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DESI TALK

IN CHICAGO



Indian Americans make history, and major gains in off-year elections



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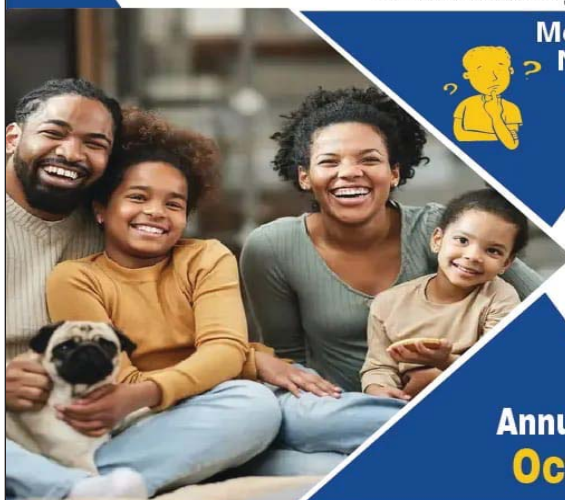
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Indian-Americans Did Go Home

By VIVEK WADHWHA

"ndians go home." That was the mantra of the MAGA crowd this year. Indian-Americans listened, and they did go home, not to India, but back to the Democratic Party they have long supported. In doing so, they have begun to redraw the map of American politics. And they may finally be ready to shed their meekness and speak up.

They have just shaken the foundation of New York City. Zohran Mamdani, 34, the son of filmmaker Mira Nair, won the mayor's race by a landslide, defeating former governor Andrew Cuomo. He will be the city's first Muslim mayor, its first of Indian descent, and its youngest leader in more than a century. His victory marks the moment a community that had long stayed quiet under fire finally found its voice, living out the stories his mother once told on screen about identity, belonging, and courage.

What makes Mamdani's story remarkable is that it seemed right out of a Bollywood melodrama. With his signature smile, he didn't just campaign; he performed. He blared Kishore Kumar at block parties, quoted Lagaan on perseverance, and turned policy debates into dance-offs. His rallies looked less like stump speeches and more like My Name Is Khan with campaign signs. Punjabi aunties swayed beside Puerto Rican students and Black union workers, all shouting his name, all part of the same beat. His campaign could have been directed by Karan Johar, equal parts family drama, social change, and a big dance number to Dhoom Machale Dhoom for the finale.

And somewhere between the bhangra and the ballots, something shifted.

For decades, Indian-Americans have carved out their place in the American dream, showing, in true Shah Rukh Khan fashion, that charm and resilience can outlast hate. Educated, family-oriented, and mostly apolitical, we became the model minority every politician wanted to claim. Traditionally we leaned Democratic, but in recent years many began to look rightward. The language of discipline, entrepreneurship, and family values felt closer

to our lived experience than the Democrats' fixation on sickening cultural battles.

I felt that pull myself. Since I came to America in 1980, I have voted Democratic, yet I sat out the last presidential election. I was uneasy about President Biden's age and lack of direction. At the same time, I found myself agreeing with parts of the Republican message. Donald Trump's talk of family, faith, and his warnings about socialism struck a chord. For those of us who grew up in, or visited India, "socialism" was not an abstract ideology, it was a ugly reality of ration lines, shortages, and corrupt bureaucrats deciding what people could eat or earn. Many of my friends and relatives lived through those nightmares and left because of them. For a while, I thought the Republican Party might finally open its doors to immigrants like me and to people like Nikki Haley, Vivek Ramaswamy, and Usha Vance, who had built their lives from scratch.

That hope did not last.

Over the past year, the MAGA movement turned its anger on the very group it once courted. Influencers like Laura Loomer began targeting Indian professionals. Members of Congress such as Marjorie Taylor Greene called for ending all H-1B visas, claiming that Indians were "stealing American jobs." Online trolls mocked our accents, ridiculed our temples, and questioned our loyalty. The message was clear: no matter how much we contributed, we would never be American enough.

The hypocrisy is staggering. Indian-Americans, less than two percent of the population, contribute nearly six percent of all federal income taxes. Our median household income is almost double the national average. CEOs of Indian heritage now lead sixteen Fortune 500 companies that together generate over a trillion dollars in annual revenue. From small-business owners who sustain local economies to scientists, engineers, and physicians who hold up hospitals and universities, no immigrant group has done more to strengthen America. We believed that hard work and contribution would secure equality. To be told to "go home" after decades of effort feels like betrayal.

In Edison, New Jersey, the heart of the Indian diaspora, voters answered that insult. In 2024, one precinct there backed Donald Trump by thirty points. This month,

Democrat Mikie Sherrill won it by seventy-six, a swing of 106 points. The vote had nothing to do with policy; it came from pride.

Indian-Americans are, however, returning to the Democrats for reasons that have little to do with party loyalty. The shift is driven by a need for respect and belonging, not blind faith in progressive politics. The Democratic Party talks about inclusion but has lost touch with the middle class it once championed. It has also drifted from the family values that hold immigrant communities together. It has become captive to its loudest extremes, chasing culture wars while ignoring the daily struggles of working families. Many parents, including immigrants like me, are bewildered by school debates over boys in girls' locker rooms while basic education standards decline.

Mamdani's win captures both sides of this new reality. It reflects a community that has found confidence and voice, yet it also exposes the risks of ideology untethered from pragmatism. His promise to open government-run stores may sound compassionate, but anyone who remembers India's old socialist model and ration shops knows how that story ends. Bureaucracy and populism may win applause in the short term, but they are the enemies of progress. They hollow out innovation, crush aspiration, and turn the dream of equality into the mediocrity of dependence.

Republicans, for their part, still have an opening if they can put aside outrage and rediscover the ideas that once defined them: enterprise, merit, and optimism. But until they do, the voters they alienated will keep their distance.

Zohran Mamdani's rise is a moment of pride for Indian-Americans, yet it highlights a paradox. The same ideals that inspire hope can also repeat the mistakes of the socialist India that some of its best and brightest left behind.



PHOTO: COURTESY VIVEK WADHWHA

Vivek Wadhwa is CEO, Vionix Biosciences.

Outside New York, Democratic Socialism Lost

This is not Zohran Mamdani's America. Even for New York City's size, its politicians always get outsize attention because so much of the national media is headquartered there. A charismatic socialist won the mayor's race by capitalizing on a wheezing Democratic establishment typified by the skeezy Andrew Cuomo. But in practice, most Americans, Democrats included, do not want the wares Mamdani is peddling.

In addition to the victories of self-styled moderates in the Virginia and New Jersey governors' races, four solidly blue municipalities underscored this on Tuesday with their own off-year elections. While largely overlooked, these results offer a pill to fight the fever dream that if socialism can win in New York, it can win anywhere.

The people of Austin want to keep their city weird, but not at any cost. Years of providing substantial support to the homeless, but not a pathway out of homelessness, have made the university town a magnet for vagrants who sleep on the streets. To keep up with rising demand for public services, the profligate city council (which recently spent \$1.1 million on a new logo) voted 10-1 to approve a 20 percent increase in property taxes. Fortunately, state law requires voters to approve such a large hike.

The Democratic Party in Travis County, which Vice

President Kamala Harris carried by 39 points last year, endorsed the proposition by a two-thirds vote. But the residents of Austin voted it down Tuesday by 27 points. Progressives like to talk about more spending as "investments" because pollsters tell them that sounds more palatable. But taxpayers aren't fools. Democrats successfully coalesced around a message of "affordability" in these elections. Now, they'll have to make good on it. Austin shows how buzzwords can't pay for expensive policies. Tax hikes inevitably make life less affordable.

Meanwhile in Michigan, Detroit elected the pro-business city council president to succeed Mayor Mike Duggan. Mary Sheffield has been an ally of Duggan, who endorsed her, pledging to expand upon his policies that revived the city after it declared bankruptcy a dozen years ago. Motor City's comeback was enabled by hard choices. Duggan chose to focus on austerity measures and incentivizing business investment, rather than demonizing wealth generators. And it worked. Sheffield, who will be Detroit's first female mayor, promises to continue in that pragmatic mold.

In Minneapolis, Mayor Jacob Frey (D) fended off a challenge from state Sen. Omar Fateh, who had the endorsement of the Democratic Socialists of America. Fateh ran on a Mamdani-like platform that included rent

control. Frey noted, correctly, that rent control has failed everywhere it's been tried and pointed to the expansion of the housing stock during his tenure, which is the sure-fire way to make housing more affordable. "We have to love our city more than our ideology," Frey said Wednesday, after besting Fateh by six points in an instant runoff. Amen to that.

