 250: A defining moment in a changing global order

The historic milestone comes at a time when the global balance of power is evolving rapidly, with China's rise, shifting geopolitics, and the growing importance of Asia redefining the international order.

By K S Tomar

As the United States marks the 250th anniversary of its independence on July 4, 2026, the celebrations extend far beyond ceremonial parades and fireworks. The semi-quintecennial arrives at an important historical moment when America continues to remain the world's most influential military, technological, and economic power, yet simultaneously faces a rapidly transforming global order shaped by new geopolitical realities and emerging strategic competitors.

The anniversary is therefore not merely a celebration of the past but also an occasion for reflection on America's future role in the world. From the adoption of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 to becoming the central architect of the post-World War-II international system, the American journey has profoundly shaped modern history.

Over two centuries, America emerged as a symbol of democratic governance, innovation, scientific advancement, and economic opportunity. The United States played decisive roles in both World Wars, led the Western alliance during the Cold War, and pioneered institutions that helped stabilize the global economy and security architecture after 1945. For decades, the international system revolved largely around Washington's leadership.

From unipolar moment to multipolar world

The end of the Soviet Union in 1991 ushered in what many described as the "unipolar moment," when America stood as the world's sole superpower with unmatched global reach. However, the international environment today is far more complex and competitive than it was three decades ago.

The most significant development has been the remarkable rise of China as a major economic, technological and strategic power. China's transformation into the world's second-largest economy and its growing influence in trade, infrastructure, manufacturing and advanced technologies have altered global geopolitical equations.

Unlike earlier strategic rivalries defined mainly by military competition, the emerging US-China contest extends across trade, supply chains, artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure and maritime influence. As a result, the global system is increasingly moving towards a more multipolar structure in which multiple powers play influential roles.

At the same time, America continues to retain enormous strengths — world-leading universities, technological innovation, financial influence, military capability and unmatched global soft power. Despite growing competition, Washington remains central to global diplomacy, security and economic stability.



The presidency of Donald Trump introduced a significant shift in American strategic thinking. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

Trump and the recalibration of American strategy

The presidency of Donald Trump introduced a significant shift in American strategic thinking. Trump's "America First" doctrine reflected growing domestic concerns regarding globalisation, manufacturing decline and the costs of prolonged overseas engagements.

His administration pushed for a stronger focus on domestic economic priorities while simultaneously redefining America's approach towards trade and strategic competition. Trump also accelerated Washington's recognition that China represented the principal long-term strategic challenge to American global leadership.

Although Trump's style often generated intense debate internationally, his presidency contributed to a broader bipartisan consensus within the American establishment regarding the need to strengthen the country's economic competitiveness, reduce dependence on critical foreign supply chains and enhance strategic focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

The strategic importance of Asia

One of the defining geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century is the growing importance of Asia. Economic growth, manufacturing capacity, energy routes and technological competition are increasingly concentrated in the Indo-Pacific region.

Trump's administration recognized this shift and intensified efforts to strengthen America's Asian partnerships. The revival of the Quad involving India, Japan, Australia and the United States reflected Washington's desire to build a stable strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific.

America's Asian policy under Trump focused heavily on ensuring freedom of navigation, strengthening regional security part-

nerships and maintaining stability in a region increasingly shaped by China's expanding influence. While the approach evolved further under subsequent administrations, the broader strategic direction towards deeper Indo-Pacific engagement remained intact.

Why India occupies a central position

In this changing geopolitical environment, India's importance to the United States has risen substantially. Washington increasingly views India as a major democratic partner capable of contributing to regional stability, economic diversification and strategic balance in Asia.

Over the past decade, India-US relations have expanded significantly in defence cooperation, technology partnerships, semiconductor manufacturing, intelligence sharing and critical infrastructure. Shared concerns regarding Indo-Pacific security and supply-chain resilience have further strengthened the relationship. At the same time, India has maintained its traditional policy of strategic autonomy. New Delhi continues to balance relations with multiple global centres of power, including the United States, Russia, Europe and the Middle East. This balanced approach allows India to pursue its national interests while engaging constructively with competing global powers.

For Washington, India represents not merely a regional partner but an increasingly important pillar of its long-term Indo-Pacific strategy.

Challenges before America at 250

As America enters its 250th year, it faces several important challenges alongside enormous opportunities. Rapid technological changes, economic competition, global supply-chain restructuring, climate con-

cerns and geopolitical tensions require strategic adaptation.

The rise of China has compelled Washington to rethink aspects of its economic and security policies. Simultaneously, domestic debates regarding trade, immigration, industrial policy and America's international role continue shaping political discourse within the country.

Yet American history also demonstrates a remarkable capacity for reinvention. The United States has repeatedly adapted to major transitions — from the Civil War to the Great Depression, from the Cold War to the digital revolution. Many analysts believe America's institutional strengths, innovation ecosystems, and entrepreneurial culture continue to provide strong foundations for long-term resilience.

The future of the global order

The world is unlikely to return to an era dominated entirely by a single power. Instead, the future international system may increasingly be characterised by strategic competition, regional partnerships and issue-based coalitions involving multiple influential nations.

In such an environment, America's role may evolve from that of an uncontested global hegemon to the leading power within a more interconnected and competitive world order. How Washington manages relations with China, strengthens alliances and adapts to emerging economic realities will shape global politics in the coming decades.

For countries like India, this transition creates both opportunities and strategic responsibilities. As geopolitical competition intensifies, New Delhi's diplomatic flexibility and growing economic weight will become increasingly important in maintaining regional and global balance.

A historic milestone beyond celebration

America's 250th Independence anniversary, therefore, represents more than a national celebration. It marks a defining moment in the evolution of the international system itself. The United States remains one of the most powerful and influential nations in human history, but it now operates within a world that is becoming more distributed, competitive and multipolar.

Whether America can successfully adapt to these transformations while preserving its leadership role will not only shape its own future but also influence the direction of global politics in the decades ahead.



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The views expressed are not necessarily those of The South Asian Times

The rise of political capital: From margins to mainstream

Tracing a seven-decade arc from Dalip Singh Saund's lonely breakthrough to today's influential, bipartisan "Samosa Caucus," this feature explores how Indian Americans moved from the political margins straight to the center of power.

When Dalip Singh Saund raised his right hand and took the oath of office as a member of Congress in January 1957, he entered territory few immigrants from India had ever imagined. The son of a Punjabi farmer became not only the first Indian American elected to Congress but also the first Sikh and first Asian American to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. At a time when Indian immigrants were a small and largely invisible minority, Saund's victory symbolized a breakthrough against barriers of race, citizenship, and political exclusion.

Nearly seven decades later, Indian Americans have moved from the margins of American public life to the center of political power. From the Vice Presidency and Congress to governors' mansions, state legislatures, city halls, federal agencies, and the White House, Indian Americans today occupy influential positions across the political spectrum. Their rise represents one of the most remarkable success stories in modern American democracy.

Saund's election was decades ahead of its time. Born in Punjab in 1899, he arrived in the United States as a student, earned a doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley, and became a successful farmer, civic leader, and judge before entering politics. Yet for years after his historic victory, he remained an exception rather than the beginning of a trend.

The transformation began after the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 opened America's doors to skilled immigrants from Asia. Thousands of Indian engineers, physicians, scientists, entrepreneurs, academics, and technology professionals arrived in the United States, establishing thriving communities and creating a powerful economic footprint. Over time, economic success evolved into civic participation, campaign engagement, and eventually electoral representation.

Today, the Indian American community numbers more than five million people, up from fewer than two million at the turn of the century. With median household incomes among the highest of any ethnic group in the country and nearly three-quarters holding college degrees, Indian Americans have translated educational and professional achievements into growing political influence.



The Samosa Caucus: (from left) Representatives Suhas Subramanyam, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Shri Thanedar, Ami Bera, Pramila Jayapal and Ro Khanna. (Photo courtesy: X@RepBera)

The first major statewide breakthroughs came through leaders such as Bobby Jindal in Louisiana and Nikki Haley in South Carolina. Their elections demonstrated that candidates of Indian origin could win statewide office far beyond traditional immigrant enclaves. Both challenged conventional assumptions about race, identity, and electability in American politics.

The defining breakthrough, however, came with Kamala Harris. The daughter of Indian cancer researcher Shyamala Gopalan and Jamaican economist Donald Harris, she first made history as the first Indian American woman elected to the U.S. Senate from California. Her election as Vice President in 2020 and swearing-in in 2021 marked a historic milestone—not only as the first woman and first person of South Asian heritage to hold the office, but as a symbol of the arrival of Indian Americans into the highest levels of American governance.

Harris's ascent inspired a new generation of Indian American candidates and helped normalize the idea that Americans of Indian heritage could aspire to any office in the nation.

Nowhere is this political evolution more visible than in Congress, where the so-called "Samosa Caucus" has emerged as a symbol of Indian American political influence. Coined by Illinois Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, the term refers to the growing group of Indian American lawmakers serving in the House of Representatives.

The 119th Congress marked a

historic milestone with six Indian American members serving simultaneously—the largest representation in U.S. history. The caucus included Ami Bera of California's 6th District, Pramila Jayapal of Washington's 7th District, Ro Khanna of California's 17th District, Raja Krishnamoorthi of Illinois' 8th District, Shri Thanedar of Michigan's 13th District, and Suhas Subramanyam of Virginia's 10th District.

The growth is striking. When Bera entered Congress in 2013, he was the only Indian American serving in the House and just the third in U.S. history. Today, six lawmakers sit in Congress, representing diverse political views, professional backgrounds, and constituencies.

Each member has carved out a distinctive role. Bera has emerged as a leading advocate for healthcare reform and stronger U.S.-India relations. Khanna has become one of Congress's most influential voices on technology policy, artificial intelligence, manufacturing, and ethics in Silicon Valley. Jayapal, the first Indian American woman elected to the House, has championed labor rights, immigration reform, and progressive economic policies. Krishnamoorthi has built a reputation as a national security and economic competitiveness expert while helping strengthen the strategic partnership between India and the United States.

Thanedar's story reflects the classic immigrant dream. Arriving in America from India with just \$20 in his pocket, he went on to

build successful businesses before entering public service. Subramanyam, meanwhile, made history as the first Indian American elected to Congress from Virginia and the first to represent the East Coast, signaling the geographic expansion of Indian American political influence beyond California and New Jersey.

Together, these lawmakers have become visible advocates for issues ranging from healthcare access and immigration reform to innovation, supply-chain resilience, education, and U.S.-India cooperation.

The Indian American political footprint extends far beyond Capitol Hill. Under the Biden-Harris administration, more than 130 Indian Americans reportedly served in senior government positions, from agency leadership roles to policy advisory posts, underscoring bipartisan confidence in the community's expertise.

The Trump administration has likewise featured influential Indian American voices. Ricky Gill serves as Senior Director for South and Central Asia at the National Security Council, while Saurabh Sharma has worked in the Presidential Personnel Office. Kush Desai has served as Deputy Press Secretary. Other prominent figures associated with Republican policy-making circles include Kash Patel, Vivek Ramaswamy, Harmeet Dhillon, and Sriram Krishnan, reflecting the growing presence of Indian Americans within conservative politics and policymaking.

This bipartisan influence may be one of the most significant developments in the community's political evolution. Unlike many immigrant groups that initially gravitated overwhelmingly toward one party, Indian Americans have established influential footholds in both Democratic and Republican circles.

At the state and local levels, the momentum continues. Aruna Miller made history as Maryland's first Indian American Lieutenant Governor, helping shape education and workforce development initiatives during a period of economic uncertainty and post-pandemic recovery.

In Ohio, entrepreneur and former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy has emerged as one of the most closely watched Indian American politicians in the country. His gubernatorial campaign has attracted national attention and could make him one of the highest-ranking elected officials of Indian

heritage in America if successful. At the municipal level, Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval gained recognition for efforts focused on public safety, economic growth, and urban development. In New York politics, Mayor Zohran Mamdani became a prominent voice on housing affordability, climate concerns, and social justice issues, illustrating the growing influence of South Asian Americans in local governance.

Across the country, nearly 40 Indian Americans now serve in state legislatures, representing the largest concentration of Asian American lawmakers from a single ethnic community. These legislators have become advocates for small-business development, education, immigration issues, disaster preparedness, and workforce innovation.

The factors driving this political rise are clear. Demographic growth has increased the community's electoral influence. Educational attainment and economic success have created networks capable of supporting campaigns and civic organizations.

Organizations such as the AAPI Victory Fund and numerous community advocacy groups have helped transform demographic growth into political mobilization, encouraging voter registration, campaign participation, and candidate recruitment.

Challenges remain. Indian Americans still account for a relatively small percentage of the U.S. population. Political divisions within the community often mirror broader national debates over immigration, economics, foreign policy, and social issues. Questions also persist about how effectively symbolic representation can be translated into tangible policy outcomes.

Yet the broader trajectory remains unmistakable.

The story is no longer simply about representation. It is about influence, leadership, and the growing ability of Indian Americans to help define the future of American governance. As candidates such as Vivek Ramaswamy pursue statewide office and lawmakers like Raja Krishnamoorthi look beyond Congress, the next chapter of this political journey is already being written.

The question today is not whether Indian Americans belong at the table of power. The question is how much of that table they will help shape in the decades ahead.

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A republic that remade the world

Examining America's legacy at 250, an Indian strategic thinker delivers a balanced verdict on a contradictory republic whose profound philosophical, scientific, and geopolitical contributions undeniably shaped the modern world order.

By Maj Gen Sudhakar Jee, VSM (Retd)

When 13 embattled colonies along the eastern seaboard of North America declared their independence from the British Crown on July 4, 1776, few among the crowned heads of Europe believed the experiment would last a generation.

Two-and-a-half centuries later, the United States of America stands not merely as a survivor but as the most consequential republic in recorded history – a nation whose contributions to human civilization have been as vast and varied as they have been, at times, profoundly contradictory.

This author writes not as an uncritical admirer of American power, nor as a detractor blinded by its excesses. Writing from the perspective of an Indian strategic thinker – from a civilization that has experienced both the burdens of colonialism and the benefits of American strategic partnership – the verdict is unmistakable: no other nation in the modern era has shaped the world's trajectory quite so decisively.

America's first and perhaps most enduring contribution was philosophical. The Declaration of Independence gave the world a vocabulary for self-determination that transcended the thirteen colonies. The assertion that all men are created equal, endowed with unalienable rights – to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness – was radical political scripture.

These words animated subsequent revolutions in France, Latin America, and eventually the anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa. India's own struggle for independence drew, selectively and critically, from the American experience.

The US Constitution of 1787 and the Bill of Rights codified a system of government built on separation of powers, individual rights, and judicial review that has since become the template for constitutional democracies across the globe.

The founding fathers were not saints, and their republic was built on the uncomfortable coexistence of liberty and slavery. But the framework they constructed carried within it the seeds of its own correction – a republic capable, however slowly and painfully, of expanding the circle of its founding promise.

The 20th century was America's great testing ground. The

American expeditionary forces helped turn the tide in Europe in 1917. President Wilson's Fourteen Points, though frustrated at Versailles, introduced the principle of national self-determination into the grammar of international relations and planted the seed of what would become the United Nations.

The Second World War was America's defining moment. By Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Britain stood battered and exhausted; the Soviet Union was haemorrhaging on the eastern front; China was in the grip of brutal Japanese occupation. The industrial mobilization that followed was without precedent: American factories produced, at their wartime peak, a ship a day and an aircraft every few minutes. The "arsenal of democracy" supplied not just American forces but also kept Allied armies in the field.

What followed the victory was equally remarkable. Rather than extract reparations – the catastrophic error of Versailles that had fertilized Nazism – America chose reconstruction. The Marshall Plan channelled over \$12 billion toward rebuilding Western Europe, consolidating its democracies in the process. Japan, too, was rebuilt under American guidance into one of the world's great industrial democracies. No victorious power in history had ever done anything quite like it.

The postwar international order was, at its core, an American construction. NATO secured Western Europe. The US-Japan alliance stabilized the Indo-Pacific. The Bretton Woods system established the dollar as the world's reserve currency and created the architecture of global trade and finance that, whatever its inequities, lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty across the developing world.

The doctrine of extended deterrence gave smaller states the confidence to invest in economic development rather than in arms races. America's contributions to science and technology have been staggering. The Wright brothers flew the first controlled, sustained, and powered aircraft in 1903. Six decades later, American astronauts walked on the Moon – a milestone for the human species.

American universities have



The American vision grants individuals the freedom to build meaningful lives according to their own aspirations. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

drawn the brightest minds from India, China, Iran, Nigeria, and beyond, producing knowledge that has benefited all of humanity. The green revolution, which saved hundreds of millions from famine, including in India, was developed in large part through American agricultural science.

American institutions drove breakthroughs in cancer treatment, HIV/AIDS, and cardiovascular disease. The development of the mRNA platform, deployed during the Covid-19 pandemic, was the fruit of decades of federally funded basic research.

No single American contribution to the modern world is more pervasive than the internet. Born from a Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency project in the late 1960s, it was commercialized and globalized by American ingenuity in the 1990s, reshaping every dimension of human activity. Silicon Valley produced the microchip, personal computer, smartphone, and platforms that now connect four billion people.

The GPS system – the backbone of modern navigation, logistics, and precision military operations worldwide – is an American public good provided free of charge to the entire world. That a device in a farmer's hand in Bihar or a fisherman's boat

off Kochi can pinpoint its location to within metres is an American gift to human productivity that is rarely acknowledged as such.

An honest essay cannot elide America's failures and contradictions. The same nation that liberated Europe also overthrew elected governments in Iran, Guatemala, and Chile. It prosecuted a catastrophic war in Vietnam. It invaded Iraq on false pretences, destabilizing a region that continues to bleed. Its own democracy has shown, in recent years, deeply troubling fractures. The ideals enshrined in 1776 have been honoured as often in the breach as in the observance.

And yet the republic has survived. It has self-corrected before, under great pain and at great cost. The abolition of slavery, the civil rights movement, and the expansion of the franchise each represented the republic bending, in Lincoln's phrase, toward the better angels of its nature.

