



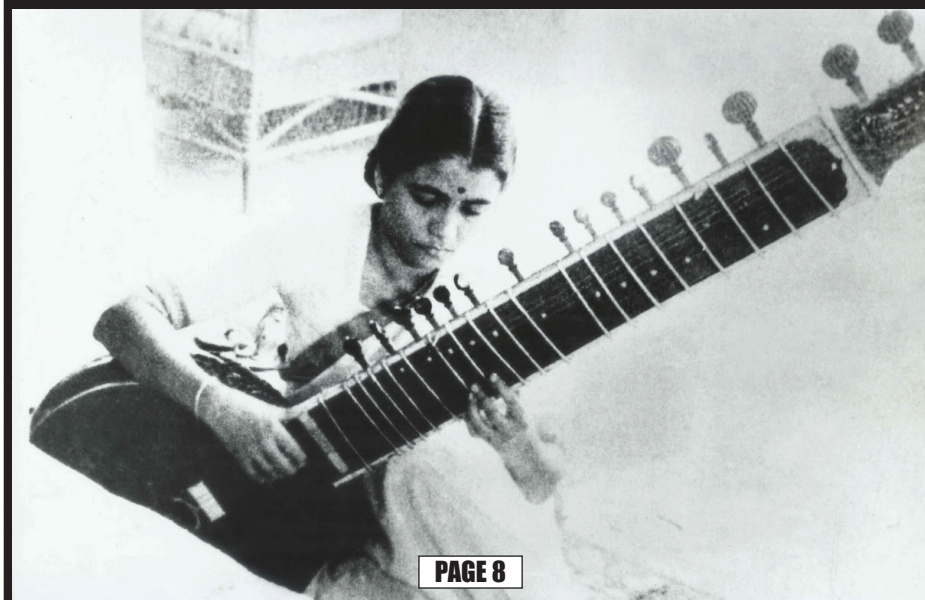
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At Least Some Democrats Are Trying To Figure Out What Went Wrong

BY RAMESH PONNURU

Finally, there are signs of intelligent life in the Democratic Party.

Not so much among Democratic congressmen, who have maneuvered themselves into a government shutdown fight that they do not appear to have a way to win. But the party's intellectuals and operatives are at last having a candid debate about what has gone wrong and what to do about it.

The most comprehensive and clear-eyed entrant in that debate comes from the center-left group Welcome, which has just produced a report called "Deciding to Win." Its trio of authors, all veterans of Democratic politics, lead with the bad news for their party: The public increasingly perceives Democrats as too liberal. That isn't a matter of flawed messaging. The party, the authors show, really has moved left on multiple issues during the period 2012-2025. Even harder for many Democrats to accept, no doubt, will be the report's evidence that the public thinks Republicans moved toward the center during that same period (although President Donald Trump has altered that perception since resuming office).

The public also increasingly thinks the Democrats do not share their priorities - that they are "out of touch." The authors write, "In comparison with the Democratic Party of 2012, today's Democratic Party is more focused on issues like climate change, democracy, abortion, and identity and cultural concerns and less focused on the economy and the middle class." They offer telling examples of changes in the party's platform language in that period. There are now fewer references to "tax cuts," the "middle class" and "fathers" (who disappeared entirely in

2024), more to "hate" and "climate." These changes have aligned Democrats better with voters who have college degrees, but increased their distance from the more numerous voters who don't.

The trio counsels Democrats to talk more about their popular positions on issues that matter to the public - especially economic issues - and less about everything else: "Going forward, it will be critical for our party to reduce the gap between what voters want Democrats to focus on and what voters think we do focus on." That this painfully obvious advice needs to be said suggests the depth of the Democrats' plight.

But the Welcome report does not confront all of the obstacles to a Democratic resurgence. Somewhat daringly, the authors suggest that Democrats have overemphasized their support for abortion. But the report doesn't go the next, necessary step: If Democrats truly want to improve their chances of winning a Senate majority, they should be ready to run candidates in some states who are pro-life, or are at least willing to restrict abortions late in pregnancy. (In some of those same states, Democrats will also need to support candidates who don't back a ban on assault weapons.)

And the report almost entirely ignores a related dimension of the Democrats' cultural challenge: their declining appeal to Christians, who remain a majority of voters. The words "Christian" and "religion" do not appear in "Deciding to Win."

The authors suggest that the party needs to moderate on immigration, but don't spell out what that means. In practice, it would probably require Democrats to stop treating "deportation" as a dirty word - which surely won't happen if even the party's truth-tellers won't recommend it.

Which raises an even deeper issue for the project of fixing the Democratic Party. When people passionately support a cause, telling them it's a political loser might not be enough to get them to downplay it. A lot of work would be required to persuade progressives that climate change is not an existential crisis, even if Bill Gates is having second thoughts. But if they continue to believe that, can they be convinced to talk about health care instead?

The report harks back to Bill Clinton's rescue of the Democratic Party after it lost three presidential elections in a row in the 1980s. But Clinton, in some ways, had an easier job. When he broke with other Democratic politicians of the era, he often had most Democratic voters on his side. They favored the death penalty, like him, even if a vocal segment of the party disagreed.

Democratic reformers today face a very different party. "Deciding to Win" repeatedly notes that most voters favor capitalism and oppose socialism. But most Democrats view the former negatively and latter positively.

It could be, then, that the trouble with Democrats is ... Democratic voters. And that's a hard one to fix.

Ramesh Ponnuru is the editor of National Review and a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

-SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST



PHOTO: THE WASHINGTON POST

Case For Controlling India's Digital Future: Looking Beyond WhatsApp & Meta

BY VIVEK WADHWA

One tweet from Washington could silence a billion Indian voices. New Delhi needs to look beyond WhatsApp and Meta

If you think Donald Trump's tariff policies won't reach your phone, think again. The man who just imposed new levies on everything from electric cars to software could, with a single stroke of a pen, decide that WhatsApp messages from India count as "digital imports". If that happened, India's business communications could grind to a halt overnight.

Meta, which owns WhatsApp, would comply immediately. Whether driven by regulation or diplomacy, the company would follow Washington's lead. Every Indian entrepreneur, trader, doctor, and government worker who relies on the app to coordinate would wake up locked out of their most essential tool. Deliveries would stall, vendors would disconnect, and customer service would freeze. The chaos would be instant and complete.

That is how dangerously dependent India has become on a single American corporation for its daily flow of information. WhatsApp has quietly become the backbone of Indian commerce. Millions of small businesses run on it. Hospitals, schools, and government offices use it for coordination. A disruption would ripple through every sector of the economy.

People talk about China's control of rare earths as a global risk. But Meta's control of India's digital lifeline

poses a deeper strategic threat. China's monopoly can slow a supply chain; Meta's can mute a nation's voice. When a foreign company holds the keys to your country's communication, sovereignty becomes a slogan.

The US understands this better than anyone. It has banned Huawei and ZTE from its telecom networks, arguing that whoever controls communications controls power. India, meanwhile, has handed its entire messaging backbone to a private American company with a long record of surveillance, manipulation, and data misuse. Meta doesn't even pretend to be neutral. It rewrote WhatsApp's privacy policy to coerce users into sharing data with Facebook, tolerated misinformation because it drove engagement, and built its fortune by monetising attention.

If Washington ever decided to weaponise its tech giants — as it already has with semiconductors and cloud computing — Meta would comply without hesitation. Its loyalty lies with shareholders and US regulators, not with India's economy. Every WhatsApp user in India is, therefore, vulnerable to the politics of another country.

Many Indians find comfort in WhatsApp's end-to-end encryption. That comfort is misplaced. Encryption hides the message, not the metadata — who you talk to, when, how often, and for how long. That metadata is gold for surveillance and advertising. Meta can map India's commercial and social networks in extraordinary detail. It knows the country's pulse better than many ministries.

I have long warned about the dangers of WhatsApp and Meta's corrosive business practices. The company

built its empire on the systematic erosion of privacy, the monetisation of outrage, and the manipulation of public discourse. From the Cambridge Analytica scandal to the spread of hate campaigns in India, Facebook's actions have repeatedly shown that profit outweighs principle. In 2018, I called for Facebook to be forced to shut down WhatsApp until it could guarantee user safety. The warnings were ignored. Since then, the dependence has only deepened.

India has treated this dependency as a matter of convenience, not strategy. But communication infrastructure is as critical as energy or defence. When a foreign power can, at any moment, compel a private company to alter, slow, or charge for your communications, you have already ceded control of your digital future.

