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IN CHICAGO



Kolhapuri Chappals Win 'Made in India' Branding From Prada



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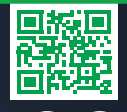
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Kolhapuri Chappals Win 'Made In India' Branding After Controversy With Prada



Customers shop for 'Kolhapuri' sandals, an Indian ethnic footwear, at a store in New Delhi, India, June 27, 2025.



A shopkeeper waits for customers as he sits next to 'Kolhapuri' sandals, an Indian ethnic footwear, at a store in New Delhi, India, July 1, 2025.

Prada is launching a limited-edition range of Indian-made sandals inspired by traditional Kolhapuri footwear, less than a year after the Italian luxury group faced a backlash for showcasing similar designs without crediting their origins.

Prada is launching a limited-edition range of Indian-made sandals inspired by traditional Kolhapuri footwear, less than a year after the Italian luxury group faced a backlash for showcasing similar designs without crediting their origins.

Each pair will be priced at about 750 euros (\$881), according to Prada's website.

The launch follows controversy in June 2025, when Prada showed sandals resembling centuries-old Indian Kolhapuri chappals at a Milan fashion show. The designs sparked outrage among Indian artisans and politicians, who accused the brand of cultural appropriation.

Prada later acknowledged the influence of ancient Indian styles and said it had begun talks with artisan groups about a collaboration.

In December, Prada announced plans to produce 2,000 pairs of the sandals in the Indian states of Maharashtra and Karnataka under agreements with two state-backed bodies, combining local craftsmanship with Italian technology.

The sandals will be sold through 40 selected Prada stores worldwide and online, the company said in a statement on Monday, April 27.

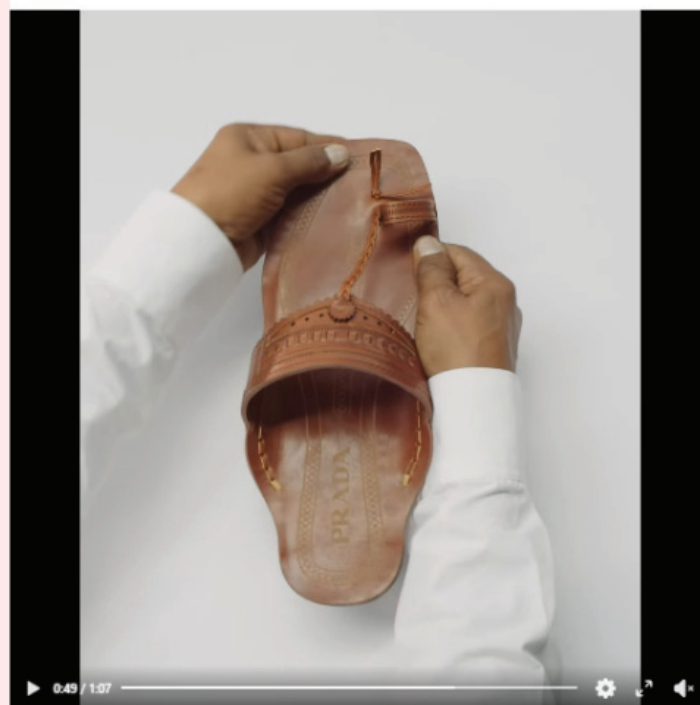
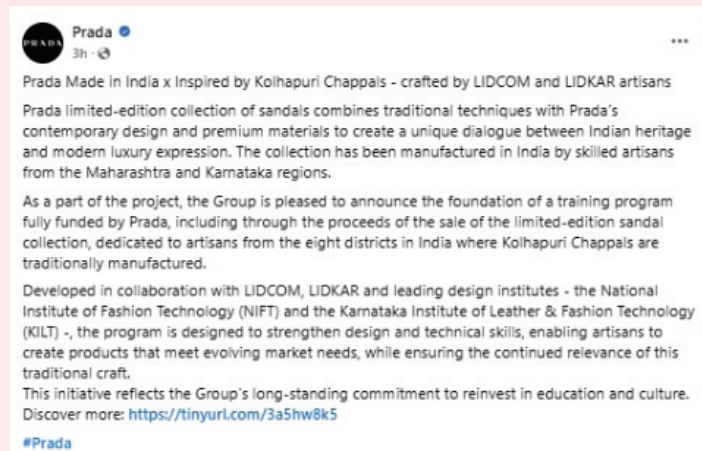
The Facebook site of Prada carrying the announcement about its collaboration with Indian artisans for production of the seminal Kolhapuri chappal.

Prada also announced a three-year training program for artisans from the eight districts in India traditionally associated with Kolhapuri sandal-making. The program will be delivered by two leading Indian design institutes in structured six-month modules and is expected to reach 180 artisans, starting next month.

"It is time that Indian traditional crafts take their rightful place on the world stage," said Tanu Kashyap, director general at the National Institute of Fashion Technology, which will offer the training program.

Artisans will also be given the opportunity to visit the Prada Group Academy in Italy to gain additional technical expertise.

-REUTERS



The Facebook site of Prada carrying the announcement about its collaboration with Indian artisans for production of the seminal Kolhapuri chappal.



Indian artisans making the Kolhapuri chappal.



The Prada logo will be on the newly designed ancient Kolhapuri chappal.



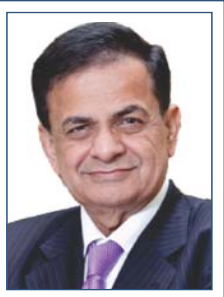
Joy of Sharing

Bridging Hearts Across Continents: The NRG Centre, Rajkot Connecting Global Gujaratis with Purpose



Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh, Chairman, Life Global, NJ, USA


"The NRG Centre, Rajkot stands as a powerful reflection of how deeply our roots define us, regardless of how far we journey across the world. As Non-Resident Gujaratis, we carry not only our aspirations but also a profound responsibility towards the land that shaped our identity and values. When the global Gujarati community unites with a shared purpose, it becomes a formidable force for building a healthier, empowered, and progressive society. The NRG Centre serves as that vital bridge - seamlessly connecting hearts, ideas, and opportunities, and transforming belonging into meaningful impact."




In a world where opportunities often take individuals far from their homeland, the emotional bond with one's roots remains timeless. In 2011, Saurashtra Medical & Educational Charitable Trust under Project 'Life' was designated by the Government of Gujarat as one of these six Non Resident Gujaratis (NRG) Centres for Saurashtra and Kutch region to facilitate association of the NRGs / NRIs with their homeland and to serve as an information centre to promote common interest, historical connections and culture that bind the people of Gujarat origin across continents. This initiative recognizes that while Gujaratis may be globally dispersed, their identity and emotional belonging remain deeply anchored in Gujarat. The NRG Centre, Rajkot - beautifully nurtures this bond by transforming geographical distance into meaningful connection and purposeful contribution.

The philosophy guiding this initiative resonates with the humanitarian vision of global leaders like Dr. Sudhir Parikh, whose belief that compassion and commitment can transcend borders is reflected in every endeavour of the Centre. It is this spirit that transforms engagement into impact.

What sets the NRG Centre apart is its ability to convert emotional connection into tangible societal change. By integrating with the broader humanitarian initiatives of Project 'Life', it enables global Gujaratis to actively participate in transformative causes - ranging from Preventive Healthcare and Thalassaemia Awareness to Voluntary Blood Donation, Rural Primary Education, Women Empowerment and Environmental Sustainability. Here, giving becomes not just an act, but an experience of fulfilment.

Beyond facilitation and engagement, the Centre also serves as a platform for awareness, guidance, and cultural continuity. Through interactive forums, seminars, and community initiatives, it strengthens the sense of belonging among the diaspora, ensuring that their connection to Gujarat remains vibrant and enduring.



Gujarat Card



Appreciation by Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat



At its core, the NRG Centre serves as a bridge between aspirations abroad and opportunities at home. It facilitates seamless engagement by providing guidance, enabling access to government systems, and fostering global partnerships aligned with initiatives like the Vibrant Gujarat Summit. Through these efforts, the Centre ensures that every Gujarati living overseas finds a meaningful pathway to reconnect and contribute. A major objective of the centre is to assist and care for Non Resident Gujaratis/Indians during their trip to India, in getting Gujarat Card to get special privileges offered from Government of Gujarat.

More than an institution, the NRG Centre, Rajkot represents a movement - one that unites identity, responsibility, and purpose. It stands as a powerful reminder that distance may separate people physically, but shared values and a spirit of service bring them closer than ever.

In essence, the NRG Centre exemplifies how global success can find its highest meaning in giving back. It is a place where roots remain strong, connections remain alive, and the true joy of sharing transcends borders, creating a lasting impact on both individuals and society at large.

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Indian Embassy Hosts 'Human Cost Of Terrorism' Exhibition On Capitol Hill



Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra addressing the gathering at the exhibition on terrorism in Washington, D.C. April 22, 2026. Seen at left, Congressmen Ro Khann of California and Shri Thanedar of Michigan.



Guests attending the exhibition on terrorism hosted by the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

BY A STAFF WRITER

The Embassy of India hosted a Special Exhibition on the Human Cost of Terrorism at the Cannon Caucus Room, Cannon House Office Building, on April 22, 2026.

The exhibition marked the first anniversary of the brutal terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, in India, which claimed the lives of 26 innocent civilians “in a tragedy whose impact con-

tinues to be felt,” a press release from the Embassy said.