As America approaches July 4, the poser is not whether it has been a perfect power – no great power has been – but whether the world would have been better without it. The answer, on balance, is no. A world without American intervention in the two world wars would likely have been a world under authoritarian dominion. A world without American science would have been sicker, hungrier, and more isolated. A world without the internet and GPS would be narrower, slower, and less connected.

India and America have not always seen eye to eye. Through the Cold War, Washington tilt-

ed toward Islamabad; New Delhi tilted toward Moscow. But the 21st century has brought a strategic convergence rooted in shared democratic values, complementary economies, and a common wariness of Chinese hegemony. This partnership is itself one measure of what America, at its best, continues to offer: not imperial domination, but a rules-based order in which a civilization as ancient and as proud as India's can find both space and partnership.

Two hundred and fifty years is not long by the measure of civilizations. America is still a young republic – still working out its contradictions, still debating its purpose, still arguing about what it owes the world and what the world owes it. That argument, conducted loudly and in public, is itself one of America's contributions: the insistence that power must answer to scrutiny, that governance must earn consent, and that no republic, however powerful, is exempt from accountability.

That idea, too, travelled the world. And the world is better for it.



Maj Gen Sudhakar Jee is a former Colonel of the Mahar Regiment who served in the Indian Army for over 37 years. He is a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS)

Two hundred and fifty years is not long by the measure of civilizations. America is still a young republic – still working out its contradictions, still debating its purpose, still arguing about what it owes the world and what the world owes it.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of The South Asian Times

Architects of American Economy

Indian-origin CEOs rule the Silicon Valley

The rise of Indian-origin executives to the pinnacle of American corporate power is a phenomenon that has reshaped the global tech and business landscape. Over the last two decades, a significant number of individuals born or educated in India have created some of the most influential and valuable tech companies in the US. And more and more such Indian talent continues to rule the top echelons of technology and innovation...

Sundar Pichai and Google era

As the leader of Alphabet and its subsidiary Google, Sundar Pichai sits at the center of the modern digital economy. Born in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, his journey from a modest background to the top of a trillion dollar enterprise is often cited as a classic example of the meritocratic nature of the tech industry.



(Photo courtesy: <https://live.worldbank.org>)

As of early 2026, estimates place his net worth at approximately \$1.6 billion. A substantial portion of this wealth has been accumulated through restricted stock units and various compensation packages that have occasionally exceeded \$200 million in a single year.

Under his guidance, Google has expanded its reach into artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and hardware, ensuring that the company remains a dominant force despite increasing regulatory scrutiny. His financial standing is not just a personal milestone but a testament to the immense value generated by the search and advertising empire he oversees.

Satya Nadella and rebirth of Microsoft

Satya Nadella is widely credited with one of the most successful corporate turnarounds



(Photo courtesy: <https://news.microsoft.com>)

in history. Since taking over as the chief executive of Microsoft in 2014, he shifted the focus of the company from a stagnating windows centric model to a cloud first strategy led by Azure.

This pivot saw Microsoft's market capitalisation skyrocket, reaching heights that few thought possible a decade ago. Consequently, Nadella's personal wealth has seen a commensurate rise. Current valuations of his net worth hover around \$740 million, primarily driven by his holdings in Microsoft stock.

Unlike some of his peers who founded their companies, Nadella is a career executive who climbed the internal ladder, making his entry into the ranks of the ultra wealthy particularly notable. His leadership style, which emphasises empathy and a growth mindset, has proved that cultural shifts can lead to massive financial gains for both shareholders and executives.

Nikesh Arora and cybersecurity boom



(Photo courtesy: <https://sequoiacap.com>)

While many Indian origin CEOs lead legacy tech firms, Nikesh Arora has carved out a massive niche in the rapidly expanding field of cybersecurity as the head of Palo Alto Networks. Known for being one of the highest paid executives in the world, Arora's compensation packages are frequently the subject of discussion in financial circles.

His net worth is estimated to be at least \$1.5 billion in 2026. Before joining Palo Alto Networks, Arora held high ranking positions at Google and SoftBank, where he refined his aggressive approach to growth and acquisitions.

His wealth is a product of his ability to scale companies quickly and his knack for negotiating performance based contracts that reward him handsomely for share price appreciation. In an era where digital security is a top priority for every major corporation, Arora's influence and bank balance continue to grow.



(Photo courtesy: wikipedia)

Shantanu Narayen and Adobe transformation

Shantanu Narayen, the long-standing chief executive of Adobe, has overseen a period of unprecedented stability and growth for the software giant. He was instrumental in moving the company from a traditional boxed software sales model to a cloud based subscription service, a move that is now the industry standard.

This transition massively boosted the recurring revenue of the firm and, by extension, Narayen's personal portfolio. His estimated net worth stands at roughly \$450 million. Having been at the helm since 2007, he is one of the longest serving CEOs in the tech sector.

Narayen, who served as CEO of Adobe for 18 years, has decided to transition from his position as CEO after a successor has been appointed. Narayen will remain as Chair of the Board. Narayen's success demonstrates that consistent leadership and a willingness to cannibalise one's own business model for the sake of future proofing can lead to significant long term rewards.

Neal Mohan reshapes YouTube

How does the largest video site on the planet manage the storm of AI-generated content



(Photo courtesy: <https://blog.youtube>)

From technology giants to global financial institutions, Indian-origin leaders continue to shape the future of business, driving innovation, growth, and transformation across some of the world's most influential organizations.

to come, while also harnessing AI to supercharge the human creativity that fueled its rise in the first place?

Its CEO Neal Mohan is trying to find the balance. "This is a profound paradigm shift, and technology is going to dramatically change how things are done," he told Forbes.

Before joining YouTube, Neal Mohan worked at Google, where he served as Vice President of Display and Video Advertising Products. Raised in Michigan and Florida, with a brief period spent in India during high school at St. Francis' College, Mohan returned to the U.S. and enrolled at Stanford University. He completed his degree in electrical engineering in 1996.



(Photo courtesy: <https://www.weforum.org>)

Ajay Banga simplifies World Bank operations

Ajay Banga is the 14th President of the World Bank Group, having assumed office for a five-year term on June 2, 2023. Nominated by the United States and elected as the first person of South Asian ancestry to lead the institution, he is leading a historic push to evolve the Bank by boosting lending capacity, simplifying operations, and shifting its mission to ending poverty on a livable planet.

Banga was educated at the St. Edward's School in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh and at the Hyderabad Public School in Begumpet. He went on to graduate with a bachelor's degree in economics from the St. Stephen's College of the University of Delhi, subsequently earning his Post graduate program in management from the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad.

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Transitioning from integration to impact

Forty years ago, the immigrant narrative was written in the language of survival. For the early waves of Indians arriving on the East or West Coast, the "American Dream" had concrete parameters: a stable job, a suburban home, and ensuring the next generation had the credentials to thrive. It was a beautiful, necessary dream of security.

But when you are standing at the helm of a billion-dollar commercial real estate enterprise, looking out over the iconic New York skyline, you realize something profound. We haven't just achieved the American Dream. We have outgrown its original boundaries.

To realize *more* than the American Dream is to transition from integration to impact.

Building a billion-dollar portfolio in commercial real estate is about far more than asset acquisition, square footage, or market capitalization. In big urban centers like New York City, the built environment shapes how people live, work, and connect. For a business rooted in South Asian leadership, our commercial footprint is a tangible declaration of permanence. We are no longer just occupying space in America; we are designing it, financing it, and anchoring the communities within it.

This expanded dream is defined



by three distinct shifts:

- **From Visibility to Stewardship:** True success isn't just about having a seat at the table;

it is about owning the building where the table sits. It is using institutional scale to create sustainable developments that elevate entire neighborhoods.

- **From Wealth to Legacy:** Financial milestones are fleeting unless they are converted into cultural capital. Realizing more than the dream means funding the institutions, mentorship pipelines, and civic spaces that ensure our community's influence lasts for generations.

- **From Assimilation to Authenticity:** We no longer have to check our heritage at the door to succeed at the highest levels of American capitalism. The

values of *seva* (selfless service), long-term relational trust, and collective resilience are precisely the frameworks that drive our boardroom decisions.

The original American Dream was a solo journey about what a family could acquire. The greater dream we are living today is a collective one: it is about what a community can build. As we shape the physical and economic landscape of this country, our responsibility is to ensure that the skylines we build reflect the boundless nature of our shared future.

Naveen Shah

President, Navika Group of Companies

Succeeding while staying my ground

Life for immigrants and their dreams of life in the USA have changed remarkably since the first unnamed Indian immigrant seaman from Madras arrived in the USA in 1790. The 1900 US Census reported that 2,545 "HINDUS" (that was the term for Indians in the Census questionnaire) had settled in this country.

I came here as a doctor over 200 years later in 1966. Mine was a more relaxed immigration as I came by air. I came to study



ily gave me the confidence to stand my ground and my parents instilled in me the concept that dignified food on the table and a roof over your head is all the money you need; there is no limit to human desire to accumulate wealth, money is not everything in life.

One year after coming to the country, in 1967, I coincidentally joined the newly formed nationwide Association of Indians in America (AIA) at its inception and later served as its National President and Chair Board of Trustees (1992 to 2001). Through this organization, I met Indians and Americans from all walks of life, including elected officials from all over the United States. I participated in successfully advocating for rights of Indian immigrants. I had the opportunity to interact with five Nobel Laureates, leading musicians, academicians and elected representatives over the decades as we (AIA) honored them across the country for their contributions to society and enhancing Indo-American understanding. In that sense, I gained even more than the traditional American dream.

I got married to a caring wife Manju in 1970, and have three grown-up children, all married and on their own feet. We are blessed with 5 grandchildren.

God has been very kind to me; the USA has been respectful of my independent expressions and gave me the opportunity to excel in my field and obtain financial independence. India gave me the wherewithal to succeed in any civilized country.

God bless America; God bless India.

Dr Narinder Kukar, MD

Founding member of Association of Indians in America

My American story of hope, hard work, and gratitude

My journey in America is a story of faith, hard work, resilience, and deep gratitude. Like many immigrants, I came to this country with dreams in my heart, limited resources in my pocket, and a strong belief that with honesty, discipline, and determination, anything was possible.

I began my journey from humble beginnings and built my career in the wireless and telecom industry, an industry that has transformed the way people communicate, connect, and grow. Over the years, I have had the privilege of building businesses in retail wireless, distribution, device trading, repairs, recycling, training, and consulting. Each step came with challenges, but America gave me the opportunity to learn, work, fail, rise again, and keep moving forward.

For me, the American Dream is not only about financial success. It is about creating opportunities, supporting families, providing employment, serving the community, and giving back to the country that gave us so much. Through my business journey, I have worked to create platforms where people can grow professionally and personally, especially in the fast-changing world of technology and telecommunications.

As an Indian American, I am proud to be part of a community that has contributed greatly to America's progress in business, technology, medicine, education, public service, and entrepreneurship. The Indian diaspora carries strong values of family, education, service, and perseverance, while fully embracing the freedom and opportunity that America represents.



As we celebrate America's 250th Independence Day, I feel a deep sense of respect for the principles of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. These values continue to inspire millions around the world. America's strength lies in its ability to welcome people from different backgrounds and give them the freedom to dream, build, and contribute.

My story is just one small example of what this great nation makes possible. I remain grateful to America, proud of my Indian heritage, and committed to doing my part in building bridges, creating opportunities, and serving the community.

America gave me a chance to dream. Hard work gave me the courage to pursue it. Gratitude reminds me every day to give back.

Nick Garg

Director, Telecom Institute of New York

(Photos: The SATimes)

"If freedom is to survive and prosper,
it will require the sacrifice, the effort and the
thoughtful attention of every citizen."

"Ask not what your country can do for you
— ask what you can do for your country."

John F. Kennedy



Heartiest congratulations on the 250th anniversary of independence of United States of America



With best wishes

Kavita & Mohan Wanchoo



Architects of American Economy

1942: A 'Patel Motel' love story

South Asian immigrants, led by one undocumented man's journey from Gujarat, built a hotel empire – transforming American hospitality through resilience, identity, and belonging. For many Indian American motel owners today, it's not just a business to them; it's a way of life.

In 1942, Kanji Manchhu Desai crossed the Mexican border in California and came to the United States. He stayed at a low-cost inn in Sacramento, California, owned by a woman of Japanese descent. When a Japanese aerial attack struck Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1942, the Japanese-American owner of the inn was forced into imprisonment.

Desai, an undocumented immigrant, and two other Gujarati farmworkers took her motel on rent and turned it into the first motel owned by the Patels. In 1947, Desai moved to the Goldfield Hotel in San Francisco.

Today, members of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) own more than 20,000 hotels with more than one million rooms. This represents around 50-60 percent of the economy lodging properties in the US and 40 percent of all hotel properties, including many upscale hotels.

"If you bear in mind that Indian Americans constitute less than one percent of America's population, the achievement appears extraordinary. The market value of these hotels totals about \$40 billion.



Indian Americans currently own or operate 50-60 percent of all hotels and motels in the United States. (Photo Courtesy: AI generated/ChatGPT)

It is estimated that the hotels employ almost 800,000 people and pay some \$700 million in real estate taxes annually," according to Stanley Turkel, a New York-based hotel consultant

and a member of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants.

A short film, titled "The Patel Motel Story," premiered at New York's Tribeca

Festival in June 2025. 'The Patel Motel Story' is directed by Amar Shah and Rahul Rohatgi that explores how South Asian immigrants, particularly from Gujarat, built an American hospitality empire.

The film draws from the history of Gujarati immigrants who helped establish the "Patel Motel" legacy — an economic and cultural phenomenon that traces back to the 1940s.

It began when entrepreneur Kanji Manchhu Desai leased a small hotel in California, laying the groundwork for what would become a dominant presence of Indian-owned motels across the US.

Despite the challenges, Indian American motel owners have become very successful and invoke the "model minority" stereotype.

"Indian American motel owners appear as the American dream incarnate — self-employed, self sufficient, boot-strapping immigrants who have become successful without government intervention," writes Pawan Dhingra, a sociology professor at Oberlin College in his book, titled "Life Behind the Lobby: Indian American Motel Owners and the American Dream".

For many Indian American motel owners, Dhingra says, it's more than a job. It's not just a business to them; it's a way of life.

Rise of Indian-origin startup founders

Indian-origin entrepreneurs are leading unicorn creation in the US, with 96 startups founded or co-founded, highlighting the growing influence of the Indian diaspora.

Indian-born entrepreneurs have emerged as the largest group of immigrant founders behind America's billion-dollar startups, underscoring the growing influence of the Indian diaspora in the US innovation economy.

A recent study by the National Foundation for American Policy (NFAP), a US-based non-profit research organization, found that Indian-origin entrepreneurs have founded or co-founded 96 American unicorns, privately held startups valued at more than \$1 billion. The figure is the highest for any immigrant community in the United States.

The 'Immigrants and US Billion-Dollar Companies,' authored by NFAP Executive Director Stuart Anderson, highlights the central role immigrants continue to play in building some of America's fastest-growing companies.

According to the study, immigrants have founded or co-founded 455 of the 775 privately held US unicorns, accounting for 59 per cent of the country's billion-dollar startups.

India topped the list of countries of origin for immigrant founders, ahead of Israel (60 unicorns), the United Kingdom (47), China (41), Canada (30), Russia (23), France (21), Germany (18), Ukraine



Aravind Srinivas, Co-founder and CEO of Perplexity AI. (Photo courtesy: www.gsb.stanford.edu)



Jyoti Bansal, Co-Founder and Entrepreneur Partner at Unusual Ventures. (Photo courtesy: <https://www.unusual.vc>)



Ashutosh Garg, CEO and Co-founder of Eightfold.ai. (Photo courtesy: <https://eightfold.ai>)



Mohit Aron, Founder and CEO of Cohesity. (Photo courtesy: www.alumni.iitd.ac.in)

(16) and Australia (14). Pakistan and Romania each accounted for 10 unicorn founders apiece or 10 unicorns each.

The highest-valued US unicorns with at

least one immigrant founder include SpaceX, Anthropic, OpenAI, Databricks and Stripe.

Among the Indian-founded companies featured in the report is AI search startup Perplexity AI, co-founded by Aravind Srinivas. The company is valued at about \$20 billion, placing it among the most valuable privately held startups in the United States.

The study also noted that six Indian-origin entrepreneurs, Mohit Aron, Jyoti Bansal, Ashutosh Garg, Arvind Jain, Sachin Nayyar and Ajeet Singh, have each founded two or more unicorn companies.

The NFAP report found that nearly two-thirds of US unicorns were founded by immigrants or their children. Almost 80 per cent of billion-dollar startups have either

an immigrant founder or an immigrant serving in a key leadership role such as chief executive officer or vice-president of engineering.

Collectively, the 455 immigrant-founded unicorns are valued at around \$5 trillion, illustrating the scale of their contribution to the US economy. The research also found that these companies employ an average of 833 people each, making them significant engines of job creation.

Another notable finding is the role of international students. According to the report, 183 US unicorns were founded by entrepreneurs who first arrived in the country to study at American universities.

Heartiest Congratulations

~ ★ AMERICA ★ ~
250

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Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Proud of our heritage, we should celebrate American identity even more

As America celebrates the 250th anniversary of its founding, I join fellow Indian Americans in extending heartfelt congratulations and best wishes on this historic occasion. The story of America remains an inspiration, no matter how often it is retold. It is the story of people who crossed oceans and conquered frontiers in search of freedom, freedom to live, to worship, and to pursue their dreams. Through hard work, sacrifice, and perseverance, they built a nation that became the envy of the world and a beacon of hope for millions. It is that promise which attracted many of us to these shores.

Like every nation, America has faced and continues to face its own challenges. Yet few would dispute that it remains that "shining city upon a hill"; a place to which the

poor, the oppressed, and the aspiring continue to look with hope. As Indian Americans, our journey may not have been one of political refugees fleeing persecution, but many of us came as economic migrants seeking opportunities to use our God-given talents not only to achieve personal success but also to contribute to the prosperity and advancement of our adopted homeland.