And in New England, the small but famous island of Nantucket in Massachusetts voted overwhelmingly to allow homeowners to offer short-term rentals to visitors, ending a five-year battle over the issue. The NIMBY crowd wanted to drive visitors away and had the support of some of the richest residents, who would never think to, or need to, rent out their places.

But the island's voters sent those campaigners a message that property rights are still a key pillar in the land of the free. Protecting the short-term rental market on Nantucket, where mansions rent at eye-watering prices that make billionaires feel like millionaires, is not exactly the Mamdani model. Yet more than 70 percent of voters recognized that towns are not wise to bite the hand that feeds them. Off Cape Cod, that's hospitality and retail, heavily linked to tourism.

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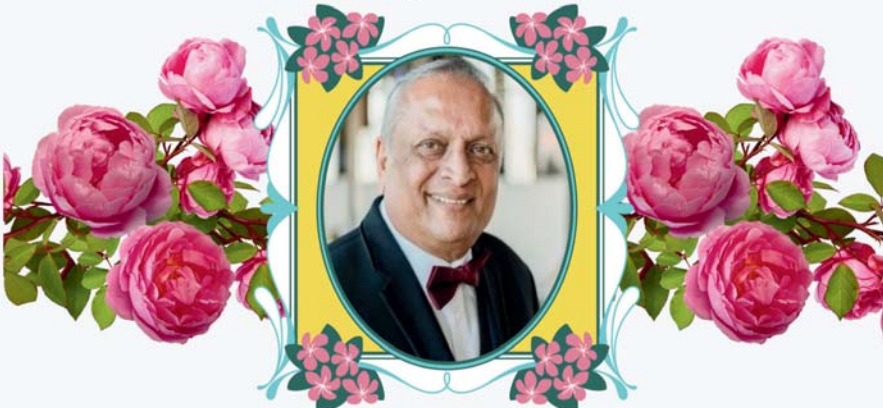
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For over forty years, Dr. Gandhi cared for thousands in Jersey City, where his patients became like family. Known for his compassion and humor, he never turned anyone away and often gave medicine freely to those in need. His quick wit and laughter were as healing as his medical care, leaving every patient with comfort and a smile.

Dr. Gandhi's life was anchored in love — for his devoted wife, Jyoti, whom he adored; for his parents, whom he deeply respected; and for his extended family, whom he supported with unwavering strength. He found immense joy in being a husband, brother, uncle, and grandfather, ensuring everyone around him felt valued and loved.

Outside his clinic, Dr. Gandhi's generosity and charisma touched countless lives. Whether meeting someone once or knowing them for decades, he had a rare gift for connecting people and spreading kindness. A passionate traveler and true foodie, he loved exploring new places and sharing good meals with good company. His garden became his sanctuary — a reflection of his care, patience, and zest for life.

Nothing brought Dr. Gandhi more happiness than his grandchildren, whose laughter and energy were his greatest joy. Seeing their faces, even through a screen, reminded him daily of the legacy he built through love and perseverance.

Dr. Kirit Vipinchandra Gandhi is survived by his devoted wife, Mina Gandhi; his children, Neha, Seema, and Jay; his grandchildren, Kira, Arya, Aliyah, Ravi, and Riya; and his brother, Chetan Vipinchandra Gandhi. His compassion, humor, and unwavering devotion will continue to inspire all who were blessed to know him.

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Indian Americans Make Significant Gains In November 4 Elections

By ELA DUTT

On November 4, night, by the time the polls closed, the world came to know that another iconic metropolis was going to be led by an Indian American, a South Asian, a Muslim. Zohran Mamdani, the 34 year-old Democratic Socialist won a decisive victory to become mayor of a global city, the City That Never Sleeps, the Crossroads of the World. He did what Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, UK, did many years before him. Uganda-born Mamdani, the son of Indian filmmaker Mira Nair, made history as his aspirational speech promised to uplift the poor and make the Big Apple an affordable place to call home. Along the way, he challenged President Donald Trump and declared politics would be played differently from this day on.

Analysts will, over the coming weeks, examine Mamdani's support base, but Indian Americans, even though they were split on his candidacy, and other South Asians, as well as several other minorities are already claiming they played a massive role in casting the votes that led to the defeat of former Governor Andrew Cuomo, who ran as an Independent, and Curtis Sliwa, the Republican.

Mamdani's embrace of Indian American and other South Asian communities concentrated in some boroughs, was a new phenomenon, and videos of rallies made up heavily of South Asians became a hallmark of his campaign.

During his victory speech November 4 night, the crowd of volunteers and other supporters, was distinctly youthful and belonging to numerous ethnicities, evident from the interviews in the news coverage on almost every channel – Caucasians, Blacks, Jews, Indians, including Indo-Caribbeans, Chinese and other East Asians, and Latinos, spoke glowingly of Mamdani and what they saw as his new brand of politics.

From Harlem to Hindu Temples and synagogues to churches and local grassroots events, Mamdani moved through his 12-month campaign to garner not only support, but also a machinery of thousands of volunteers.

The campaign not only reverberated around the nation, but also beyond. A Reuters report noted that Left-wing parties in Europe were taking a lesson and courage from Mamdani's victory.

Come January 1, 2026, when he will be sworn-in, Mamdani said, he will begin implementing his vision of a more livable New York City, a kinder, gentler behemoth.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Mamdani's victory is not the only Indian American gain during the November 4 elections. In New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Minne-



PHOTO: REUTERS/KYLIE COOPER

New York City mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani holds a press conference at the Unisphere in the Queens borough of New York City, U.S., November 5, 2025.



PHOTO: HASHIMIAVSENATE.ORG

Ghazala Hashmi, Democratic state senator in Virginia State Senate.



PHOTO: X @AFTABPUREVAL

Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval addressing the Democratic National Convention August 22, 2024.

sota, and elsewhere, up and down the ballot, candidates from the community appear to have been elected or re-elected.

According to the Indian American Impact Fund, a Washington-based political action committee, 19 candidates that it endorsed won elections around the country.

Among the notables was Ghazala Hashmi, the first-ever Indian American elected to statewide office in Virginia, as Lt. Governor; Mayor Aftab Pureval of Cincinnati of mixed Indian and Tibetan heritage who defeated

Pastor Cory Bowman, the half-brother of Vice President J.D. Vance; and Joe Khan as district attorney of Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Plus, by November 5, as this went to press, 4 candidates had advanced to runoff elections and 5 elections were still too close to call.

"After the election on Tuesday, there are now 50 South Asian state legislators nationwide, as well as over 350 total South Asian elected officials," Impact Fund estimated in its press release.

Chintan Patel, executive director of the Indian American Impact Fund, said, "The results of the election this past Tuesday proved that whether it's city council, mayor, or statewide office, South Asian Americans are part of the political future of this country."

IMPACT FUND LIST OF NOVEMBER 4 ELECTION WINS :

- Ghazala Hashmi, Lieutenant Governor, Virginia
- Zohran Mamdani, Mayor New York City, New York
- Aftab Pureval, Mayor Cincinnati, Ohio
- Joe Khan, District Attorney Bucks County, Pennsylvania
- J.J. Singh, State House HD-26, Virginia
- Balvir Singh, State Assembly LD-07, New Jersey
- Sterley Stanley, State Assembly LD-18, New Jersey
- Ravi Bhalla, State Assembly LD-32, New Jersey
- Sangeeta Doshi, City Council Cherry Hill, New Jersey
- Diya Patel, City Council Parsippany, New Jersey
- Dimple Ajmera, City Council At-Large Charlotte, North Carolina
- Haseeb Fatmi, Board of Commissioners Wake Forest, North Carolina
- Minita Sanghvi, County Supervisor Saratoga Springs, New York
- Anant Nambiar, County Supervisor Westchester District 7, New York
- Ajmeri Hoque, Attorney Franklin County, Ohio
- Kim Singh, City Council Mason, Ohio
- Nalini Krishnankutty, City Council State College Borough, Pennsylvania
- Uday Palled, City Council Franklin Park Ward 1, Pennsylvania
- Venu Paruvelli, City Council Franklin Park Ward 2, Pennsylvania

The Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund also listed the following additional winners around the country

- Swaranjit Singh Khalsa, elected as Mayor of Norwich, Connecticut
- Satwinder Kaur, elected to City Council in Kent, Washington



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First Indian American, First Muslim Woman, Ghazala Hashmi, Wins Lt. Governor's Race In Virginia

By ELA DUTT

Ghazala Hashmi, the Democratic candidate for Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, won the race with a comfortable margin as she made history in the nation, November 4, 2025.

