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October 16, 2026
Chicago, IL.
Vol. XXX, No. 42
www.desitalkchicago.com

Published by
Parikh Worldwide Media, LLC.

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Published weekly
Founded in 1997
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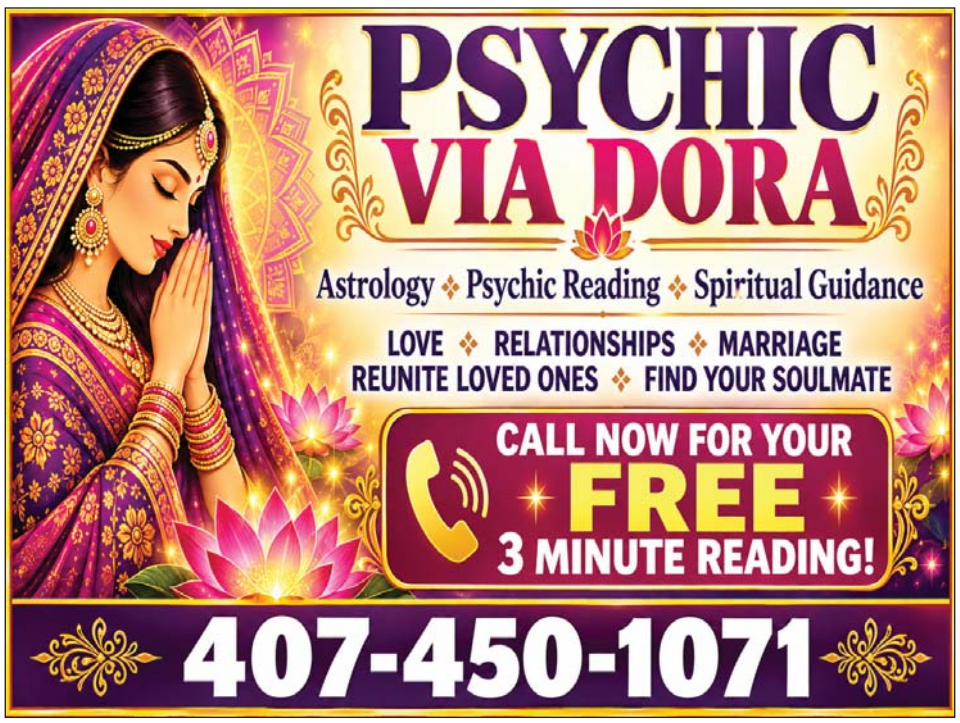
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"Great Defender" Of Legal Principles: Navanethem "Navi" Pillay Wins Nobel Peace Prize

By a Staff Writer

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2026 has been awarded to Navanethem "Navi" Pillay for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee describes the Indian Tamil from South Africa as "a person who with exceptional courage and integrity has led the way towards a more comprehensive global legal order. This year's laureate has been instrumental in ensuring that war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are prosecuted."

"Navi Pillay is one of the great defenders of international legal principles in our time. Her distinguished career reminds us of the need to support, fortify and expand the global rule of law. Navi Pillay's commitment to justice and human dignity is a source of hope and inspiration to all who seek to bring about a more peaceful world," the Nobel Committee declared.

Navi Pillay's commitment to universal legal principles and her firm moral compass are constants in a long career, the October 9 announcement said.

Born into a family of Indian Tamil origin under apartheid in Durban, South Africa, Pillay became a lawyer and legal pioneer, "confronting deep structural discrimination, segregation and exclusion."

She defended Nelson Mandela and others who stood up against apartheid, and later went on the serve as a judge in some of the key international court cases.

"This year's laureate has significantly enlarged the scope and impact of international law. She has served as a judge on the High Court in South Africa, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court. She was the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and, until recently, she chaired the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Today Navi Pillay is a judge on the International Court of Justice in the case where Myanmar stands accused of genocide, the announcement noted.



UN PHOTO: JEAN MARC FERRE

Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights addresses the 17th Session of the Human Rights Council.

The Nobel Committee credited her with making rulings in historic international court cases, showing that legal measures can help prevent acts of war and violence. Pillay was also praised for strengthening the institutions of international law.

Among the breakthroughs Pillay achieved during her career, the Nobel Committee pointed to the ruling in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda which established that rape and sexual violence could constitute a crime against humanity – as well as genocide – "her influence was a significant factor."

In the same case, Pillay was instrumental in a separate legal breakthrough, namely, "for the first time, a defendant faced charges of incitement to commit genocide purely on the basis of spreading propaganda."