Our challenge today is different. At a time when the nation appears increasingly polarized along ethnic, racial, and ideological lines, we have an opportunity and a responsibility to become agents of healing and reconciliation. While we rightly take pride in our heritage, we should celebrate



our identity as Americans even more. We need not diminish our cultural roots, but neither should we define ourselves solely by them. We can honor our traditions while embracing the customs, val-

ues, and institutions of the country that has welcomed us so generously. Loyalty to our adopted nation and pride in our heritage are not mutually exclusive; indeed, they can complement one another.

Above all, we are blessed to enjoy political, economic, and religious freedoms unparalleled in much of the world. Thanks to constitutional principles that safeguard life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, we have been able to flourish and make our mark on American society. With these blessings come responsibilities. As beneficiaries of freedom, we should also stand for those same principles in our countries of origin and wherever human dignity and liberty are threatened.

As we celebrate America's 250th anniversary, let us also remember those around the world who continue to face hatred, discrimination, and persecution because of their faith, ethnicity, or beliefs. May we have the courage to stand up for freedom and justice, and may we reaffirm our commitment to the timeless ideals that have made America a beacon of hope for humanity.

On this historic milestone, let us salute America not merely for its power and prosperity, but for its enduring promise of liberty for all.

George Abraham
Vice-Chair of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA

I was there for America's Bi-Centennial celebrations in 1976

America is truly a land of opportunity; a melting pot for all immigrants around the globe. Personally, I might not have been able to achieve and fulfill my goals & dreams that easily, growing up in India.

Being in this country for over five decades has given me a chance to flourish in higher education, career, and working with Fortune 500 companies at higher levels, without ever feeling like a second-class citizen. It has taught me to assimilate with the local culture & traditions, at the same time maintaining our own heritage.

I was fortunate enough to be one of the pioneers in bringing the best of talent and entertainment from the subcontinent to the United States. Organizing shows for living legends like Lata Mangeshkarji, Mukeshji, Asha Bhosle, RD Burman, Kishore Kumar, and AR Rahman, to name a few, and presenting them at prestigious venues throughout the country. At that time, my team also began exhibiting Indian movies. We launched three Indian TV channels and a premiere radio station in the USA & Canada. I was also blessed to be the first ever Indian producer on Broadway in its 120-year history, with Andrew Lloyd Webber & AR Rahman's Bombay Dreams, as well as two Off-Broadway productions. All of this would have been a distant dream remaining in India.

As we celebrate 250 glorious years of the USA, it takes me back to my involvement with



the Bi-Centennial celebrations in 1976. Co-founding the Indo-American Friendship Society in Philadelphia in 1973, it was the only Indian organization receiving a grant from the Ethnic Heritage Affairs Foundation to have one full week of bicentennial celebrations showcasing our culture, with the grand finale being famous actress Padmini Ramchandran's dance ballet.

We as the Vaishnav family, then, became actively involved with many community organizations in various capacities and helped promote and preserve the arts, culture, and heritage of our motherland. Taking from experience in the entertainment industry, we were able to help many nonprofit organizations raise funds for charity and cultural events.

Although we as first-generation immigrants had to find our way in unknown territory, the second generation is progressing extremely well in business, finance, politics and their professional lives, achieving even greater heights. The India-US relationship will continue to flourish in the right direction.

America the Beautiful, from "sea to shining sea." We also wish a Happy 80th Independence Day (August 15) to the 5,000-year-old civilization of India, and wish a Happy 250th Birthday to the oldest democracies in the world. Jai Bharat. God Bless America.

Sudhir Vaishnav
President & CEO,
New Age Communications & Marketing

"Where liberty dwells, there is my country"

On July 4 our nation will commemorate and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. More than a date, it is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our achievements. The milestone encourages us to consider both past and future.

It is time to honor the struggles and achievements that have shaped this country. It is a reminder that America is the land of opportunities and history is ongoing and each citizen contributes to the nation's growth. The story of our families and how we arrived and what we have achieved will

It is worthwhile for us Indian Americans to understand what we stand for. Today our success and achievements are a combination of our traditions, education, family values, hard work, culture and opportunities provided by the land of the free.

pave paths for our children and grandchildren. As American citizens we should be grateful for the freedoms embedded in America's founding document.

It is worthwhile for us Indian Americans to understand what we stand for. Today our success and achievements are a combination of our traditions, education, family values, hard work, culture and opportunities provided by the land of the free.



We salute our veterans whose service made this possible. Let the fireworks remind us of every generation that kept the flame of freedom burning. From our kitchens to the cookout to the fireworks, every family tradition we share is part of America's history and story. We live through and are part of American history. Nothing but harmony, honesty, entrepreneurial ventures are necessary to make us great and happy people. As Benjamin Franklin said, "Where liberty dwells, there is my country."

I congratulate Kamlesh Mehta and his team at The South Asian Times for their excellence in journalism and commemorative efforts for America at 250.

God bless America!
Jai Hind!

Indu Jaiswal
Chairperson, Indian American Forum

'This country has made me who I am' – An Indian American perspective

Reflecting on a life that spans more than a fifth of America's existence, an immigrant physicist examines the nation's complex paradoxes and celebrates the profound freedom that shaped his destiny.

By Basab Dasgupta

The US will celebrate its 250th birthday on July 4th. I have lived through not only the major part of my own life here (mostly as a US citizen) but more than 20% of the existence span of this great country. This makes me feel proud as an American.

I fell in love with everything about the US within six months after coming here. I decided that this is where I belong and would like to spend the rest of my life. It was a lot more than comfort and convenience; it was compatibility with my personality and perspective towards life. My favorite one-word description of myself was "American". I intended to get completely assimilated into American society.

But why should I be proud? Many friends and relatives in India have pointed out the shameful chapters during my life here: Vietnam War, Watergate scandal, Iran hostage crisis, endless wars in the Middle East, the unthinkable disaster of 9/11, subprime loan crisis resulting in the collapse of the real estate market, influx of millions of illegal migrants, including criminals, and so on.

Then there are almost daily reports of mass shootings, homelessness, use of recreational drugs, increasing corruption, and so on. Politically, the country is hopelessly divided.

Despite all this, the US remains the most desirable destination in the world, both to visit and permanently settle down. An explanation for this paradox lies in that pledge: "Liberty and Justice for All". This pledge allows ALL citizens to speak their mind, pursue their interests, practice their religions, and excel in whatever they want to do.

When I first came here, landing on the moon was a regular event.



Indian Americans celebrating at the iconic Times Square in New York.
(Photo courtesy: FIA NY-NJ-NE/Facebook)

A HP-35 pocket-sized electronic calculator signaled the dawn of a new era in computing. Numerous innovations made life more comfortable and convenient: microwave ovens, cable TV, HBO, VCR and DVDs, home computers, trash compactors, garbage disposals, slow cookers, central heating and cooling; the list goes on.

The two most mind-boggling developments during my life have been DNA analysis and smartphones. The latest marvel is the implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our daily lives, from customer service to driverless cars to medical surgery performed by robots.

Apart from having the strongest economy and the most powerful military, the US has continually

dominated the fields of education, medicine, sports, music, movies, advertising and many other areas.

The country has been blessed with breathtaking natural beauty. The ease of travel by car and easy availability of overnight accommodation make travelling irresistible.

We enjoy unparalleled convenience in financial transactions, electronic communications, climate control, availability of food, shopping, quality of medical care, and air travel.

The US provides regular financial assistance to many countries and international organizations, and is there to help whenever any disaster strikes anywhere.

Above all, this country has made me who I am. I came with eight dollars in my pocket and \$100 in

borrowed money. My accomplishments extend from a PhD in physics to working in academia and multinational industries.

I worked hard and struggled for years to get to those positions based on my skill set and motivation without nepotism or bribery. My only daughter became a medical doctor on her own merit and efforts. The icing on the cake was an ocean-view custom home in California.

I have pursued my hobbies: painting, writing, traveling, comedy, photography, and music. I can express my political, religious, or technical views without fear of being typecast or isolated. I have always had the option of moving to another state with minimal hindrance. I have lived my domestic life the way I wanted. It truly feels like my own country. I interact with people of different cultures every day.

However, they all speak the same language, English, dress the same way in jeans, and follow similar behavior patterns. I feel like one of them and not some dark-skinned person with a funny accent trying to emulate white folks. American exceptionalism is built on this acceptance of people from all over the world; just think of Elon Musk and Shohei Otani.

One incident during the evening of my arrival in the US permanently etched its image in my head. My friend who offered to meet me at the airport had instructed me to call him as soon as I landed on US soil. At the airport, I saw public telephones but had no idea how to call him. After wandering around for a while, I walked into a gift shop. A friendly elderly sales lady asked me, "May I help you?"

I explained in my broken English that I wanted to make a telephone call; I showed her my friend's number and the US coins I had. She listened patiently and

then said slowly and clearly that I did not have enough money to call my friend, but I could make a "collect call".

In a collect call, the caller calls the local operator, who then asks the person at the other end if he/she was willing to receive the call and accept the charges involved. The conversation would proceed if the other person agreed to accept the call. The caller paid only for a local call, which at the time was ten cents.

She looked at the coins I had on my right palm and patiently introduced me to the American currency by identifying "penny", "nickel", "dime," and "quarter"; all I needed to do was insert a dime in the coin slot of any public telephone to connect to the local operator. I followed her instructions and got through to my friend.

The kindness shown by the lady to a strange foreigner overwhelmed me. I did not even buy anything from her store. I was delighted to see that people here were so friendly, polite, kind, honest, patient, and helpful. I knew that first evening that I would be proud to embrace a country with people like her as MY country.



California-based **Basab Dasgupta** has a doctorate in Physics from the University of Wisconsin and has worked with Sony as Vice President of an operating division.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of The South Asian Times

Kumar Shah, M.D.

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Architects of American Economy

How South Asian pioneers transformed American healthcare from rural clinics to the White House

What began as an emergency influx of Indian physicians evolved into the bedrock of clinical care, charting a six-decade legacy from isolated country roads to the highest peaks of national policy.

By SATimes Team

Celebrating its 250th birthday this year, America reflects on the diverse tapestries that have built its foundational structures. Among these, the American healthcare system stands as a monumental testament to immigrant contribution. Central to this narrative is the immense, indelible footprint of South Asian doctors, researchers, and academics. Over the last six decades, what began as an emergency influx of talent has evolved into the bedrock of American clinical care, academic research, and public health policy.

To trace the history of South Asian physicians, we have to look back at the Hart-Celler Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Passed alongside the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, this historic legislation unlocked health coverage for millions of Americans overnight, triggering a severe domestic doctor shortage. To fill these massive systemic gaps, the US turned to international medical graduates (IMGs), heavily recruiting from newly independent South Asian nations like India and Pakistan.

The initial landing strip for these pioneering physicians was far from the glittering laboratories of Ivy League universities; it was the quiet, overlooked margins of rural and inner-city America.

The vanguard of rural and underserved care

Assigned to areas facing severe shortages, thousands of young South Asian doctors arrived in isolated Appalachian towns, vast Midwestern farming communities, and underfunded urban public hospitals. In many of these areas, they were not just the only specialized providers—they were the only doctors available for a hundred miles.

These trailblazers faced a dual challenge: managing intense clinical caseloads while navigating complex cultural, linguistic, and social landscapes in communities that had often never encountered a South Asian. Through sheer clinical excellence, deep empathy, and steady resilience, they transformed from outsiders into the ultimate lifelines of local towns. They became the beloved community pediatricians, the trusted family physicians, and the reliable surgeons working past midnight. By anchoring rural healthcare, these doctors effectively prevented the collapse of local safety nets across geographic America.

Moving Into the mainstream: Academic and research centers

As the first generation established its footing, the South Asian medical footprint expanded rapidly from rural clinics into the upper echelons of academic medicine and scientific research. Armed with rigorous foundational training from premier

institutions back home, these professionals began reshaping how modern medicine is understood and practiced globally.

The contribution to medical science has been profound. In laboratories and major research hospitals across the country, South Asian academics have pioneered breakthroughs in:

- **Oncology:** Pioneering new paradigms in cancer treatment and surgical oncology.
- **Cardiology:** Advancing structural heart interventions and epidemiological research into metabolic syndromes.
- **Genomics and immunology:** Unraveling complex genetic codes to pave the way for modern precision medicine.

Beyond clinical findings, South Asian medical professionals have deeply enriched the humanities and literature of medicine. Thinkers and writers like Dr. Abraham Verghese have redefined the modern understanding of bedside medicine, reminding a highly technical American system of the sacred, primal importance of the physical examination and human ritual in healing.

Leaders of policy and national health

Today, the trajectory that started in isolated, rural clinics culminates at the highest peaks of American health governance and institutional leadership. South Asian names are synonymous with the public health infrastructure of the United States.

From Dr. Vivek Murthy serving multiple terms as the U.S. Surgeon General and bringing national awareness to the loneliness epidemic, to Dr. Ashish Jha steering the White House COVID-19 Response, South Asian professionals have been the steady hands guiding the country through its most vulnerable modern crises. Furthermore, organizations like the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) have mobilized thousands of members, transforming a sprawling diaspora into a cohesive, powerful voice that actively lobbies for patient rights, workplace equity, and structural healthcare reforms.

A legacy written in healing

The narrative of the South Asian medical pioneer serves as a definitive model of the immigrant story. From the remote country roads of the American heartland to the state-of-the-art research hubs of the Northeast, their footprint is woven permanently into the fabric of the nation. To honor them during America@250 is to recognize that the heartbeat of American healthcare is, and will continue to be, profoundly sustained by the brilliance and dedication of the South Asian diaspora.

6 South Asian leaders in medicine and healthcare science

Here are 6 prominent South Asian leaders in American medicine and healthcare science who perfectly illustrate the journey from frontline clinical care to the highest levels of global research, public literature, and national policy.



Dr. Vivek Murthy
National Public Health leader

As the first Surgeon General of the United States of Indian descent, he has used his national platform to tackle major systemic issues, pioneering campaigns against the loneliness epidemic, gun violence, and youth social media burnout.

(Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)



Dr. Abraham Verghese
The voice of humanistic medicine

A professor of medicine at Stanford University, he began his career treating patients during the early, challenging years of the rural AIDS epidemic in Tennessee and has since become a globally renowned, bestselling author championing the deep human connection in patient care.

(Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)



Dr. Siddhartha Mukherjee
The biographer of cancer

An oncologist, researcher, and associate professor of medicine at Columbia University, he revolutionized the public understanding of oncology by winning the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful book, *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer*.

(Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)



Dr. Daattatreya Nori
Breakthrough in radiation oncology

A world renowned oncologist, Dr. Nori is a leading authority in brachytherapy - the implantation of radioactive seeds to combat cancer. He has done groundbreaking work at Memorial Sloan Kettering and Cornell Medical Center. India awarded him Padma Bhushan 2026.

(Photo courtesy: Dr Nori)



Dr. Jatin Shah
Leader in Head and Neck cancer care

Dr. Jatin P. Shah, the Elliot W. Strong Chair in Head and Neck Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering, has contributed to dramatically improving survival and quality of life for patients with head and neck cancer. He founded the International Federation of Head and Neck Oncologic Societies in 1986.

(Photo courtesy: Dr Shah)



Dr. Arati Prabhakar
Pioneer in National Science Policy

An applied physicist who broke boundaries as the first woman to lead DARPA, she currently serves as the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, shaping the federal research and development strategy for the future of American health and technology.

(Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)



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Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

Far away from India, but never felt distant from the Divine



Abhishek Mishra with his wife, Namita, and their children, Avi and Anika.

I came to the US from India to pursue my master's degree at NYIT, carrying a dream of building a better future. I lived with my brother in Hoboken while he attended Stevens Institute of Technology and supported us through his on-campus job. To help pay for my education, I walked into nearly every store on Washington Street searching for part-time work. After many rejections, I finally secured a job at a local bookstore, to help with my expenses.

Those early struggles led to a graduate degree and a full-time career at AT&T. Soon afterward, I got married, and in a few years, we welcomed our two children. Raising a family while working full-time was rewarding yet demanding. During my children's early years, I developed chronic back pain, but my faith in God remained strong. I believed that by fulfilling our duties with honesty, gratitude, and devotion, God would guide our path and give us strength through life's challenges.

In 2016, my spiritual journey deepened through experiences that reinforced my belief that God is present in all aspects of life. Guided by the belief that "Kan Kan Mein Bhagwan" (God resides in every particle of

creation), I began noticing what I perceived as divine signs around me.

One winter, I saw what appeared to be the profile of Lord Shiva naturally formed in the snow in my backyard through my chil-

dren's footprints. In subsequent years, I discovered a naturally formed ice Shivling created by frozen water droplets, reminiscent of the sacred Shivling at Amarnath.

Later, I noticed images resembling Lord

Shiva, Nandi, and Lord Krishna playing his flute within the natural patterns of my shower tiles. These experiences strengthened my belief that the divine is present in everyday life, offering strength and grace through life's challenges.

Another profound moment came after my father-in-law's passing, when my mother-in-law was visiting us. I saw a real person walking in our neighborhood who was a full body replica of my father-in-law. It felt as though he was reassuring us of his presence and watching over his family. Whether viewed as coincidence or something more, it brought immense comfort.

These experiences have taught me that God and the blessings of those we love are not confined by geography, temples, or borders. Even while living thousands of miles from India, I have never felt distant from the divine. Time and again, I have found God in ordinary places and unexpected encounters, reinforcing my belief that He is ever-present—offering guidance, grace, and strength. We simply need faith and awareness to recognize Him.

Abhishek Mishra
IT Professional, Edison, NJ

America: My home, sweet home

On July 4, 2026, my beloved home, America, will commemorate its 250th anniversary of independence. July 4, 1776 stands as a significant milestone in the history of mankind. The founding fathers' determination and sacrifices laid the foundation for a land defined by liberty, justice, and freedom for all.