There is another way — and it works.

At Vionix Biosciences, my India team recently abandoned WhatsApp and switched to Arattai, the India-built messaging app from Zoho. The transition was effortless and the results immediate. Arattai is faster, cleaner, and designed for real collaboration. It syncs seamlessly across phones, desktops, tablets, and even TVs. It has a "Pocket" for saving notes and files, and a "Mentions" tab that gathers every time you're tagged in chats. Meetings are integrated directly within the app, so teams can move from text to video with one tap.

Most importantly, Arattai has no ads, no trackers, and

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Association Of South Asian Real Estate Professionals Celebrates Decades Of Leadership, Legacy & Global Vision

BY BHAILAL M. PATEL

October 25, 2024 at Waterford Banquets and Conference Center. A dazzling celebration marked the 10th Annual Gala of the Association of South Asian Real Estate Professionals (ASARP) Chicano – commemorating a decade of leadership, unity, and growth. The milestone evening brought together more than 200 distinguished guests representing real estate, finance, government, and civic leadership from across the Midwest. “Conviction, collaboration, and consistency can turn ideas into enduring institutions.” - Pradeep B. Shukla, CPA, CCIM, Founder, ASARP

A Celebration of Culture, Professionalism & Purpose: The evening began with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, accompanied by live sitar music, vibrant décor, and colorful exhibits that blended culture with commerce. Attendees enjoyed an Indian attire boutique, live mehndi art, and interactive vendor booths that turned the ballroom into a lively networking arena.

Distinguished Guests & Dignitaries: Among those in attendance were: Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India, Chicago; Kinga Korpacz, President, Mainstreet REALTORS®; John Gormley, CEO, Mainstreet REALTORS®, Kate Sax, Mainstreet REALTORS®; Jeff Lasky, CEO, North Shore-Barrington Association of REALTORS®; Laurie Murphy, Director, Real Estate Division, IDFP; Mike Gobber, Past President, Illinois REALTORS®; Debby Prohdel, Incoming President, Illinois REALTORS®; Piero Orsi, Past President, Illinois REALTORS®; Margaret Hicks, MRed LLC; and Dan Wagner, Senior Vice President, INLAND Real Estate Group.

Also present were community leaders and elected representatives Dr. Suresh



Association of South Asian Real Estate Professionals / ASARP's Executive Board with Distinguished Chief Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India, Chicago.

Reddy, Saba Hyder, and Sweta Baid.

Following the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, Consul General Somnath Ghosh praised the growing influence of South Asian professionals in Chicagoland's real-estate sector. He encouraged deeper collaboration between U.S. and Indian markets and applauded Illinois' strong educational and licensing systems that promote higher professional standards.

Leadership Reflections & Global Vision: In his keynote address, Pradeep B. Shukla, CPA, CCIM, Founder of ASARP, shared the inspiring story of the Brooklyn Bridge, symbolizing perseverance and faith. Drawing parallels to ASARP's own journey — from a handful of dreamers in 2015 to a dynamic global network — he celebrated the organization's growth as a testament to shared vision and unity.

He announced two new milestones: ASARP Dubai — formed by Mohan and Sunita Kakarlapudi, becoming ASARP's first international chapter. U.S.-India-Dubai Builders' Summit - planned for later this year in Chicago, to strengthen

global partnerships and cross-border investment.

Quoting C.K. Prahalad and Walt Disney, Shukla urged members to believe that “Aspiration is greater than resources (A > R)” and that “If you can dream it, you can do it.”

Installation of 2026 Executive Board The evening also marked the installation ceremony of ASARP's 2026 Executive Board: Sunita Kakarlapudi (President), Shirin Marvi (Vice Chair), Bhailal M. Patel, Raj Patel, Nick Verma, and Nimish Jani.

A special honor was bestowed upon Shirin Marvi, appointed as Lifetime Vice Chair of ASARP for her long-standing service and leadership.

Laurie Murphy (IDFP) commended ASARP's impact on professionalism, diversity, and continuing education in Illinois real estate. John Gormley, Piero Orsi, and other industry leaders echoed her praise, calling ASARP “a vital bridge between heritage and excellence.”

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Recognition: Institutional sponsors included Illinois REALTORS®, MRed LLC, Mainstreet REALTORS®, NSBAR, and Millennium Bank, with additional support from Amundsen Davis, CLS Mortgage, Shalin Shah, Nirav Patel, Stu Boynton, Manish Shah (Genex Lending), Pat Parikh, and Pritesh Patel.

Mainstreet REALTORS® added a touch of fun with an open-air photo booth, while event coordination was led by Phani Krishna and Prachi Jaitley.

Harsha Shukla, Raj Patel, Nick Verma, and Nimish Jani presented floral tributes to sponsors and performers.

Ramona Ruskuls and Dipti Dave delivered moving renditions of the U.S. and Indian national anthems, setting an inspiring tone for the evening.

Culture, Art & Celebration: Cultural highlights included stunning Bharatanatyam and Kathak performances, followed by an energetic Dandiya Raas, symbolizing unity in rhythm and motion. Guests enjoyed a gourmet dinner, lively networking, and a shared celebration of community spirit and professional pride. “Our success is not in avoiding the storm, but in learning to sail through it.” — Sunita Kakarlapudi, President, ASARP

A Decade of Building Bridges and Beyond: As ASARP enters its second decade, its mission remains clear:

to expand global collaboration, mentor emerging real-estate professionals, promote ethics and education, and strengthen South Asian leadership in the industry.

Closing the evening, Sunita Kakarlapudi reflected: “Whether in business or in life, let's keep building bridges of trust, opportunity, and humanity.”

With international momentum and renewed purpose, ASARP stands poised for an even more dynamic future — bridging continents, communities, and commerce.

VIEWPOINT

Case For Controlling India's Digital Future: Looking Beyond WhatsApp & Meta

-CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

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I also use Arattai daily with my head of marketing, Alex Salkever, in Silicon Valley. Despite the distance to India, the calls are crisp, file transfers are instant, and there's a sense of control that American tech giants can't provide. Communication feels private again — like it should.

Dependence on a foreign platform for national communication is complacency. The East India Company began as traders, secured monopolies through charters, won Plassey in 1757 (Indians betraying Indians), then annexed provinces via debt, divide-and-rule, and private armies — conquering all India by 1857 in a century-long creep. Today, Meta mirrors this: it entered as “free”



PHOTO: COURTESY VIVEK WADHWA

convenience, locked users via network effects, and now holds the switch. One tweet from Washington could bring India to its knees in minutes. A country that values independence cannot let another Company control its voice.

Vivek Wadhwa is CEO, Vionix Biosciences. The views expressed are personal.

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Chicagoland Enjoys Film On Legendary Indian Musician Annapurna Devi

By A Staff Writer

Mandala South Asian Performing Arts drew enthusiastic audiences for screenings of the film 6-A Akash Ganga, directed by Nirmal Chander, at FACETS in Chicago on October 25 and Hollywood Cinema in Woodridge on October 26.

6-A Akash Ganga is a documentary that explores the life and legacy of Annapurna Devi, the reclusive Indian classical musician and first wife of Ravi Shankar. Using rare archival footage and intimate interviews, Chander reveals a story of genius, devotion, and the quiet strength of a woman who lived entirely for her art.

The film received the Best Documentary award at the 2024 Jagran Film Festival, Best Film at Film Southasia 2024, Best Indian Documentary Film at the 2024 Mumbai International Film Festival, and feature documentary runner-up at the 2025 South Asian Film Festival of Montreal.

Both screenings drew lively and engaged crowds, filling the theaters and setting the stage for art, conversation, and community, a press release from Mandala said.

The Chicago event opened with welcoming remarks from Hiteshree Das, Mandala's director of public art and programs, who reflected on the organization's ongoing mission to foster cross-cultural dialogue through the arts.

Dr. Madhuvanti Ghose, the inaugural Alsdorf Associate Curator of Indian, Southeast Asian, and Himalayan Art, Arts of Asia, moderated a post-screening Q&A at each event, engaging in a conversation with director Chander. Audiences at both showings asked questions about the film's narrative, its musical and visual language, and the deeper creative process behind 6-A Akash Ganga.