Interactive displays, videos, and personal testimonials at the exhibition highlighted the “profound and far-reaching impact” of terrorism on individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

“It served as a tribute to the victims and their loved ones, and as a call to action for the global community to renew our collective resolve to eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations,” the Embassy said.

This exhibition was among the largest events hosted by the Embassy on Capitol Hill.

It was attended by 19 Members of the US Congress from across the political spectrum and more than 60 Congressional offices. Attendees represented key committees including the House Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, Armed Services, Judiciary, and Homeland Security.

Senior officials from the U.S. Administration, members of the Indian diaspora, students, media representatives, and think

tanks were also present.

In his remarks, Ambassador Kwatra reaffirmed India's steadfast commitment to combating terrorism and reiterated the message of Prime Minister Narendra Modi: “India will never bow to any form of terror.”

Members of Congress expressed strong solidarity and emphasized their commitment to strengthening the India-U.S. partnership in counterterrorism efforts, the press release said.

India's Chief Of Army Staff General Dwivedi Inducted Into US Army War College International Hall Of Fame

Chief of Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi on Thursday (local time) was inducted into the International Hall of Fame, becoming the third Indian Army Chief to receive this honour.

General Dwivedi is the third Indian Army Chief to receive this honor.

In a post on X, the Indian Army said, “General Upendra Dwivedi, COAS, visited the Army War College (AWC), Carlisle Barracks, USA, where he was inducted into the

International Hall of Fame – the third Indian Army Chief to receive this honour, after General V K Singh and General Bikram Singh. The COAS addressed the faculty and international student officers on leadership, professional military education and evolving security dynamics.”

“A USAWC Distinguished Fellow himself, General Upendra Dwivedi is an alumnus of the prestigious college and toured key facilities and participated in academic engagements, including panel discussions, reviewing advanced study projects of the scholars program and interacting with distinguished members of the institution,” the Indian Army added.

Earlier on April 21, General Dwivedi was accorded a Guard of Honour at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, during his



India's Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi.

ongoing visit to United States Army Pacific.

In a post on X, the Indian Army said, “General Upendra Dwivedi, COAS, was accorded a Guard of Honour at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, during his ongoing visit to United States Army Pacific. He held discussions with General Ronald P. Clark Commanding General US

Army, Pacific, and other senior leaders, focusing on strengthening India-US Defence Cooperation and advancing a shared vision for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.”

“COAS General Dwivedi also undertook an aerial tour of Oahu island, gaining insights into the training ecosystem and multi-domain operational readiness,” it added.

Indian ambassador to the United States, Vinay Mohan Kwatra, on Tuesday (local time) hosted Dwivedi at India House, ahead of the Army chief's upcoming engagements in Washington DC.

In a post on X, the Indian Embassy in the United States said, “Ambassador hosted COAS General Upendra Dwivedi, at India House today, ahead of his upcoming engagements in Washington DC.”

The visit, according to the embassy, “continues the high-level military-to-military exchanges between India and the US.”

-ANI

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Naperville Robotics Team Wins State's Top Honor, Advances To World Championship

By PRACHI JAITLEY,
SPECIAL TO DESI TALK

A team of young innovators from Naperville has earned top recognition in competitive robotics, securing a place on the global stage after winning the highest honor at the Illinois state level.

BoostPlus Academy's Boost+ Robotics Team 32356B captured the prestigious Excellence Award at the Illinois State VEX IQ Championship held in March 2026, qualifying them to represent Illinois at the VEX IQ World Championship scheduled for April 28–29 in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Excellence Award is considered the top distinction in VEX IQ Robotics competitions, recognizing all-around performance in robot design, programming, teamwork, engineering documentation and match results.

The achievement is particularly notable as all five members of Team 32356B are first-time competitors who began their robotics journey in October 2025. Within months, the team advanced to become one of the top elementary-level robotics teams in the state.



PHOTOS: COURTESY PRACHI JAITLEY

Naperville's Boost+ Robotics Team 32356B advances to the VEX IQ World Championship in St. Louis, Missouri, after winning the Illinois State Excellence Award.



The students were guided by coach Ms. Mongelli, along with mentors Ms. Mili Srivastava and Ms. Kanika Talwar. Their leadership helped develop the team's technical abilities, collaboration skills and confidence in STEM fields.

"This achievement reflects the power of structured learning, mentorship, and the incredible potential of young minds," the Boost+ Robotics leadership team said in

a statement. "To see first-time competitors reach the world stage and represent Illinois is truly inspiring."

The upcoming world championship will bring together top robotics teams from across the globe, highlighting innovation, engineering excellence and collaboration among students.

BoostPlus Academy, founded by Mili Srivastava and based in Naperville, fo-

cuses on hands-on education in robotics, STEM, entrepreneurship and leadership development. Its Boost+ Robotics program offers year-round training, summer camps and a competitive pathway that progresses from local events to state and international championships, primarily serving students in grades three through eight.

Indian Community In Niles Township, Ill., Celebrates 150th Anniversary Of "Vande Mataram" And US' 250th

By BHAILAL M. PATEL

In a display of cultural pride and unity, the Indian-American community of Niles Township hosted a celebration commemorating two historic milestones—the 150th anniversary of "Vande Mataram" and the 250th anniversary of the United States. The event brought together a distinguished gathering of dignitaries, community leaders, families, and youth in a vibrant tribute to freedom, democracy, and shared heritage.

A Celebration of Heritage and Shared Values: At the heart of the program was a moving tribute to "Vande Mataram," the iconic national song composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in 1875. Revered as a symbol of India's spiritual awakening and freedom struggle, the song continues to inspire generations worldwide.

This historic milestone was celebrated alongside the United States' remarkable 250-year journey, rooted in the enduring principles of liberty, equality, and democratic governance. Together, these two legacies created a meaningful bridge between India and America—two nations united by shared ideals and aspirations.

Distinguished Voices and Community Leadership: The evening was enriched by insightful remarks from respected leaders and dignitaries: Rohit Joshi, President, warmly welcomed attendees and emphasized unity within the Indian diaspora. Hon. Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India in Chicago, highlighted the importance of cultural diplomacy and the Indian diaspora's vital role in strengthening India-U.S. relations. Harish Kolasani spoke passionately about community empowerment and preserving cultural identity. Usha Kamaria reflected on the importance of passing traditions to future generations. Dr. Rashmi Patel emphasized education, youth engagement, and provided an update on the Mokshdham



PHOTOS: ORGANIZERS

Harish Kolasani, Usha Kamaria, Consul General Somnath Ghosh (Consulate General of India, Chicago), Rohit Joshi, Dr. Rashmi Patel, Ashok Pandya.



Vande Mataram being sung by Swapnil Sahu and Avnie Singh.

project.

The event was made possible with the generous support of Chief Sponsor Ashok Pandya.

A Vibrant Cultural Showcase: The celebration reflected the spirit of both nations, including: Collective singing of "Vande Mataram", traditional music and dance performances, youth participation and cultural presentations.

The dual commemoration conveyed the message that while "Vande Mataram" symbolizes India's resilience and awakening, the United States' 250-year journey reflects the enduring strength of democracy and freedom. Together, they represent a shared vision of unity in diversity.

The program concluded with a renewed commitment from the community to uphold these values and continue building stronger cultural and civic bridges between the two nations.

The Indian Community of Niles Township is a dynamic

and influential cultural organization serving the Indian-American diaspora across Chicagoland, including Skokie, Morton Grove, Glenview, and Schaumburg. The organization is dedicated to promoting cultural heritage, community unity, and civic engagement while fostering strong connections between generations.

Executive Committee: President: Rohit Joshi Vice President: Amar Upadhyay Secretary: Smitesh Shah Treasurer: Hirit Pandya Jr. Secretary: Bhanubhai Vyas Jr. Treasurer: Bhavik Patel

Distinguished guests at the event included Chief Guest: Consul General of India, Chicago Somnath Ghosh, Guests of Honor Mafatbhai Patel, Dr. Bharat Barai, Ashok Pandya, Harish Kolasani, Dr. Vijay Prabhakar, Dr. Rashmi Patel, Bhailal M Patel, Sohan Joshi, Hemant Patel (FIA since 1980), Sunil Shah (FIA) Dr. Manish Bhrabhath, Santosh Kumar, Vinesh Virani, Pinakin Desai.



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FIA Chicago's Holi 2026 Celebration Draws Large Crowd, Highlights Unity And Culture

BY A STAFF WRITER

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) Chicago hosted a vibrant Holi celebration April 12 at the Mall of India, bringing together community leaders, performers and families in a colorful display of culture and unity.

The event, led by Founder Chairman Sunil Shah along with Presidents Altaf Bukhari and Richa Chand, showcased traditional and contemporary performances, drawing a diverse audience from across the region.

The program opened with remarks from Shah, who welcomed Somnath Ghosh. Ghosh praised FIA's continued efforts to promote Indian heritage in the United States. Local dignitaries, including Shweta Baid and Larry Herman, highlighted the importance of cultural events in fostering community connections.

Emcees Chand and Munish Kaistha led the program, which featured dance and music performances from multiple groups, including Suhani Dance Academy, Shirlzaar Dance Academy and Sapphire Dance Group. Vo-



PHOTOS: FIA

FIA Chicago leadership and community members with Somnath Ghosh, Larry Herman and Shweta Baid during the Holi celebration.

calists and performers added to the festive atmosphere, while DJs Mahesh and Sarita maintained high energy throughout the event.