Hashmi becomes the first Indian American to hold the position in Virginia, and the second Indian American to become Lt. Governor of a state after Aruna Miller of Maryland.

Hashmi broke the glass ceiling by becoming the first Muslim woman to win a statewide office in the country's history.

A progressive Democrat, Hashmi defeated Republican John Reid, securing 55 percent of the vote to Reid's 44 percent, to step into a largely symbolic role, but also one that gives her the deciding vote in the event of a tie in the State Senate.

The salary for the post is a mere \$36,000 which according to observers, makes the Lt. Governor's position more like a stepping stone for making a run for higher office like that of Governor, or even run for the US Congress.

The result for the gubernatorial race has also been decided and Virginians chose a Democrat, Abigail Spanberger to replace the outgoing Republican governor Glen Youngkin.

Hashmi's legislative priorities as spelt



PHOTO: FACEBOOK @SENATORGHAZALASHMI

Ghazala Hashmi, the new Lt. Governor of Virginia, the first Muslim to win statewide office and the first Indian American to hold the position in Virginia.

out on her campaign website, include public education, voting rights and the preservation of democracy, reproductive freedom, gun violence prevention, the environment, housing and affordable healthcare access.

The Indian American Impact Fund, a leading political action committee, which said it had invested \$175,000 in Hashmi's campaign to mobilize voters, congratulated her on her victory.

"Ghazala Hashmi's victory is a landmark moment for our community, our Commonwealth, and our democracy," said Chintan Patel, executive director of Impact Fund. "An immigrant, educator, and tireless advocate, she has dedicated her life to expanding opportunity and delivering results for working families across Virginia," he added.

Hashmi made history before when she flipped the Republican-held seat in the

Virginia State Senate in 2019.

Hyderabad-born Hashmi came to the US from India as a four-year old with her mother and older brother, to join her father in Georgia just as he was completing his PhD in international relations and beginning his university teaching career.

Ghazala grew up in the small college town, at a time when public schools were being desegregated, she notes in her profile on the campaign website ghazalaforvirginia.com.

After graduating as valedictorian of her high school class and receiving multiple full scholarships and fellowships, Hashmi earned a BA with honors from Georgia Southern University and her PhD in American literature from Emory University in Atlanta.

Ghazala and her husband, Azhar Rafiq, moved as newlyweds to the Richmond area in 1991, and she spent nearly 30 years as a professor, first teaching at the University of Richmond and then at Reynolds Community College. While at Reynolds, she also served as the Founding Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).

The couple has two adult daughters who both graduated from Chesterfield County Public Schools and the University of Virginia.

Edison Mayor Sam Joshi Wins Second Term In Decisive Race

By A STAFF WRITER

Edison Mayor Sam Joshi appeared headed for a second term Tuesday, holding a commanding lead over independent challenger Dave Tingle in unofficial results.

Joshi, 36, a Democrat completing his first four-year term, led Tingle, a township police lieutenant, 20,142 to 7,952, with all districts reporting, according to unofficial totals.

Since taking office in 2022, Joshi has held more than 400 plus community meetings. He ran with a new slate of Democratic Township Council candidates — Kelli Dima, Robert Kentos and Biral Patel — who also appeared poised to win.

Kentos led the council race with 19,263 votes, followed by Patel with 18,366 and Dima with 17,708, according to unofficial report of Middlesex County.

Tingle, making his first run for mayor, led a fusion ticket with Elizabeth Conway, a Democrat, and Republicans Gloria Dittman Samiksha Sharmas. Preliminary results showed Sharmas with 7,820 votes, Dittman with 7,727 and Conway with 4,655.

The Democratic surge extended beyond Edison. Mikie Sherrill, a Democratic congresswoman from Montclair, was elected governor of New Jersey, defeating Republican Jack Ciattarelli in a closely watched race.



PHOTO: COURTESY SAM JOSHI

Edison Mayor Sam Joshi

In another notable race, Ravi Bhalla, the former mayor of Hoboken, was elected to the New Jersey General Assembly, further contributing to what analysts described as a Democratic sweep across the state.



PHOTO: MIKIE SHERRILL OFFICIAL

Mikie Sherrill

Edison, one of Middlesex County's largest and most Democratic-leaning municipalities, appeared to stay true to form Tuesday as Joshi and his running mates built large margins across the township.



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Trump Implies Talks With India Continue, Praises Modi, Says He Might Visit That Country

FROM NEWS DISPATCHES

President Trump during a press conference at the White House, indicated he may visit India next year. He also repeated that applying tariffs on countries was a national security measure and that it was a tool he used to stop wars, reiterating his reference to India and Pakistan as an example of his success.

Trump was speaking during a press conference he held to announce a deal to lower the price of weight-loss drugs. Asked about the Supreme Court's ongoing hearing on whether the tariffs his administration had applied on countries were legal, Trump said tariffs were akin to a national security initiative.

"I use them for national defense. I ended say five or six (wars) were ended because of tariffs." He repeated the example of the recent India Pakistan conflict.

"If you take a look at India and Pakistan, they started to fight. The two nuclear nations, they were shooting each other. Eight planes were shot down. There was (sic) seven. Now it was eight, because the one that was sort of shot down is now abandoned, and eight planes were shot down."

"And I said, Listen, if you guys are going to fight, I'm going to put tariffs on you. And they both were not happy about that, and within 24 hours they settled the war. If I didn't have tariffs, I wouldn't have been able to settle that war."

Asked if he was planning to go to India, Trump said, "Prime Minister largely stopped buying oil from Russia when you plan." The President went on to say, "He's a friend of mine, and we speak, and he wants me to go there. We'll figure that out. I'll go. I had a great trip there with Prime Minister... Modi's... great man, and I'll be going." Asked if he would be going there next year, Trump responded, "It could be, Yeah."

ADDON FROM THE WASHINGTON POST

"I do not have anything on this to share," Randhir



PHOTO: SCREENGAB FROM VIDEO OF PRESSER

President Trump responding to a question on India, November 6, 2025, at a White House press conference on drug prices, when asked about tariffs and trade deal with India.



PHOTO: PRAKASH SINGH/BLUMBERG

India's prime minister Narendra Modi.

Jaiswal, a spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs, said at a briefing in New Delhi on Friday regarding Trump's visit. "I will let you know when I have."

During his February visit to the White House, Modi had invited Trump to India. "On behalf of 1.4 billion Indians, I invite you to come to India," the Indian leader had said at a joint press conference in Washington during his visit. But relations between the two countries deteriorated rapidly after that.

Trump earlier this year slapped 50% tariffs on India's exports to the US in part to pressure New Delhi to stop buying Russian oil. That added tensions to an already contentious negotiation over what the US has cast as India's high levies and other barriers on American goods.

In recent weeks, Trump has said that Modi has pledged to wind down purchases of crude from Russia and expressed optimism about trade talks.

While some officials in New Delhi have indicated that India is close to signing a trade deal with Washington, others - including the Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal - have sent mixed signals, saying the country won't be pressured into finalizing any agreement.

It is also unclear if the recent warmth between the two leaders will last. Despite sharing a close relationship, the alliance between Trump and Modi has been strained by the US leader's repeated claim that he deserves credit for brokering a truce in a four-day armed conflict between India and Pakistan.

Trump's last presidential visit to India came over five years ago, during his first term. "The people of India still remember your visit of 2020, and hope that President Trump will come to them once again," Modi had said at the February press conference.

India Trade Delegation To Visit Moscow As U.S. Tariffs Hit Exports

BY MANOJ KUMAR

A large delegation of Indian exporters will start a four-day visit to Moscow on Tuesday, a senior trade body official said, part of New Delhi's push to diversify export markets amid the impact of U.S. President Donald Trump's sharp tariff increases.

The visit comes ahead of an expected trip to India next month by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The delegation will comprise more than 20 exporters from the engineering sector - a sector which accounts for nearly a fifth of all Indian merchandise exports - and the visit is part of a broader strategy to tap new markets, industry officials said.

Trump has doubled tariffs on Indian imports into the U.S. to 50% as punishment for India's purchases of Russian oil, driving bilateral relations to their lowest point in decades, though the two countries are now trying to reach a trade deal.