India's Consul General in Chicago Somnath Ghosh and his wife, Anindita Ghosh attended the event. Chander's wife Reena Mohan, the film's editor, was present at

PHOTO: ANNAPURNA DEVI FOUNDATION, COURTESY MANDALA SOUTH ASIAN PERFORMING ARTS



Annapurna Devi.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MANDALA SOUTH ASIAN PERFORMING ARTS



Madhuvanti Ghose (L) and Nirmal Chander during the post-screening Q&A.

both events.

Partial support for these events was provided by Dr. Umang Patel and Paragi Patel, and Dr. Ashok and Nirmita Dholakia.

The Board of Directors from Mandala Arts and India Development Service received guests and visiting artists, welcoming them on behalf of the organizations and promising a memorable experience for all who attended.

Other organizations who supported Mandala in its initiative include South Asian Classical Music Society and India Development Service, as well as the Indian Consulate of Chicago.

Mandala was founded by Artistic Director Pranita Nayar, and has received funding from the Joyce Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Art. For more information visit mandalaarts.org.



Mandala South Asian Performing Arts Founder and Artistic Director Pranita Nayar (L) with director Nirmal Chander.

NFDC-Backed 'A Teacher's Gift' To Be Screened At Tribeca Festival Lisboa 2025

The NFDC-backed film 'A Teacher's Gift' has been officially selected for screening at the Tribeca Festival Lisboa 2025, scheduled for November 1 at The Theatre, Lisbon.

An immigrant British South Asian story has received international recognition over the

past year, winning the Best British Asian Film for Bridging Cultures award at the 2025 UK

Asian Film Festival. It was also nominated for Best Feature Film at the BAFTA and BIFAqualifying Iris Prize Film Festival in Wales.

Produced by Eric Ollerenshaw OBE, directed by Artur Ribeiro, and co-written by and starring Rajdeep Choudhury, A Teacher's Gift follows the story of Rohan,

a Hindi language teacher in London who develops an unexpected friendship with an Englishman. The film explores themes of identity, belonging, and cultural understanding, according to the press release.

The cast includes Anthony Calf, Paula Lobo Antunes, Anjali Patil, Dhruv Sehgal, Virgilio Castelo, and Varun Buddhaddev.

Speaking about the selection, producer Eric Ollerenshaw OBE, who is also a former Member of the UK Parliament, said in a statement, "For an independent British film that started its journey in the UK with a predominantly South Asian crew, then received support from NFDC WAVES Film Bazaar, and is now selected for Tribeca, this has been an incredible journey."

At the Iris Prize Festival in Wales,

noted television producer, writer, and director Jackie Lawrence described the film as "beautifully atmospheric and a much-needed story from and for the South Asian diaspora."

The Tribeca Festival Lisboa, co-founded by actor and director Robert De Niro, brings the New York-based festival experience to Europe. The 2025 edition will also feature appearances by Kim Cattrall, Giancarlo Esposito and Meg Ryan, along with the Portuguese premiere of Honeyjoon, winner of the 2024 Tribeca Festival AT&T Untold Stories Award.

The film's selection adds to the growing global presence of Indian and South Asian stories in international cinema circuits.

-ANI



PHOTO: COURTESY ANI

Film poster.



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States And Cities Across The U.S. Declare October 2025 As Hindu Heritage Month

BY BHAILAL M. PATEL

October is Hindu Heritage Month in the USA, a time to recognize and celebrate the culture, history, and contributions of Hindu Americans. The month is also celebrated globally and often coincides with major Hindu festivals such as Navaratri, Dussehra, and Diwali. Throughout the United States, numerous states and cities have officially proclaimed October as Hindu Heritage Month, with celebrations ranging from cultural events, youth workshops, and interfaith gatherings to official proclamations and resolutions issued by governors, mayors, and state legislators.

This year, proclamations were issued in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia, and several other states, as well as in cities like Skokie, IL and Harrisburg, PA, reflecting a growing national recognition of Hindu Americans' impact on civic and cultural life.

Illinois Leadership in Recognition: Illinois has been at the forefront of this recognition. State Senator Ram Villivalam (D-Chicago), the first Hindu to serve in the Illinois State Legislature, successfully passed legislation in the Illinois Senate declaring October 2021 as Hindu Heritage Month in Illinois.

"Hindus have furthered our state's cultural diversity and economic prosperity," said Senator Villivalam. "As the senator of one of the most diverse districts in the state, I am proud to be a co-sponsor of legislation to honor the contributions of Hindu communities across Illinois."

His leadership set a precedent that has since inspired other states across the nation to follow suit, helping bring Hindu Heritage Month to the national stage.

A Celebration of Heritage, Faith, and Community: Hindu Heritage Month provides an annual platform to educate, celebrate, and unite communities



PHOTO: COURTESY SEN. VILLIVALAM'S OFFICE

State Senator Ram Villivalam's historic leadership in successfully passing legislation in the Illinois Senate declaring October 2021 as Hindu Heritage Month in Illinois.

through the exploration of Hindu traditions, philosophy, and values. Hinduism — the world's third-largest religion, practiced by more than 6 million people in the United States, including over 250,000 in Illinois — is unique for its pluralistic approach, with no single founder, text, or doctrine. Instead, it embraces a wide variety of beliefs, customs, and practices that have flourished for thousands of years.

Throughout October, communities nationwide hosted events highlighting Indian classical dance, yoga and meditation workshops, interfaith dialogues, youth cultural programs, and Diwali and Navaratri celebrations, welcoming people of all backgrounds to participate and learn.

"Hindu Heritage Month strengthens civic understanding and promotes inclusion," stated the largest South Asian news network in the United States. From small-town temples to major metropolitan centers,

Hindu Americans have made lasting contributions to medicine, education, business, technology, and the arts. These official proclamations are far more than symbolic—they represent a meaningful acknowledgment of shared values and the diverse threads that together strengthen the American fabric.

Advocacy and coordination for Hindu Heritage Month have been championed by leading national organizations such as the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA), which have worked collaboratively with state and local governments to foster awareness, inclusion, and mutual respect.

Why October Matters: The timing of Hindu Heritage Month aligns with several major Hindu festivals, including Navaratri, Dussehra, and Diwali, providing a natural moment of celebration for families, temples, and community centers across the country. Events during the month include: Classical and folk performances, traditional dance, and music showcases. Civic recognitions and educational programs in schools and universities. Interfaith panels and community dialogues. Yoga, meditation, and health awareness workshops. Charitable drives and Diwali "Festival of Lights" celebrations open to all.

A Growing National Movement: What began as a local recognition has evolved into a nationwide celebration of identity, faith, and service. With official proclamations now issued in multiple states — including Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia, and Illinois — Hindu Heritage Month has become a unifying observance for Hindu Americans and an educational bridge for the broader public.

In 2025, Governor Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania, Governor Mike DeWine of Ohio, and Governor Roy Cooper of North Carolina joined other state leaders in issuing proclamations recognizing the month's cultural significance and acknowledging the contributions of the Hindu community to American society.

US-INDIA

US Signs 10-Year Defense Framework Agreement With India

BY A STAFF WRITER

US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth announced October 31, 2025, that Washington has signed a ten-year defense pact with India.

He posted his comment accompanied with images of his meeting with Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh on the sidelines of the ongoing Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN meetings in Malaysia.

"I just met with @rajnathsingh to sign a 10-year U.S.-India Defense Framework," Hegseth said in his X post.

"This advances our defense partnership, a cornerstone for regional stability and deterrence," he said, adding, "We're enhancing our coordination, info sharing, and tech cooperation. Our defense ties have never been stronger."

Details of the agreement are yet to be spelled out. The defense agreement comes in the midst of talks to hammer out a trade deal and the high tariffs President Donald Trump has slammed on India.



PHOTOS: X @SECWAR

US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth shakes hands with India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh.



US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh hold up the 10-year Defense Framework.

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WHERE TO WATCH?



Share And Care Raises \$600,000 At Gala, Honors Grand Sponsors

BY A STAFF WRITER

More than 550 supporters and guests filled the hall at the Share & Care annual gala November 2, 2025, held at the Jo Ann Magistro Performing Arts Center (JMPAC) in East Brunswick, NJ. The theme of the Gala was "United in Purpose: Boundless in Impact."

Sharad Shah, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Share and Care told Desi Talk, "What was great was that many of them who came are long-time supporters. The Gala raised \$600,000."

Chairman of Fund Raising & Gala Committee Chairman of Share and Care Dr. Manoj Desai, welcomed the gathering.

Saumil Parikh, president of Share and Care, gave an account of the activities of the non-profit organization.