A highlight of the celebration was the appearance

of Bollywood actor Riya Sen, who presented certificates to performers and recognized community supporters. Sen commended the talent and enthusiasm of participants, noting the strong cultural spirit reflected in the event.

Organizers credited the success of the program to a large volunteer base, referred to as the "FIA Rockstar Team," along with past presidents and community contributors who supported logistics, stage design and coordination.

The celebration concluded outdoors with a large ceremonial color display, symbolizing unity and shared heritage. Organizers thanked sponsors and community partners for their support and announced upcoming events, including a Mother's Day celebration in May and a larger summer program marking India's 80th and the United States' 250th independence milestones.

FIA Chicago officials said the Holi event underscored the organization's mission to preserve cultural traditions while building a strong and inclusive community in the United States.

Building Bridges: A Decade of Vision & Perseverance-ASARP Hosts Insightful Forum on Design, Sustainability & Wellbeing in Real Estate

BY BHAILAL M. PATEL

The Association of South Asian Real Estate Professionals (ASARP) proudly hosted a dynamic and intellectually enriching event titled "Building Bridges – A Decade of Vision & Perseverance" at the prestigious Waterford Banquet & Conference Center. The well-attended gathering brought together leading real estate professionals, investors, policymakers, and community stakeholders to explore the rapidly evolving landscape of real estate through the lenses of sustainability, innovation, and human wellbeing.

The evening served as both a celebration of ASARP's decade-long journey and a forward-looking dialogue on the future of the industry. The central theme emphasized a transformative shift—where modern real estate is no longer defined solely by structures and transactions, but by environmental stewardship, wellness-driven design, and intelligent, future-ready investment strategies.

Inspiring Leadership & Thoughtful Dialogue:The program commenced with a compelling opening address by Ms. Shirin Marvi, Vice Chair of ASARP, who delivered an insightful overview of emerging trends and recent developments shaping the real estate sector. Her remarks set a visionary tone for an evening centered on knowledge-sharing and strategic foresight.

The event was seamlessly anchored by Ms. Anjali Mohanty, Board Member of ASARP, whose exceptional emceeing ensured a smooth and engaging flow. In recognition of her dedication and impactful contribution, she was honored with a special acknowledgment from the association.

Adding depth to the discussion, Mr. Nick Verma, Treasurer of ASARP and Chairman of the Commercial Committee at Mainstreet REALTORS®, shared valuable insights into the commercial real estate sector. His analysis of current market dynamics, emerging opportunities, and shifting investment patterns resonated strongly with attendees.



PHOTOS: ASIAN MEDIA USA

Dr Vish of Hawthorne World Group and ASARP Board -Left to Right - Malti Pandhi, Harsha Shukla, Shirin Marvi, Tanvi Gandhi, Anjali Mohanti, Jyothi Pallapothu, Kantibhai Patel, Bhailal M Patel, Dr Vish, Bimal Pandhi, Pradeep B Shukla, Nick Verma.

Financial Innovation & Strategic Insights:A focused presentation by Mr. Anil Punjwani of U.S. Bank provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of financial tools and banking solutions tailored for real estate professionals. His practical guidance added significant value for investors seeking to optimize financing strategies in a competitive market.

A highlight of the evening was the keynote master session by Dr. Vish of Hawthorne World Group, who delivered a powerful presentation on ESG-driven investments and next-generation green development. His forward-thinking approach outlined high-growth opportunities in sustainable real estate, inspiring participants to align profitability with environmental responsibility.

Policy, Tax Strategy & Market Evolution:On the policy and taxation front, Mr. Pradeep B. Shukla, CPA, CCIM, offered an in-depth analysis of emerging opportunities under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). He highlighted the significant advantages of 100% depreciation when combined with Cost Segregation strategies, enabling

investors to unlock immediate tax benefits by accelerating depreciation on qualifying assets.

Mr. Shukla also emphasized the strategic role of 1031 exchanges in long-term wealth creation, particularly for generational planning. He noted that beneficiaries benefit from a step-up in basis, effectively eliminating prior depreciation liabilities and creating substantial tax efficiencies.

Further enriching the discussion, he addressed transformative updates from Midwest Real Estate Data (MRED LLC), including expanded access for non-members and the nationwide evolution of the Private Listing Network (PLN). These developments signal a progressive shift toward greater transparency, accessibility, and collaboration in real estate data sharing across markets.

Commitment to Growth & Global Collaboration

The event reaffirmed ASARP's ongoing commitment to professional development and industry leadership. Upcoming initiatives, including a Legal & Professional Updates session in May and participation in the International Real Estate Conference in Hyderabad, were highlighted as part of the association's mission to foster global collaboration and continuous learning.

Acknowledgments & Closing Reflections:The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Mrs. Harsha Shukla, who graciously recognized the contributions of all speakers, organizers, and participants. She also paid special tribute to Board of director and executive committee for his dedicated service and meaningful contributions toward the growth and success of ASARP.

The evening concluded with an inspiring message that captured the spirit of the event: "Today is the first day of the rest of our lives. The future is not something we enter—it is something we create. And today, ASARP takes another meaningful step in shaping that future by embracing sustainability and green innovation in real estate development."



FROM HEADLINES TO INSIGHT



Piya Jyoti Kachroo

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Cook County Proclaims April 2026 As Sikh Awareness And Appreciation Month

By PRACHI JAITLEY,
SPECIAL TO DESI TALK

In a significant recognition of the rich heritage, contributions, and values of the Sikh community, the Cook County Board of Commissioners has officially proclaimed April 2026 as Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month. The resolution was sponsored by Kevin B. Morrison and approved under the leadership of Board President Toni Preckwinkle, according to an April 27, 2026, press release.

This proclamation acknowledges over 120 years of Sikh presence in the United States and highlights the community's enduring contributions to the nation's growth—ranging from early labor in agriculture, railroads, and lumber industries to present-day leadership across professions including medicine, technology, business, armed forces, and public service.

The resolution also commemorates the historical and spiritual significance of Sikh traditions, including Sikh Sajna Diwas, marking the establishment of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh Ji in 1699, and the celebration of Vaisakhi, reinforcing values of courage, equality, service, and unity. It further notes that Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest religion, with over 25 million followers globally and an estimated 500,000 Sikhs in the United States, including more than 25,000 in Illinois.

Importantly, the proclamation emphasizes the Sikh community's unwavering commitment to service, equality, and



Members of the Midwest Punjabi Association hold up the Proclamation issued by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, Ill. April 27, 2026.

respect for all humanity, while reaffirming Cook County's dedication to diversity, inclusion, and standing firmly against discrimination and violence.

The resolution also specifically recognizes key community leaders and organizations, including Gurmeet Singh Dhalwan, Founder President of the Midwest Punjabi Association, for their continued efforts in uplifting and uniting the Sikh community.

The event was attended by several Sikh community leaders representing various organizations including Gurmeet Singh Dhalwan, Founder President of Midwest

Punjabi Association; Bhai Bhagat Singh Dhalwan, Mentor of Midwest Punjabi Association (MPA),

Prachi Jaitly-of Midwest Punjabi Association (MPA), T. Paul S. Chawla-of Midwest Punjabi Association (MPA), Bhai Mohinder Singh, Amarjeet Singh-Illinois Sikh Community Center, Jasbir Kaur Mann of Swera, Tarlochan Singh-Sikh Religious Society, Onkar Singh Sangha And Gurleen Kaur Sangha-PTC TV who expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Commissioner Kevin Morrison and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle for this meaningful recognition.

Sharing his thoughts on this milestone, Gurmeet Singh Dhalwan said, "We are truly grateful to Cook County for this thoughtful and meaningful recognition. This proclamation is a beautiful initiative that embraces and honors the Sikh community—known for its resilience, spirit of seva (selfless service), and unwavering commitment to humanity. Such gestures not only celebrate our contributions but also strengthen the fabric of inclusion and understanding. We look forward to many more milestones like this in the future."

Expressing pride on this milestone, Prachi Jaitly, General Secretary of the Midwest Punjabi Association, stated:

"This proclamation is a moment of immense pride for all of us. It not only honors the contributions of the Sikh community but also strengthens awareness and understanding of our values, history, and service to society. We are deeply grateful to Commissioner Morrison and President Preckwinkle for this recognition."

The Midwest Punjabi Association views this proclamation as a meaningful step toward fostering greater cultural awareness and appreciation, and remains committed to continuing its efforts in community service, cultural education, and unity.

About Midwest Punjabi Association:

The Midwest Punjabi Association is a community-driven organization dedicated to promoting cultural awareness, community service, and unity among the Punjabi and Sikh diaspora across the Midwest region.

Indian American Medical Association Of Illinois And IAMA-CF Fundraising Gala Banquet Unites Medicine, Culture, And Community Impact In A Memorable Evening

By BHAILAL M. PATEL

Indian American Physicians Celebrate Legacy, Leadership, and Compassion in Healing. In an inspiring celebration of service, excellence, and cultural unity, the Indian American Charitable Foundation (IAMA-CF) and the Indian American Medical Association of Illinois (IAMA-IL) hosted their prestigious annual fundraising gala on April 18, 2026, at the elegant Ashton Place in Willowbrook, Illinois.

The grand evening brought together over 375 physicians, families, and community supporters, creating a vibrant platform that honored decades of dedication to healthcare, humanitarian service, and community empowerment.