Trucks with shipping containers are parked at Jawaharal Nehru Port, in Navi Mumbai, India, August 27, 2025. REUTERS/Francis Mascarenhas

"Russia has been an important business partner for India, and the engineering and tools sector presents significant potential for collaboration," said S.C. Ralhan, president of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), which is leading the delegation.



PHOTO: SPUTNIK/ALEXANDER KAZAKOV/POOL VIA REUTERS

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi shake hands during a meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin, China, September 1, 2025.

tions (FIEO), which is leading the delegation.

"Our engineering exports to Russia are growing rapidly and are expected to reach \$1.75 billion this year," he

said, adding that the visit aimed to deepen commercial ties and promote Indian manufacturing in the Russian market.

Exports of engineering goods to the U.S., India's largest market, declined 9.4% year-on-year to \$1.40 billion in September, industry estimates showed, while total exports to the U.S. fell to \$5.4 billion from \$6.9 billion in August.

India's exports to Russia rose 14.6% year-on-year to \$4.9 billion in the fiscal year 2024/25 ending in March, while imports, mainly of crude oil and other energy products, climbed 4.3% to \$63.8 billion, Commerce Ministry data showed.

Indian exporters have benefited from supply gaps in Russia after Western firms exited the market following the Ukraine invasion. However, imports have recently slowed as refiners paused Russian oil purchases following the imposition of U.S. sanctions on two major Russian crude oil exporters.

At the MITEX Tools Expo in Moscow from November 11-14, Indian firms will showcase engineering goods, highlighting the country's manufacturing strength, FIEO said, while the Indian Embassy and the Commerce Ministry will facilitate meetings with Russian buyers to promote trade and joint ventures.

-REUTERS



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Seniors' Association- FISANA- Celebrates Silver Jubilee

BY A STAFF WRITER

The Federation of Indo-American Seniors Association of North America (FISANA) held its Silver Jubilee celebration Saturday November 1, 2025, at Royal Albert's Palace, Fords, New Jersey.

Among the elected officials who attended were Mayor of Woodbridge John E. McCormac, and Edison Mayor Sam Joshi.

Piyush Patel, chair of FISANA, spoke of his vision to have a central database, and to have a dedicated call line that seniors could get help from in times of need.

Dr. Sudhir Parikh thanked Suresh Patel for organizing the event and noted the elaborate decorations symbolizing India's culture and credited FISANA with making its voice heard. Dr. Parikh was the first chairman of FISANA and was recognized for his service.



Mayor of Edison, NJ Sam Joshi, center, and officials and special guests at the FISANA Silver Jubilee celebrations November 1, 2025, in New Jersey.



Padma Shri recipient Dr. Sudhir Parikh, chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media, being honored at FISANA event Nov. 1, 2025., as Suresh Patel, right, president of FISANA looks on.



Piyush Patel, left, and Suresh Patel of FISANA at the Silver Jubilee of the organization Nov. 1, 2025, in New Jersey.



Woodbridge Mayor John E. McCormac being honored at the FISANA Silver Jubilee event November 1, 2025, in Royal Albert's Palace, Fords, NJ.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Indian Consulate In Seattle Hosts Briefing Ahead Of AI INDIA Impact Summit 2026

The Indian Consulate in Seattle hosted a Pre-Summit Roundtable November 8, 2025, ahead of the India AI Impact Summit 2026, attended by US representatives Adam Smith and Michael Baumgartner.

The roundtable featured presentations from leading tech CEOs from the Greater Seattle area, focusing on themes such as the application of artificial intelligence in Agri-Tech and the potential of data centres and digital infrastructure in India.

In a post on X, the Consulate said, "India AI Impact Summit 2026: Pre-Event Briefing Session hosted in Seattle! Thank US Rep. Adam Smith and US Rep. Michael Baumgartner for gracing the Pre-Summit Roundtable. Deeply appreciate presentations from Tech and AI Industry leaders underscoring the Three Sutras / Pillars of India's AI journey: People, Planet, Progress."

Participants also briefed US Congressman Adam Smith, Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, and Congressman Michael Baumgartner, Member of the House Judiciary and Foreign Affairs Com-



Scenes from the briefing held at the Indian Consulate in Seattle prior to the AI Summit.

mittees about India's progress in AI and highlighted the Seven Chakras, or Themes for Global Cooperation centered around (i) Safe and Trusted AI (ii) Human Capital (iii) Science (iv) Resilience, Innovation and Efficiency (v) Inclusion and Social Empowerment (vi) Democratizing

AI Resources and (vii) Economic Growth and Social Good.

Today's briefing at the new Chancery premises of the Indian Consulate in Seattle was the first such curtain raiser in a series of such sessions that are being planned in the run-up to the AI India Impact Summit. Subsequent workshops and briefing sessions are being planned in leading US Universities in the US Pacific Northwest, as well as with leading Tech and AI industry stakeholders in January 2026, a statement by the Consulate said.

The India-AI Impact Summit 2026 will be held from February 19-20, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, marking the first global-scale AI summit hosted in the Global South. It will bring together governments, industry, academia, and startups from global capitals with an aim to translate AI's potential into tangible outcomes for People, Planet, and Progress and reaffirm India's vision of "AI for All."

-ANI

ASTROLOGY



This week for you

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

ARIES: Your hard work finally earns the recognition you’ve been waiting for. This month also opens doors for organizing special events with collective support. Loved ones will guide you toward resolving personal matters effectively. Academic growth looks bright, and learning something new could strengthen your professional prospects. Be mindful of expenses to maintain financial peace.

TAURUS: Family gatherings and social celebrations dominate the month. Newlyweds enjoy a phase of warmth and harmony. A short getaway restores inner peace and positivity. Keep an eye out for a promising property deal. Stay disciplined at work to win the confidence of seniors. Excellent health keeps your morale high.

GEMINI: Taking initiative and handling responsibilities independently will bring great satisfaction. Professional and academic progress continues smoothly. Positive financial news may arrive soon, adding to your happiness. Your fitness routine delivers visible results, while affection from loved ones keeps your spirits high.

CANCER: Family issues might test your patience, and recognition at work may require extra effort. Being overly strict about money could attract unwanted opinions, so remain flexible. Academic tasks may demand additional explanation. Avoid delay in official work and focus on maintaining your health through discipline.

LEO: You may feel the urge to confide in someone, so choose wisely. Academic performance may dip slightly, while overconfidence at work could cause minor errors. Family support will help you stay grounded. Plan household expenses carefully, especially for repairs or décor updates.

VIRGO: Matters involving younger family members or children will need attention. Social gatherings could connect you with influential people. Singles may meet someone with shared ideals. Minor distraction may affect studies—stay focused. Compare before making any major purchase to ensure value.

LIBRA: Plans for overseas travel may begin to materialize. Reunions with loved ones bring joy and laughter. Investments or rent-related returns boost financial security. Romantic life flourishes, deepening bonds. Reviewing academic progress proves useful, and you may be trusted with a significant task at work.

SCORPIO: Doubts about someone’s intentions might make you more cautious. Financial growth remains stable, and stock-related gains look promising. Your commitment to health routines brings positive results. A secret admiration could turn into something meaningful, and a career shift may soon be on the horizon.

SAGITTARIUS: Honest feedback might sting at first but proves constructive later. Challenges in academics or work will be overcome easily. Expectant mothers enjoy care and comfort. Loved ones stay supportive, while a special outing with your partner brings delight. Exploring new property options could keep you occupied.

CAPRICORN: Assign responsibilities with tact to avoid confusion. Professional progress moves steadily forward. Academic success is within reach, and your ability to motivate others enhances your image. Financial stability allows some indulgence. Emotional relationships deepen with mutual understanding.

AQUARIUS: The month may start slow but soon gains pace with new opportunities. A property deal may bring lasting rewards. Persistence helps resolve a difficult issue. Dealing with strict family opinions could test your patience, but keeping sight of long-term goals will help you stay composed.

PISCES: Focus on health by following a consistent routine. Careful planning at work ensures smooth results. Academic performance shines, and a delayed payment finally comes through. Smart financial decisions clear earlier blockages. Your charisma and communication win admiration from everyone around you.



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Indian Consulate In Chicago Commemorates 150th Anniversary Of “Vande Mataram”

By BHAILAL M. PATEL

The Consulate General of India in Chicago, under the leadership of Consul General Somnath Ghosh, hosted a ceremony to commemorate the 150th anniversary of India's National Song, “Vande Mataram.” The event was held at the Consulate's office in the NBC Tower.