"Her independence, expertise and steadfastness have made her one of the most respected international jurists of our time," the Nobel Committee said.

The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded 125 years ago, and since then, the award choices have underscored the importance of resolving conflicts through international law.

"At a time of existential challenges – including more wars and conflicts than the world has seen in a long time – international law is no longer just a supplement to peace and security. It is an absolute necessity," the Nobel Committee contended, noting that the system of international law at this time was "under tremendous pressure," and its institutions are under attack. "We see a shift towards power politics at the expense of legal frameworks and global respect for law and justice. Whenever might overtakes right, it undermines stability, trust and peaceful co-existence," the Nobel Committee asserted.

This year's award, the Committee said, is an attempt "to remind the world that the rule of law – national and international – underpins the system we have set up to ensure peace and resolve conflicts non-violently. Peace requires justice."

"Navi Pillay has held states and national leaders accountable and brought hope to victims of violence and conflict. In all the positions she has held, she has stressed the responsibility of individuals and states to comply with the rule of law. She has also helped define the relevant norms and legal principles," it said.

Pillay in her statement accepting the $1.2 million prize said she dedicated it to all those who had been fighting for human rights, and minimized her contributions. "The last thing I did is the report on Gaza naming what is happening there as genocide. One of the main reactions to that report [was] paying tribute to me for my courage.. why would you need courage to speak the truth?" Pillai said.

Israel was among the first to criticize the Nobel Committee for choosing Pillay for the Peace Prize, describing it as a politicization of the award. "Awarding Pillay the Nobel Peace Prize isn't a recognition of justice. It's the grotesque weaponization of an award to legitimize anti-Israel hatred and prejudice," the Israeli Foreign Ministry said, adding, "Now that the Nobel commission has rewarded the biggest lie of the 21st century, Joseph Goebbels is certainly applauding from hell."

Trump Again Laments Not Winning "Noble Peace Prize"

US President Donald Trump on Saturday continued to criticise the decision to award the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize to Indian-origin South African jurist Navi Pillay, claiming that he had settled eight wars, is close to ending or settling two more conflicts and deserved the prestigious honour for his efforts.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump listed what he described as his achievements in resolving international conflicts, securing the release of hostages and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, while questioning why he or the United States did not receive the award.

"I settled 8 WARS, am close to ending or settling 2 more, got all of the Israeli hostages back, including the final 28, both living and dead, had hundreds of hostages, from countries all over the World, released and sent back home, won a war in Venezuela, and captured the violent dictator who so viciously ran that country, and stopped the number one state sponsor of terror, the Islamic Republic of Iran, from obtaining a Nuclear Weapon — AND MUCH MORE! Yet, with all of that I, or the United States of America, did not get the Noble Peace Prize," Trump said in his post on Truth Social.

Trump's remarks came after the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced on Friday that Pillay had been awarded the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to promote peace and international law.

In an earlier post on Truth Social, Trump questioned the decision to honour Pillay, claiming that he deserved the recognition for his role in resolving conflicts around the world.

"This is the woman who received the Nobel Peace Prize over the Great United States of America, whose Representative, ME, settled eight Wars, and many other things. I know nothing about this woman, and neither does anyone else!" Trump said.

He added, "In fact, to the best of my knowledge, no one ever heard of her other than the fact that she, very obviously, hates Israel."

Trump also asserted that he had prevented Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and claimed to have helped avert conflicts in other regions, including tensions involving North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan.

The Nobel Committee, in its announcement, said Pillay had demonstrated exceptional courage and integrity in advancing a more comprehensive global legal order and had played a significant role in ensuring that war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are prosecuted.

"The Nobel Peace Prize for 2026 goes to a person who with exceptional courage and integrity has led the way towards a more comprehensive global legal order. This year's laureate has been instrumental in ensuring that war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are prosecuted," the committee stated.

Born into a family of Indian Tamil origin under apartheid in Durban, South Africa, Pillay became a lawyer and legal pioneer who confronted structural discrimination, segregation and exclusion.

She has served as a judge on South Africa's High Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court (ICC). She also served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and, until recently, chaired the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Pillay is currently a judge at the International Court of Justice in the case in which Myanmar stands accused of genocide.

Hours after the Nobel Peace Prize announcement, the United States announced additional sanctions targeting the ICC, citing concerns over American sovereignty and the threat posed by the international judicial body.