An Evening of Elegance, Culture, and Connection: The evening commenced with a lively social hour and exhibitor



showcase, allowing attendees to network and explore healthcare initiatives. The cultural program began with a mesmerizing Kuchipudi dance performance by Aashna Golla, beautifully blending classical Indian artistry with contemporary expression.

The formal ceremony was skillfully anchored by Dr. Rajan Shah and Dr. Poonam Merai, while the national anthems—performed by Dr. Radhika Chimata and Dr. Samir Shah—created a powerful moment of unity, reflecting the dual heritage of the Indian American community.

Leadership, Vision, and Community Impact: In his welcome address, IAMA-CF President Dr. Samir Shah highlighted the remarkable growth and transformation of the organization's charitable initiatives. A major focus was the expansion of the Seva Community Health Clinic, which

-CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

ASTROLOGY



This week for you

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

ARIES: This week, competitors may create obstacles in your plans. On the social side, explaining your viewpoint could feel challenging. Work matters may bring some pressure, so stay calm. You might start thinking about new ways to increase your income. Mentally, you could feel slightly restless and may wish for a short break. A positive marriage proposal may come for someone eligible in the family.

TAURUS: At the workplace, a difficult task may come your way, but your practical approach will help you manage. There are chances of being honoured at a function. Family elders may begin discussions about a suitable alliance for you or a family member. Financial conditions look promising as new earning opportunities appear. Your health stays stable because of your disciplined lifestyle.

GEMINI: Creative ideas about work may fill your mind, but practical planning will be necessary. Life may feel peaceful, giving you time to relax. A trip to meet a relative living far away is possible. Romance may bring excitement, and you might plan something special with your partner. Professionally, your reputation may grow, attracting more clients or recognition. Income is expected to remain consistent.

CANCER: Try to handle sensitive situations so they do not become bigger problems. The stress that has been troubling your mind may gradually fade away. Financial progress is likely as your earnings improve. In your professional dealings, open communication will help prevent misunderstandings. A family celebration may require your presence, even if it interrupts important work plans. Your love life stays pleasant and emotionally fulfilling.

LEO: Romantic vibes may grow stronger as someone shows interest in you. In studies or learning matters, avoid making quick decisions without proper thought. At work, taking on too many responsibilities may affect your efficiency. A family member may step forward to help but will require your guidance. Important tasks may demand extra time and attention to complete successfully.

VIRGO: Recognition for your efforts is very likely this week. A financial deal may help you save money and even create opportunities for new investments. Your dedication at work will impress seniors and help you build a strong professional image. Family matters that seemed complicated earlier may slowly move towards resolution and harmony.

LIBRA: This week encourages you to follow what truly makes you happy. Spending time with friends will bring joy. Your performance in studies remains strong despite rising competition. At work, you may receive special attention or benefits. Your partner may propose an exciting idea that you will happily join. However, while trying to please others, you might spend more than planned. Energy levels stay high.

SCORPIO: Being polite and supportive toward colleagues or juniors will help you achieve success at work. A trip to a place you have long wished to visit may become possible. Stay alert, as a rival may create complications. Someone in authority might influence your decisions, so think before acting. Financial pressure could arise, forcing you to use savings. Avoid unhealthy habits to prevent health issues.

SAGITTARIUS: You may reconnect with someone from your past. Academic or learning responsibilities may demand your attention. Planning a romantic outing or vacation with your partner is possible. If you are considering skipping work, be cautious as it might create trouble. Unexpected expenses may disturb your budget. Maintaining a balanced diet will help keep you energetic and healthy.

CAPRICORN: Taking the first step will encourage others to support your plans. Those preparing for exams or competitions may receive helpful guidance. Good news may arrive regarding a marriage proposal for someone in the family. Romantic feelings may deepen as you receive encouraging signals from someone special. A family trip to an interesting destination may also be planned. Financial stability remains strong, and health stays satisfactory.

AQUARIUS: Success at work will depend on smart planning and strategic thinking. If you are considering travel, this week looks favourable. Academic matters will progress. However, rising expenses may cause frustration. You might not receive the warm response you expected from someone close. Maintaining discipline in diet and lifestyle will help you stay healthy.

PISCES: You may gather support for your ideas. Financial strength is likely to improve. Freelancers may secure a profitable project. If you are waiting for results or outcomes, they are likely to be favourable. Efforts made in love matters may bring happiness and emotional satisfaction. A family get-together may allow you to reconnect with loved ones.

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Los Angeles Knight Riders And Cricmax Cricket Development Partnership Across America

BY A STAFF WRITER

Knight Riders Sports, owners of cricket franchises across four continents, announced April 27, 2026, it has partnered with CricMax Connect as the Official Cricket Development Partner of the Los Angeles Knight Riders (LAKR). The partnership of LAKR and CricMax Connect “will establish a national network of Knight Riders Cricket Academies to develop youth cricket across the United States,” the press release said.

While over \$300 million has already been invested in professional cricket infrastructure in the United States through Major League Cricket (MLC), momentum continues to build, the press release contended. Most recently, the Los Angeles Knight Riders and Fairplex broke ground on the Knight Riders Cricket Ground in Pomona, Los Angeles, which will be Southern California’s first dedicated cricket venues and LAKR’s official home ground for the 2026 Major League Cricket, MLC, season.

The venue is set to host seven matches, including LAKR’s first three home fixtures from July 1-5, 2026.

“Along with these developments, it is equally important to build grassroots programs that create a feeder system for various leagues and encourage youngsters to take up the sport,” organizers said.

According to Knight Riders Sports, the American audience for cricket has grown “rapidly” and this latest partnership combines Knight Riders Sports’ globally proven franchise model with CricMax Connect’s decade-long record in community cricket development, its established network of academies and township partnerships, and its exclusive role as the cricket partner of the PlayLA Olympic youth initiative.

“This partnership further strengthens CricMax Connect’s position as a key growth engine for cricket in the United States ahead of the sport’s return to the Olympic stage at LA28,” organizers claimed.

As part of their long-term vision for cricket in the United States, the Los Angeles Knight Riders have un-



CricMax Announcement.

veiled the Knight Riders Cricket Grounds at Fairplex in Pomona, Los Angeles County, CA, as their official home venue for the 2026 season.

The venue is set to host key major cricket matches this season, in a bid to make Los Angeles into a leading cricket destination in the United States while also supporting both professional competition and the growth of cricket at a grassroots level, the press release said.

In an ambitious outreach, the two organizations plan to jointly build Knight Riders Cricket Academies nationwide, supported by professional coaching programs, masterclass clinics, and talent exhibition pathways that

provide young cricketers with direct exposure to best practices in the sport. CricMax Connect’s proprietary technology platform, Quixera, will power talent identification and scouting across the network, the press release said.

“This partnership with CricMax Connect is a strategic step towards building a strong grassroots foundation for cricket in the United States. By combining our global ecosystem with their community-led expertise, we are creating a clear pathway from youth development to the professional game. As the sport grows in the United States, our focus is on nurturing talent, strengthening the ecosystem, and ensuring long-term, sustainable growth for cricket in America,” Venky Mysore, CEO, Knight Riders Sports, is quoted saying.

“We’ve spent over a decade building cricket from the ground up in American communities, coaching youth, partnering with townships, and earning our place as the exclusive cricket partner of PlayLA and the LA28 Olympics,” said Vinay Bhimjani, CEO of CricMax Connect and former CEO of USA Cricket. “The partnership with Knight Riders’ and its global platform will enable us to bring our scouting expertise and technology infrastructure together with their franchise reach to deliver what American cricket has been missing: a complete ecosystem that develops talent at the grassroots and connects it to the professional game.”

ABOUT THE KNIGHT RIDERS

The Knight Riders already has nine trophies to its name and four professional franchises under its wings – Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the TATA IPL, Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR) in the Caribbean Premier League, Abu Dhabi Knight Riders (ADKR) in UAE’s International League T20 and Los Angeles Knight Riders (LAKR) in USA’s Major League Cricket, which, it says, makes it “one of the most versatile brands in T20 cricket globally.”

CricMax Connect, led by former USA Cricket CEO Vinay Bhimjani alongside BCCI-veteran coaching leadership, is the exclusive commercial cricket partner of the PlayLA initiative ahead of the LA28 Olympics.

TECHNOLOGY

Indian American Medical Association Of Illinois And IAMA-CF Fundraising Gala Banquet Unites Medicine, Culture, And Community Impact In A Memorable Evening

-CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

now operates six days a week, offering enhanced services such as women’s health programs, telehealth access, and community education seminars—significantly improving healthcare accessibility for underserved populations.

Adding national prominence to the event was Chief Guest Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, President of the American Medical Association. As the first physician of Indian heritage to lead the AMA, his presence symbolized the growing influence of Indian American professionals in shaping U.S. healthcare policy and advocacy.

The keynote address by Dr. Subrahmanyam Dravida connected healthcare

service with education and rural empowerment, inspiring attendees to expand their vision beyond clinical practice toward holistic community development.

Honoring Excellence: Awards & Recognition: A highlight of the evening was the prestigious awards ceremony, celebrating extraordinary contributions within the medical and community service sectors: Lifetime Achievement Award: Dr. Thomas John. Distinguished Physician Award: Dr. Ngozi Ezike. Lifetime Support Recognition (Posthumous): Late Dr. Usharani Nimmagadda & Family. Service Recognition Awards: Dr. Bharati Swaminathan, Dr. Shami Goyat, Mr. Rajesh Chotalia, Dr. Prema Malani.