Dr. Amar Shah, who was responsible for leading the event organizing effort, along with Dr. Manoj Desai, announced the honorees at the event, including Dr. Sudhir Parikh, chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media and ITV Gold and Dr. Sudha Parikh; And Dr. Bharat Mody and Dr. Bharati Mody; as well as Jaydev and Purnima Patel.

"It has been a privilege and honor to join the Share and Care Foundation and work with the Share and Care Foundation since its inception for 42 years. It is a privilege to be a Grand Sponsor of this organization for the last 43 years," said Dr. Parikh in his speech.

He emphasized that people successful in their fields must remember those who helped them get where they are today, and must help others the same way.

"Philanthropy is the most important way to do this. And education is the most important philanthropy by which – when you lift a student, you lift a family and a country." He urged donors to open their hearts and wallets to give to Share and Care. Dr. Sudhir and Sudha Parikh were presented flowers and a plaque.

Dr. Bharat Mody and Bharati Mody, both doctors by profession, were also recognized the same way. "Dr. Mody's goal has been to always help organizations in India and



PHOTOS: SHARE AND CARE

'Rainbow Colors of Women' Kathak presentation at Share and Care Gala Nov. 2, 2025



A section of the audience at the Nov. 23, 2025, Annual Gala of Share and Care, held in New Jersey.



Chintan and Tanvi Parikh (left) being honored as Platinum Sponsors at the Share and Care gala November 2, 2025. Also seen in photo, parents receiving the honor.

US," Desai said introducing them. As part of Share and Care, Mody has helped build 7 digital centers.

Among the Platinum Sponsors, Sharad Shah noted that Tanvi and Chintan Parikh, founders of the digital consul-



H.R. Shah speaking at the Nov. 2, 2025 Gala, accepting recognition as Platinum Sponsor Honoree.

tancy company, PRI, later named Proven, were a young couple who gave \$25,000 for Share and Care projects.

Share and Care's mission "is to create a world that gives women and youth in India the opportunity to rise out of poverty and improve their quality of life in an ever-changing world of new and improved technologies and innovation," the organization says in its publicity materials.

The highlight of the first half of the evening featured a Kathak performance led by actress, dancer, choreographer and acclaimed guru of the classical dance form, Archana Joglekar and her troupe of some 20 dancers. Entitled "Rainbow

Colors of Women" which was billed as a tribute to 'Nari Shakti' or Women's Power, the performance told the story of women's roles as mothers, sisters, daughters, partners, wives, and friends, accompanied by music genres ranging from classical to folk to Bollywood.

The Keynote Speaker was Dr. Sindhu Mittadoddi, a specialist in geriatric medicine and internal medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Einstein, in Bronx, NY. At Share and Care, Dr. Mittadoddi is co-chair of Women's Empowerment where she works with Dr. Ketki Shah who built the program along with Dr. Sudha Parikh. "Dr. Sudha Parikh has been the "quiet" person working with Ketki to create the Women's Empowerment program," Sharad Shah told Desi Talk.

During the Gala, Dr. Mittadoddi presented a video showing four examples of Share and Care's work.

Sharad Shah in his speech compared the case of India's star in women's cricket, Deepti Sharma, whose brother provided all the support to train her to become a leader in the sport, to the work that Share and Care does with its beneficiaries. Sharma and her team just won the crown at the Women's World Cup defeating South Africa.

Organizers also honored the artists who performed at the event in a special ceremony.

Jayu Parikh, trustee of Share and Care, gave the vote of thanks.

ASTROLOGY



This week for you

E-mail: psharma@premaastrologer.com Contact No - 01147033152/40532026

ARIES: Promising opportunities may arise for acquiring property. Manipulating others for personal gain might only work temporarily, so it's best avoided. Those seeking promotion have positive prospects ahead. Academic success is on the horizon. Making genuine efforts in your relationship will bring warmth and special gestures from your spouse. A meaningful connection on the romantic front may soon blossom.

TAURUS: Keep your choices flexible at work, as sudden changes could surprise you. Avoid office politics, as it may backfire. Choose investments wisely for rewarding outcomes. A domestic issue may escalate, leading to friction with spouse or family, but harmony will return. Romantic moments bring cheer, strengthening bonds of love.

GEMINI: Stay away from superstitions, as they may only cloud your judgment. Busy times lie ahead at work while academic progress boosts your self-assurance. Your efforts to maintain harmony in social circles will succeed. Give your partner personal space if they need it. Financial security grows stronger, ensuring peace of mind.

CANCER: Instead of complaining, openly discuss what bothers you for better results. Professional challenges may surface, so stay focused. Strong competition academically will need your full effort. Rash investments could make you lose better opportunities, so act carefully in finances. Guard your health from excesses. Married life remains calm and steady.

LEO: Helping someone in need today may bring long-term benefits. A long-awaited wish at work is likely to come true. Chances for promotion look brighter. You will perform impressively on the academic side. Someone's encouragement may inspire you toward fitness. A special evening with your beloved is on the cards.

VIRGO: Work matters may demand extra time and effort. Academically, you'll dive into serious pursuits requiring concentration. A major purchase may have to wait, as funds remain limited. Harmony at home depends on avoiding interference. Romance may seem dull, so take steps to spark excitement again.

LIBRA: Trust your judgment when navigating personal matters. Career growth picks up pace as your efforts shine. Your deepest aspirations may come true on the academic side. Prospects of inheriting property appear bright. A social gathering will bring you into the limelight. Love life turns joyful and deeply satisfying. Travel to an exotic place is likely.

SCORPIO: Your decision may determine someone's continuation at work, so weigh it wisely. A heartfelt conversation with your partner about the future brings reassurance. Handling workplace challenges will showcase your skill. Promising opportunities await on the academic side. Monetary gains boost financial standing, while health improves with dedicated efforts.

SAGITTARIUS: Greater effort ensures greater success, so keep pushing forward. Financial stability is maintained. Support from a colleague will help you complete tasks at work. Expanding your social circle brings joy. Progress on the academic front meets expectations. A trip with your beloved may prove exciting and memorable.

CAPRICORN: Sometimes honesty is the best choice, so speak your mind when needed. New career avenues may soon open up. Academic achievements bring admiration. Financial growth is likely through an increment or raise. An official journey could turn enjoyable. A suitable place of residence may be found. Family needs some attention—don't overlook it.

AQUARIUS: Stay firm if someone pressures you into something you dislike. Promising financial deals come your way. Positive results emerge in health as you stay committed to fitness routines. Work responsibilities may grow, but you'll handle them well. Academic choices may confuse you, so seek guidance before deciding.

PISCES: Romantic bonds strengthen, bringing fulfillment. Professional endeavors to win approval will succeed. Academic performance looks promising, especially in exams or competitions. Financial comfort prevails, with chances of wealth accumulation. Experimenting with new fitness regimes may be beneficial. An official trip may seem tiring but will get the job done.

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Not Indentured: H-1B Visa Holders Have Changed Jobs 1.1 Million Times

By David J. Bier, CATO INSTITUTE

Critics of the H-1B visa for skilled foreign workers often claim that the status amounts to “indentured” servitude. Indentured servitude is a contract to work for a single employer for a predetermined period without pay. H-1B workers are not only compensated well—they receive wages in the top 10 percent of wage earners in the United States. As importantly, although they face more obstacles to changing jobs than US citizens, H-1B workers are not tied to a single employer and change jobs regularly.

In fact, tens of thousands of H-1B workers leave their original H-1B employers every year. Figure 1 shows the number of H-1B workers switching to new employers by fiscal year. Between fiscal year 2005 and 2024, H-1B workers changed jobs over one million times (1,115,069). The number of switches grew from about 24,000 in 2005 to a record 123,888 in 2022—a more than five-fold increase. The number of approved H-1B petitions for a change of employer has fallen in the past two years, plummeting to just 63,865 in 2024.