This anniversary is the opportunity of a lifetime. How fortunate we are to witness it. America has given us opportunities beyond imagination. Many of us arrived with only a few dollars in our pockets, but thanks to the principles established in the Declaration of Independence, we now stand proudly as equal members of this great nation.

Growing up in India, I dreamed of coming to America for a better life. My dream came true when I married my husband, who came here for higher studies and built a future here. The journey of 42



years entailed adjusting to a different culture and confronting challenges. We faced and overcame stereotypes about our Indian accent. We persevered, and now our future generations have established themselves in key roles as CEOs, entrepreneurs, doctors, lawyers, and politicians.

Since 1776, America has fought a dozen major wars and lost many brave men and women to protect the country and its legacy. As loyal citizens, it is our duty to help America reach new heights in the next 250 years, and to teach future generations about the rich history of this great nation.

America has faced many challenges over the decades but has always emerged stronger, learning from its mistakes. Democracy here has proven that self-governance is

not a static achievement, but an ongoing experiment.

If asked what America means to me, I would say it is everything: my life, my love, my home, and my paradise, the place where I wish to take my last breath. America has welcomed me with open arms and love. Today my children are well-educated and settled as lawyers and physicians. Thanks to liberty, equality, and freedom.

Expanding freedom requires continuous civic action and participation in public life. We are indebted to this country in many ways. It is our duty to repay it in each and every way one could. Showing respect by learning the National Anthem, voting for preferred parties, staying informed about government, and joining community activities are simple ways to get involved.

On this special day, my wish is for the bond between India and America to grow stronger, fostering peace and prosperity across the globe. I may not be here to witness the 300th milestone, but I will celebrate this occasion to the fullest.

God bless America, and long live India.

Bina Sabapathy
Founder & President, Indo American Community Voice

Here you can explore diverse cultures and races

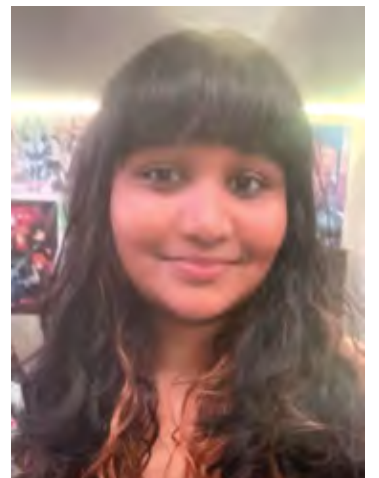
I am an 8th grader living with my family on Long Island. I am glad to write about my family's experiences, and to honor America's 250th Independence Day.

My family came to the US in 2010 after having lived in New Delhi for their entire lives! They

America is a place where everyone can come and start fresh and pursue the American dream. I am glad I get to live in the US and thrilled to honor America's 250th landmark year of independence.

made a fresh start and so many new opportunities came up in America. My parents found work and moved to Pennsylvania. I was born two years after their arrival on these shores.

Growing up in America was pleasant. I would also visit India sometimes during summer break. Although I was living in the US, I was always around Indian TV channels, our Hindu religion, and Indian food. I was raised to speak



both Hindi and English, learning both at the same time and over time becoming fluent.

Since I was little, I always had friends who were all kinds of different races. In my opinion that's one of the best things about America. Here you can explore diverse cultures and races. America is a place where everyone can come and start fresh and pursue the American dream. I am glad I get to live in the US and thrilled to honor America's 250th landmark year of independence.

Grace Raje
Schoolgirl

On this special day, my wish is for the bond between India and America to grow stronger, fostering peace and prosperity across the globe.

Why Indian Americans must reflect and move from spectators to citizens

Love for the Motherland is an affair of the heart—it is about memory, food, music, and roots. Allegiance to America is an affair of the conscience—it is about duty, civic participation, and the protection of the democracy that allows us to thrive.

By Parveen Chopra

As the calendar turns toward July 2026, the United States stands on the precipice of a monumental milestone: the Semi-quincentennial. For two and a half centuries, the American experiment has evolved, stumbled, and soared, driven by a Constitution that remains the envy of the free world. For the Indian American community—now one of the most affluent, educated, and influential demographics in the country—this anniversary is not just a federal holiday. It is a moment of reckoning.

We have mastered the American Dream. We have conquered the boardrooms of Silicon Valley, the wards of prestigious hospitals, and (in a small measure) the halls of political power. Yet, as we prepare to celebrate America's 250th birthday, an uncomfortable question lingers in the air: Why is it that we paint the streets orange, white, and green every August with thunderous enthusiasm, yet remain so quiet when the Fourth of July rolls around?

The architecture of allegiance

There is a profound difference between heritage and home. India is our motherland—the source of our values, our spirituality, and the cultural DNA that makes our community so resilient. To love India is natural; it is a debt of gratitude to the soil that nurtured our ancestors.

However, for the vast majority of us, America is no longer a "transit lounge." It is the land where we have built our lives, buried our elders, and birthed our children. Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi from Illinois, who moved to the US as an infant, often reflects on this unique trajectory:

"My story is proof of the power of the American Dream... Only in America is that possible. I'm running to ensure that every family—regardless of how many letters are in their last name—has the chance to succeed."

When we took the oath of citizenship, we didn't just sign a document to ease travel; we made a solemn vow to "renounce and abjure" old allegiances in favor of a new one. As the country reaches the 250-year mark, we must ask ourselves if our participation in the American story is merely transactional or truly transforma-

tional. Do we only value America for the prosperity it provides, or do we value it for the principles it upholds?

Patriotism does not force either/or choice

A common hesitation within the Indian diaspora is the fear that embracing American patriotism somehow dilutes our "Indian-ness." This is a fallacy. Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal emphasizes that our immigrant background is actually our greatest strength in serving our new home:

"I realized that because I had the protection of citizenship, I had a moral obligation to speak out. I had to... it's not just about what we look like and checking a box, but the perspective that we bring."

The beauty of the American tapestry is that it is woven from threads of different origins.

Love for the Motherland is an affair of the heart—it is about memory, food, music, and roots.

Allegiance to America is an affair of the conscience—it is about duty, civic participation, and the protection of the democracy that allows us to thrive.

In the New York tri-state area, we see massive parades for India's Independence Day. We see many events and gatherings to celebrate



"We've got to be part of the mainstream. We've got to be part of politics... if we are not, then we will be on the menu. We need to continue to help this nation become even greater than what it is."

-Congressman Shri Thanedar



"My story is proof of the power of the American Dream... Only in America is that possible. I'm running to ensure that every family—regardless of how many letters are in their last name—has the chance to succeed."

-Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi

Republic Day. These are beautiful displays of cultural pride. But where is that same collective energy on the Fourth of July? To celebrate the "Spirit of 1776" with the same fervor we bring to the "Swaraj" movement is not a betrayal of our roots; it is the ultimate fulfillment of our journey as immigrants.

The 250th anniversary: A call to action

The upcoming 250th anniversary is the perfect catalyst for a shift in the Indian American psyche. We must move from the periphery of American civic life to its very center. Congressman Shri Thanedar warns that being "active" is no longer optional:

"We've got to be part of the mainstream. We've got to be part of politics... if we are not, then we will be on the menu. We need to continue to help this nation become even greater than what it is."

This transition requires more than just attending a local fireworks display; it requires visible, organized participation. It is time for our community organizations—from the temples of New Jersey to the cultural associations

of Long Island—to lead the charge.

Organize Collective Celebrations: Let us see Indian Americans leading Fourth of July parades and hosting community events.

Display the Colors: Let the Stars and Stripes fly as prominently from our homes as the Tricolor does during festive seasons.

Civic Education: We must teach our youth that they are not "living in" America; they are America.

Securing the legacy for the next generation

If we continue to treat July 4 as a "long weekend" rather than a sacred civic duty, we risk raising a generation of children with divided hearts. Congressman Ro Khanna points out that for the next generation, being American is about active responsibility:

"We need to restore the idea that being American means helping build the next chapter of the country. That's what active citizenship looks like. My parents said, 'You won the lottery, you were born in America. Go work hard and contribute.'"

By vocally and visibly celebrating 250 years of America, we provide our children with a clear



"We need to restore the idea that being American means helping build the next chapter of the country. That's what active citizenship looks like. My parents said, 'You won the lottery, you were born in America. Go work hard and contribute.'"

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"I realized that because I had the protection of citizenship, I had a moral obligation to speak out. I had to... it's not just about what we look like and checking a box, but the perspective that we bring."

-Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal

sense of identity. We show them that they don't have to choose between their heritage and their country—but that their loyalty belongs to the nation that protects their future.

Conclusion: From residents to stakeholders

This July, as the fireworks illuminate the skylines of New York and Connecticut, let us reflect on the magnitude of the American journey. This nation has opened its doors to us with a generosity rarely seen in history. It has given us the freedom to practice our faith, the infrastructure to build our businesses, and the legal framework to demand equality.

We are no longer guests in this house. We are the owners. And as the United States celebrates its 250th year, the Indian American community must stand at the forefront.

Let us celebrate India with affection, but let us honor America with allegiance. Not with a whisper, but with a roar. Not because we have to, but because we are proud to be a part of the greatest democratic experiment in human history.

God Bless America!

(Photos: The SATimes)

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

USA offered a milieu to scale new heights in cancer care, saving lives

I landed at the JFK airport on August 5, 1967, with seven dollars and a suitcase, a postgraduate degree in surgery from India, with a dream to become a cancer surgeon. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center offered me an opportunity to achieve that dream. I trained there, joined the faculty, became a Chairman, and continue to serve my patients, teach and train fellows, do research, publish and continue to do so. It has been an exhilarating experience.

Being at the world's number one cancer center in itself is an accomplishment. But, bringing this cancer center to newer heights is a challenge and an opportunity of a lifetime. I did not want to miss that. And, I did not. Over the course of the past 50+ years, I served and saved the lives of thousands of patients, including royalty, heads of state, Hollywood and Bollywood stars and people from every walk of life. These patients gave me an opportunity to learn and devise "New" operations to reconstruct surgical defects.

In a teaching role, I had the

opportunity to train hundreds of Residents and Fellows, who have gone on to become leaders in the specialty nationally and internationally. Thousands of visitors and observers from all corners of the world have come here to see "what we do, and how we do it", and take that knowledge home to improve the care of their patients.

Collaborating with colleagues, trainees, and researchers, I was able to publish over 700 peer reviewed articles in high impact journals, giving me an h-index of 162, the highest among all head and neck surgeons in the world. The knowledge and experience gained here stimulated me to publish 14 textbooks in head and neck surgery, and I was honored to be the author of the "Best Medical Book" in this specialty recognized by the Royal Society of Medicine.

These academic accomplishments led to Honorary Fellowships from the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of England, Edinburgh, Ire-



land and Australia, Honorary PhD degrees from Belgium and Greece, Honorary DSc from India, and Honorary Professorships in Russia and China. Head and Neck surgery has been a passion of my life.

This academic productivity was recognized by leadership positions in six National and International

organizations, where I was privileged to serve as President. To create a global platform for exchange of ideas, research, knowledge and experiences, I with the support of my colleagues, established the

I want to express my gratitude to the USA, for giving me the opportunity to build my career and my life and offering a milieu to scale newer heights, which have been aptly rewarded year after year. God bless America!

International Federation of Head and Neck Oncologic Societies (IFHNOS) in 1987, and I continue to serve as its CEO. The organization has 73 National organizations as its members from 60 countries.

These international collaborations have given me the opportunity to lecture at various conferences and Institutions over 2200 times. The icing on the cake has been my recognition as the Legend of my Alma Mater, Baroda Medical college of MS University as well as being recognized as the "Living Legend of Oncology" by the Indian Cancer Congress, The ICON of Head and Neck Oncology by the Foundation for Head and Neck Oncology in India, and the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GOPIO).

As we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, the greatest nation in the world, I want to express my gratitude to the USA, for giving me the opportunity to build my career and my life and offering a milieu to scale newer heights, which have been aptly rewarded year after year. God bless America!

Dr Jatin Shah
E.W. Strong Chair in Head and Neck Surgery and Oncology,
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, NY

My American journey of achievement, service, and gratitude

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary of independence, I reflect on my American journey shaped by the freedoms, opportunities, and values that define this great nation.

My story began in 1980 when I arrived in the United States on a transfer from Taj Hotels, part of the Tata Group in Mumbai, India. Like many immigrants, I came with ambition, determination, and a strong work ethic. America provided an environment where hard work was rewarded and oppor-

tunities were available to those willing to pursue them.

Over the next three decades, I held senior leadership positions with Taj Hotels, including Chief Financial Officer, Senior Vice President of Finance, Head of Mergers & Acquisitions, and Executive Member of the Board of Directors. These roles allowed me to contribute to the growth of a respected global organization while building a fulfilling professional career.

After more than 30 years with the Tata



served as President of the New York Chapter and later as National President. Working with dedicated volunteers, I helped strengthen and modernize one of the oldest Indian American organizations in the country.

Charitable service has always been a passion of mine. As President of IALI, our team raised over \$30,000 through the Diwali Food Drive for the Mary Brennan INN Soup Kitchen. During my presidency of AIA-NY, Project India raised more than \$40,000 for women's empowerment initiatives in India. As AIA National President, I led the donation of \$35,000 to help India Home launch its first senior center on Long Island.

Today, I am proud to be a Founding Trustee of the National Alliance of Indian Organizations (NAIO), which seeks to unite Indian American organizations and strengthen U.S.-India relations.

For me, the American Dream is not measured solely by professional success. It is reflected in service, community building, cultural preservation, and creating opportunities for others. As America marks its 250th anniversary, I remain deeply grateful for the opportunities it has provided me and my family and honored to be part of its continuing story.

Gobind Munjal
National President AIA (2022-2025)



Gobind Munjal with son Kevin Munjal, daughter-in-law Iona Munjal, Gaurav Munjal (standing) and Suman Munjal.

My service continued through the Association of Indians in America (AIA), where I

Heartiest congratulations to

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Independent America!*

From

Ashok & Mamta Shaha



Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

I am dedicated to advancing global healthcare

The best thing I found in America is that my research interest was welcomed by a lot of research scientists, and they readily cooperated with my ideas and whatever I needed. It was easier when I was doing the clinical practice. But when I started my own company, I found it difficult for anybody to collaborate, because it's a very expensive proposition. So I just concentrated on myself.

I financed myself. I've been steadily investing my own money in biotechnology from 1980 onward. A major investment came in 2010 when I got a grant from the

federal government, and another investment came during COVID when I made \$22 million in stock market. Much of the money is invested already. It's my belief that I should do what my mind and goal desires, because we have one life to live. We should do whatever we want to do.

I've written one chapter in a book on breast cancer, the project is by an award-winning British writer. I explain the current advances in breast cancer limitations and how my technology could help. I also have a book chapter in Fundamentals of Immunology and

its applications.

Later this month I am keynote speaker in Paris for a conference on re-engineering diabetes. Re-engineering diabetes is a different way of treating diabetes, where complications of diabetes are not related to A1C, but directly through immune interactions.

I am greatly excited about the future of artificial intelligence that is evolving in both the USA and India. AI is "Aladdin's Lamp" for future generations. With rightful engineering prompts, artificial intelligence acts as a magic genie. It allows us to visualize flaws in cur-



rent systems and help define the future products and services in different fields. I am dedicated to advancing global healthcare. I le-

verage artificial intelligence to advance life saving, futuristic space age products and services that can be implemented with "Zero Tolerance to time" using "Right to Try Law" in the USA. In future, I expect this law will be implemented to meet the global needs.

I am in the process of forming ETBONDAI private limited company in India to streamline my advances through clinical trials in diabetes.

Kumar Shah, MD
President, Endocrine Technology, LLC
New York



THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA
Śrī Mahā Vallabha Ganapati Devasthānam, NY



The Hindu Temple Society of North America extends its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all as we commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America on this Fourth of July, 2026.

May this historic milestone inspire continued unity, freedom, prosperity, and peace for all.

We proudly join the nation in celebrating 250 years of America's enduring spirit and democratic ideals. Happy Independence Day!

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The future looks promising, but challenging too!

Happy Birthday America!

The America I came to in 1970s was different from the America of today. This was the country where if you had merit you could get ahead, no matter your color, race, gender or origin. If you could make it in the US, you had "arrived".



Today, merit is still prized highly, but other factors have come into play. I love this country. It has helped me climb the ladder of success career-wise and have a standard of living in safety and comfort, which would not have been possible elsewhere.

Lately, however, Indian origin Americans, successful, highly educated, entrepreneurs - literally model citizens - are resented. The rapport between India and America went through a roller-coaster, following the Pahalgam terror attack. Luckily it is on the upward swing now.

India is rising. Sometimes when a new power emerges, established ones feel threatened, no matter how secure.

Keeping our culture alive is a challenge especially when living in a different social setting. Our children and grandchildren are in a totally different microcosm. Robot-driven and GMO products all around. Manufacturing is no longer part of the US landscape. Our grandchildren don't need to take driving tests because they will be driven by self-driving vehicles. A surgeon in New York can perform surgery in Toledo with a robot, thus eliminating inexperience and human error.

The future looks promising, but challenging too! Here's to another 250 years for America! Cheers!

Dr Bhavani Srinivasan
President RCNS
President GMC Alumni USA Inc.
Past President AAPIQLI
Past President IALI

If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter.

Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

- George Washington



*Heartiest
Congratulations on*



With best compliments from

Shashi & Dalip Malik





The story of America through postage stamps

Two hundred and fifty years ago, 13 American colonies declared their independence from the British Crown, a decisive step in a story told by stamps of significance.

By Pradip Jain & Pragya Jain

The United States celebrates the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 2026, marking the birth of a nation founded on liberty and self-governance. This remarkable journey is beautifully reflected through a series of commemorative postage stamps that preserve key moments in American history.

From the Mayflower to the new world



1920 The Mayflower, Green -1c.

America's story began in 1620 when the Pilgrim Fathers arrived aboard the Mayflower at Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Their voyage in search of religious freedom was commemorated in 1920 by a set of stamps marking the tercentenary of their arrival. The 1-cent stamp depicts the Mayflower framed by English and American mayflowers.