In a fact sheet, the US Department of State said the Trump administration was taking further measures against the ICC under an executive order titled "Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court".

The department said the United States had already imposed sanctions on 17 individuals under the executive order and was now announcing additional action against the court itself.

Under the measures, subject to applicable licences and exceptions, all property and interests in property of the ICC located in the United States or held by US persons would be blocked and required to be reported to the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

The measures also prohibit transactions by US persons, or transactions within or transiting the United States, involving the property or interests of designated or otherwise blocked persons, unless exempted or authorised under applicable licences.

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"We Will Do It": PM Modi Completes 25 Years Of Continuous Service As Head Of Government; BJP Holds 'Seva Jyoti Yatra

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday completed 25 years of continuous service as the head of a government, having taken the oath as the Chief Minister of Gujarat on October 7, 2001. On the occasion, PM Modi gave the "We will do it" mantra as he affirmed his resolve for a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

Addressing the 'Seva Jyoti' program held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in the national capital, the Prime Minister expressed profound gratitude, acknowledging every person and incident that shaped his journey.

"I express my gratitude to all of you and to all my fellow countrymen. When I took the oath as the Chief Minister of Gujarat on 7 October 2001, I never imagined that this milestone would also come," PM Modi said.

Giving the mantra, he stated, "The enthusiasm and zeal needed to take India to new heights conveys just one message: we will do it, We Will Do It."

"Viksit Bharat by 2047: we will do it; top 3 economy: we will do it; Atmanirbhar Bharat: we will do it; global manufacturing hub: we will do it; hosting the Olympics: we will do it; venturing into space: we will do it. This energy, this enthusiasm, this self-confidence is remarkable," PM Modi stated.

PM Modi cited specific instances that contributed to his learning, including the 2001 Bhuj earthquake, which he said, "taught me to remain steadfast in reconstruction"; the Chandrayaan mission that taught him to "rise from failure"; and the COVID-19 pandemic, which "made me realise the importance of the nation's collective consciousness." He also acknowledged the media for inspiring him "to move forward amidst bitter-sweet experiences."

Describing his resolve towards duty, PM Modi said that he will continue to perform every action with responsibility and devotion to the country.

"My right is to my action, so I consider action to be my duty. And I will continue to perform every action with full capacity and perform action continuously. Perform action; the work should not stop, the effort should not stop. Therefore, for me, action is not just responsibility; it is my devotion to the country. Action for the country, action for the countrymen. And the sentiment in this is – Ma phaleshu kadachana," he said.

Wishes poured in for him from all across India. President Droupadi Murmu lauded his "steadfast commitment to the well-being of the people" and wished for his good health.

In an X post, President Murmu wrote, "This momentous milestone reflects a steadfast commitment to the well-being of the people and an enduring resolve to advance the progress of Bharat. The transformation witnessed across our country in recent years is visible in the lives of people. From expanding access to housing, healthcare, financial services, clean energy and basic amenities to strengthening connectivity, digital infrastructure and opportunities, transformative initiatives have touched the lives of millions across the length and breadth of Bharat. The remarkable progress in reducing poverty and improving the quality of life of our people reflects the scale and depth of this transformation."

"Bharat is moving ahead with confidence and renewed aspirations, while the world looks towards India with renewed respect and confidence. May the people of India continue to benefit from your guidance and resolve as the nation advances towards the realisation of the vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047," the President added.



PHOTO: ANI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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Heartfelt gratitude for your warm wishes on my birthday. Your affectionate words have further energised our efforts to work for the nation's progress and ensure positive change in the lives of every citizen.

Through our resolve of 'Shakti ki Saptadhara', we are building an India where every citizen gets the opportunity to nurture their talents and give wings to their dreams. 'Jan Bhagidari', or people's participation, is our greatest strength in building a developed and self-reliant India.

I am confident that your hard work, support and continued contribution will help take the nation to new heights.

Best wishes for your good health and a bright future.

Yours,

(Narendra Modi)

Dr. Sudhir M. Parikh
Chairman – Center for Asthma and Allergy
18 North Third Ave.
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Wishing him on the occasion, Vice President CP Radhakrishnan posted on X, "Your journey as Pradhan Sevak has transformed the vision of inclusive development into a nationwide mission, guided by Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayaas."