On another note, H-1B job switching is more common than H-1B workers starting H-1B employment for the first time. In 2024, only one in three of all H-1B workers starting with a new employer were existing H-1B workers recruited from other US employers (Figure 2). This suggests that US employers are more likely to hire an H-1B worker already in the country with H-1B status

Figure 1

Tens of thousands of H-1B workers switch employers every year

Number of approved H-1B petitions to change employer by fiscal year, 2005-2024

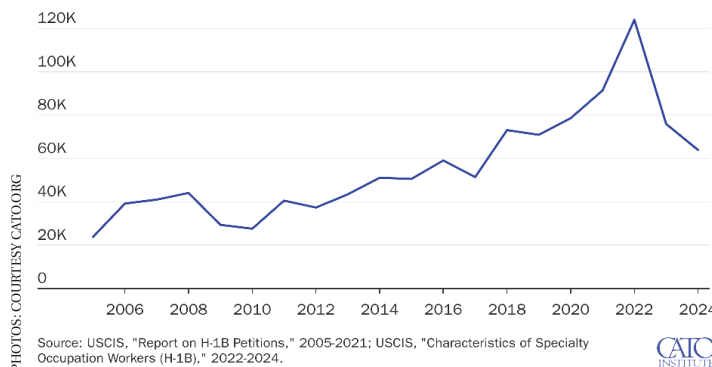


PHOTO: REUTERS/DADO RUVIC/ILLUSTRATION/FILE PHOTO

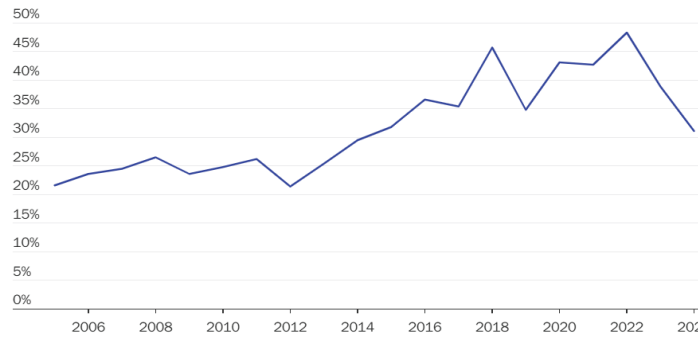


U.S. and Indian flags and U.S. H-1B Visa application forms are seen in this illustration taken, September 22, 2025.

Figure 2

H-1B job changers have been more than a third of new H-1B employment for every years

Share of approved H-1B petitions to start employment for workers changing employers in the US, 2005-2024



than to hire a new H-1B worker who does not yet have H-1B status.

The jump in switching in 2021 is likely attributable to the record number of green card applications filed that year. After 180 days, H-1B workers who have filed a green

card application may change jobs without the employer being forced to restart the green card process, easing the job-switching process. The decline in green card applications since 2022 has meant fewer H-1B workers are able to change jobs, highlighting the challenges that H-1B workers still face when changing jobs.

Among other issues, new H-1B employers have to pay hefty fees to poach them, and the shortage of green cards for Indian workers can wrongly make those workers feel that they have to stick with their existing employer to complete the process. The best solution would be to make the conversion to a green card automatic rather than requiring a renewal after three years. The sixty-day grace period to find a new job is still not long enough to give some workers the confidence to simply quit a problematic job without already having a new one lined up.

Despite these government-imposed obstacles, the

widespread practice of H-1B job-shifting further refutes the claim that H-1B workers are “indentured” servants. The fact is that the government has unfairly tilted the playing field against H-1B workers by erecting artificial barriers to job changes, but options exist to find better employment within the H-1B system. The government should expand these options rather than try to reduce or eliminate

workers who contribute significantly to the fields of science, technology, engineering, math, and medicine.

Note: This post is an update of an April 2024 blog post on the same subject using more up-to-date numbers.

“Lot Of Immigrants Undercutting Wages Of American Workers,” US VP J.D. Vance Bats For H-1B Reform

US Vice President JD Vance has yet again defended President Donald Trump's reforms to the H-1B visa programme, arguing that the current system is being misused to undercut American workers' wages by importing talent at discounted rates.

Speaking at the Turning Point USA Event in Mississippi on Wednesday (October 29, 2025), Vance said the administration's push for H-1B reform was aimed at ensuring fairness for US workers and restoring the visa's original purpose—to retain top global talent, not replace domestic labor with cheaper alternatives.

“Legal immigration is complicated because we let in about a million legal immigrants into the United States of America every single year. And the evidence is pretty clear that a lot of those immigrants are actually undercutting the wages of American workers,” Vance said.

“It's one of the reasons why the President of the United States and a lot of us in the administration have encour-



U.S. Vice President JD Vance speaks to members of the media in Kiryat Gat, Israel, October 21, 2025.

aged H-1B reform,” he added.

Explaining the intent behind the program, Vance said, “If you look at the H-1B visa, what it's supposed to be is that you have a super genius who's studying at an American university and who's working at a great company. You want that super genius to stay in the United States of America and not go somewhere else. What it's actually used to do is hire an accountant at a 50 per cent discount for an American citizen. I don't think that we should be hiring accountants from foreign countries when we've got accountants right here in the United States that would love to work for a good wage.”

Vance's comments come amid escalating debate over the proclamation that will trigger a major overhaul of the H-1B visa petition, signed by Trump in September.

According to the proclamation, there will now be a

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

“I Honestly Do Wish,” Says US VP Vance, When Asked If He Hopes His Wife Will Come To Christ

US Vice President JD Vance candidly expressed his hope that his Hindu-raised wife, Usha Vance, would one day embrace Christianity, while affirming her free will and their mutual respect in an interfaith marriage, while addressing the Turning Point USA Event in Mississippi on Wednesday (October 29, 2025).

Speaking at the event, Vance was asked whether he hopes his wife will eventually “come to Christ”.

Responding candidly, he said, “Now, most Sundays, Usha will come with me to church. As I’ve told her, and as I’ve said publicly, and as I’ll say now in front of 10,000 of my closest friends — do I hope, eventually, that she is somehow moved by the same thing that I was moved by in church? Yeah, I honestly do wish that because I believe in the Christian gospel and I hope eventually my wife comes to see it the same way.”

He added, however, that faith is deeply personal and that differences in belief do not create conflict in their marriage.

“But if she doesn’t, then God says everybody has free will, and so that doesn’t cause a problem for me.”



US Vice President J.D. Vance, with his wife Usha and their children, at the Taj Mahal during this visit to India in 2025.

That’s something you work out with your friends, with your family, with the person that you love,” Vance said.

The Vice President, who converted to Catholicism in 2019, described Usha’s background, stating, “My wife did not grow up Christian. I think it’s fair to say that she grew up in a Hindu family, but not a particularly religious family in either direction.”

He further explained that the couple has found a balanced way to manage their interfaith household.

“Everybody has to come to their own arrangement here. The way that we’ve come to our arrangement is that she’s my best friend. We talk to each other about this stuff. We’ve decided to raise our kids Christian. Our two oldest kids, who go to school, go to a Christian school. Our 8-year-old did his first communion about a year ago. That’s the way that we have come to our arrangement,” the Vice President said.

Vance’s remarks drew applause from the conservative audience at the event.

-ANI

DHS Ends Automatic Extensions Of Work Permits For Certain Immigrants

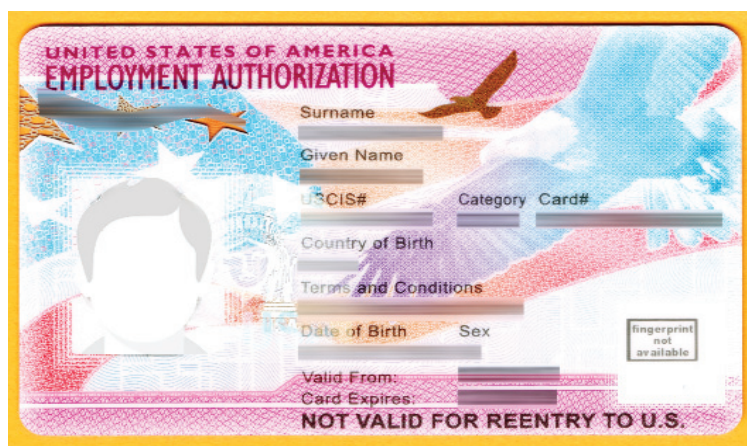
BY A STAFF WRITER

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has announced a significant policy change that will end the automatic extension of Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) for many noncitizens who apply to renew their work permits.

Under an interim final rule taking effect October 30, 2025, individuals in certain categories who file EAD renewal applications will no longer receive an automatic extension while their cases are pending. The move, DHS said, is designed to strengthen national security by ensuring “proper screening and vetting” before renewing employment authorization.

Limited exceptions will remain, including cases covered by federal law or Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations announced through the Federal Register.