Composed in 1875 by the visionary author and poet Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, “Vande Mataram” transcended literature to become a resounding call for freedom during India's struggle for independence. Its verses, blending devotion and valor, awakened the conscience of a nation and united millions in their pursuit of self-determination and national pride.

In his keynote address, Consul General Somnath Ghosh reflected on the song's timeless message and its enduring power to unite Indians across generations and continents: Itural reverence as members of the Indian diaspora, community leaders, and dignitaries gathered to pay homage to one of the most powerful symbols of India's unity and spirit.

“Vande Mataram” is not merely a song — it is a sacred invocation, a hymn of gratitude to the motherland that ignited the soul of India's freedom struggle and continues to remind us of our shared heritage and unity. It represents India's civilizational ethos — rooted in respect, harmony, and diversity.”

The ceremony commenced with a joint rendition of “Vande Mataram”, as attendees stood in reverent silence before



PHOTOS: GURMEET SINGH DHALWAN

Guests and community members join in the dignified ceremony to commemorate the 150th anniversary of India's National Song, “Vande Mataram.”

their voices rose in unison, filling the Consulate's halls with emotion and pride. The collective singing evoked a deep sense of connection to India's history — linking generations who have sung these lines in devotion to the Motherland.

Following the performance, speakers reflected on Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's remarkable literary contribution and the evolution of “Vande Mataram” from its appearance in the novel Anandamath to its adoption as India's National Song, complementing Jana Gana Mana.

In his remarks, Consul General Ghosh highlighted that the 2025–2026 period marks a year-long global commemoration of the song's 150th anniversary an opportunity for Indian Missions worldwide to rekindle awareness of India's literary, spiritual, and cultural heritage.

“This celebration is not only about history — it is about the living spirit of India. ‘Vande Mataram’ continues to resonate because it reflects our eternal values: unity in diversity, respect for all, and unwavering love for the motherland. It is a living embodiment of India's soul — timeless, unifying, and profoundly moving. Each verse of Bankim Chandra's creation breathes love for the motherland and the spirit of selfless devotion.” - Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India, Chicago

The ceremony concluded with a renewed pledge to preserve and promote India's cultural and artistic heritage across generations. Attendees engaged over light refreshments, sharing personal reflections on their connection to the song and its enduring place in the Indian American experience.

As the final notes of “Vande Mataram” echoed through the Consulate's atrium, the gathering was reminded that this song, written 150 years ago, remains an undying testament to India's resilience, unity, and devotion.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee: The Composer of “Vande Mataram”: Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838–1894), one of Bengal's foremost literary pioneers, is revered as the father of modern Indian fiction. His 1882 novel Anandamath introduced the immortal hymn “Vande Mataram,” which became the spiritual anthem of India's independence movement. Written in a blend of Sanskrit and Bengali, the song envisions the Motherland as both divine and nurturing — an embodiment of courage, compassion, and national pride.

Hundreds Attend Gujarat Cultural Association Of Chicago's Diwali Celebrations

By BHAILAL M. PATEL

The Gujarat Cultural Association of Chicago (GCA) hosted its much-anticipated Diwali Celebration at the elegant Signature Banquet in Woodridge, Illinois. Hundreds of families, dignitaries, and community leaders attended an evening that celebrated tradition, leadership, and cultural pride.

The event was held under the leadership of Chairman Kanti S. Patel and the GCA Board. Among the high profile guests were Chief Guest Smita Shah, Consul General of India Somnath Ghosh, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison (District 15), Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Mayor of Lincolnwood Jasal Patel. Other prominent business and community leaders also attended.

The evening began with a lively networking reception, followed by a welcome speech by Jyotendra Patel. The Masters of Ceremonies Hetal Patel and Dr. Manish Brahmhatt, conducted the program.

The Ajay Musical Group opened the ceremony with a soulful prayer, following which a ceremonial Deep



PHOTOS: GURMEET SINGH DHALWAN

Lamp-lighting ceremony: The ceremonial Deep Pragatya (Lamp Lighting) was performed by Chief Guest Smita Shah, Consul General of India Somnath Ghosh, and Chairman Kanti S. Patel, joined by a distinguished group of elected officials and community leaders.

Pragatya (Lamp Lighting) was performed by Chief Guest Smita Shah, Consul General of India Somnath Ghosh, and Chairman Kanti S. Patel, joined by a distinguished group of elected officials and community leaders, including: Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Clerk, Circuit Court of Cook County Kevin Morrison, Cook County Commissioner, District 15 Jasal Patel, Mayor of Lincolnwood

Kalpesh Joshi, Upper Midwest Director, AAHOA Ashok Punjabi, CEO, Chicago Imports Moti Agrawal, CEO, Millennium Bank Raj Bedi, Community Leader, Bhaila Patel Executive Vice president Prearikh woldwide Media, Trustee and Former Chairman of Gujarat Cultural As-

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

FIA Chicago Celebrates Diwali, Announces New Executive Team

By A Staff Writer

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) Chicago celebrated the Festival of Lights at its Annual Board Meeting and Diwali Gala on Sunday, November 2, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Chicago SW, Burr Ridge, hosted by hotelier Vishal Thakkar. Themed “Sitare Zameen Par: Desi Treats & Diwali Lights,” the event included Bollywood glamour, cultural performances, and the unveiling of FIA’s newly elected executive team of 2026.

More than 150 distinguished guests, dignitaries, and community leaders filled the ballroom. The lively beats of Mehul Adhikari’s dhol infused the venue with festive cheer.

FIA Founder and Chairman Sunil Shah welcomed everyone and wished them a Happy Diwali. “FIA stands today as the largest and most dynamic Indian organization in Chicagoland — a symbol of unity, service, and celebration,” he said, commending President Anu Malhotra for her leadership. “Anu has been one of the most outstanding presidents FIA has ever had,” Shah added, earning a standing ovation.

Shah also acknowledged past leaders including Mukesh Shah, Rita Singh, Dr. Kamal Patel, Onkar Singh Sangha, Hitesh Gandhi, Pratibha Jairath, and Vinita Gulabani, and extended special appreciation to Vice Chairman Neil Khot for his dedication and his ongoing congressional campaign in Illinois’ 8th District.

Taking the stage to resounding applause, President Anu Malhotra thanked her team, saying, “Together, we didn’t just host events — we created memories built on teamwork, trust, and community love.” She highlighted FIA’s record-breaking year with a presentation showcasing cultural events, Independence Day parades, and health camps. Malhotra honored 27 volunteers as “FIA Ambassadors,” with special recognition to Falguni Sukhadia for her exceptional service.

Vice Chairman Neil Khot commended Malhotra’s leadership and reiterated his commitment to public service, earning enthusiastic support from attendees.

PHOTOS: RAMESH PUNATAR, COURTESY FIA CHICAGO



Anu Malhotra (President), Neil Khot (Vice Chairman), Richa Chand (President Elect), Altaf Bukhari (President Elect), Sunil Shah (Founder & Chairman).

The highlight of the evening was the formal introduction of the FIA Dream Team 2026. For the first time, FIA appointed dual presidents — Altaf Bukhari and Richa Chand — a widely applauded move. The new leadership team includes Senior Executive VP Sonia Luther, Executive VPs Chintan Patel, Ajanta Sharma, and Prashant Mehta, and a team of Vice Presidents, Secretaries, and Cultural leaders. “The Dream Team 2026 reflects passion, diversity, and purpose,” said Malhotra.

As the formalities concluded, the evening transformed into a celebration with performances by Bollywood playback singer Abbas Ali Mirza and Paulami Mazumdar of SaReGaMaPa fame, followed by high-energy music from DJ Melody Mahesh Kumar. Guests sang, danced, and celebrated under bright lights. Photographer Ramesh Punatar captured the night’s magic.

The event closed with a joyful group celebration for FIA members’ October–November birthdays. Vipul Srivastav described the evening in the following words, “Tonight was not just a meeting—it was a movie, a melody, and a movement.”



FIA Chicago members and leaders pose for a photo at the November 2, 2025 Diwali Gala and annual board meeting.

Hundreds Attend Gujarat Cultural Association Of Chicago’s Diwali Celebrations

-CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

sociation of Chicago (GCA) and Executive GCA Board.

Hetal Patel and Dr. Brahmabhatt introduced each dignitary inviting them to address the gathering. “Diwali is not just an Indian festival — it’s a global celebration of light, peace, and hope,” said Chief Guest Smita Shah, praising the Gujarati community for its leadership and cultural preservation.