"Across my visits to States and Union Territories, I have witnessed Bharat's visible transformation through improved connectivity, digital advancement, expanding opportunities and inclusive development. The greatest achievement of your visionary leadership is liberating 25 crore people from extreme poverty. It is a landmark historical achievement that human history can never forget," the X post read.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Prime Minister Modi's 25-year journey as Chief Minister and Prime Minister marked a significant chapter in the history of Indian democracy.

He said the 'Seva Jyoti Yatra' had been organized in every district across the country to commemorate PM Modi's 25-year journey in public service.

Addressing the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Sabha – Seva Jyoti Yatra' in Gurugram, Shah said, "7 October marks a golden and epoch-making day in the history of Indian democracy. Today, an individual born into a family of very humble means, by virtue of his qualities and capabilities, and with the support of crores of people, has set a record of serving continuously for twenty-five years as Chief Minister and Prime Minister; that individual is our PM, Narendra Modi."

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended a program under the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' in Ghaziabad, where he lauded PM Modi's milestone, asserting that he has redefined politics from a tool to form governments into a mission for nation-building.

"Before 2014, the word 'politics' had lost its true meaning and essence. In these years, Modi ji has proved that politics is not merely a medium to form governments, but a medium for nation-building. There is perhaps no Prime Minister in the world who hasn't taken a single day off in a year. In his 25 years as Chief Minister and Prime Minister, Modi ji has not taken a single leave. We want to make India a developed nation by 2047… Under Modi ji's leadership, India's economy stands among the top five nations in the world," Singh said.-

BJP National President Nitin Nabin also congratulated PM Modi, describing his journey as one marked by struggle, dedication and public service. He said PM Modi's "penance, devotion, resolve" had made public service the purpose of his life and that public service became his path to national service.

Chief Ministers from the NDA ruled states also hailed PM Modi. Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel participated in the 'Seva Jyoti Yatra' organised at the Riverfront in Ahmedabad under the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan', with the message 'From Public Service to Service to the Nation'.

Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath said that there are over 2,50,000 startups in the country, high-speed rail networks, law and order improvements, and development in the technology and defence sectors.

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis traced PM Modi's administration over 25 years in office, highlighting that India's economy has grown from the "Fragile Five" to the "top five."

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders across the country organised 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Sabhas' and torch rallies as part of the nationwide 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan'.

Prime Minister Modi also met veteran BJP leader LK Advani at his residence.In a post on X, PM Modi recalled Advani's decades of public service and contribution to the country's progress. "Met Advani Ji at his residence and sought his blessings. His decades of public service and contribution to our national life have left a lasting imprint. He has played a pivotal role in strengthening India's progress," he said.

Congratulatory messages poured in from across the world. Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Dominican Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever, Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, and Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay were among the world leaders who wished PM Modi on the occasion.

-ANI

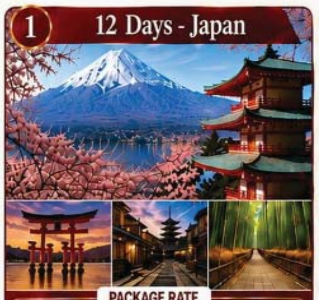
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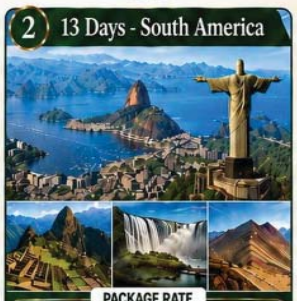


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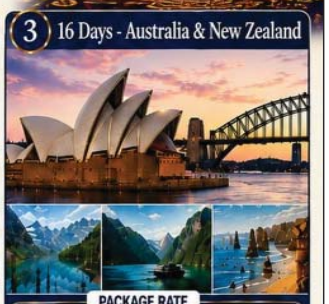
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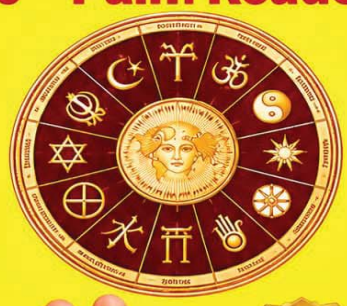
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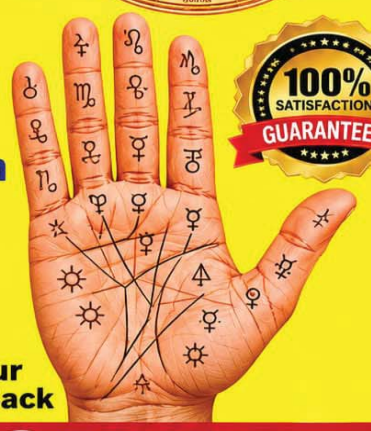


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Kamala Harris Has A 2028 Opening — And A 2024 Problem

By Cleve R. Wootson Jr., Praveena Somasundaram, Dan Merica,

If Kamala Harris runs for president again, she would begin with advantages no rival could match: near-universal name recognition, experience in the White House and the hard-earned lessons of already having carried the party's banner.