The road to Independence



1973 US Boston Tea Party stamp, to mark the American Revolution Bicentennial, image depicting colonists throwing tea into Boston Harbor.

Growing tensions between the colonies and Britain led to events such as the Boston Tea Party (1773) and the Battles of Lexington and Concord (1775).



1976 - Bicentenary issue, John Trumbull's Declaration of Independence, stamp featuring the USA's Founding Fathers.



1925 Lexington-Concord battles -1c, stamp depicting George Washington taking command of American volunteers before the battles.

Under George Washington, the colonies fought for freedom and ultimately secured independence. The Revolutionary War was commemorated in 1925 through a sesquicentennial stamp issue featuring Washington taking command of colonial forces.

Framing the nation



1937 - 3-cent Constitution Sesquicentennial "Adoption of the Constitution".

The newly independent nation established its government through the United States Constitution, signed in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. A 1937 commemorative stamp based on Junius Brutus Stearns' painting Adoption of the Constitution depicts George Washington presiding over this historic event.

Declaration of Independence

On 4 July 1776, the thirteen colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming their freedom from British rule. The Bicentennial celebrations of 1976 featured the famous paintings Spirit of '76 and John Trumbull's Declaration of Independence, reproduced on se-tenant commemorative stamps.

Expanding America

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 doubled the size of the United States through the acquisition of vast French territories. Its centenary was celebrated in 1904 with a series of commemorative stamps featuring the negotiators James Monroe and Robert Livingston, as well as maps of the newly acquired lands.



10-cent red-brown Map of Louisiana Purchase single.

Innovation and progress

The invention of the telegraph by Samuel F B Morse revolutionized communication. The centenary of the first telegraph message, "What hath God wrought," was commemorated in 1944 with a special 3-cent stamp.



3c Telegraph Centenary - The introduction of the telegraph, pioneered by Samuel F B Morse in 1844, revolutionized communication across the vast American landscape.

The California Gold Rush, triggered by the discovery of gold in 1848, transformed the American West. A 1948 commemorative stamp marking its centenary depicts Marshall's sawmill, where the discovery was made.



1948 - the centennial of the discovery of gold in California - 3C.



1999 - stamp features prospectors mining a stream in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains in California during the 1849 Gold Rush.

The 33-cent California Gold Rush commemorative stamp was issued on June 18, 1999, in West Sacramento, California. The stamp was designed by Howard Paine of Delaplane, Virginia, and illustrated by John Berkey of Excelsior, Minnesota.

Civil War and emancipation



1963 - Blue & Gray at Gettysburg - 5c.

The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 led to the American Civil War, fought over the future of the Union and slavery. The pivotal Battle of Gettysburg was commemorated on a 1963 stamp issued as part of the Civil War Centennial series.



1940 - 75th anniversary of the 13th amendment to the US Constitution. The amendment abolished slavery in the US. The statue stands in Lincoln Park in the District of Columbia.



1948 - stamp features an image of President Abraham Lincoln, a quotation from the Gettysburg address and a torch. The Battle of Gettysburg ended with a Union victory over the Confederate forces and was a turning point in the Civil War.



1965 - India stamp on 100 anniversary of the death of Abraham Lincoln, paying homage to the memory of one of the world's greatest humanitarians and champions of liberty.

The war culminated in the abolition of slavery through the 13th Amendment in 1865. Its 75th anniversary was marked in 1940 with a stamp depicting the Emancipation Memorial honoring Lincoln and the struggle for freedom.

America at war

The attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was a surprise Japanese aerial strike on the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii that killed over 2,400



Pearl Harbor Attack (1941): The day that pulled a superpower into war.

234 years of American diplomacy in India

Kolkata holds a special place in American diplomatic history as the location of the first US consular presence in India and one of the oldest American consulates in the world. On November 19, 1792, President George Washington appointed Benjamin Joy as the first American Consul to Kolkata, marking the beginning of official US engagement with India.

Today, the US Consulate General in Kolkata continues this legacy, providing consular services to American citizens and strengthening ties between the United States and India.



1932 - Washington Bicentennial: 2 and 3 cent stamps.

India's souvenir of the 1931 round-the-world flight

A special commemorative cover was issued by the Aero Philatelic Club of Calcutta honoring the record-breaking flight of Wiley Post and Harold Gatty. Featuring portraits of the aviators, their route, and contemporary Indian postage stamps, the cover addressed to President Hoover, USA, illustrates India's early contribution to aviation philately and international postal commemoration.



The cover referred July 6, 1931, letter sent by Charles Griffiths to President Hoover, USA, an important piece of early Indian aviation philately and a rare souvenir issued by the Aero Philatelic Club of Calcutta.

India-US diplomatic relations were formally established in 1947, immediately after India's independence, making the relationship nearly 79 years old as of 2026. To com-



The Treasures of the Revolutionary Era prestige booklet brings the past into focus through 10 compelling objects from the time of the American Revolution, which began 250 years ago.



2026 -Romania stamp on 250 Years of Independence featuring the US War of Independence and the personalities involved in it.

(All photos courtesy of the authors)



Pradip Jain, a signatory to the prestigious Roll of Distinguished Philatelists (RDP) and a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London (FRPSL), is one of India's most distinguished philatelists, internationally recognized for his contributions to philately, postal history, and philatelic literature.



Pragya Jain, FRPSL, is an internationally acclaimed philatelist recognized for scholarly contributions to philately and postal history.

Achieving the American Dream

Prominent Indian Americans and community leaders share the stories of their passage to the United States, and how the land of opportunity empowered them to achieve extraordinary success and drive meaningful impact.

My American Journey: A life of learning, service and gratitude



the COVID-19 pandemic. Through more than 250 virtual programs featuring experts from the US, UK, and India, we helped seniors remain informed, engaged, and connected during a period of unprecedented isolation. The success of these initiatives led to a feature interview on ABC Channel 7 News.

I currently serve as President of India Home and the Rotary Club of North Shore, New York. I also hold leadership roles with FISANA, GOPIO International, GOPIO Manhattan, FOGAUSA, and NIAASC, while actively supporting several spiritual and cultural organizations.

In recognition of my lifelong commitment to public service, I have received numerous honors, including a Congressional Proclamation presented through Congressman Gregory W. Meeks and a Lifetime Achievement Award from 17 New York-based organizations.

Looking back, I remain profoundly grateful to America for the opportunities it has provided for education, professional success, and meaningful service to the community.

God bless America!

Mukund Mehta
President of India Home
and Rotary Club of North Shore, NY

I am deeply grateful to call America my home

My life journey is a testament to the power of education, perseverance, faith, family, and the willingness to embrace unexpected opportunities.

My journey in 1975 from India to the United States of America has been incredible, like that of many immigrants. It offered new opportunities, experiences, and perspectives in my adult life which included, applying for a visa, saying goodbye to family, experiencing a new airport, city, climate, and culture. Even simple things like grocery shopping or using public transportation was like an adventure. Getting admitted to a university, securing a job built my confidence and getting my first apartment in New York City made me more independent.

My professional career in technology began in India, where I learned computer programming. I built my skills and experience over the years in the USA. I enrolled in every computer-related course available, embraced new technologies, mastered programming languages, databases, and systems design, and steadily advanced in the rapidly evolving field of information technology, progressing into leadership positions and ultimately serving as a Chief Information Officer (CIO). I am currently running an IT software company.

Beyond my corporate achievements, through my nonprofit organization, I have the privilege of giving back. I am thankful for the opportunity to contribute through



community service and give back to the community that has supported me. My public service has earned significant recognition. In 2025, I was honored by the New York State Senate as a Woman of Distinction, recognizing my outstanding contributions to the community. Earlier, in 2013, I received The President's Volunteer Service Award from President Barack Obama for exceptional volunteer service and community leadership.

It is true that America is a land of opportunities and my journey has been filled with growth, and I am grateful for the privilege of serving my community and making a positive impact.

Looking back, I am deeply grateful to God for the countless blessings that guided me through every step of my new life in the USA. to my parents for shaping my character, to my husband Dalip Malik for his unwavering love and support, to my four children for making me complete as a woman, and to my friends for enriching my life.

Having come to this country in pursuit of opportunity and a better future, I am deeply grateful to call America my home, with my children, grandchildren, and future generations.

Shashi Malik
President, SD Services Inc
President, Seva Center for Humanity

(Photos: The SATimes)



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America's Scenic Beauty

Crown Jewels of America: The best national parks in the United States

Preserving more than 85 million acres of pristine wilderness, America's celebrated National Park System offers an unmatched tapestry of geological wonders, vibrant ecosystems, and untamed landscapes that define the nation's soul.

The United States is home to one of the world's most celebrated systems of protected wilderness. Spanning more than 85 million acres across mountains, deserts, forests, wetlands, coastlines, and volcanic landscapes, the U.S. National Park System preserves some of the planet's most extraordinary natural treasures.

From the geysers of Wyoming to the granite cliffs of California and the glaciers of Alaska, America's national parks offer visitors an unmatched opportunity to experience nature at its most spectacular.

Why National Parks Matter

Beyond their beauty, America's national parks play a critical role in conservation, education, and recreation. They preserve endangered ecosystems, protect wildlife habitats, safeguard cultural heritage, and provide opportunities for millions of people to connect with nature. At a time when urbanization and technology increasingly dominate daily life, national parks offer something rare: silence, perspective, and a reminder of the immense natural forces that shaped the continent. They inspire stewardship, foster appreciation for the environment, and serve as living classrooms for future generations. From Yellowstone's geysers and Yosemite's granite cliffs to Denali's wilderness and Acadia's rugged shores, the best national parks in the United States represent the very best of America's natural heritage. They are more than tourist destinations—they are national treasures, preserving landscapes that continue to inspire wonder, adventure, and discovery. For travelers seeking the soul of America, there is no better place to begin than its national parks.

With 63 national parks spread across the country, choosing the best can be a challenge. Yet a handful stand out for their breathtaking scenery, ecological significance, recreational opportunities, and enduring appeal. These are the parks that define America's natural heritage and inspire millions of visitors every year.

Yellowstone National Park: The Original Wonder

No discussion of national parks can begin anywhere but Yellowstone. Established in 1872, Yellowstone became the world's first national park and laid the foundation for the global conservation movement. Spanning nearly 2.2 million acres across Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, Yellowstone is a geothermal wonderland unlike any place on Earth.



The park contains more than half of the world's active geysers, including the iconic Old Faithful. Visitors encounter colorful hot springs, bubbling mud pots, steaming fumaroles, dramatic canyons, waterfalls, and vast wilderness. Equally remarkable is Yellowstone's wildlife. Bison roam freely across open valleys, while elk, wolves, grizzly bears, moose, and bald eagles thrive within the protected ecosystem. For many travelers, Yellowstone represents the ultimate American wilderness experience.

Yosemite National Park: Nature's Cathedral



Nestled in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains, Yosemite National Park is renowned for its towering granite cliffs, giant sequoias, and breathtaking waterfalls. The park's centerpiece, Yosemite Valley, is one of the most photographed landscapes in the world. Massive rock formations such as El Capitan and Half Dome rise dramatically above lush meadows and winding rivers. During spring, waterfalls including Yosemite Falls, Bridalveil Fall, and Vernal Fall thunder down cliff faces swollen by melting snow. Yosemite's combination of accessibility and grandeur has inspired generations of artists, photographers, and conservationists, including legendary naturalist John Muir.

Glacier National Park: The Crown of the Continent

Located in northern Montana near the Canadian border, Glacier National Park showcases some of the most pristine mountain scenery in the United States. Known as the "Crown of the Continent," the park features rugged peaks, alpine meadows, turquoise lakes, and remnants of ancient glaciers. The famous Going-to-the-Sun Road traverses the heart of the park, providing one of America's most scenic drives.

Though climate change has significantly reduced the number of glaciers within the park, Glacier remains a spectacular destination for hiking, wildlife observation, and backcountry exploration.

Grand Canyon National Park: Earth's Greatest Geological Showcase

Few landscapes evoke awe like the Grand Canyon. Carved by the Colorado River over millions of years, this immense chasm

stretches 277 miles across northern Arizona and reveals nearly two billion years of geological history. The sheer scale of the canyon defies comprehension. Layers of red, orange, and gold rock create a constantly changing palette of colors as sunlight moves across the landscape. Visitors can admire panoramic vistas from the South Rim, explore quieter viewpoints along the North Rim, or descend into the canyon itself via historic trails.

Whether viewed at sunrise, sunset, or beneath a starlit sky, the Grand Canyon remains one of the world's most unforgettable natural wonders.

Grand Teton National Park: The American Alps

Just south of Yellowstone lies Grand Teton National Park, home to one of the most dramatic mountain ranges in North America. Unlike many mountain ranges that rise gradually, the jagged Teton peaks rise abruptly from the valley floor, creating a stunning skyline reflected in crystal-clear alpine lakes.

The park offers exceptional hiking, wildlife viewing, kayaking, and photography opportunities. Moose, elk, bears, and bison frequently appear against a backdrop of snow-capped peaks, making Grand Teton a favorite among nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park: America's Most Visited Park

Straddling the border between Tennessee and North Carolina, Great Smoky Mountains National Park consistently ranks as the most visited national park in the United States. Its appeal lies in its accessibility and diversity. Ancient mountains cloaked in mist, dense forests, cascading waterfalls, and abundant wildlife create a landscape rich in natural beauty.

The park contains one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in North America, with thousands of plant and animal species. Visitors can enjoy scenic drives, hiking trails, historic Appalachian settlements, and spectacular fall foliage that transforms the mountains into a sea of color.

Acadia National Park: New England's Coastal Treasure

Perched on Maine's rugged Atlantic coastline, Acadia National Park offers a striking contrast to the mountain and desert parks of the American West. Granite cliffs meet crashing ocean waves, while forests and lakes provide opportunities for hiking, cycling, and kayaking. Cadillac Mountain, the highest point on the U.S. Atlantic coast, is among the first places in America to witness the sunrise.

Acadia's combination of coastal scenery, charming nearby towns, and accessible outdoor recreation makes it one of the nation's most beloved parks.



Zion National Park: Utah's Red Rock Masterpiece

Zion National Park has become one of America's most popular outdoor destinations, attracting visitors with its towering sandstone cliffs and narrow slot canyons. Located in southwestern Utah, Zion's massive red and cream-colored rock walls rise thousands of feet above the valley floor. Adventurous travelers flock to hike Angels Landing, one of the most famous trails in the world, while others explore The Narrows, where hikers wade through the Virgin River between towering canyon walls. The park's unique geology and vibrant desert landscape create a visual spectacle unlike anywhere else.

Denali National Park: Alaska's Untamed Wilderness

Everything in Alaska feels bigger, and Denali National Park is no exception. Covering six million acres of wilderness, the park protects vast landscapes of tundra, forests, glaciers, and mountains. Its centerpiece is Denali, North America's tallest peak at 20,310 feet. On clear days, the mountain dominates the horizon with breathtaking grandeur. Wildlife sightings are a major attraction. Visitors often encounter grizzly bears, wolves, caribou, moose, and Dall sheep in their natural habitat. Few places in America offer such an authentic wilderness experience.

Bryce Canyon National Park: Nature's Sculpture Garden

Though smaller than many parks on this list, Bryce Canyon delivers some of the most distinctive scenery in the National Park System. The park is famous for its hoodoos—towering spires of red, orange, and white rock sculpted by erosion over millions of years. These formations create an otherworldly landscape that appears almost unreal, particularly at sunrise and sunset when the colors glow with remarkable intensity. Walking among Bryce Canyon's hoodoos feels like entering a natural amphitheater carved by time itself.

(All photos courtesy: www.pexels.com)

America's Scenic Beauty

America by the windshield: The 10 most scenic road trips in the United States

From the dramatic cliffs of Big Sur to the tropical bridges of Key West, we trace ten legendary highways that showcase the vast geographic diversity and enduring spirit of the open road.

Few countries are as perfectly suited for road travel as the United States. Stretching from the rocky coastlines of New England to the deserts of the Southwest, from snow-capped mountains to tropical beaches, America offers an extraordinary diversity of landscapes best experienced from behind the wheel. Road trips have long been woven into the nation's culture, representing freedom, discovery, and adventure.

For travelers seeking unforgettable journeys, these ten scenic drives showcase the very best of America's natural beauty, historic charm, and breathtaking vistas.

Pacific Coast Highway, California

No American road trip list is complete without California's legendary Pacific Coast Highway (Highway 1). Running along the rugged Pacific coastline, this route offers dramatic ocean views, towering cliffs, and charming seaside towns.

The most spectacular stretch lies between Monterey and San Simeon, passing through Big Sur, where mountains plunge into the sea and every bend reveals another postcard-worthy panorama. Travelers can stop at Bixby Creek Bridge, McWay Falls, and the historic Hearst Castle before continuing south toward Santa Barbara and Los Angeles.



Big Sur Coast Highway is a section of California State Route 1 through the Big Sur region of California that is widely considered to be one of the most scenic driving routes in the United States, if not the world. (Photo courtesy: Wikipedia)

The Pacific Coast Highway is more than a drive—it's a cinematic journey through some of America's most iconic scenery.

Blue Ridge Parkway, Virginia and North Carolina

Known as "America's Favorite Drive," the Blue Ridge Parkway

winds 469 miles through the Appalachian Highlands, connecting Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina.

Unlike many highways, the parkway was designed specifically for sightseeing. Rolling mountain ridges, dense forests, waterfalls, and sweeping overlooks create an ever-changing landscape. In autumn, the route transforms into a blaze of red, orange, and gold, attracting leaf-peepers from around the world.

The leisurely pace and abundance of hiking trails make this one of the most relaxing road trips in the country.

Going-to-the-Sun Road, Montana

Cutting through the heart of Glacier National Park, Going-to-the-Sun Road is one of the greatest engineering achievements in the National Park System.

The 50-mile route traverses alpine meadows, glacial lakes, and towering peaks before reaching Logan Pass, the highest point on the road at 6,646 feet. Mountain goats, bighorn sheep, and grizzly bears are often spotted along the route.