“USCIS is placing a renewed emphasis on robust alien



screening and vetting, eliminating policies the former administration implemented that prioritized aliens’ con-

venience ahead of Americans’ safety and security,” said U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Joseph Edlow. “It’s a common-sense measure to ensure appropriate vetting and screening has been completed before an alien’s employment authorization or documentation is extended.”

DHS officials said that by reviewing applicants’ backgrounds more frequently, the agency can better detect fraud and identify individuals who may pose security risks. Those found to have violated immigration laws could be processed for removal.

The new rule will not affect work permits that were automatically extended before October 30. USCIS encouraged eligible noncitizens to file for EAD renewals as early as 180 days before their current authorization expires to avoid potential lapses in work eligibility.

More information about EAD applications and renewals is available on the USCIS Employment Authorization Document webpage.

“Lot Of Immigrants Undercutting Wages Of American Workers, ” US VP J.D. Vance Bats For H-1B Reform

-CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

\$100,000 fee for new H-1B visa applications, a sharp increase from the previous level of about \$1,500.

According to the US State Department, the new fee requirement applies only to individuals or companies filing new H-1B petitions or entering the H-1B lottery after September 21.

Current visa holders and petitions submitted before that date remain unaffected.

Under the proclamation, a \$100,000 payment must accompany every new H-1B visa petition filed after the deadline, including those submitted for entries in the 2026 lottery.

The Vice President also underscored the administration’s broader goal of reducing overall immigration numbers, saying that the current volume of legal and illegal

entrants was unsustainable.

“There are people who want to come to the United States of America, and some of them I’m sure can enrich the United States of America by coming here, but we have got to get our overall numbers way down. Too many people have come into the United States of America,” he said. did not.

-ANI

H-1B Proclamation FAQ: USCIS Clarifies \$100,000 Fee and October 2025 Updates

IN MEMORIAM

By David H. Nachman, Esq



Michael Phulwani



David Nachman



Ludka Zimovcak



Snehal Batra

On September 19, 2025, President Trump signed a Presidential Proclamation requiring a \$100,000 payment for certain H-1B petitions. Since then, federal agencies have released several rounds of clarifications.

To help employers, HR professionals, and visa holders understand how this rule is being applied, NPZ Law Group continues to update this "living" resource with the latest developments and official guidance.

Update: USCIS Guidance Issued on October 21, 2025

USCIS has provided additional clarification on the implementation of the \$100,000 H-1B petition fee under the Presidential Proclamation.

The agency confirmed that the fee applies only to new H-1B petitions filed on or after September 21, 2025, for individuals outside the United States. Petitions for extensions, amendments, or changes of status within the U.S. are not subject to the new payment requirement.

Employers must make the payment through the official pay.gov system at the time of filing and retain documentation for compliance. USCIS also emphasized that National Interest Exceptions (NIEs) will be approved only in rare, case-specific circumstances, and that the H-1B1 visa category for Singaporean and Chilean citizens is unaffected by the Proclamation.

Summary of USCIS Clarifications (as of October 21, 2025)

Filing Type	Subject to \$100,000 Fee?	Notes / Clarifications
New H-1B Petition (Worker Outside the U.S.)	Yes	Applies to petitions filed on or after Sept. 21, 2025. Payment required via pay.gov.
Extension of Stay	No	Petitions for ongoing employment with the same employer are not affected.
Amendment / Change of Employer	No	Not covered by the new rule; regular H-1B filing fees continue to apply.
Change of Status (Inside the U.S.)	No	Individuals already in valid U.S. status changing to H-1B are exempt.
H-1B1 (Singapore / Chile)	No	DOS and USCIS confirmed this category is not covered by the Proclamation.
Nurses (Schedule A Occupations)	Possibly Exempt	May qualify for a National Interest Exception (NIE) based on U.S. healthcare shortages.

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All Photos: Canva

New FAQ – October 2025 Updates

Do H-1B amendments or extensions require the \$100,000 fee?

No. The fee applies only to new petitions filed for workers outside the United States. Existing H-1B employees can continue to file extensions, amendments, or changes of employer using the standard fee structure.

How is the \$100,000 fee paid?

Employers must submit payment through the official pay.gov system and include proof of payment with the H-1B filing.

Are National Interest Exceptions (NIEs) still available?

Yes, but they will be granted sparingly. Employers must clearly demonstrate that the worker's role serves the U.S. national interest and does not adversely affect domestic labor markets.

Does the Proclamation affect H-1B1 professionals from Singapore or Chile?

No. The Department of State and USCIS confirmed that the Proclamation does not apply to H-1B1 petitions.

NPZ Law Group's Guidance

The new USCIS guidance provides important clarification but also leaves open questions about implementation and future litigation. NPZ Law Group advises employers to:

- Confirm whether upcoming petitions fall under the new fee rule.
- Maintain clear proof of payment and supporting records.
- Evaluate whether a National Interest Exception may apply to critical roles.

NPZ attorneys continue to monitor agency guidance and court challenges and will provide updates as new developments arise.

Contact NPZ Law Group

If you or your organization have questions about how the new H-1B rules or related litigation may affect your immigration planning, please contact NPZ Law Group at info@visaserve.com or call 201-670-0006

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis Orders End To H-1B Hiring In Higher Education Institutions

BY A STAFF WRITER

On October 29, 2025, Florida governor Ron DeSantis lashed out at the practice of hiring H-1B high skilled workers in education institutions. According to him, the visa that brings thousands of highly qualified Indians to this country is being abused and universities are not producing enough qualified individuals to fulfil the needs of the nation.

Governor DeSantis directed the Florida Board of Governors "to crack down on H-1B Visa abuse in higher education," a press release from his office said.

He also announced that Florida DOGE has partnered with Federal DOGE, the State University System, and institutional partners to cancel or repurpose millions of dollars in DEI-related grants.

"Universities across the country are importing foreign workers on H-1B visas instead of hiring Americans who are qualified and available to do the job," he is quoted saying in the press release and in a post on X. "We will not tolerate H-1B abuse in Florida institutions. That's why I have directed the Florida Board of Governors to end this practice."

Florida is requiring institutions to put American graduates first and ensure taxpayer-funded schools serve the American workforce, not to be used to import cheap foreign labor.

The Governor's press release claims that H-1B visas "are allegedly intended to hire individuals for a specialty occupation, but many universities and institutions have hired foreign workers for jobs that could easily be filled by qualified Americans."

The press release noted that Universities are exempt from federal H-1B caps, enabling year-round hiring of



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis announcing views on H-1B visas. October 29, 2025 post on X.

foreign labor. He also announced an end to Diversity Equity Inclusion initiatives.

"By working with Federal DOGE, the State University System, and individual institutions, Florida has also repurposed or canceled DEI-related grants that were made with total intended amounts of more than \$33 million," the press release said.

Several grants were cancelled due to their lack of compliance with state and federal law regarding DEI-centric, discriminatory missions, the Governor contended, citing the following examples to make the case:

- \$1.5 million for "Challenging Anti-Black Racism in Civil and Environmental Engineering Curriculum," a grant centered around environmental justice and eq-

- uitable and inclusive curriculum for civil engineers.
- \$1.3 million for "Mobilizing Physics Teachers to Promote Inclusive and Communal Classroom Cultures Through Everyday Actions," a grant focused on inclusive and equitable practices for women and minority racial groups and promoting inclusion and equity in classrooms.

He also cited examples where his state had "repurposed" millions of dollars in previously DEI-centered grants to align with state and federal law, such as:

- \$1.5 million grant previously focused on promoting "historically marginalized students" in STEM fields to focus on financial background, rather than race or ethnicity.
- Expanded a \$700,000 National Science Foundation grant historically focused toward exclusively black students to include eligibility for all students, regardless of race or background.

Florida DOGE has also identified over \$10.6 million in grants within the Florida College System to repurpose or cancel, the press release said, citing as examples, the following:

- \$454,000 for a grant targeted toward "underrepresented populations" in drone work and avionics.
- \$750,000 for a grant exclusively available for minorities pursuing STEM degrees.

In a post on X, DeSantis went on to say, "Florida leads the nation in higher education, and thousands of highly qualified Americans graduate from our colleges and universities every year. If any universities are truly struggling to find U.S. citizens to fill their job openings, they ought to evaluate their academic programs to determine why they cannot produce graduates who can be hired for these positions."

Ford To Invest \$370 Million In India Defying Trump's Local Push

BY ALISHA SACHDEV

Ford Motor Co. plans to invest about 32.5 billion rupees (\$366 million) in India to make new engines, the Detroit-based automaker said Friday, signaling renewed confidence in the country and defying Donald Trump's promotion of American manufacturing as it reopens a factory closed four years ago.