For many Democrats, that still may not be enough.

With roughly a dozen Democrats maneuvering toward possible 2028 bids, Harris retains considerable affection and respect inside the party. But interviews with 18 strategists, donors, former Harris surrogates and other Democrats – including some who backed her in 2024 – revealed persistent uncertainty about whether her moment was cut short or her time has passed, and whether she can lead Democrats back to power.

Some see a former vice president with an unmatched résumé in the still-forming field – a candidate who, her supporters argue, deserves a fairer shot than the 107 frantic days she had to take over and try to rescue Joe Biden's faltering campaign.

Others see a defeated nominee inextricably tied to the party's recent past confronting Democrats hungry for new leaders, sharper ideas and a more decisive break from the political order that preceded Donald Trump's return to power.

Beneath the respect for the former Democratic standard-bearer is a striking anxiety about the potential consequences of her return to the political conversation. Her stature could instantly reorder the field, discouraging some candidates from running and forcing others to define themselves around her. For some in the party, the concern is not simply that Harris could lose again. It is that her candidacy could pull Democrats back toward a painful political era before they have fully reckoned with what happened and how to move beyond it.

"She's extraordinarily popular in the party and people are very fond of her and want her to be treated with a lot of respect and deference – given all the due of someone in her position," said Jamal Simmons, a Democratic strategist who was Harris's communications director for a year starting in January 2022. "Many people see it as a service what she did in 2024, where she really stepped up for the party, stepped up for Joe Biden, stepped up for the country. There's a lot of respect for her. But it's yet to be seen how much of that becomes support for another presidential run."

Former transportation secretary Pete Buttigieg, Maryland Gov. Wes Moore and California Gov. Gavin Newsom have already begun making appearances in South Carolina, which will host the Democrats' first presidential primary in 2028 – a change designed in part to give Black voters and the party's broader coalition a larger voice in choosing the nominee.

Newsom, who has made a pair of recent visits there, said last month he would not run if Harris enters the race, wary of forcing their overlapping political bases to choose between them.



(DEMETRIUS FREEMAN/THE WASHINGTON POST)

Harris and husband Doug Emhoff at a campaign rally on Oct. 29, 2024.

Fletcher Smith, a former South Carolina state legislator and one of Biden's surrogates in the state in 2020, said Harris's pending decision is impeding a necessary conversation about the Democratic Party's future.

"People just want to move on," he said. "We've got a number of younger-generation people who are capable of leading – we've got governors, we've got congresspeople, we have senators. I think what she needs to do is sit out 2028 and let some other people have a shot at saving our democracy."

Through a spokesperson, Harris declined multiple requests to comment on this story. She revisited the frustrations of her abbreviated campaign in full last year with a memoir, "107 Days," that included the difficulty of distinguishing herself from Biden while serving as his vice president.

She has left open the possibility of another presidential run. This spring she said she was "thinking about it." She has expanded her public appearances as the midterms have approached, campaigning in key battleground states – in Michigan for U.S. Senate candidate Abdul El-Sayed and, soon, in Georgia for Sen. Jon Ossoff.

For those eager for Harris to run again, her experience is an argument for another chance.

Harris has been a senator, presidential candidate, vice president and presidential nominee – a résumé that would ordinarily be an enormous asset and, many Democrats say, make her an instant front-runner should she enter the race.

Harris and her allies have long viewed the 2024 loss through the constraints of the campaign she inherited: an unpopular incumbent, deep voter frustration over inflation and the economy, and barely three months to convince voters that she represented change while still serving as Biden's vice president. She lost the popular vote to Trump by about 2.3 million votes and the electoral college, 312 to 226.

Maria Cardona, a longtime Democratic strategist and friend of Harris, said the former vice president faces less time pressure than other potential candidates. Given her 2024 experience, Harris would be able to scale up campaign operations faster than other potential contenders who have never appeared on a national ballot, Cardona said.

Another go-round would look different from the 2024 campaign that she assembled in a pinch after Biden dropped out, Cardona said: "If she decides to run, she will run as an unapologetic, unabridged version of Kamala Harris. And I don't think any of us know what that looks like."