Consul General Ghosh highlighted Diwali’s message of harmony that resonates deeply in both Indian and American societies, encouraging youth participation in the Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz, a global initiative to connect young Indian-origin individuals with their heritage.

Cook County Clerk Mariyana T. Spyropoulos, Commissioner Kevin Morrison, Mayor Jasal Patel, all delivered



Consul General of India Somnath Ghosh, and Chairman Kanti S. Patel, joined by a distinguished group of elected officials and community leaders.

uplifting messages celebrating the Gujarati community’s contributions to the Midwest.

“The Gujarati community’s spirit of service and unity continues to inspire everyone in the Chicagoland area,”

remarked Commissioner Kevin Morrison.

Chairman Kanti S. Patel and the GCA Board were applauded for organizing what some described as one of the most memorable Diwali celebrations in recent years—blending faith, fellowship, and festivity.

The program concluded with a Vote of Thanks by Girish Patel, who thanked the dignitaries, sponsors, performers, and the GCA team for their tireless work and community spirit.

Founded in 1973, the Gujarat Cultural Association (GCA) is one of the first Gujarati community organizations in the Chicago metropolitan area. For over five decades, GCA has held to its mission of cultural preservation, community service, and intergenerational connection among Gujarati families across Illinois and the

Midwest. The mission of the Gujarat Cultural Association is to preserve and promote Gujarati culture, religion, language, and traditions for present and future generations.

DHS Ends Automatic EAD Extensions for Many Categories: What Employers and Foreign Workers Need to Know

IN MEMORIAM

By David H. Nachman, Esq



Michael Phulwani

David Nachman

Ludka Zimovcak

Snehal Batra

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has announced a major policy shift ending automatic extensions of Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) for several categories of foreign nationals. The change, effective October 30, 2025, will have major implications for both employers and employees who depend on EADs to continue lawful employment in the United States.

What Has Changed

Under the new Interim Final Rule (IFR), individuals filing EAD renewal applications on or after October 30, 2025 will no longer benefit from the automatic 540-day extension that previously allowed continued employment while their renewals were pending. Applicants must now wait for USCIS to approve the renewal before they can resume working if their current EAD expires. This shift impacts many categories that had relied on the automatic extension to avoid work interruptions.

Categories Impacted by the End of Automatic EAD Extensions

Below is an NPZ summary table showing how the new DHS rule affects key employment authorization categories. Applicants who previously received up to 540 days of automatic work authorization while their renewals were pending will now lose that benefit starting October 30, 2025.

EAD Category	Examples / Eligibility	Old Rule (Before Oct. 30, 2025)	New Rule (On or After Oct. 30, 2025)
A03 / A05 / A07 / A08 / A10	Refugees, Asylees, Withholding of Removal, and related humanitarian categories	Automatic work extension up to 540 days	No automatic extension; must wait for new approval
A12 / C19	Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and TPS Prima Facie applicants	Automatic extension tied to TPS validity (up to 1 year)	Still eligible for limited extension during TPS period
A17 / A18 / C26	Spouses of E, L, and H visa holders	Up to 540 days or until I-94 expiry	No automatic extension; work must stop when EAD expires
C08 / C09	Asylum applicants and Adjustment of Status applicants	Up to 540 days of automatic extension	No automatic extension; cannot work until renewal approved
C10 / C16 / C20 / C22 / C24 / C31	Legalization, continuous residence, LIFE, and VAWA categories	Up to 540 days of automatic extension	No automatic extension; must wait for new card issuance

Note: Only TPS-based categories remain eligible for limited automatic extensions under this rule.

Why This Matters

This change could cause workforce disruptions and compliance risks for U.S. employers. Organizations must now track EAD expirations closely and ensure that employees do not continue working past expiration without valid authorization. Industries that rely heavily on EAD holders—such as healthcare, education, technology, hospitality, and agriculture—may face staffing challenges if renewals take several months to process. Employers also face potential Form I-9 compliance exposure if they fail to reverify employees in time.

Steps Employers Should Take Now

To prepare for this change, NPZ recommends that employers and HR teams:

1. Encourage early filings: Employees should file EAD renewals up to 180 days before expiration.

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Steps Employers Should Take Now

2. Track renewal timelines: Create internal alerts or software reminders for expiring EADs.
3. Communicate proactively: Notify affected employees about the new rule and confirm filing status.
4. Plan contingencies: Consider cross-training, role-sharing, or temporary coverage for critical positions.
5. Monitor agency updates: The rule allows for future adjustments after public comments or court rulings.

Legal and Litigation Outlook

Because this policy was issued as an Interim Final Rule, DHS implemented it without a traditional notice-and-comment period.

That decision may invite legal challenges from advocacy groups and employers arguing that sudden implementation is harmful or procedurally improper. Until a federal court intervenes, however, the rule remains fully enforceable.

What Affected Workers Should Know

- If you hold an EAD, file your renewal as early as possible and plan for processing delays.
- You must stop working once your current EAD expires unless a new card is approved.
- For personalized guidance, consult an immigration attorney—especially if your renewal is pending or your job depends on continued employment authorization.

FAQ – EAD Automatic Renewal Changes (October 2025)

Q1: Who still qualifies for automatic extension?

Only those under Temporary Protected Status (TPS) continue to receive limited automatic extensions tied to TPS validity.

Q2: What happens if my EAD expires before approval?

You must stop working until USCIS issues the renewed card. Continuing to work without authorization can lead to immigration and employer compliance issues.

Q3: Could this rule be reversed or delayed?

Possibly. DHS may revise portions of the rule after public feedback, or litigation could result in a temporary injunction.

Contact NPZ Law Group

If you or your organization may be impacted by this policy, contact NPZ Law Group at www.visaserve.com or call 201-670-0006.

Our immigration attorneys advise employers and foreign nationals on EAD renewals, I-9 compliance, and workforce planning under the latest DHS regulations.

Chicago Mayor Implores U.N. Body To Investigate 'Abusive' Immigration Campaign

By TOBI RAJI,

The mayor of Chicago on Friday (November 7, 2025) invited a panel of independent United Nations experts to examine what he called the federal government's "abusive immigration crackdowns" in the nation's third-largest city.

Speaking before members of the U.N. Human Rights Council on Friday, Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson (D) accused President Donald Trump's administration and federal immigration officials of violating the "dignity of all Chicagoans" with violent raids, and he asked the human rights council to hold a special session to discuss "the worsening human rights crisis in the United States."

"I call on this council to hold the federal government of the United States to the same standards of accountability you apply elsewhere in the world," Johnson said in the virtual address. "No country should be above international law. Human rights are universal – or they are meaningless."

Since the Department of Homeland Security launched its "Operation Midway Blitz" enforcement operation in the Chicago area in early September, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents have descended on work-sites, dragged residents through neighborhood streets and used chemical irritants to disperse protesters – tactics that a federal judge said "shocks the conscience."

On Wednesday, immigration officers arrested a teacher after chasing her onto the grounds of a private preschool. The incident appears to be one of the first instances during Trump's second administration in which immigration officers entered and made an arrest on school grounds – once considered off limits to enforcement actions. DHS disputed that the woman was arrested inside the school, saying she was detained in a "vestibule."

In his remarks, Johnson characterized these kinds of incidents as stemming from a "moral failure" on the part of the Trump administration.

In a statement to The Washington Post, DHS spokeswoman Tricia McLaughlin blasted Johnson for "demonizing ICE and CBP law enforcement," adding that federal officers are facing increasing assaults as they use more aggressive tactics to meet Trump's deportation goals.

"Mayor Johnson has shown time and time again he does not care about the innocent American lives taken at the hands of gang members, murderers, drug traffickers, and rapists who have no right to be in this country,"



Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson speaking to UN members.

McLaughlin said. "Perhaps the United Nations should investigate the 'human rights crisis' that is Chicago's crime rate."

The White House echoed McLaughlin's criticisms of Chicago's crime rate in its own statement.

The enforcement operation is part of the administration's broader crackdown on "sanctuary cities," which have long drawn Trump's ire. Sanctuary city policies limit cooperation with federal immigration enforcement.

"Operation Midway Blitz" has resulted in the arrests of 3,000 undocumented immigrants throughout Illinois and northern Indiana, according to DHS.

Johnson said the deportation campaign has had a destabilizing effect on the city, and the harms extended beyond immigrant communities.