The Maraimalai Nagar manufacturing site in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu will be retooled to make high-tech engines for export markets with an annual capacity of 235,000 units, the statement said. Details on the engine type and where they'll be exported to will be announced closer to the start of production, it added.

Bloomberg News first reported the plans on Thursday.

The US automaker, which signaled its interest in resuming local production in India a year ago, has been preparing the investment for months against a backdrop of heightened tensions between New Delhi and Washington. Trump placed a 50% tariff on Indian imports earlier this year in a trade standoff, and has lashed out at the Asian country's purchase of Russian oil.

Ford said it will start work on the site this year, with production slated to begin in 2029.

The move comes even as Trump made boosting manufacturing in the US - especially where the automotive in-



Ford Motor Co. employees assemble vehicle body parts at the Maraimalai Nagar factory in Chengalpattu, India in 2012.

dustrial sector is concerned - a signature policy goal. Ford caught flack from the president during his first term for a plan to increase output outside the US, but more recently won praise from him after announcing major investments at its domestic plants.

Ford's decision reflects renewed confidence in India as a manufacturing base from Chief Executive Officer Jim

Farley and comes as it pivots from a previous focus on electric vehicles. The Dearborn, Michigan-based company first set up manufacturing near Chennai in 1995 and added a second plant in Sanand, Gujarat, in 2015.

Shortly after becoming CEO in 2020, Farley pulled the plug on a deal with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. that would have kept Ford vehicles on Indian roads. He abandoned the market altogether less than a year later, saying it could no longer pour capital into marginal markets like India and Brazil that provided little or no return.

By the time it exited, Ford racked up losses totaling over \$2 billion. It ultimately sold off the Sanand vehicle plant to Tata Motors, which now builds EVs there. In 2020, Ford's chief US rival, General Motors Co., also ceased production in India, three years after shifting to an export-only business model.

More recently, other US companies have been building up their manufacturing presence in India, despite the political tension. Trump singled out Apple Inc. in May for its decision to manufacture in India, but the tech giant has since ramped up iPhone production across five Indian factories.

Tamil Nadu, where Ford plans to restart its old facility, is one of India's largest industrialized states and a longtime automaking hub. It's home to manufacturing facilities operated by Hyundai Motor Co., Renault SA, and BMW AG.

-BLOOMBERG

The Washington Post

When our dog died, visiting Pet Memorials helped me heal

By Andrea Sachs

ST. JOHNSBURY, Vt. - The fall dog party on Dog Mountain was in full swing. The guests of honor bounded after tennis balls, splashed around in a baby pool and wolfed down plates of pumpkin puree in the pie-eating contest. Every year, hundreds of dogs show up here for a celebration of life. Thousands more arrive in spirit.

On an early October day, beneath a halo of red and gold leaves, the 150-acre property was devoted to fun and games, canine-style. The scene was more serene inside Dog Chapel, a memorial to dearly departed pets fashioned out of photos, notes and drawings stretching from floor to ceiling, wall to wall. The visitors shared stories about their best friends, living and gone. They laughed or cried, sometimes both. *“This place is really cathartic,”* said Matt Reed, a Vermont resident who brought his dog Gracie to honor his late golden retriever. “If you just lost a dog, you can feel it. It’s in the walls; it’s in the air; it’s in the people.” The death of a pet is a blow to the heart. Bereavement specialists say the grief for a pet is a different kind of ache. According to Eric Richman, a licensed counselor at Tufts University’s Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, it can be more intense and enduring than the pain we feel for a deceased friend or relative.



Photo By: Andrea Sachs — TWAP



Photo By: Matt McClain/The Washington Post



Photo By: Andrea Sachs — TWAP

A resting place for our best friends

Animal adulation goes back centuries. Egyptian pharaohs, European royals and Alexander the Great bid their furry companions adieu with pomp. They buried them in ornate graves or sarcophagi laden with jewels for their afterlife, or named cults and cities after them, according to Paul Koudounaris, author of the book *“Faithful Unto Death.”* The idea of a formal resting place for pets originated in the Victorian era, when dogs rose in status from domestic helper to fashion accessory. Koudounaris credits London’s Hyde Park as the world’s first urban pet cemetery and Cherry, a Maltese who died in April 1881, as its first interred resident. Since then, graveyards dedicated to animals have sprung up around the world, with the United States leading the pack. In an interview that followed a pigeon funeral in Las Vegas, Koudounaris said the U.S. has the highest number and widest variety of pet cemeteries in the world. Though an exact figure is hard to nail down, he estimated the country has upward of 900 cemeteries, or more if you count small graveyards secreted away in deserts and forests. “Pet cemeteries are as American as apple pie and baseball,” said Koudounaris, who has attended pet burials, memorials and ceremonies around the world. The Southern California native grew up near Los Angeles Pet Memorial Park, a cemetery with star-studded pets including Boogie, Mae West’s monkey, and Droopy, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall’s cocker spaniel. The site used to hold a monthly candlelight vigil for any and all bereft pet owners. “I’d go to some of those meetings and for some of the people, it was a fresh loss from a week ago, but some of those people had been going for eight or 10 years,” he said. “It was a community.” On the East Coast, solace-seekers can find some of the biggest, oldest and most personal pet cemeteries. Hartsdale Pet Cemetery, a National Register of Historic Places site in New York, was founded in 1896 and is the final resting place for more than 80,000 pets, including dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, reptiles, monkeys and a Russian princess’s lion cub who lived at the Plaza Hotel.

In D.C., the dog cemetery at Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens is more of a family affair. Marjorie Merriweather Post and her three daughters buried or memorialized about 20 of their dogs on the grounds. Every Sunday, members’ pups are welcome to wander among the forget-me-nots and limestone dog sculptures honoring the four-legged kin. Koudounaris identified two of his favorites, both of which I visited by virtue of proximity. I live near Aspin Hill Memorial Park in Silver Spring, Maryland, which the owners of a dog kennel established in 1920 and is part of the first great wave of American pet cemeteries. My mother’s apartment, and Rosa’s home for her final year, is a few miles from Pine Ridge Pet Cemetery, founded in 1907 in Dedham, Massachusetts. A few weeks after donating Rosa’s supplies to the Animal League of Boston outpost in Dedham - helping other animals is another recommendation by grief experts - I visited the grounds run by the rescue organization. Set on a tree-stippled hill, the cemetery was still except for the rustling leaves and crunch of acorns underfoot. The dedications lifted my heart. There was a poem to “His Majesty” Beau Beau with the opening lines, “A poodle was he; although he never knew,” and a candid epitaph to Dewey. Though “only a cat,” he provided infinite comfort in times of loneliness and pain. Until her death in 1911, Polly the parrot was a cherished family member for nearly two decades. Aspin Hill, the eternal home of more than 50,000 pets and 55 of their human parents, is also a reminder that we never forget. Owners have adorned the graves with fake flowers, seasonal trimmings such as pumpkins and autumn leaf decorations and gift offerings of tennis balls. One Maryland resident made an even bolder gesture, said Julianne Mangin, a local historian who researches and lectures about Aspin Hill. Following a talk about the cemetery, an audience member approached Mangin, asking for her help in finding the unmarked grave of his childhood dog.

he reasons are manifold: the weight of responsibility that we, their primary caretakers, feel for our pets, plus the unconditional love they provide and the constant companionship. Amanda Weiss, a licensed psychologist who provides bereavement services for animal rescuers and owners, says grief is different for everyone. Finding solace can be a solitary endeavor or a communal experience, a quiet meditation or a public ritual. The where is as important as the how. The journeys we take to commemorate our pets are sacred. You can revisit the familiar and nostalgic, the beaches and parks where you walked side by side. Or they can be new to you, yet well-known in the wider pet community. Dog Mountain is one such memorial, but I discovered many more this summer when I found myself grappling with grief. One August morning, Rosa, our Siberian husky, was curled up in her bed like an arctic fox. Come evening, she was gone. Her absence was omnipresent, the sorrow unrelenting. I needed to heal. *Travel was the prescription but not to just anywhere. It had to be places that glorified pets, where it is perfectly acceptable to learn the names of a stranger’s dogs but never know the humans’.*

He wanted to place a headstone at the site. In 2022, nearly 70 years after Blackie died, a headstone honors a boy’s dog and a man’s everlasting love for his pet. “A Wonderful Dog - the Best Friend a Child Could Hope to Have - Gone but Not Forgotten,” the inscription reads.