These honorees exemplify the spirit

of SEVA—selfless service—through their dedication to patient care, mentorship, and community engagement.

Cultural Celebration & Community Spirit: The evening concluded with a vibrant cultural program and entertainment segment featuring performances by Tarana Dance Academy, Sadhana School of Indian Music, Yadoki Barat, and Chicago Versatile Singers. The celebration continued with music, dance, and fellowship, reinforcing the strong cultural bonds within the community.

A Legacy of Service and a Vision for the Future: For over three decades, IAMA-IL and IAMA-CF have stood as pillars of support for physicians while quietly transforming lives through free healthcare

initiatives. This year’s gala reaffirmed their mission to bridge communities, advocate for healthcare equity, and inspire future generations of medical professionals.

The event also recognized the leadership of Banquet Chair Mr. Kishore Chugh, Executive Director Dr. Vilasini Shetty, and the organizing committee for delivering a truly memorable and impactful evening.

Conclusion: More than a celebration, the 2026 IAMA-CF Gala served as a powerful reminder that when compassion meets commitment, the impact extends far beyond medicine. It becomes a movement—one that heals communities, builds bridges, and strengthens the very fabric of society.

BJP Gains Ground In India's Upper House After AAP Lawmakers Defect

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP party strengthened its position in parliament's upper house after seven opposition lawmakers joined it, a parliamentary list showed on Monday, a shift that could ease the government's passage of legislation.

All seven defectors are from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), led by one of Modi's most high-profile critics, Arvind Kejriwal. The party governs the northern state of Punjab and previously ran the national capital territory of Delhi.

The defections leave the AAP with just three seats in the Rajya Sabha house, while Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party now has 113 members, 10 short of a simple majority in the 245-member chamber. Modi's broader National Democratic Alliance coalition holds about 140 seats in the house, also known as the Council of States.

Rajya Sabha members are elected for six-year terms by elected members of state legislatures and federal territories with legislatures, using a proportional representation system. Modi's coalition rules 19 of India's 28 states and two of its



PHOTO: REUTERS/ANUSHREE PADANAVIS

Supporters of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) carry Raghav Chadha, one of the party's candidates, during celebrations after learning of the initial poll results outside the party headquarters in New Delhi, India, February 11, 2020.

three federal territories with legislatures.

The defectors include former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh and Raghav Chadha, the de facto leader of the group who gained prominence by raising middle-class concerns such as the high cost of food at airports.

Chadha accused the party of being run by "corrupt and compromised" people. The AAP said the defectors were being opportunistic.

All but one of the former AAP members were elected from Punjab, where state polls are due next year and Modi's party has never won a majority on its own. Several other AAP leaders, including Kejriwal, have faced court cases over corruption allegations.

A New Delhi court in February declined to proceed with a trial against Kejriwal and other party colleagues in one such case, which the AAP has described as politically motivated. The matter is now before a higher court.

-REUTERS

India Has To Be Self-Confident, Prosperous, Harmonious Society To Serve World: RSS General Secretary

Rashtriya Swayam Sewak, RSS, General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale on Thursday, April 23, 2026, outlined India's civilizational vision and global role while addressing a community reception organized by the Indo American Community of Greater DC in the Washington DC Metro Area.

The event, themed "India's Global Vision & Role in the Emerging World: Civilizational Foundations for Prospering Together," brought together scholars and community leaders, including Walter K Andersen (Author & Former State Dept) and Walter Russell Mead (Hudson Institute).

The event was supported by a wide range of diaspora and community organizations, including the American Hindu Coalition, American Hindus for Engagement and Dialogue (AHEAD), India Israel Coalition, Indo American Community (IAC), Indian American Diaspora Association (IADA), Overseas Friends of BJP, Rajdhani Mandir of Virginia, Sikhs of America, United Hindu Jain Temples (UHJT), SV Lotus Temple, Vishwa Hindu Parishad Americas (VHPA), US India Security Council, and Samskrita Bharati, reflecting broad-based participation from the Indian diaspora in the United States.

Addressing the community reception, Hosabale said, "Great to be here in the midst of you all and thanks are due to the Hudson Institute and also the organizers of this meet. And it's a special honour to be sitting in the midst of these two great friends of India, and those who have tried to understand the movement of RSS and the RSS movement and its contribution. And really, it is a matter of pleasure for me

to address this wonderful audience and also interact with them."

He acknowledged the work of Andersen in interpreting the organisation's role, stating, "I thank Dr. Andersen for his understanding of the organisation and its contribution, and also introducing the organization to a large section outside the RSS world. And what he has said is most welcome."

Clarifying the structure of organizations associated with the RSS, he said, "In the scheme of RSS organisation network, all the organisations that he mentioned or even at the level of introduction, he said they are not wings or controlled by RSS per se. They are all RSS-inspired activities, organizations, fora. And they are in a way we can say that RSS vision in action, the RSS philosophy applied in those fields."

He further explained, "The swayamsevak of RSS, the volunteers of RSS, they initiated, and they started these activities in the form of organizations in various fields of national life, which Dr Andersen mentioned. And they have also attracted people those who are inclined to work in those fields. And that is why all members of those organizations may not be from the RSS background, but they have accepted the views and the philosophy of those organisations. And no doubt each one of them are inspired by the RSS philosophy and its methodology of the organization."

On coordination among these organizations, he said, "There is a family coordination with these organisations. They are independent, their policies are independent, their working is independent, they are all having their own constitutions and

rules and regulations which they follow, they have framed."

Reflecting on contemporary global challenges, Hosabale cited what he described as the paradox of modern times, stating, "We have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but we have less. We have bigger houses, but smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees, but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, but more problems, more medicines, but less wellness."

He continued, "We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We have learned how to make a living, but not a life. We have been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet the new neighbour. We have conquered outer space, but not inner space. We want to clean up the air, but pollute our souls. We have split the atom, but not our prejudices. We have higher incomes, but lower morals. We have become long on quantity, but short on quality."

Drawing on India's historical experience, he highlighted examples of coexistence, noting, "Not a single Parsi has ever said that because of their minuscule minority they were ill-treated or persecuted. Not only that, they did not even claim minority rights when the Constitution was being framed. His Holiness Dalai Lama and his followers, his disciples, Tibetans, they have taken shelter in India for decades. And Tibetans have been given the land, and they have been living in India. In India, they have been living with peace, honour, and respect."

Emphasizing India's global outlook,

he said, "When India says that world is one family, it says with some experience, some practice. Wherever Indians have gone, they have contributed to that land. They have contributed in nation building in that country. They have mingled with host society. And Indians, because of their cultural civilisation values, they have lived in peace and contributed to the welfare of that nation. So that is why these visions of India is not shallow words or emotional outburst, they are practised."

Calling for India's rise in the global order, Hosabale stated, "India has to be a self-confident, prosperous society, and united, harmonious, people. The rise of India to that call of the world time is necessary so the RSS unit in India is engaged in this activity which Dr Walter Anderson explained."

He added, "To make India a self-confident, prosperous society, accepting modernity rooted in cultural ethos and civilizational values. And thereby India can play this role eminently and with sustained efforts and in cooperation with other nations and societies and civilisations."

Concluding on a forward-looking note, he said, "I hope the time will come sooner that India will be eminently capable of playing this role and the world is looking towards India on many issues. Particularly, the family values, the health, on the basis of yoga and pranayama, and on many other fronts, India can play this historic role with this vision of unity of mankind and world as one family."

-ANI

Green Card Denials and Rejections Are Increasing. What Applicants Should Do to Avoid Costly Mistakes

IN MEMORIAM



Michael Phulwani



David Nachman



Ludka Zimovcak



Snehal Batra

Applying for a U.S. green card has always required careful preparation, but recent trends suggest that the process has become more challenging. Many applicants are experiencing increased scrutiny, longer processing times, and a higher rate of denials or rejections. Understanding the reasons behind these trends can help applicants better prepare and avoid costly mistakes.

Increased Scrutiny in Green Card Applications

Recent developments indicate that immigration authorities are applying stricter review standards across many types of applications.

This includes:

- More detailed background checks
- Expanded review of documentation
- Greater focus on eligibility requirements
- Increased discretion by adjudicating officers

As a result, applications that may have been approved in the past could now face additional challenges.

Rise in Administrative Rejections

One of the most significant changes is the increase in applications being rejected for technical or administrative reasons.

Common issues include:

- Incorrect filing fees
- Missing signatures
- Using outdated forms
- Incomplete applications

In many cases, these errors lead to immediate rejection rather than an opportunity to correct the issue, requiring applicants to refile and pay fees again.

Longer Processing Times and Backlogs

Processing delays continue to affect green card applicants.

Recent data shows:

- Millions of pending immigration cases remain in the system
- A large portion of cases exceed standard processing times
- Staffing shortages and increased vetting contribute to delays

These delays can impact work authorization, travel permissions, and overall immigration planning.

Stricter Review of Family-Based Cases

Family-based green card applications are also seeing increased scrutiny.

Applicants may be required to provide:

- More extensive documentation of relationships
- Additional proof of shared life and financial ties
- Clear and consistent evidence across all submissions

Inconsistent or insufficient documentation may lead to delays or denials.

Expanded Background and Security Checks

Enhanced vetting measures are contributing to longer processing times and increased denials.

These may include:

- More thorough identity verification
- Review of prior immigration history
- Additional screening for fraud or security concerns

Even minor inconsistencies can trigger additional review.