"In Chicago's South Shore neighborhood – a proud, predominantly Black community – federal agents carried out what can only be described as a military-style raid designed for social media spectacle," Johnson said. After the raid, DHS published to social media a video, set to cinematic music, of the operation.

"Helicopters circled overhead. Doors were kicked in. Homes were destroyed. Immigrant residents were detained in one van, while Black families – including young children – were held in another," Johnson added.

Authorities said that they were targeting the Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua. Two of the 37 immigrants arrested in that raid were gang members, and dozens of

U.S. citizens' apartments were targeted.

On the city's West Side, federal agents placed a Black man in a chokehold and forced him to the ground just steps from the doors of the legal nonprofit Westside Center for Justice, Johnson said. Earlier this week, federal agents rammed into the vehicle of Dayanne Figueroa before taking her into custody "for no apparent reason," he added.

"These are not isolated incidents. They are reminders that the fate of our communities – Black, Brown, immigrant – is bound together," Johnson said. "An attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. And in Chicago, we will stand united in defense of our shared dignity, safety and freedom."

Johnson also sought to draw the U.N. body's attention to the lapse in federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP or food stamps. In Chicago, roughly 1 in 5 households receive food assistance, according to official state data.

"As someone with first-hand experience, I can tell you how humiliating it is when you open the refrigerator and you have nothing to eat," Johnson said. "In the wealthiest country in the world, there is no reason why our federal government should allow hundreds of thousands of Chicagoans to go hungry."

Friday's address comes after the Trump administration skipped a review of its human rights record, known as the Universal Periodic Review. In February, Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the U.S. from the U.N. Human Rights Council, accusing the body of not living up to its potential.

Established in 2006, the UNHRC is a 47-member body that meets in Geneva each year to discuss human rights issues and adopt resolutions compelling governments to take action. Members can also hold crisis meetings, known as "special sessions."

In his remarks Friday, Johnson slammed the Trump administration for "fail[ing] to meet even the most basic expectations of transparency and accountability before this council."

"By refusing to submit its Universal Periodic Review report and declining to appear for its review, this administration seeks to evade scrutiny for its violations of human rights – just as it has sought to evade accountability for its actions in cities like mine," he said.

-THE WASHINGTON POST

SPORTS

Cricket-Not Your Normal Cup Of Tea? India Flips Menu For Guwahati Test

Cricket's traditional meal schedule is getting flipped on its head in Guwahati, where the India and South Africa the players will have tea after the first session of the second test followed by lunch due to the early sunrise and sunset.

The Indian cricket board (BCCI) has taken the unusual step of reversing the normal refreshment order for the second test starting on November 22, which will be Guwahati's first-ever test match at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium.

The decision was driven by the early start and fast fading light in north-east India.

"It is a practical decision," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia, who hails from Guwahati, told cricket website ESPNcricinfo.

"In winters, sunrise and sunset are very early here in north-east India. By 4 pm the (day)light recedes and you can't play much after. Because of that we have decided to start early, so play will start at 9 am."

Reuters has contacted the BCCI for comment.

The match will begin half an hour earlier than usual for red-ball tests in India.

The first test in Kolkata from November 14-18 begins at 9.30 am local time, but the revised schedule for the second test will have the toss at 0830 am before a 0900 start.

The first session will be played until 11 am when players have a 20-minute tea break. Lunch will be taken between 1320 and 1400, with the final session wrapping up by 1600.

-REUTERS



PHOTO: PWN STAFF

Representative photo.

Bloomberg, The Washington Post

Tariffs take a toll on New York's Indian food

By Kate Krader and Arvelisse Bonilla Ramos



All photos: Canva

Indian restaurants have been on a well-documented tear in New York City, outshining London's, garnering chef awards and becoming a destination for Wall Street executives. Even butter chicken, a culinary cliché, has become one of the Big Apple's most notable dishes. The South Asian wave has seemed unstoppable.

But on July 31, President Donald Trump imposed additional tariffs on India, which went into effect on Aug. 27, doubling the rate on most exports from the country to 50%.

Even as the legality of those tariffs is being debated before the Supreme Court, the impact has been tough on New York's Indian food community. The price of products that define the cuisine, from spices and rice to pulses and tea, has risen, cutting into tight margins for restaurants as well as retailers. (And it's a problem not everyone wants to discuss because of the highly charged politics around the conversation.)

Chef and restaurant operator Salil Mehta - founder of Fungi Hospitality Group, which includes grilled-meat specialists Kebab aur Sharab on the Upper West Side of Manhattan - has seen the wholesale price of a 40-pound bag of basmati rice climb to \$45 from \$30. Likewise, a 500-gram pack of chili powder that was \$7 now costs him \$10.50.

Indian and Asian restaurants more broadly are particularly vulnerable to these cost increases, says Mehta, in part because they suffer from the stigma of being a "cheap" cuisine. "People don't mind paying \$35 for a cacio e pepe, for five ounces of pasta. But there's a different perception that [Indian] food should be cheap already," he says.

As a result, Mehta has had to raise prices at his restaurants. Entrees are about \$5 more than they were pre-tariffs, and appetizers are "a couple of dollars more here and there." But he says "it still doesn't cover us, it means the margins are even lower than they were." Mehta is putting all his food costs under a microscope, he says. "Now if the server drops the food at the wrong table, it's a problem."

At Lungi, a South Indian and Sri Lankan dining room on the Upper East Side, chef-owner Albin Vincent is likewise feeling the pinch from the higher outlays for imported ingredients such as rice, lentils, and spices like ginger and garam masala. "These increased costs make it difficult for us to maintain profitability while keeping the menu prices low," he says.

So far, he's maintained the price of dosas at \$20 to \$26 and assorted biryanis at under \$28, but it's getting hard. "If we raise prices to offset these costs, we also risk driving away customers who may already be sensitive to price increases," he says. "This creates a challenging situation where maintaining quality and authenticity becomes financially difficult."

Vincent estimates that his costs on ingredients from India have gone up about 25%. "Coconut milk, we were ordering for \$38 per case and now are paying \$48 per case."

Maneesh Goyal, owner of the elegant, year-old Passerine in the Flatiron district - one of the few Indian tasting menu restaurants in the city - is also trying to absorb the higher costs of imported ingredients.

A bag of Arhar brand dal that was \$62 pre-tariff is now \$82, and a case of ghee costs \$220, up from \$150, a more than 46% rise. "As a new restaurant and an Indian restaurant, [we] haven't felt that we have the wherewithal to raise prices," he says. "We know the impact that it can have on covers." Not every operator says they're being affected. Pavan Pardasani, the new chief executive officer of JKS Indian restaurants, is overseeing the opening of the group's first two US-based restaurants, Ambassadors Clubhouse in New York and Gymkhana in Las Vegas. "Right now, we haven't been directly impacted," he says. But the tariff-related cost increases "do create disruption, and that's unfortunate for small business owners. It's a real thing."

Chef Mohammad Tarique Khan of Hyderabad Zaiqa, which has two locations in Manhattan, is watching prices rise. A 25-lb bag of basmati rice is \$69, up from \$45, he says. "Rice is an important ingredient for us, because we're known for our biryani, but we don't have a lot of storage space to buy it in bulk." His menu features six varieties of lentils, which have risen in price to \$4.50 per pound from \$3. Still, he's resisted hiking prices. "Most of our guests are students, office workers, and neighbors from the community, so we haven't raised our prices." To cut costs, he says, he's working late hours and "not hiring."

The tariffs are also hurting the booming Indian snack market. Kartik Das is the founder of Queens, New York-based manufacturer Doosra. Das is the founder of the Queens, NY-based brand that features which makes an addictive mix of boondi, or spiced chickpea puffs, and caramelized white or dark chocolate and nuts. Das, a veteran of UBS, says that beyond price, tariffs are affecting supplies: "The knock-on effect is of importers and exporters not wanting to bring in as much because of uncertainty around pricing."

Das was sourcing boondi from India, but because the inventory was unpredictable, he's recently switched to a US-based supplier. The same problem applied to a key Doosra spice, the dried mango powder amchur. Because importers are afraid of getting stuck with overpriced products if the tariff rates change, "there was a downstream inventory shortage," he says. He's also looking for alternatives to his packaging manufacturer from India as well. So far, he hasn't raised prices.