Thousands of tributes at Dog Chapel

When Stephen Huneck and his wife Gwen bought property in Vermont in 1995, they didn’t intend for it to become a pilgrimage site for pet owners. The folk artist and wood carver was going use it as a studio. After an accident put Huneck in a months-long coma, he awakened with a new sense of purpose: to build a chapel where owners can *“celebrate the spiritual bond they have with their dogs,”* the dog dad of three wrote in his 2010 book, *“Even Bad Dogs Go to Heaven - More From the Dog Chapel.”* (Huneck and Gwen died in 2010 and 2013, respectively.) Styled after an 1820s Vermont church, the white clapboard sanctuary is decked out in dogs - from the steeple, with its angel-winged dog weather vane, to the stained-glass windows, pews and doorway, where a white terrier sculpture peers out at the never-ending parade of paws. The walls were originally bare, but since the chapel opened in 2000, every inch of space has been wallpapered with tributes left by pet owners. The notes and photos that flutter to the floor are gathered by staff members and preserved in binders in perpetuity. *“Remember who those dogs are looking at in those photos - the person who loves them the most,”* said Judy Ross, a community outreach coordinator at Dog Mountain. *“The love that is coming off these walls isn’t grief. It’s a shared compassion, animal to human.”* After the dog party wrapped up, I returned to the chapel, a pilgrim on a mission. I found an empty space beside the stained-glass window with Huneck’s most famous image - Sally, his black Labrador, chasing after a ball in the water. I grabbed a roll of tape from a table that was thoughtfully stocked with pens and boxes of tissues and sat on the floor to secure a card for Rosa.

Cricket-India Win Maiden Women's World Cup Title After Verma-Sharma Show



Cricket – ICC Women's World Cup – Final – India v South Africa – DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, India – November 2, 2025 India players celebrate with the trophy after winning the ICC Women's World Cup.



Cricket – ICC Women's World Cup – Final – India v South Africa – DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, India – November 2, 2025 India's Harmanpreet Kaur and teammates celebrate with the trophy after winning the ICC Women's World Cup.

India's agonising wait for a maiden Women's World Cup title finally came to an end as Harmanpreet Kaur and her teary-eyed teammates

clinched the trophy by beating South Africa in a dramatic final at the DY Patil Stadium on Sunday.

Their 52-run victory before a full house was the perfect culmination of a campaign, which was nearly derailed after three defeats in a row, including one against South Africa, in the league phase.

Kaur's team pulled off a record chase in their semi-final against defending champions Australia to reach the final against a South Africa side also gunning for their maiden 50-over World Cup title.

India found an unlikely hero in opener Shafali Verma, whose whirlwind 87 was key to their total of 298-7 even though 350 looked within their reach at one stage.

Verma also had a golden arm, claiming two quick wickets that turned the match on its head after South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt (101) led their robust reply with her second successive hundred of the tournament.

Verma walked away with the player-of-the-match award in the final of a tournament where she was drafted in only before the knockout stage as a late injury replacement.

Deepthi Sharma was equally impressive, smashing a run-a-ball 58 and following it with figures of 5-39.

The 28-year-old finished the World Cup with 22 wickets and 215 runs, which earned her the player-of-the-

tournament award.

Wolvaardt kept South Africa, who were all out for 246

in the 46th over, in the chase but once she holed out in the deep, India took charge of the contest.

India opener Smriti Mandhana, their leading scorer in the tournament, summed up the feeling in their camp after they clinched victory following two previous final defeats.

"It's still sinking in. I haven't been emotional on a cricket field but just an unreal night," she said battling tears.

"To be the champions, I'm not able to process it.

"Every World Cup we go in, there have been so many heartbreaks

but we always believe we have a responsibility with women's cricket and to see the last month and a half and the way we've been supported... I will take that 45 days of not sleeping every night."

Wolvaardt finished as the tournament's leading scorer but found little joy in personal milestones.

"I couldn't be prouder of this team for the campaign that we've had," the opener said.

"We've played some brilliant cricket throughout but we were outplayed today, India played fantastically well.

"We had a lot of different players stepping up, it was an amazing tournament for a lot of players. I'm just proud of the resilience we showed to get to the final."

-REUTERS



Cricket – ICC Women's World Cup – Final – India v South Africa – DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, India – November 2, 2025 South Africa's Sune Luus in action with India's Sinalo Jaftha



Cricket – ICC Women's World Cup – Final – India v South Africa – DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, India – November 2, 2025 India's Shafali Verma in action.



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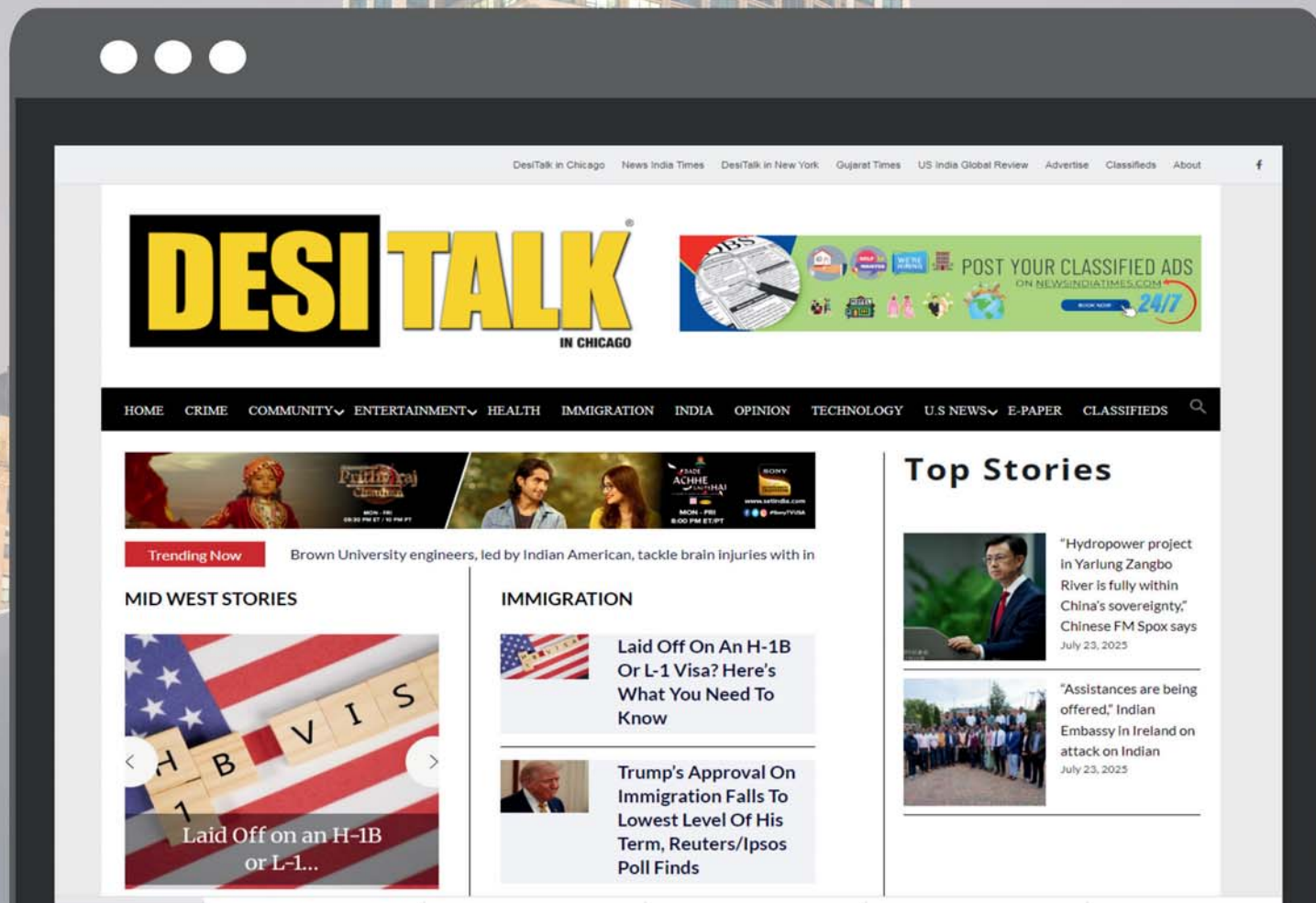
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