Open only during the warmer months due to heavy snowfall, this drive offers a rare opportunity to experience the raw grandeur of the Rocky Mountains up close.

roadside attractions, desert landscapes, and historic small towns. The route provides a fascinating glimpse into America's past while crossing diverse terrain from Illinois farmland to the deserts of Arizona and New Mexico.

Though portions of the original road have been replaced by interstate highways, much of its nostalgic charm remains intact.

Overseas Highway, Florida

The Overseas Highway transforms driving into an island-hopping adventure. Connecting mainland Florida to Key West, the route spans 113 miles across turquoise waters and tropical islands.

The highlight is the Seven Mile Bridge, where drivers seem to float above the ocean. Along the way, travelers can stop for snorkeling, fishing, dolphin watching, and fresh seafood.

Unlike any other road trip in America, the Overseas Highway offers a Caribbean atmosphere without leaving the United States.

Utah's Scenic Byway 12

Often overlooked compared to more famous routes, Scenic Byway 12 may be America's most underrated drive.

The 122-mile highway links Bryce Canyon National Park and Capitol Reef National Park while passing through some of the most spectacular desert landscapes in the Southwest. Travelers encounter red-rock canyons, sandstone cliffs, pine forests, and narrow ridgelines with dramatic drop-offs on both sides.

The route also provides access to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, one of the nation's most remote and stunning wilderness areas.

The Million Dollar Highway, Colorado

For thrill-seekers, few drives match Colorado's Million Dollar Highway. This section of U.S. Route 550 runs between Ouray and Silverton through the heart of the San Juan Mountains.

Sharp curves, steep cliffs, and soaring peaks create jaw-dropping scenery at every turn. Historic mining towns, waterfalls, and alpine valleys add to the experience.

While the route demands careful driving, the reward is one of the most dramatic mountain landscapes in North America.



The advantage of travelling by your own vehicle is that you can stop and linger near scenic spots like this one in Colorado. (Photo: Parveen Chopra)

Shenandoah Skyline Drive, Virginia

Running 105 miles through Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive offers a tranquil journey along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The road features more than 70 scenic overlooks with sweeping views of the Shenandoah Valley and the Piedmont region. Wildlife sightings are common, including black bears, deer, and wild turkeys.

Particularly stunning during spring wildflower blooms and autumn foliage season, Skyline Drive provides a peaceful escape from urban life.

Great River Road, Mississippi River Corridor

Following the course of the Mississippi River through ten states, the Great River Road offers a journey through both natural beauty and American history.

Travelers pass river bluffs, wetlands, farmland, historic towns, and vibrant cities such as Minneapolis, St. Louis, Memphis, and New Orleans. The route showcases the cultural heritage of America's greatest river, from Native American history to blues music and Southern cuisine.

It is one of the most diverse and culturally rich road trips in the nation.

Hana Highway, Hawaii

The Road to Hana on Maui may be only 64 miles long, but it delivers one of the world's most memorable driving experiences.

Featuring more than 600

curves and dozens of bridges, the route winds through lush rainforests, bamboo groves, waterfalls, black-sand beaches, and dramatic coastal cliffs. The journey is not about speed but exploration.

Travelers frequently stop to swim beneath waterfalls, hike through tropical forests, or simply admire the spectacular scenery around every corner.

The enduring appeal of the American road trip

What makes these journeys special is not merely the destination but the experience of discovery along the way. Road trips allow travelers to witness the extraordinary geographic diversity of the United States—from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic coast, from mountain summits to tropical islands and desert canyons.

Whether it's watching the sun set over Big Sur, crossing the Seven Mile Bridge toward Key West, navigating Colorado's alpine passes, or winding through the forests of the Blue Ridge Mountains, each route offers a unique perspective on America's natural wonders.

In an era dominated by air travel and digital connectivity, the road trip remains one of the most authentic ways to experience the country. The open road still promises what it always has: adventure, freedom, and the possibility that the next bend may reveal something unforgettable.

For travelers seeking beauty, inspiration, and a deeper connection to the landscape, these ten scenic drives represent the very best of America by road.

Congratulations!



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Facts versus fabrication: Reassessing the Indus Basin water debate

By Atul Jain

Pakistan's recent claims projecting an impending water crisis in the Indus Basin and attributing river flow variations to upstream actions fail to withstand scrutiny when examined against Pakistan's own hydrological data, reservoir records, and operational realities.

A closer assessment of the evidence reveals a markedly different picture—one defined not by systemic scarcity, but by abundant inflows, significant downstream escapages, and longstanding structural limitations in water management.

The most striking feature of the 2025 hydrological cycle was the substantial surplus in water availability during the Kharif season (April to September). As per Pakistan's Indus River System Authority (IRSA) data, actual inflows reached approximately 122.36 MAF, which was almost 18 per cent higher than the anticipated inflows of nearly 104 million acre-feet (MAF) for Kharif 2025.

Heavy rainfall across the basin further reduced irrigation demand and eased pressure on provincial allocations. Such conditions are fundamentally inconsistent with assertions of acute or engineered water shortages.

An even stronger contradiction to the scarcity narrative lies in the extraordinary quantity of water that ultimately flowed downstream of Kotri into the Arabian Sea. During Kharif 2025, escapages below Kotri amounted to nearly 30.848 MAF—around 71 per cent higher than the recent five-year average of 18.034 MAF.

Significant downstream escapages to sea (about 3.6 MAF) continued even during the lower-flow Rabi 2025 season (October to March). If the basin were genuinely facing severe scarcity supposedly due to upstream interference, such large volumes of water would not have remained unutilized and allowed to pass into the sea. The data instead points toward limitations in storage



Part of the greater Indus Basin, the Baglihar Dam serves as a critical infrastructure asset for regulating water flow and generating power. (Photo: AI-generated/TSAT)

infrastructure, flood management, and distribution efficiency within the lower basin itself.

Reservoir behavior during the same period further undermines claims of sustained hydrological distress. As expected, the Kharif season began with relatively low storage levels, a normal phenomenon unless the reservoirs are designed for carry-over storages.

Subsequently, the combination of higher inflows and flood events rapidly replenished major reservoirs. By September 2025, storage levels had risen to nearly 99 per cent of capacity, creating a significantly stronger water availability position for Rabi 2025–26.

The outlook for Kharif 2026 also remains stable. Projected rim-station inflows of approximately 103.3 MAF for Kharif 2026, coupled with carryover storage estimated at around 2.3 MAF—higher than both the previous year and long-term averages—indicate that the basin enters the new cycle from a position of relative hydrological comfort rather than crisis.

At the same time, recent attempts by Pakistan to portray

fluctuations in the Chenab River as evidence of upstream manipulation ignore both hydrological realities and established operational practices of run-of-the-river hydropower projects. The river flows at downstream locations such as Marala are inherently influenced by seasonal snowmelt patterns in the Himalayas.

Variations in winter snowfall, delayed melting, or cooler spring temperatures naturally affect early-season discharge levels. Such fluctuations are a routine feature of Himalayan river systems and cannot, by themselves, be interpreted as evidence of deliberate interference.

Operational dynamics at hydropower projects such as the Baglihar Hydroelectric Project have also been repeatedly mischaracterized. Reservoir management in run-of-the-river systems necessarily involves variable releases linked to sediment flushing, maintenance requirements, hydropower optimization, technical safety considerations, and flood management protocols.

Sediment management is particularly critical in Himalayan rivers carrying heavy silt loads.

Temporary operational adjustments during flushing or maintenance cycles are therefore intrinsic to project functioning.

Importantly, the Baglihar project has already undergone extensive international scrutiny. Pakistan itself invoked the dispute resolution provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty, leading to the appointment of a Neutral Expert under Article IX and Appendix F.

The Neutral Expert's 2007 determination upheld the essential design and operational parameters of the project, rejecting most objections related to pondage and freeboard. The project was confirmed to be consistent with the treaty provisions governing run-of-the-river hydropower development.

Equally significant is the absence of any demonstration of tangible downstream harm arising from the alleged flow variations.

Allegations have relied largely on selective snapshots, isolated observations, and media narratives rather than rigorous hydrological analysis establishing causation, economic damage, or

quantifiable agricultural impact. No concrete evidence has been produced linking operational variations at upstream projects to sustained downstream distress.

Moreover, allegations of politically motivated manipulation overlook an important practical reality: any deliberate meddling in hydropower operations would impose not only direct economic costs on the upstream operator itself through reduced power generation efficiency, it may also cause long-term harm to the plant.

A single flushing cycle during the monsoon season at the Baglihar Dam may result in an estimated loss of around 150 million units of electricity generation and corresponding revenue. Such flushing operations are undertaken by the operator purely on technical and maintenance grounds. It is difficult to reconcile claims of intentional disruption with operational choices that simultaneously reduce energy production and impose financial losses.

Taken together, the evidence presents a clear conclusion. The Indus Basin has recently experienced higher-than-expected inflows, substantial downstream escapages, rapid reservoir recovery, and stable forward projections. Variations in river discharge remain well within the scope of natural hydrological processes and standard reservoir operations.

The larger challenge facing the basin lies not in speculative claims of upstream deprivation, but in unresolved structural issues—limited storage capacity, sedimentation pressures, inefficient utilization, and broader water governance constraints. Externalizing these internal management deficiencies through narratives of manufactured scarcity does little to address the real long-term challenges confronting the basin.

(Atul Jain is the former Chairman of the Central Water Commission.)

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Does Beijing have a new foothold in Dhaka? What Tarique Rahman's China visit means for South Asia

The Teesta handshake is the headline. The strategic architecture beneath it is the real story.

By Vipul Tamhane

When Prime Minister Tarique Rahman touched down in Beijing on June 24, the optics were carefully handled. Thirteen memoranda of understanding, a quick handshake with Premier Li Qiang at the Great Hall of the People, pledges of solidarity on growth and sovereignty. Dhaka called it a new chapter. But for strategists in New Delhi, and indeed in Washington, the sub-text of this visit will be parsed some time later, even after the ceremonial photographs have faded.

The visit was not a diplomatic revolution. Bangladesh is not pivoting away from India in the manner of, say, Myanmar's military junta or Sri Lanka under the weight of Chinese debt. Tarique Rahman's government has neither the ideological inclination nor the geopolitical luxury to abandon New Delhi entirely. What this visit represents is something subtler and, in the long run, more consequential: the deliberate institutionalization of Chinese influence across the full spectrum of Bangladeshi statecraft, economic, political, developmental, and now hydrological.

The GDI gambit

The most strategically significant outcome of the Rahman visit is not the Teesta River agreement that has dominated Indian commentary. It is Bangladesh's formal accession to China's Global Development Initiative. Proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2021, the GDI is, on its face, a multilateral framework for accelerating progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

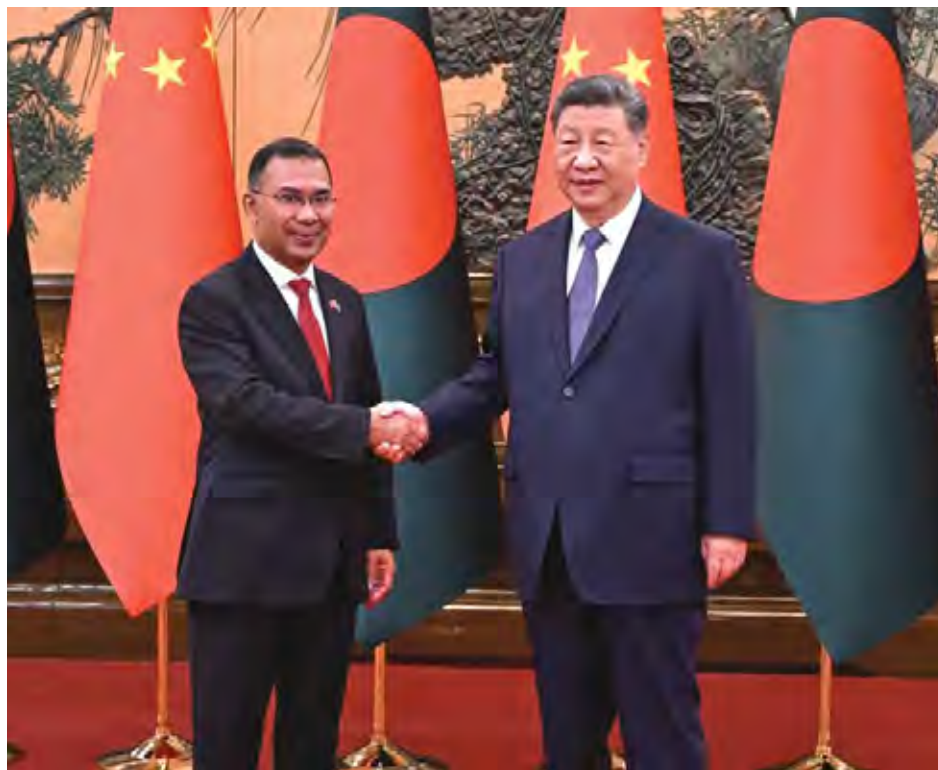
In practice, it is Beijing's answer to the West's attempts to offer developing nations an alternative to Chinese financing, except that the GDI is itself a Chinese initiative, with Chinese institutions, Chinese priorities, and Chinese political assumptions embedded in its architecture.

For years, Dhaka remained cautious about joining. Officials signalled concern about preserving strategic neutrality. That caution has now dissolved. Bangladesh's accession to the GDI means it has, sort of formally stepped into a Chinese-led development framework at the exact moment when the geopolitical rivalry between Beijing and Washington, and between Beijing and New Delhi, is really getting more intense across the Indo-Pacific.

This is not just a ceremonial nod or symbolic thing. It sets up institutional linkages, opens up routes for financing, and generates political duties that will steer Bangladeshi policy decisions over the coming decade.

The Teesta trap and the Siliguri shadow

The Teesta River agreement has really drawn the loudest alarm in India, and not without reason, maybe. The river runs from the eastern Himalayas through Sikkim and West Bengal, before it reaches Bangladesh, where it keeps up irrigation for millions of



Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman with Chinese President Xi Jinping.
(Photo courtesy: X@bdbnp78)

people. Over a decade already, India and Bangladesh have still been unable to finish a full water-sharing treaty, largely because

one government after another in New Delhi couldn't simply override Mamata Banerjee's objections coming from Kolkata. That political impasse has now handed China an opening.

China's proposed engagement, river training, dredging, flood control infrastructure, embankment construction, and water-resource data systems, is put forward in a sort of neutral talk about technical cooperation, you know. Beijing has predictably insisted the project "does not target any third party", like it's a simple technical matter and nothing more.

That assurance should satisfy no one. What matters is not Chinese intentions but Chinese capabilities and positioning. A significant Chinese engineering and technical presence on the Teesta basin places Beijing's professionals in close geographic proximity to India's Siliguri Corridor, the narrow strip of territory, barely 18 kilometers wide at certain points, connecting mainland India to its entire northeastern region. Indian security planners do not have the luxury of assuming that hydrological data collected near this corridor will remain purely civilian in application.

India offered its own technical assistance for the Teesta basin in 2024. That offer now looks insufficient. New Delhi's failure to convert goodwill into a binding treaty, one that gave Bangladesh tangible benefits and foreclosed Chinese entry, is a strategic miscalculation that will be studied in South Block for years.

Party lines and political architecture

Beneath the headline agreements lies a

development that may prove equally durable: the memorandum of understanding between the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Chinese Communist Party. China has long cultivated party-to-party relationships across Asia as a hedge against electoral uncertainty.

The logic is straightforward: when a government changes, the infrastructure of political relationships survives. The CPC-BNP agreement means Chinese

influence in Bangladesh is no longer dependent on who sits in the prime minister's chair. Beijing is putting money into the institutional fabric of Bangladeshi politics, like the whole thing from the inside, kind of itself. This reminds you of China's approach in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and more and more across Southeast Asia.

It's patient, structural, and honestly not that easy to spot for a casual observer. For India, which has long gained from deep people-to-people links and civilizational ties with Bangladesh, this feels like a real qualitative step up. Economic competition, India can manage. Competing for institutional political influence inside Bangladesh's party structures is a different challenge entirely.

The Bay of Bengal calculus

To read the Rahman visit in isolation is to miss its regional logic. China already has a pretty big leverage in the Bay of Bengal's strategic geography, like Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Kyaukpadaung in Myanmar, and this web of maritime economic interests that spreads across the Indian Ocean.

Bangladesh sits in a kind of awkward but crucial middle spot between South Asia and Southeast Asia, and it controls the northeastern arc of the Bay of Bengal, so in a sense it is the missing link in this whole

connectivity picture. With more Greater Chinese economic and political integration with Dhaka, Beijing gets stronger, not only for maritime trade routes but also for logistics chains, and generally for the wider Belt and Road framework.

There is no evidence of Chinese military basing ambitions in Bangladesh. But in statecraft, military basing is the last step, not the first. The sequence is economic access, then political influence, then institutional entrenchment, and only then, if strategic conditions permit, a security presence. China is methodically working through the earlier stages.

What New Delhi must do

India's response to this visit will, in a big way, set the tone and trajectory for South Asian geopolitics through the rest of this decade. The instinct in New Delhi will likely be to express worry via diplomatic channels, push harder on connectivity promises that are already in the pipeline, and renew engagement with Bangladeshi officials. All of this is needed, but somehow still not enough.

The Teesta water-sharing agreement needs to be wrapped up. Not as some kind of favor for Bangladesh, but honestly as a strategic must for India. The longer it stays unresolved, the larger the opening it unintentionally creates for Beijing. India also needs to build a more sophisticated sort of understanding, like the real Bangladeshi agency in this whole relationship, not just a surface picture, because that angle matters.

Dhaka is not being coerced by China. It is making rational choices about how to leverage competition between Asia's two major powers to maximise its own development financing and strategic autonomy. That is a legitimate strategy, and India cannot simply demand loyalty. It should somehow make itself the more appealing partner, sort of.