The repercussions reach beyond New York City. Keya Wingfield, the founder of the Richmond, Virginia-based Keya's Snacks - potato chips come in two bright flavors, Bombay Spice and Black Salt - is likewise challenged by supply and pricing. "We bring in single-origin spices from India, the tariffs have been astronomical," she says. "The spice company we work with in India has experienced a big loss of business, because their customers have put orders on hold." A month ago, "we had a 200 pound delivery of spices by air that had a \$1,700 tariff freight fee. Before that those costs were negligible." The launch of a new flavor has also been complicated by the increase in costs. "Money we could have used for advertising, for delivery, has had to go to tariffs," she says, "and there's no substitute for spices from India."

All these compound the pressure on small businesses. "On top of that, the margins are getting slimmer," says Mehta. The market will always adjust, he says, but it's going to be the "survival of the fittest."

Martin Scorsese Hosts Neeraj Ghaywan's 'Homebound' In New York, Karan Johar Expresses Happiness



Homebound screening in New York.



Neeraj Ghaywan with Martin Scorsese.



Cast of 'Homebound' with Martin Scorsese at NYC event.

Filmmaker Karan Johar was elated about the screening of India's Oscar entry 'Homebound' in New York, which was hosted by legendary director Martin Scorsese.

Taking to his Instagram handle, Karan Johar shared an appreciation note for the director Martin Scorsese.

The screening was attended by the film's lead cast and director Neeraj Ghaywan.

While sharing the photos, Karan Johar wrote, "Taking our story of #Homebound across the continents and seas has been the most surreal journey...and this is another chapter of it! Our NYC screening hosted by our executive producer @martinscorses_ was a night filled with

friends and more supporting with their full hear. Thank you!!! This means everything to us, showing up and giving us your love. I am bummed to be missing out but

I feel absolutely whole knowing that our film is getting everything it needs."

-ANI

Sivakarthikeyan Starrer 'Amaran' To Open Indian Panorama Section At IFFI 2025

The 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) has selected Rajkumar Periyasamy's Tamil-language war drama 'Amaran,' starring Sivakarthikeyan, as the opening feature film for this year's Indian Panorama section, reported Variety.

The 56th International Film Festival of India will take place in Goa from November 20-28.

According to the outlet, the lineup of the film festival includes 25 feature films, 20 non-feature films, and five streaming series for the Best Web-Series Award.

'Amaran' leads a diverse selection that includes five mainstream cinema titles chosen from 516 contemporary Indian feature film entries, as reported by Variety.

The feature film jury, chaired by actor-filmmaker-producer Raja Bundela and comprising 12 members, selected films representing multiple Indian languages and regional cinema traditions.

The complete lineup of 20 feature films in the main section includes: Thamar KV's Malayalam-language 'Sarkeet,' 'Amaran,' Jitank Singh Gurjar's Braj-language 'Vimukt,' Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri's 'The Bengal Files,' Anupam Kher's 'Tanvi The Great,' Badiger Devendra's Kannada-language 'Vanya,' Praveen Morchhale's Urdu-language 'White Snow,' Sasanka Samir's Assamese-language 'Bhaimon Da,' Santosh Davakhar's Marathi-language 'Gondhal' and J.P. Tumi-

nad's Kannada-language 'Su From So.'

The selection also includes Soukarya Ghosal's 'Pokkhirajer Dim,' Shivadhwaj Shetty's Tulu-language 'Imbu,' Purushottam Lele's Marathi-language 'Drushya Asdrushya,' Naorem Dinesh Singh's Manipuril-language 'Oitharei,' Reshmi Mitra's Bengali-language 'Barobabu,' Raju Chandra's Tamil-language 'Piranthanaal Vazhthukal,' Vishal Patnaik's Oriya-language 'Maliput Melodies,' Paresh Mokashi's Marathi-language 'Mukkam Post Bombilwadi,' Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar's 'Ground Zero,' and Jigar

Nagda's Rajasthani-language 'Whispers Of The Mountains,' reported variety.

The mainstream cinema section will feature Laxman Utekar's Hindi-language 'Chhaava,' Shivraj Waichal's Marathi-language 'Aata Thambaycha Naay,' Tharun Moorthy's Malayalam-language 'Thudarum,' Debangkar Borgohain's Assamese-language 'Sikaar,' and Anil Ravipudi's 'Sankranthiki Vastunnam.'

According to the outlet, the jury also nominated five films for the Best Debut Director of Indian Feature Film Award: Tribeny Rai's Nepali-language 'Shape Of Momo,' Ram Kamal Mukherjee's 'Binodiini Ekti Natir Upakhyam,' Karan Singh Tyagi's 'Kesari Chapter 2,' Jithin Laal's 'A. R. M,' and Yadhu Vamsee's Telugu-language 'Committee Kurrollu.'

-ANI



Amaran poster

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Franchise Motel in Virginia Front Desk. Need a couple or single with hotel experience preferred, fluent English, computer literate and legal status must. Accommodation provided. Contact: Ankur 917-595-0356

11/14-12/12-SD

AUGUSTA, GA

2 franchise motels 110 rooms and 65 rooms in Augusta, GA immediately need Single/couple for front desk clerk and Manager. Legal status must. Accommodation will be provided on site. Please call Meena: 706-877-1991, 706-631-2626 meena888patel@aol.com

11/14-12/12-SD

Virginia

36 rooms Independent motel in Central Virginia needs two couples for Housekeeping. Good pay and accommodation will be provided. Call: (540) 486-1333

11/14-12/05-SD

LONG ISLAND, NY

20 Rooms Independent motel in Long Island, NY needs a couple for Front desk help. Experience, Fluent English, computer knowledge and legal status must. Accommodation will be provided. Contact: Ishwar Ahir: (607)-262-0157

11/14-12/05-SD

NORTH CAROLINA

Choice Hotel needs an experienced single person for the Night Auditor Front Desk. Must be legal. Accommodation provided. Attractive salary. STUDENTS PLS DO NOT CALL. Call : 252-767-5252 nc802_27536@yahoo.com

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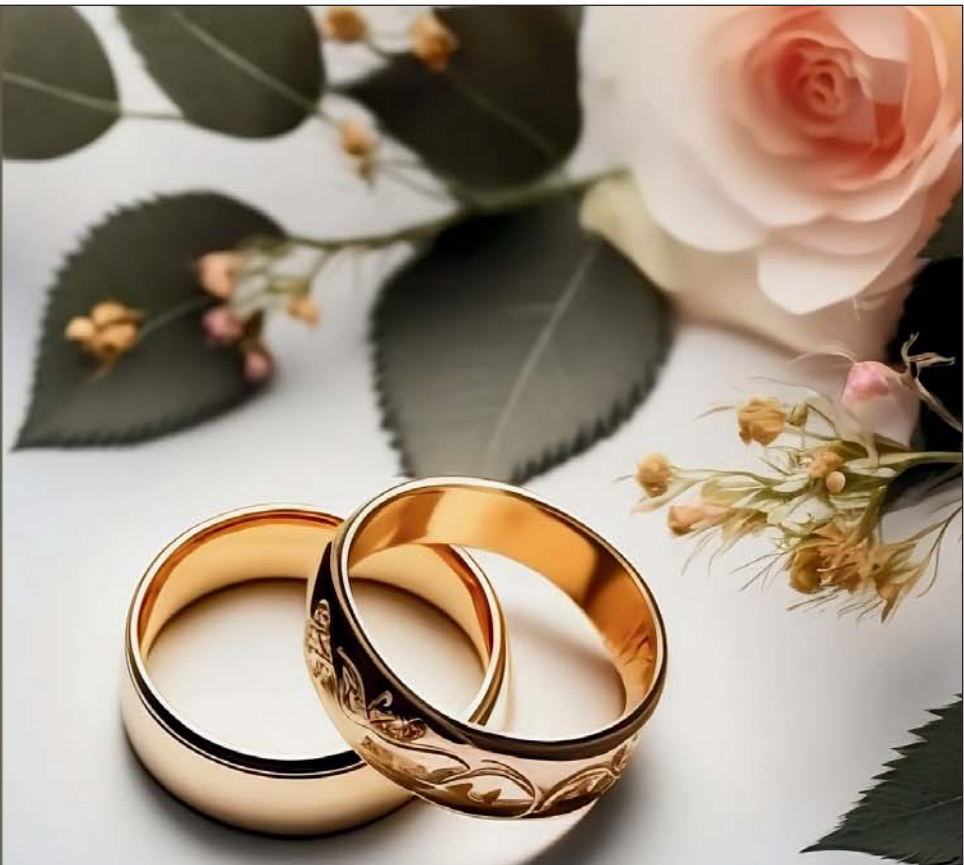
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