Impact on Work and Travel Benefits

Applicants with pending green card cases may also experience:

- Delays in receiving work authorization
- Longer wait times for travel documents
- Increased need to renew temporary benefits

This can create uncertainty for individuals relying on these approvals.

By David H. Nachman, Esq

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Common Mistakes to Avoid

To reduce the risk of rejection or denial, applicants should:

- Double-check all forms for accuracy and completeness
- Use the most current USCIS forms and instructions
- Ensure all required fees are correct
- Provide thorough supporting documentation
- Maintain consistency across all filings

Careful preparation is more important than ever.

Final Thoughts

The green card process is becoming more detailed and demanding, with a greater emphasis on accuracy, consistency, and complete documentation. While these changes can make the process more challenging, understanding the risks and preparing properly can significantly improve the chances of success.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are green card applications being denied more often?

Due to stricter review standards, increased documentation requirements, and administrative errors.

Can small mistakes lead to rejection?

Yes. Even minor issues like missing signatures or incorrect fees may result in rejection.

Are processing times getting longer?

Yes. Backlogs and additional vetting are contributing to delays.

Are family-based cases more difficult now?

They may require more detailed documentation and closer review.

How can I avoid denial?

Ensure accuracy, provide complete documentation, and maintain consistency across all filings.

Contact Information

If you or your family members have any questions about how immigration and nationality laws in the United States may affect you, or if you want to access additional information about immigration and nationality laws in the United States or Canada, please do not hesitate to contact the immigration and nationality lawyers at NPZ Law Group.

You can reach us by emailing info@visaserve.com or by calling us at **201-670-0006** extension 104. We also invite you to visit our website at www.visaserve.com for more information. Nachman, Phulwani, Zimovcak (NPZ) Law Group, P.C. - VISASERVE.

I'm A Gastroenterologist. Here Are The IBS Treatments That Actually Work

By TRISHA PASRICHA, MD, MPH

was diagnosed with IBS and feel like that basically means no one knows what's going on. I've seen people recommend things like abdominal massages online. Would that help?

The biggest misconception I see about irritable bowel syndrome as a gastroenterologist is that people think we don't know what the actual underlying problem is. The second biggest misconception is that we don't have effective ways to treat it.

A recent analysis of over 130 popular TikTok videos on irritable bowel syndrome, or IBS, found that only about 20 percent were made by health care providers. The most popular suggested interventions included chamomile tea, caffeine avoidance, probiotic supplements and abdominal massage. The #hotgirlswithIBS movement, a hashtag that racked up over 100 million views on TikTok alone, did something genuinely valuable: It got people talking openly about a condition many find too embarrassing to discuss. I am fully here for it.

But here's the problem: The conversation quickly filled up with remedies that have little to no scientific backing. These remedies will not be found anywhere in the guidelines advised by the academic gastroenterological societies. IBS is a disorder with well-studied molecular and cellular changes in the gut – and the suggestion that chamomile tea is the best and only remedy we have leaves me gobsmacked.

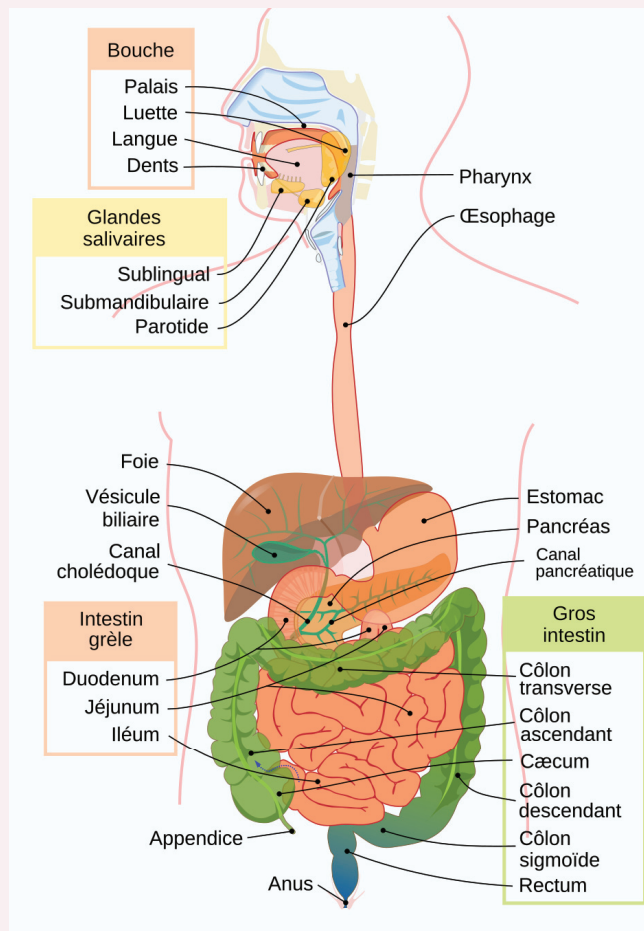
I find it frustrating because I know the reason many people turn to these suggestions is because they hear from others – often their own physicians – that there isn't anything we can do about IBS. That belief flies in the face of decades of rigorous medical research and clinical trials, yet it remains pervasive. People want help with their symptoms, and science-backed answers can be surprisingly hard to find.

If you've been told there is no real treatment for IBS, I have some good news for you: We have many treatment options that work and we have the data to back them up. Misinformation around IBS is something I am personally passionate about and determined to correct. It's IBS Awareness Month, and it's high time to set the record straight.

WHAT IS IBS AND WHAT IS IT DOING TO MY BODY?

We know quite a lot, actually. Studies of the enteric nervous system, the approximately 500 million nerve cells in our guts, have led to the discovery of numerous real, measurable abnormalities in the gut in people who have IBS. The key reason there is so much misinformation about IBS is that standard clinical tests like colonoscopies or routine bloodwork come back "normal," which leads both patients and doctors to wrongly conclude that nothing is actually wrong.

But remember this: Normal tests do not mean a normal gut. Much of the enteric nervous system lives in the deep muscle layers of the bowel wall, which cannot be assessed by a colonoscopy. For instance, we know that the nerves in the gut fire at a lower threshold than they should, making ordinary sensations like from gas or food feel genuinely painful. Special cells called mast cells can create microscopic inflammation around the gut lining, which leads to pain and changes how the nerves function. There are also disruptions in the microbiome and in how the gut contracts, with some people skewing toward diarrhea and others toward



Digestive System diagram.

constipation (and many oscillating between the two).

Just because your colonoscopy is negative, it does not mean "it's all in your head." Many people are told that their IBS is due to stress, which misses the point. While stress certainly can aggravate symptoms in the gut, problems in the gut itself aggravate stress and can be the very source of the anxiety and depression that are common in IBS.

WHAT ACTUALLY HELPS IBS

The hallmark of IBS is pain or discomfort, stemming from those hypersensitive nerves in the gut. Effective treatments target the cells involved in pain signaling and how quickly – or slowly – your gut moves.

As a starting point, there is good data to try soluble fiber, such as psyllium husk, as a first-line therapy in IBS. A large meta-analysis found soluble fiber meaningfully improved IBS symptoms, though insoluble fiber (think wheat bran) actually made things worse for some patients.

The type matters as does hydration: When you take a soluble fiber supplement, it's critical to ramp up slowly and mix it with plenty of water (at least a 10-ounce cup per teaspoon). In some cases of IBS, a short-term trial of a diet called the low FODMAP diet, which excludes certain fermentable carbohydrates, can be considered, but here's the part I've seen people get wrong: It should be limited, meaning you should only exclude those foods that trigger symptoms. The point is to identify a few food triggers, avoid just those, and then vary your diet as much as possible – not to restrict everything on the list indefinitely.

Peppermint, which has antispasmodic properties on the gut, has also been surprisingly well-studied in

randomized controlled trials. It's not a magic bullet by any means, but peppermint is recommended by the American College of Gastroenterology and has better evidence for mild IBS symptoms than what many people on TikTok are recommending. You can try it as a tea, although enteric-coated peppermint oil capsules have the strongest data. Exercise and minimizing ultra-processed foods can also help support gut function.

What didn't make the list? The American Gastroenterological Association does not recommend probiotics for IBS – and the American College of Gastroenterology explicitly advises against them. The evidence simply doesn't support probiotics for IBS, despite their enormous popularity and marketing to the contrary. There's weak but vaguely positive data on abdominal massage for constipation (certainly not enough to be formally recommended by the academic societies). While it's probably harmless, if an abdominal massage isn't moving the needle profoundly, it's time to try something with better data.

The next step is often medication, and there are several FDA-approved prescription options. Here are some examples by type:

For IBS with predominant constipation: The ACG and AGA both recommend prescription agents called chloride channel activators (lubiprostone) and guanylate cyclase-C activators (such as linaclotide or plecanatide). These work directly on the gut lining to increase fluid secretion and speed up the colon. They have been shown in multiple randomized controlled trials to improve abdominal pain, bloating and bowel frequency.

For IBS with predominant diarrhea: Rifaximin – a minimally absorbed antibiotic – may be recommended or bile salt sequestrants like colestipol, which help reduce irritation. Tricyclic antidepressants such as nortriptyline are also recommended for patients with diarrhea and abdominal pain, even in patients without depression. They work by directly modulating the gut's nerve signaling, not necessarily by treating mood.

If you've never heard of these prescription medications, have a chat with a gastroenterologist and see what options may be right for you. No one needs to suffer in the dark.