The June 2026 visit won't be remembered as the moment Bangladesh slid into Beijing's orbit. Instead, it will stick in minds as the time China locked in another meaningful structural gain across South Asia, little by little, brick by brick, MoU after MoU, and river project on river project. The accumulation of these advances is the strategy. And India, for now, is watching it unfold.



(Vipul Tamhane is a counter-terrorism expert and governance consultant)

Ready for war if diplomacy fails: Iran



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf also reiterated Tehran's position on its nuclear program.
(Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

Iran has warned that it was prepared for war if diplomacy with the United States failed, while reiterating that dialogue remained its preferred course, as officials from both countries prepared for separate talks in Qatar aimed at advancing the implementation of their memorandum of understanding (MoU).

Speaking in an interview on state television, Iran's Parliament Speaker and

chief negotiator, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, said Tehran would continue pursuing dialogue with the US but is also fully prepared for military confrontation if its commitments were not honored.

During the interview, Ghalibaf also reiterated Iran's position on its nuclear program and said the country's nuclear rights and "red lines" were non-negotiable. He maintained that Iran's nuclear activities remained within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Ghalibaf questioned the credibility of international guarantees, citing Iran's experience under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

He said discussions were continuing and stressed that Tehran would not move to the next phase of implementing the agreement until the five key clauses, "one of the most important of which is the issue of Lebanon", oil

exports and navigation through the Strait of Hormuz were fully consolidated and finalized.

Israel warns of another strike on Iran if needed

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has warned that Israel is prepared to strike Iran again if necessary, signalling that military action remains firmly on the table even as Washington and Tehran push ahead with negotiations aimed at ending months of regional confrontation.

Speaking to Israel's Channel 14, Netanyahu said Israel would continue to act independently to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, signalling that further military action remains a possibility despite ongoing diplomatic efforts.

Over 1,300 killed as Europe faces intense heatwave

As a relentless heatwave blankets large parts of Europe, several countries continue to juggle extreme weather conditions with water and healthcare crises. The record-shattering conditions across Europe have resulted in numerous deaths, infrastructure disruptions, and school closures.

As temperatures soared over 40 degrees Celsius in multiple countries, over 1,300 deaths were reported across Europe since June 21, according to the news agency AFP, citing the World Health Organisation (WHO).

France has been among the worst-hit nations engulfed by

the latest spell of heatwave. According to AFP, the country saw five days of unusually high temperatures in May, and a record-breaking 11-day heatwave in June.

So far, France has reported 1,000 deaths, with officials warning the toll could rise further. In Germany, at least seven people have died due to heatwave-related incidents, reported Al Jazeera.

Climate experts have linked the intense heatwave spell to an "omega block" weather pattern. It is caused when a large area of high pressure gets sandwiched between two low-pressure systems.

SUBCONTINENT

Afghanistan strikes ISIS bases in Pakistan



Taliban said that Pakistani fighter jets bombed a civilian home in Paktia.
(Photo courtesy: X@FitrathHamd)

Afghanistan's Ministry of Defense said this week that its air force carried out airstrikes on alleged ISIS targets in Pakistan's Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, claiming the sites were being used to plan attacks against civilians inside Afghanistan, TOLONews reported.

The Taliban said the targeted locations were being used to coordinate sabotage operations and attacks against civilians in Afghanistan. It claimed the strikes were carried out with precision, causing heavy casualties and significant material losses to ISIS while resulting in no civilian casualties.

Sources told TOLONews that a school in the Saranan area, which they alleged

was being used by ISIS members and groups described as "agents of chaos and violence," was among the targets.

The Afghan Ministry of Defense also stressed that any location used to undermine Afghanistan's security will be targeted. Warning Pakistan, it said: "We will target every location that poses a threat to our security."

The strikes came days after cross-border airstrikes by Pakistan along the Afghanistan border left dozens of civilians dead and injured. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said at least 28 civilians were killed and 49 others injured, warning that the toll could rise as hospitals continued treating the wounded.

Pakistan warns world over Indus Waters Treaty

Pakistan hosted an 'international conference' this week, where it warned that no world order that is on paper would remain secure if the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) failed. India has kept the IWT in abeyance after the Pakistan-sponsored terror attack in Pahalgam in April 2025.

Pakistan's agrarian economy and power generation depend on the waters of the Indus River System. The suspension of the IWT, signed in 1960, by India has also left Pakistan blindsided on the volume of water in its rivers, as it doesn't have hydrological information for timely action.

India has time and again made it clear that "blood and water cannot flow together". Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, who addressed the conference, described the IWT as "not merely a water-sharing arrangement but a



Pakistan Deputy PM Ishaq Dar called the Indus Waters Treaty vital for regional peace and stability.

(Photo courtesy: X@ForeignOfficePk)

vital instrument of regional peace, stability, and cooperation".

"Shared waters must never be weaponized. They must remain a bridge between nations, guided by cooperation, dialogue, and respect for international law," Dar wrote on X.

He also warned that any attempt to deprive Pakistan of its rights under the treaty would have "profound consequences" for regional peace and security, affecting the shared interests of nearly two billion people in South Asia.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari asserted Pakistan wanted "peace with dignity" and "dialogue under law", asserting that Islamabad would not compromise on what it described as its water rights.

The IWT is a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan, brokered by the World Bank. It allocates the six rivers of the Indus basin between the two countries.

A call to end bilateral hostility

Over 100 prominent figures from India and Pakistan, including several politicians and public figures, have jointly appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart, Shehbaz Sharif, to take concrete and sustained steps towards restoring peace, dialogue and normal bilateral relations between the two countries.

The appeal, issued by the Centre for Peace and Progress and signed by 117 people, 61 from India and 56 from Pakistan, urged the two governments to end the prolonged hostility, saying it was denying millions of young people opportunities, prosperity and a secure future.

“ America will never be destroyed from the outside.
If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because
we destroyed ourselves.

Be with a leader when he is right, stay with him when
he is still right, but leave him when he is wrong.”

Abraham Lincoln
16th President of USA

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FIFA WC: Mexico truly deserve to reach round of 16

Mexico City: Mexico manager Javier Aguirre said reaching the World Cup round of 16 carried special meaning after overcoming a hurdle that had eluded him in his previous spells in charge of the team.

The 2-0 win over Ecuador marked Mexico's first World Cup knockout-stage victory since it last hosted the tournament in 1986, when Aguirre was a player.

The 67-year-old managed the Mexico teams that were eliminated in the first knockout round at the 2002 and 2010 World Cups.

"It means a lot to me; I was never able to play that fifth match. It happened in South Korea and Japan (in 2002) and in South Africa (in 2010). We had good group stages, but we couldn't move forward," Aguirre said in a press conference as quoted by Xinhua as saying.

Aguirre praised his players' unity after first-half goals from Julian Quinones and Raul Jimenez sealed Mexico's fourth straight win of the tournament without conceding. "I can tell you that this team deserves what is happen-

ing," he said. "There is a special connection with the fans and the privilege of playing a World Cup at home," he said.

Aguirre stressed that neither team could be taken lightly, underlining the importance of rest and preparation.

"We'll watch the match (between England and DR Congo) and recover as best we can between now and Sunday. We'll keep our spirits up during the week and do our best to play another good match," he concluded.

Germany knocked out by Paraguay on penalties



Germany had never lost on penalties at the FIFA World Cup. (Photo courtesy: X@FIFAWorldCup)

Foxborough: Paraguay knocked out four-time champions Germany with a wild penalty shootout (4-3) win after the two teams were tied at 1-1 in regulation time in the Round of 32 match of the FIFA World Cup 2026 here at Boston Stadium.

Germany had never lost on penalties at the FIFA World Cup. After being down and out seemingly, Manuel Neuer got them back on level terms, only for Paraguay to finally seize their third spot-kick shot at reaching the last 16.

Julio Enciso put La Albirroja ahead in the 42nd minute. The Germans used their own aerial prowess to equalise with Kai Havertz diverting Florian Wirtz's cross into the bottom corner. After another header, from Jonathan Tah, was ruled out, the tie went to a shootout.

Gill repelled two penalties in it to leave the

Paraguayans all but through, only for Manuel Neuer to inspire a remarkable fightback. Finally, with what was the third spot-kick the Paraguayans had to progress, Jose Canale kept his cool to send Gustavo Alfaro's charges through.

Germany started the penalty shootout but immediately found themselves on the back foot when Kai Havertz hit his spot-kick straight at the Paraguay goalkeeper. Mauricio capitalised on the error by burying his shot into the corner, though Joshua Kimmich quickly responded for the Germans, hesitating before confidently converting his effort.

Gustavo Gomez then struck well to put Paraguay ahead 2-1, only for Jamal Musiala to level the score at 2-2 with an effortless finish. The drama intensified as Matias Galarza successfully converted to put Paraguay on the brink of victory after Nick Woltemade's subsequent effort for Germany was saved.

Mbappe shatters all-time knockout goals record

New Jersey: French captain Kylian Mbappe continued his impressive 2026 FIFA World Cup goal-scoring form as he shattered the all-time knockout goals record while also leapfrogging Argentine great Lionel Messi in the Golden Boot race.

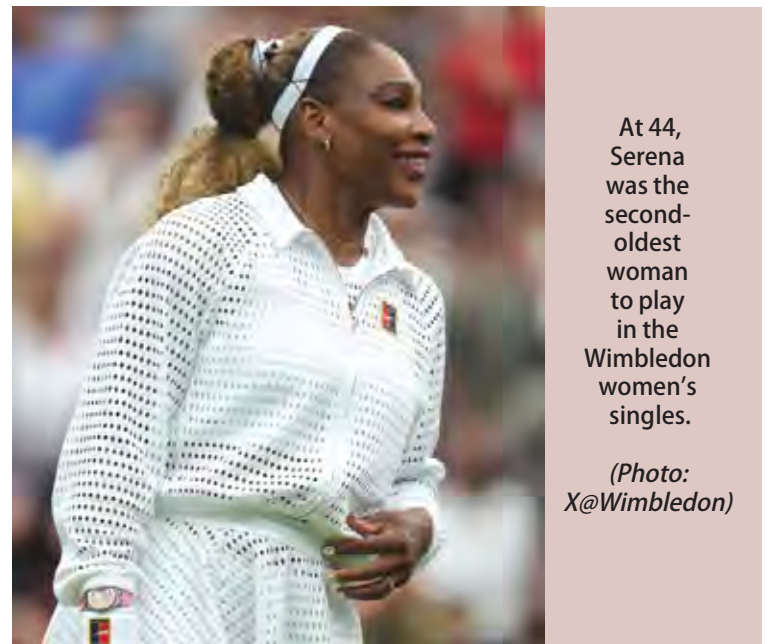
Mbappe, who is featuring in his third World Cup, secured a brace, his third of the tournament, in the 3-0 rout of Sweden in the Round of 32 clash to level with Argentine great Lionel Messi on six goals but edged him with two assists.

With the French No. 10 sweeping home to make a half-dozen at World Cup 2026. He will have the chance to add to his haul when France face Paraguay in the Round of 16 at Philadelphia Stadium on July 5. The Frenchman's brace, his third of the tournament, moved him to within one goal of Lionel Messi's all-time mark of 19.



The 2-0 win over Ecuador marked Mexico's first World Cup knockout-stage victory in 40 years. (Photo courtesy: X@FIFAWorldCup)

Wimbledon: Maya holds nerve to derail Serena's comeback



At 44, Serena was the second-oldest woman to play in the Wimbledon women's singles.

(Photo: X@Wimbledon)

London: Maya Joint played and won the biggest match of her young career to end the Wimbledon singles comeback of the legend Serena Williams in a Centre Court thriller.

Joint, who had never won at Wimbledon before and had entered The Championships on a run of 11 Tour-level defeats dating back to January, registered 6-3, 6-7 (6), 6-3 win over the seven-time champion. She will next face Alexandra Eala.

Serena saved a first match point in the second-set tie-break and then led by a break in the decider.

She defied time with an accomplished display but could not tame Joint's spirit. The 20-year-old Aussie stood up to Serena's power and broke her legendary serve five times before ultimately outlasting her. She also sent down 10 aces.

At 44, Serena was the second-oldest woman to play in the Wimbledon women's singles in the Open era after 47-year-old Martina Navratilova in 2004. The 23-time Grand Slam champion Serena had last played a singles match 1,397 days ago at the 2022 US Open against Australian Ajla Tomljanovic.

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JULY 4-10, 2026



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

Strengthening bonds with children and family members can create a warm and peaceful atmosphere at home. Your confidence and initiative may help you take charge of important professional matters. This is a suitable time to make your living space more organised and welcoming. Staying present and focused can improve your daily productivity. Travel opportunities may bring excitement and memorable experiences. Although a few hurdles may arise, persistence will help you move forward steadily. Social interactions can introduce you to helpful and encouraging people.

Lucky Number: 6
Lucky Colour: Cream



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 20)

Mutual trust and heartfelt conversations can deepen your relationship with your partner. Your support and guidance may inspire children to perform at their best. Expanding your expertise and sharpening your abilities can open doors to career advancement. Property-related matters appear favourable and may bring satisfaction. Taking time to evaluate your goals can lead to valuable self-improvement. A journey to a new place could provide the change of scenery you have been craving. Studies and skill-building efforts are likely to produce encouraging outcomes. Your social circle may become more vibrant and rewarding.

Lucky Number: 9 Lucky Colour: White



GEMINI (May 21-Jun 21)

Not everyone around you may immediately appreciate innovative suggestions, so patience will be essential. Family discussions may require extra care to avoid misunderstandings. Real estate-related decisions have the potential to strengthen your financial standing. Travel plans could be physically demanding, making proper preparation important. Some may think about relocating closer to work for greater convenience. Maintaining emotional balance and self-control will help you navigate situations effectively.

Lucky Number: 22
Lucky Colour: Grey



CANCER (Jun 22-Jul 22)

Financial prospects look brighter than expected, bringing greater confidence and security. Matters of the heart may not progress exactly as planned, but perseverance will serve you well. Those who have recently adopted healthier habits can begin noticing positive results. Work-related travel may prove highly productive and beneficial. Property investments show strong potential for future gains. Certain social situations may require careful handling. Consistent effort can help you gain recognition and appreciation for your achievements.

Lucky Number: 18
Lucky Colour: Red



LEO (Jul 23-Aug 23)

Family unity and teamwork will be important in overcoming domestic challenges. Thoughtful financial planning can help you move toward a major long-term goal. Avoid using sensitive information against a loved one, as it may damage trust. Physical activities and sports can contribute greatly to your vitality and well-being. Necessary travel is likely to proceed smoothly. It may be wise to delay major property purchases for now. Learning from experienced individuals can provide valuable direction for future success.

Lucky Number: 2
Lucky Colour: Light Yellow



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)

Business growth may slow temporarily, requiring patience and strategic planning. Romantic relationships can flourish through meaningful time spent together. Paying attention to fitness and personal development can bring noticeable improvements. New opportunities in business may encourage you to think bigger and pursue ambitious goals. Property matters require careful evaluation and proper safeguards. Your disciplined approach is likely to bring positive academic achievements. Stimulating discussions and connections with intelligent people can prove rewarding.

Lucky Number: 3
Lucky Colour: Golden



LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)

Avoid rushing into investments without proper evaluation. Love and romance can bring happiness if you allow yourself to enjoy the moment. A healthy routine supported by balanced nutrition and regular activity will benefit you greatly. Planning a family outing or recreational trip can create cherished memories. Property-related developments may bring encouraging news. Academic progress is likely to remain steady with proper time management. Pleasant interactions and meaningful conversations can add joy to your week.

Lucky Number: 8
Lucky Colour: Peach



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

Participating in charitable or community activities can bring satisfaction to both you and your loved ones. Review financial opportunities carefully before making commitments. Minor disagreements with a partner may surface, but understanding and patience can restore harmony. Looking after your emotional well-being is just as important as caring for your physical health. While travelling, prioritise caution and avoid unnecessary risks. Those searching for suitable accommodation may receive favourable opportunities. Your practical thinking can help you accomplish important objectives.

Lucky Number: 8
Lucky Colour: Green



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

Pleasant surprises from relatives living abroad may brighten your week. Financial ventures involving calculated risks could work in your favour. A special romantic moment may bring excitement and renewed enthusiasm. Good health will help you remain active and productive. Although travel ideas may seem attractive, careful planning is advised before making commitments. Temporary accommodation options may prove useful during journeys.

Lucky Number: 11
Lucky Colour: Pink



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 21)

You may need to handle unrealistic expectations from family members with diplomacy and firmness. Financially, the week remains stable and comfortable. Your partner may make creative efforts to keep the relationship lively and engaging. Focusing on healthier habits can improve your overall well-being. A memorable cruise or water-related vacation may appeal to you. Protect your assets and property by taking timely precautions. Students and learners can achieve excellent results through dedication. Reliable friends may become a valuable source of encouragement.

Lucky Number: 6
Lucky Colour: Magenta



AQUARIUS (Jan 22-Feb 19)

Family ties can grow stronger when you appreciate and respect individual differences. Taking the first step in matters of love may bring encouraging responses. Efficient scheduling will help you meet important deadlines and commitments. Travel plans could encounter a few obstacles, requiring flexibility. Be mindful of excessive spending on luxury housing or lifestyle upgrades. Partnerships with ambitious and forward-thinking people can support future growth. Family support will remain one of your greatest strengths.

Lucky Number: 1 Lucky Colour: Silver



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

Wise financial decisions can gradually strengthen your income and savings. Your caring and compassionate nature may enhance harmony in your relationship. Even if health feels less than perfect, staying active through regular walks can be beneficial. A vacation filled with scenic beauty and pleasant experiences may be on the horizon. Property-related ambitions appear promising and deserve consideration. Stay away from questionable associations that could affect your image negatively. Your imagination and natural insight can contribute significantly to academic and intellectual success.