WHAT I WANT MY PATIENTS TO KNOW

Many third-party companies promise they can identify the cause of your gut health woes through expensive kits like at-home microbiome tests. Be warned: These are not clinically validated, and I've seen patients waste hundreds of dollars in search of answers with companies that prey on desperation. You deserve better than that. IBS is real, common (affecting 15 percent of Americans), and it is treatable. Instead, find a gastroenterologist who specializes in IBS and can give you evidence-backed options. Bring this column to your next appointment..



PHOTO: THE WASHINGTON POST

From "You've Been Pooping All Wrong," by Trisha Pasricha, MD, MPH, to be published Tuesday by Avery, an imprint of Penguin Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House. Copyright © 2026 by Trisha Pasricha LLC.

-THE WASHINGTON POST

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Drury Lane Theater



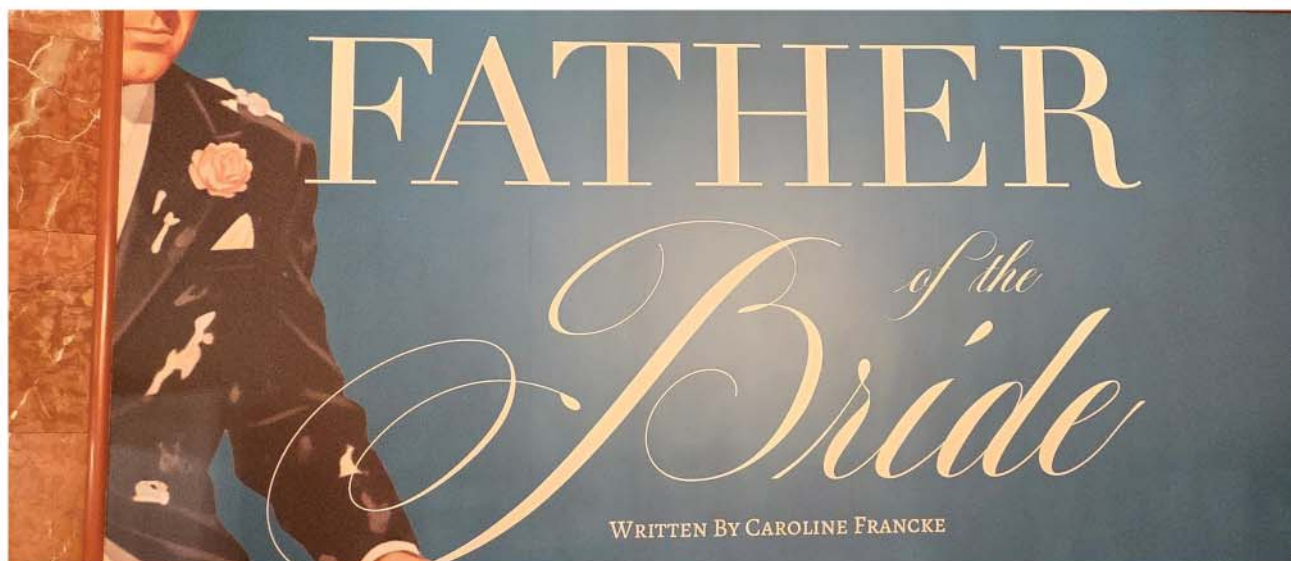
OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL

This time from April 8 to May 31, 2026, the Drury Lane Theater has once again set the stage with an exceptional rendition of the classic comedy, "Father of the Bride" – a hilarious yet bittersweet play. Stage setup, costume design, family dynamic and ambiance reminded us of the 1950s. Written by Caroline Francke and based on the novel Father of the Bride, this production is really entertaining as family-oriented comedy.

The humor of wedding mishaps and wedding planners acting and comedy keeps you laughing.

Drury Lane Theater of Oakbrook, IL, founded by Tony DeSantis around 70 years ago, continues to uphold its reputation for producing world-class theater. The venue consistently offers some of the finest family-friendly entertainment and our experience with this marvelous production solidified this reputation.

With a rich history of more than 2000 productions and an impressive nomination count of over 360 Joseph Jefferson Awards, Drury Lane Theater continues to be a stalwart in the world of performing arts. The theater promises more excitement this summer, with the upcoming play, "Nunsense" featuring the nuns from Little Sisters of Hoboken, and "Buddy – the



Buddy Holly Story", which chronicles the life and music of rock and roll Buddy.

For further information:

Drury Lane Theatre, 100 Drury Ln., Oakbrook Terrace, IL,
630-530-0111, drurylanetheater.com



Lina Shah is a Freelance Writer, Editor, Teacher, Social Worker, Financial Professional, a multi-talented suburban Chicagoland wife and a mother of two, who also enjoys cooking, social gathering, and event planning.

“Captured India’s Vibrancy Through His Lens”: PM Modi Condoles Passing Of Renowned Photographer Raghu Rai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep sorrow over the passing of eminent photographer Raghu Rai, describing him as a creative stalwart who immortalised India’s vibrancy through his lens.

In a post on X, PM Modi wrote, “His photography had extraordinary sensitivity, depth and diversity. It brought people closer to the different aspects of life in India. His passing is an irreparable loss to the world of photography and culture. My thoughts are with his family, admirers and the photography fraternity in this hour of grief. Om Shanti.”

Rai, celebrated for his ability to capture the “extraordinary in the ordinary,” leaves behind an unparalleled archive documenting India’s social, political and cultural evolution.

Born on December 18, 1942, in Jhang (now in Pakistan), Rai rose to global prominence as a protégé of Henri Cartier-Bresson, who nominated him to join Magnum Photos in 1977, an achievement that cemented his place among the world’s elite photographers.

His work forms a visual chronicle of modern India. From the haunting aftermath of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy to intimate portraits of figures like Mother Teresa and Indira Gandhi,

Rai’s lens captured both historic milestones and everyday life.

His evocative images of Indian streets and the banks of the Ganges remain iconic representations of the country’s spirit.

His cremation took place April 26, 2026, at 4:00 pm at the Lodhi Road Cremation Ground.

Filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar paid tribute to legendary photographer. Remembering Rai’s contribution and his personal experience with him, Bhandarkar said the photographer had helped him during the research for his 2017 thriller *Indu Sarkar*. Calling his camera

a “compass for truth,” the filmmaker shared an emotional note on X.

Taking to social media, Madhur wrote, “Sad to hear of Raghu Rai’s sir demise. During my research for the film *#InduSarkar*, he gave great insight into India’s Emergency. His camera was a compass for truth, and his work

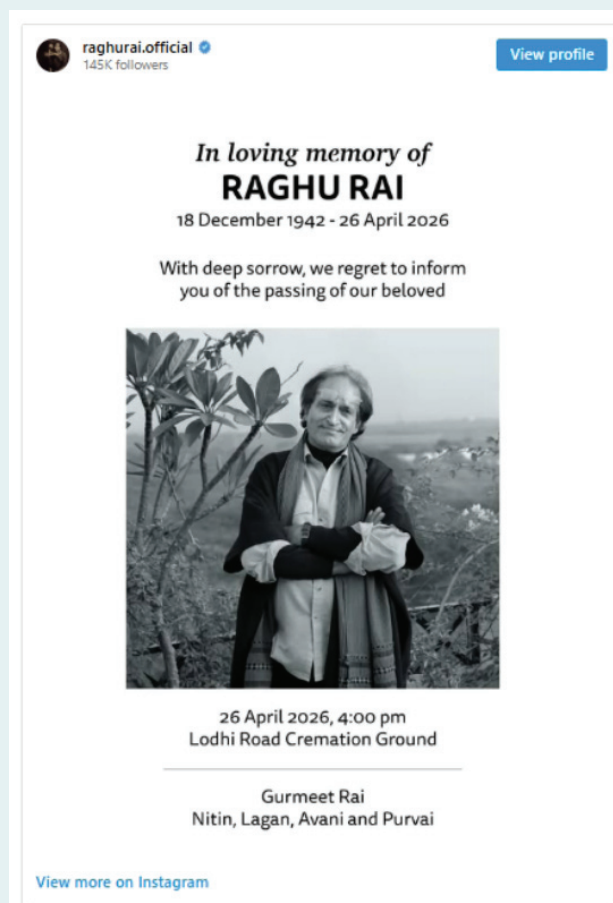


PHOTO: INSTAGRAM COURTESY ANI

Announcement of Raghu Rai’s cremation.

a meditation on life. Sir you will be deeply missed and forever celebrated. #OmShanti”

He was awarded Padma Shri in 1972 and Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017 by the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for his decades of service to photography.

Notably, tributes have been pouring in from public figures as well as political leaders from across the country following Rai’s demise, including filmmaker Varun Grover, historian William Dalrymple, and spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev.

National Award-winning lyricist, screenwriter and stand-up comedian Varun Grover paid an emotional tribute, writing, “The silent storyteller, the interpreter of light, the most gentle and kind – Mr. Raghu Rai has departed. The time is moving faster than we can register, the characters of this grand play sticking to their exit-stage cues, an ache fills the room – we applaud and we cry. Thank you Raghu saab. Aap hamesha yaad aayenge.”

Historian and bestselling author William Dalrymple remembered Rai as both a mentor and a dear friend.

“So very sad to hear about the passing of my friend and mentor, Raghu Rai. Raghu was not just the greatest Indian photographer of his generation, he was the most beloved, generous & wonderful man. His book on Delhi was the first book I ever bought about the city, and it was he who first taught me how to look at it and pin it to paper. Later he became the kindest of friends. I adored him and loved his warmth and energy and wild enthusiasms. Om Shanti... he will be much, much missed,” he wrote.

Spiritual guru Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev also paid tribute, stating, “Raghu Rai’s keen eye immortalized the trials and triumphs of Bharat with candor & vividness. Will be greatly missed & ever remembered fondly. Our deepest condolences to all bereaved by his passing. Blessings. Sg”

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also highlighted the contribution of Raghu Rai’s work in Indian history and its cultural representation. On his official X handle, he paid tribute to the late legend and wrote, “Raghu Rai ji’s lens chronicled the soul of India for over six decades – its people, its struggles, its joys, and its defining moments. He didn’t just take photographs, he preserved our nation’s memory. My heartfelt condolences to his family, his colleagues, and the countless admirers his work touched across generations.”

-ANI

Lens Of One Of The World’s Finest Visual Storytellers Has Finally Closed

India’s cultural and artistic community is mourning the loss of legendary photojournalist Raghu Rai, who passed away on April 26, 2026, at the age of 83. Among those paying tribute, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor shared a deeply personal and evocative message, remembering Rai not only as a global icon but also as a figure tied to his own childhood memories.

Taking to X, Tharoor wrote, “It is with deep sorrow that I learned the devastating news of the passing of Raghu Rai. Today, the lens of one of the world’s finest visual storytellers has finally closed. My memories of Raghu stretch back to my childhood, since he was a colleague of my father’s at The Statesman newspaper.”

Reflecting on Rai’s influence, he added, “For me, he wasn’t just a global name; he was the man with the gentle smile and the observant eye who inspired my father’s

generation of journalists. To the world, he was an incomparable master of photography, the visionary who captured the pulsating heart and soul of India.”

In his tribute, Tharoor highlighted Rai’s global stature and career milestones, noting, “From his powerful early years at The Statesman to his prestigious appointment by Henri Cartier-Bresson to Magnum Photos, his contribution to visual history is unparalleled.”

Rai was mentored by Henri Cartier-Bresson and joined Magnum Photos in 1977, cementing his place among the world’s elite photographers.

His body of work includes some of the most defining visual records of modern India. Tharoor recalled, “His portfolio contains many of the world’s most defining images: the harrowing documentation of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, his profound and intimate portraits of Mother Teresa

and Indira Gandhi, and countless scenes that captured the exquisite beauty and complex humanity of everyday Indian life.”

Rai’s accolades include the Padma Shri (1972) and the inaugural Academie des Beaux-Arts Photography Award, alongside numerous international honours. He also authored several influential books, including *Indira Gandhi*, *The Sikhs*, *Raghu Rai’s India*, and *Mother Teresa*.

Concluding his tribute, Tharoor wrote, “Raghu Rai did not just photograph India; he lived it, and through his lens, he made us feel its pulse. Our thoughts are with his beloved family: his wife Gurmeet Rai, and children Nitin, Lagan, Avani, and Purvai during this painful time. Rest in power and peace, Raghu Rai. Your vision will forever be the lens through which India is seen. Om Shanti.”

-ANI



Renowned photographer Raghu Rai.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM COURTESY ANI

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FUNDING REQUESTS CDBG ACTION PLAN 2026 PUBLIC SERVICE CATEGORY			
AGENCY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDED
Middle Earth	Journeys Program for Franklin Center Program school students ages-14-18. Funding for staffing to assist with activities for youth activities that focus on employment readiness and education. Goal-25 children.	24,978	24,978
Center for Great Expectations	Katy's Place- aid with staffing for daycare for homeless children of teen mothers in recovery and mothers in supportive housing -26 children	20,000	0
Central Jersey Housing Resource Center	Staffing for housing counseling services for low and moderate-income families and individuals who live or work in Franklin Township-101 families	11,987	11,987
Homesharing, Inc.	Funding to assist with staffing services for shared affordable housing program. To serve 2558 Franklin Township residents	10,000	10,000
Hillsborough-YMCA	Swim Around Program- Providing life saving swimming skills to K-5 eligible low and moderate income children enrolled in Title 1 schools- Elizabeth Ave, Hillcrest and Pine Grove. 50 students	15,000	8698.50
Sister2Sister	Staffing support and a scholarship for very low-,low-and moderate income Franklin residents who experience breast cancer. Total served 50.	7,600	0
Total Public Services		89,565	55,663.50

AGENCY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDED
Sister2 Sister	A major renovation of building interior, exterior cleaning and revitalization of building grounds, and operating expenses. Direct beneficiaries 50.	50,000	50,000
Franklin Foodbank	Rehabilitation of current warehouse for foodbank usage. Three priority projects which follow: Parking lot resurfacing- PRIORITY 2- 40,000 Resurfacing of loading area-70,000- PRIORITY 1 Roof repair- PRIORITY 3- 90,000 Clients served-730	200,000	110,000
Total Public Facilities		250,000	160,000

HOUSING			
AGENCY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDED
Center for Great Expectations	Furnace replacement for two 20 year old furnaces for two residential group homes including the child development center. Persons served 50	20,009	20,009
ADTI Housing Corp-Alternatives	Reconstruction of two accessible ramps, a rear wood deck and landscaping for a group home. Home to 4 disabled residents. (Priority 1)10 Vince Road	30,000	20,999.50
Alternatives	Vehicle Parking Expansion- Updating parking lot with new lines and expanding the lot to include 3 additional parking spaces, including landscaping.(Priority 2) 560-562 Madison. Home to 8 persons	25,000	0
Youth Consultation Service Inc. (YCS)	Installation of an accessible deck and ramp. Demolition and removal of existing deck to provide accessible entry for residents and visitors. 2005 Amwell Rd. Home to 4 disabled persons.	70,000	40,200
Total Housing		145,009	81,208.50

Program Planning and Administration 74,218.00

CDBG 2026 Grant Award 371,090

Additional projected projects: Single Family Housing Rehabilitation - Anticipated funding 50,000 from repaid housing loans.

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NEW YORK / NEW JERSEY FRANCHISE HOTEL NEED Couple for Housekeeping and Single for Front Desk Help (English must). Good pay with free accommodation. Legal must. **Call Nishith: 5163739274 / Nick (201) 637 5062**
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NEWARK, DELAWARE
Need experienced General Manager, Asst. General Manager and Front Desk Clerks for Franchise Hotel / Motel in Newark, DE. Accommodation provided. Legal status must. **Call / text (732) 423-1725 / email resume: joinmyhotel@gmail.com**
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VIRGINIA
Housekeeping couple needed to clean hotel rooms and do laundry at a franchise hotel in Roanoke, VA Experienced with legal status must. Free accommodation provided. **Whatsapp message : Sunny Shah (540) 537 0618.**
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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**
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ARIZONA
Need Energetic Couple for Laundry and other miscellaneous help for 90 Rooms Franchise Motel in St George, UT. Experience preferred, ready to train. Legal must. Accommodation provided. **Call (435) 229 8980**
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LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA
House keeping couple needed for property in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (close to Reading & Harrisburg PA). We will also provide accommodation. Legal status must. **Please Call 717-669-6217**
04/17-05/29-SH

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Need Housekeeping Couple for a Franchise Motel in Burlington. Experience preferred, but we are ready to train. Legal must. Free accommodation provided. **Call (516) 401 3812 / Email Resume: mokshagroupny@gmail.com**
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OHIO
Need Single / Couple Front Desk, Night Auditor, Housekeeping for Motel near Columbus OH - 43025. Experienced preferred, ready to train. Legal status must. Accommodation can be arranged. **Call Sunny (740) 404 7478**
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NEW JERSEY
Franchise Motel near Atlantic City need Front desk help, 7 days week. Experience preferred, ready to train. Free Accommodation provided. **Call (609) 892-8631**
05/01-SL

DELAWARE
Small Independent Motel in South Delaware looking for an experienced couple Manager. Fluent in English is preferable. **Call 302-628-0155 (8 AM to 8 PM)**
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GREENVILLE - SOUTH CAROLINA
Independent Motel need Experienced Manager / Front Desk (Computer literate, Fluent English) Also Housekeeping / Laundry couples needed. Legal Must. Free Accommodation provided. **Call: (864) 787 2632 / Superlodge9@gmail.com**
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Scranton, PA
Franchise Motel in Scranton, Pennsylvania immediately need couple or single for Housekeeping and front desk. Good salary with accommodation provided. **Call 571-268-7937 or 347-244-0589**
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NEW YORK & MARYLAND
GARDEN CITY, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK Franchise Hotel and **BALTIMORE, MARYLAND** Franchise Hotel seeks **FRONT DESK CLERKS** and **NIGHT AUDITORS** with fluent English and computer skills looking for long-term employment with excellent salary and accommodation provided. Manager positions available with experience and education looking for growth-oriented company and bonus potential. **CALL/TEXT: (516) 946-1000 or Email Info/Resume to: hoteljobsny@gmail.com**
05/01-06/26-SL

NEW JERSEY
Franchise Hotel in NJ is looking for Single/Couple for: Housekeeping, Front Desk, Maintenance. Good salary and accommodation will be provided. Also looking for Hotel Sales Associate. (Experience and good communication skills required) **Call: Nick 201-637-5062 (Contact between 9 AM to 7 PM.) • Vivian (757) 620-9207 • Hina (201) 936-8762**
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