Lucky Number: 22 Lucky Colour: Purple

July 4, 2026

Ruled by number 4 and Uranus, you are practical, disciplined, and highly dependable. You like stability in life and believe in working patiently toward your goals. Your organized thinking and hardworking nature help you earn respect both personally and professionally. At times, however, stubbornness or overthinking may slow your progress, so staying flexible and open-minded will help you move ahead more smoothly. This year brings rewards for your past efforts, especially in career and financial matters. Property-related gains or benefits through investments are also likely for many. Professionally, your dedication and systematic approach will attract recognition from seniors and influential people. Financial stability will improve steadily, allowing you to plan confidently for the future. On the personal front, relationships will become stronger with better understanding and communication. Family responsibilities may increase, but support from loved ones will also give you emotional strength. Romance can bring happiness and warmth, especially for those looking for deeper commitment. Health requires attention toward maintaining a balanced routine, healthy eating habits, and regular exercise. Creative hobbies or artistic interests may bring peace of mind and emotional satisfaction. Travel connected with work or family can prove beneficial during the year. Important months for progress and success are January, November, and December. Stay disciplined, patient, and positive, and this year can bring stability, financial growth, and emotional fulfillment in many areas of life.

July 5, 2026

Ruled by number 5 and Mercury, you are intelligent, practical, and naturally gifted in communication. Your quick thinking, leadership qualities, and adaptable nature help you succeed in different situations. You enjoy change, new experiences, and meeting people who inspire fresh ideas. However, mood swings and indecisiveness may sometimes create confusion, so staying focused and organized will help you make better progress. This year brings many opportunities for career advancement, especially for those connected with media, business, communication, travel, or creative professions. Financial growth is likely through promotions, successful investments, or new proj-

ANNUAL PREDICTIONS FOR THOSE BORN IN THIS WEEK

ects. Travel will play an important role this year and may introduce you to influential people who can support your ambitions. Students are likely to achieve recognition in academics and extracurricular activities. On the personal front, relationships may need patience and understanding, but honest communication will strengthen emotional bonds. Family support will motivate you during challenging moments. Health generally remains stable, though stress and irregular routines should be avoided. A balanced lifestyle and proper rest will help maintain your energy levels. Social life will remain active and enjoyable, bringing exciting opportunities and memorable experiences. Important months for success and major achievements are March, October, and December. By staying disciplined, practical, and confident in your decisions, you can turn this year into a period of strong growth, happiness, and personal success.

July 6, 2026

Ruled by number 6 and Venus, you are warm-hearted, practical, and admired for your caring and supportive nature. People value your advice and feel comfortable in your presence because of your balanced personality and positive outlook. You enjoy beauty, comfort, and harmony in life, and often try to maintain peace in relationships. However, being overly direct or restless at times may create misunderstandings, so patience and emotional balance will help you greatly this year. Financial stability is strongly indicated, with gains likely through property matters, travel, or foreign connections. Professionally, your creativity and talent will bring recognition and growth, especially for those connected with art, design, hospitality, education, or public dealing. Positive news from children or younger family members can bring happiness and strengthen family bonds. Relationships will grow deeper as you spend more quality time with loved ones and nurture emotional understanding. A spiritual journey or positive change in thinking later in the year may bring peace, clarity, and emotional maturity. Health remains mostly stable, but maintaining a balanced routine, healthy eating habits, and proper rest will be important. Social gatherings and travel may bring exciting opportunities and memorable

experiences. Important months for progress and success are February, April, September, and December. Stay optimistic, practical, and emotionally balanced, and this year can bring love, financial comfort, personal growth, and long-lasting happiness in many areas of life.

July 7, 2026

Ruled by number 7 and Neptune, you are sensitive, creative, and deeply thoughtful by nature. You often trust your intuition and prefer meaningful connections over superficial relationships. Your emotional depth, imagination, and spiritual outlook help you understand people and situations in a unique way. However, being overly emotional or stubborn at times may create confusion or delays in important matters. This year encourages you to stay balanced and practical while making decisions. Financially, the year looks promising, with gains likely through investments, overseas connections, or new opportunities. A journey abroad or travel connected with work may prove highly beneficial and open doors to personal and professional growth. On the personal front, romance and relationships will become more joyful and emotionally fulfilling. Family life can remain peaceful if you avoid overthinking and communicate openly with loved ones. Some may plan property renovation or purchase during the year. Professionally, growth opportunities will help you showcase your talent and creativity, bringing appreciation and recognition. Health needs proper care, especially stress, sleep issues, or exhaustion caused by overwork. A balanced lifestyle, meditation, and regular routine will help you stay mentally and physically strong. Spiritual interests may grow further and bring inner peace and clarity. Important months for progress and success are March, September, and December. Stay positive, open-minded, and confident in your abilities, and this year can bring emotional happiness, financial improvement, and meaningful personal growth.

July 8, 2026

Ruled by number 8 and Saturn, you are disciplined, hardworking, and admired for your reliability and maturity. You believe in patience, responsibility, and building success step by step. Your practical thinking and

strong determination often help you achieve long-term goals, though rigidity or stubbornness may sometimes slow your progress. This year encourages you to stay flexible and avoid unnecessary stress in both personal and professional matters. Financially, the year looks rewarding, with chances of gains through career growth, new assignments, property matters, or smart investments. Professionally, your dedication and systematic approach will earn respect from seniors and influential people. Support from your spouse or loved ones will create emotional stability and strength during difficult phases. Social interactions, travel, and networking can bring valuable opportunities and useful contacts that may help your future plans. Health requires attention, especially stress, blood pressure, or exhaustion caused by overwork, so maintaining balance is important. Family responsibilities may increase, but emotional support from close ones will help you manage everything smoothly. Relationships will improve when handled with patience and understanding. Important months for success and major achievements are January, April, and October. Stay disciplined, focused, and open to change, and this year can bring stability, financial growth, and personal satisfaction in many important areas of life.

July 9, 2026

Ruled by number 9 and Mars, you are courageous, energetic, and naturally driven toward success. Your confidence, leadership qualities, and strong determination help you face challenges fearlessly. You believe in taking action and often inspire others with your bold personality. However, impatience and a quick temper may sometimes create misunderstandings, so learning to stay calm and balanced will help you greatly this year. Professionally, major opportunities and positive changes are likely, even if they initially seem challenging. Business ventures, partnerships, and investments may bring strong financial gains and long-term benefits. Your hard work and bold decisions can help you move ahead confidently in career matters. On the personal front, relationships will improve when you balance confidence with patience and emotional understanding. Family support will bring encouragement

and motivation during important phases of life. Romance may become deeper and more meaningful for many. Health needs attention, especially regarding stress, energy levels, and maintaining a healthy routine. Regular exercise, balanced eating habits, and proper rest will help you stay active and focused. Travel plans may prove rewarding and could bring new opportunities or fresh inspiration. Spiritual growth and self-reflection may also help you feel emotionally stronger and more peaceful. Important months for progress and success are February, September, and November. Stay positive, disciplined, and focused on your long-term goals, and this year can bring achievement, happiness, and personal growth in many areas of life.

July 10, 2026

Ruled by number 1 and the Sun, you are confident, creative, and naturally drawn toward leadership. Your strong personality, charm, and sense of responsibility help you make a lasting impression on people around you. You enjoy recognition and often work hard to achieve success and stability in life. However, spending impulsively or taking unnecessary risks may create financial pressure at times, so careful planning will be important this year. Professionally, the year brings opportunities for growth, appreciation, and new achievements. Your creativity and dedication can help you gain recognition in your field and strengthen your position. Financially, stability will improve gradually, especially through smart decisions and disciplined savings. On the personal front, relationships will become warmer and more meaningful. Family support and emotional understanding from loved ones will help you stay motivated during challenging moments. Romance may bring excitement, deeper bonding, and memorable experiences for many. A distant journey or travel later in the year could offer fresh inspiration, happiness, and a positive change in perspective. Health generally remains stable, but maintaining balance between work and rest will be essential for mental peace and physical well-being. Social life may become more active, bringing useful contacts and joyful moments. Important months for progress and success are March, July, and December. Stay focused, positive, and practical in your approach, and this year can bring growth, happiness, recognition, and emotional fulfillment in many important areas of life.



The Meaning and Message of Divine Experiences in New Jersey

~ *Abhishek Mishra answers the questions he is most asked*



Abhishek Mishra

Abhishek Mishra, a seasoned corporate professional with multiple years of service in the IT industry, has been sharing something strange and mysterious for a couple of years with the press. Naturally formed (Swayambhu) images of Lord Shiva have appeared both inside and outside his family home in Edison, NJ, without any human intervention.

Among the "astonishing phenomena" at the Mishra residence have been a Shivling forming naturally from winter ice, while a 50-foot depiction of Lord Shiva holding a trident appeared in the backyard snow. Inside the home, an image of Shiva with Nandi appeared on the bathroom tiles, and another meditative form of Shiva emerged from the ice.

From symbols appearing unexpectedly to moments he describes as spiritually transformative, his experiences have led many to reflect on faith and the unseen.

Mr Mishra has since been interviewed by major Indian TV channels, print media and at an Editors Meet on Long Island last November where he promoted interfaith understanding and communal harmony. Another meet-and-greet with Editors and prominent members of the community has been planned for February 21, 2026 in a restaurant in Edison, NJ. Here are the more salient points of his story and belief system in his own words.

When did these Signs start Emerging?

"I first began noticing Shiva formations in 2016. Since then, they have appeared every year, self-generating from snow and ice outside, or even manifesting within bathroom tiles. While the icy formations only occur during the winter, the patterns on bathroom tiles are visible year-round."

What are You Reading in Those Signs?

"For me, these recurring patterns are physical evidence that God is real. Divine blessings showered on my home have deepened my family's faith and devotion. These forms are beyond human imagination and serve as a reminder to connect with a higher power, whether one follows Buddha,

Jesus, or Shiva."

Why are You Sharing Your experiences?

"I share these experiences in public not for personal ownership or benefit, but because I feel like a messenger. A powerful moment came when my young son, who had no prior knowledge of Hindu iconography, naturally began shaping a Shivling out of snow. I understand skepticism from others, but noting consistent physical evidence over several years builds my faith and of those who witness it."

been proclaimed by all the religious or spiritual traditions of the world in different epochs. What I want to tell people is that aligning with God or that Divine Power will make our worldly life happy, peaceful, and prosperous."

What is Your Mission?

"My final message to the world is one of unity and righteousness. Religion is not the same as Dharma. Religions differ and sometimes cause division. Religion is a set of rituals and modes of worship, while Dharma is the cosmic law, right-



A collage of formations of Lord Shiva in Mishra family home

Do you have a Family Background of Religious Beliefs?

"Spiritual devotion is a family tradition. My grandfather built a Shesh Bhagwan (Kherapati) temple in Kanpur in north India, which is currently celebrating its 100th anniversary. My brother there looks after the temple."

How can Belief in Divine Power help?

"Yes, I sincerely want to inspire faith in others of a Divine Power, referred to by different names across religions and worshipped in various forms. Mind you, there are many times more people in the world even today who believe in God than those who don't. Of course, some people believe in saakar (God with form), and some in nirakaar (formless), but God is one. This unity of God has

eous conduct, and a path to truth. Dharma and pure heart bring all of us together. To me, Lord Shiva represents "everything and nothingness"—a completeness that is available to everyone regardless of their karma or beliefs."

What is the meaning or ultimate message of the mysterious forms appearing at Mishra's home? And why is Abhishek Mishra chosen to deliver that message? All one can say is that there are many things even today in life and the universe which are beyond the understanding of science, no matter how developed it is.

The Mishra family warmly welcomes visitors who wish to learn, reflect, and personally experience this spiritual miracle at their home - 25 Lavender Drive, Edison, NJ. Abhishek Mishra can be contacted at Ph: 732.690.0404 for more information.



By Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

Each day we are bombarded by sensory stimuli from all directions. Each message coming in through our five senses is conveyed to the brain. Some messages

Cultivate a healthy mind through meditation

require a physical response, but many of them require intellectual or mental responses. We have to think through problems, make decisions, plan, analyze, synthesize, create, and then communicate our thoughts back to others.

Oftentimes, the mental stimuli can bring about reactions of fear, anxiety, tension, confusion, indecision, and a host of emotional responses. Mental tension and emotional pain take their toll on our body and physical health. It also affects our ability to be productive and effective in the world. In modern societies, much of the stress is not so much physical as it is mental. The challenges we face are mostly at the level of the mind. Often, in work situations, we have to find agreement with people who have different opinions and ideas

than we do. We all have different ways of looking at the world. Our way of working differs. Instead of taking our differences in a congenial and friendly manner, we stake our whole existence on the decisions.

When we feel threatened by someone else's ideas, decisions, or power at a mental level, we go into our flight or fight mode as if we were being physically attacked. The result is a stress response that leads to physiological reactions. Oftentimes, this continued fear and stress can cause emotional problems which bring great pain to us.

Meditate to Heal the Mind

We can avoid much of the stress, anxiety, and tension that faces us at the mental level by learning the

technique of meditation. Meditation is a way to relieve stress at the mental level and help us have a healthy mind. A healthy mind means that we can deal with the challenges of life in a calm, composed way without it causing us to feel upset, depressed, anxious, fearful, or threatened. A healthy mind means we deal with life's problems without it affecting our emotional make-up.

We take things as they come, deal with them effectively, try to find the best solution, and move on. We do not need to be overwhelmed, overpowered, and upset over the daily situations we face. By sitting in meditation, we develop the calmness to approach problems and situations. The more we sit in meditation, the more we are able to return to that state of peace

and harmony at any time during the day.

From Pain to Joy

The joy and happiness we feel in meditation lingers long after we emerge from our sitting. It can stay with us throughout our day. Thus, while our mind is engaged in our work, we have an underlying peace that guides our thoughts, words, and deeds. We can then act from a higher place, from a place of peace and calm. In this way, we remain unruffled and undisturbed by life's problems. Living life in such a manner can help heal our mind with its unhealthy and painful thoughts and emotions. In such a state, rather than being blinded by its pains and sorrows, we can drink from life's joys and blessings.

(Image courtesy: www.sos.org)

ANUVRAT MOVEMENT

A small vow to save horses and human lives

By John Di Leonardo

The tragic and preventable death of our beloved nephew Romanch Mahajan has left our family completely shattered."

Those heartbreaking words from the family of 18-year-old Indian tourist Romanch Mahajan remind us that the Jain principle of ahimsa—nonviolence toward all living beings—is more than a personal virtue. It is a call to confront systems that inflict preventable suffering.

Romanch traveled from India to New York City with his family to celebrate his recent high school graduation. Instead of returning home with cherished memories, his family returned home in mourning after Romanch was tragically killed when he was thrown from a horse-drawn carriage in Central Park. According to his family, in his final moments, Romanch acted instinctively to protect his mother—a final act of selflessness that reflected the remarkable young man he was.

His family described his death as "tragic and preventable," stating that it "was not an unpredictable accident. It was the direct result of a severe safety violation and systemic failure to protect tourists."

Just one week before Romanch's death, another carriage horse, Deniz, collapsed and died while pulling tourists through Central Park. Determined that no other family would endure the same heartbreak, the Mahajan family has urged New York City to pass legislation now renamed Romanch's Law. Originally introduced as Ryder's Law following the death of another carriage horse, Ryder, the bill now



Acharya Tulsi Ji
(Image provided by Arvind Vora)

bears Romanch's name in recognition that this cruel industry has taken the lives of both horses and people. If enacted, Romanch's Law would permanently end New York City's horse-drawn carriage industry, protecting both horses and the millions of residents and tourists who visit the city each year.

After learning carriage rides would resume just days after the tragedy, Romanch's uncle, Gaurav Mahajan, wrote to Mayor Zohran Mamdani: "Allowing these carriages

back onto the streets while our family is planning a funeral proves that the city values an antiquated novelty over human life." He concluded, "Our family will not rest until these carriages are gone for good."

The Anuvrat Movement, founded by Acharya Tulsi in 1949, teaches that lasting social change begins with small, personal vows. When we witness preventable suffering, neutrality is not compassion. Even a small vow—to speak up, submit testimony, or refuse to support cruelty—can help transform society.

Horse-drawn carriage rides have long endangered both horses and the public. Horses are compelled to navigate one of the world's busiest cities amid traffic, noise, extreme weather, and countless unpredictable hazards. When things go wrong, both animals and people pay the price.

I invite New Yorkers to join me at the New York City Council hearing on Romanch's Law at New York City Hall on Wednesday, July 15, at 10:00 a.m. If you cannot attend, submit written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov with the subject line "Intro 0943-2026

I invite New Yorkers to join me at the New York City Council hearing on Romanch's Law at New York City Hall on Wednesday, July 15, at 10:00 a.m.

If you cannot attend, submit written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov with the subject line "Intro 0943-2026 Testimony, July 15, 2026."

"Readers in India and around the world can also make their voices heard. Tell the Council that New York City's continued operation of horse-drawn carriages influences your travel decisions and that you will not visit New York City until this cruel industry is permanently abolished."



The author, John Di Leonardo, speaking about the legislation days before the unfortunate incident (Photo courtesy: John Di Leonardo)

Testimony, July 15, 2026." Readers in India and around the world can also make their voices heard. Tell the Council that New York City's continued operation of horse-drawn carriages influences your travel decisions and that you will not visit New York City until this cruel industry is permanently abolished.

The Mahajan family's courage has transformed unimaginable grief into a call for compassion. Whether you live in New York, New Delhi, or anywhere else in the world, you can help ensure that Romanch's legacy inspires lasting change. Anuvrat reminds us that history is often changed not by one great act, but

by thousands of small vows taken together. Let yours be one of them.

John Di Leonardo is the founding director of Humane Long Island. 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.

Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to all Americans on the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States of America.



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As America celebrates its 250th anniversary of Independence, we take the opportunity to reflect on the ideals that have defined this great nation and continuously strengthen it.

Heartiest Congratulations



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The Way we live our life is our Return gift to God"

Siddhguru Brahmrichi Gururvar

You are cordially invited to a spiritual gathering in celebration of Guru Purnima. The event will include Guru Darshan and Guru Prasad.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 | **Time:** 3:30 PM

Location: John Cranford Adams Playhouse, Hofstra University,
1000 Hempstead Turnpike, Hempstead, NY 11549

For more information, please contact: **917-650-1278**

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