Ashley Etienne, who was Harris's first communications director as vice president, acknowledged that Harris would need to create some distance from a Democratic establishment facing an increasingly anti-status-quo sentiment. But she argued that Harris's critics discount something none of her potential rivals has yet demonstrated: that she can withstand the personal scrutiny, political pressure and sheer intensity of a national presidential campaign.

"It's almost like, why not her? She has proven, unlike anyone else in the race, that she's got these advantages that will matter in a national election," Etienne said.

Some Democrats warned that moving too quickly past Harris would carry its own political cost, particularly among Black women, one of the party's most loyal constituencies.

L. Louise Lucas (D-Portsmouth), the first woman and first Black person to be president pro tempore of the Virginia Senate, said she would back whoever becomes the Democratic nominee. But she said Black women she knows could see Democrats' rejection of Harris as another painful rebuff of a Black woman who had earned her chance to lead.

"There's no question that people would be upset because you see what happened last time," Lucas said. "It could very well be that some folks would be so disillusioned that they would just say, 'I give up on this process' – especially people who've been fighting as many years as I have, who have come through the civil rights movement and just experienced so much, endured so much, and then to see this happen again would be quite painful."

The 2024 campaign gave Harris unequaled name recognition, said Clay Middleton, a former senior adviser to the Biden-Harris campaign in South Carolina and a longtime Democratic operative in the state.

"She is instantly the front-runner because she was our nominee the last time, she has an infrastructure that was in place that she can turn on quickly," Middleton said. "But can you stay up through the course of the entire cycle?"

Those advantages may help less as the party searches for new language, new fights and new political identities. To some Democrats, Harris looks less like the beginning of the next Democratic era than a vestige of the last one.

"I think she is a great candidate, but I don't want to see Harris run," said David Wilson, an 81-year-old retired educator from St. Louis. He supported Biden in the 2020 primary, voted for Harris in 2024 and would like to see someone else on the ballot in 2028. "She already lost and I don't think there is a practical purpose when you have a lot of good candidates to put up a loser a second time around. I want new ideas."

Harris faced skepticism about her political skills before her defeat. During her vice presidency, Democrats consistently questioned whether she could eventually lead the ticket, concerns that flared after awkward interviews, verbal stumbles and periods when she receded from public view. At one point, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts) conspicuously stopped short of endorsing Harris as Biden's 2024 running mate, though she quickly clarified that she supported the pair's reelection.

Yet when Biden abruptly ended his campaign in July 2024, the doubts gave way to remarkable speed and unanimity. Biden endorsed Harris, Democratic leaders quickly followed, and within days she had secured commitments from enough delegates to effectively claim the nomination.

Her defeat renewed questions about how she had made her case to voters.

A Democratic autopsy of the 2024 race argued that the White House, under Biden, did not do enough to set Harris up for political success, a frequent if whispered gripe among people in Harris's camp. But the report, which party leadership has said did not meet its standards, also faulted the campaign for assuming that negative views of Trump were baked in and for not doing enough to win the economic argument.

For some past supporters, the test will be what a Harris campaign has to offer Democrats.

Bakari Sellers, a former South Carolina state senator who helped marshal delegates behind Harris in 2024, said he still regards her as "extremely talented." But talent alone, he said, will not answer the questions Democrats have about her viability.

She has taken public stances on issues, he said, but she has not defined what her candidacy would mean for the constituencies that matter most to her success. She hasn't spoken to him in more than a year, which he said raises questions about someone who would need to win South Carolina.

"One of the first statements she put out was about AI, when it's clear she needs to boost her support among Black men," Sellers said. "California has a cost-of-living issue, and she's not talking about cost of living at all."

Harris has largely receded from the spotlight since her defeat. Her reemergence on the campaign trail will give prospective supporters like Erick Allen, a Cobb County commissioner and former Georgia state representative, another look.

Allen, who backed Harris early during her first presidential run in 2019, said many people he knows are watching her closely.

"I think people want to see what's happened in two years," he said. "What is she going to come out looking like? If she goes out there and she gets the cheers, she's feeling good, you better damn well believe you're going to start seeing the 'Kamala 2028 bumper stickers."

-Special to The Washington Post

Joy of Sharing

Awareness Seminar on Marriages with Indians Residing Abroad Held in Rajkot

An initiative by Gujarat State Non-Resident Gujarati Foundation and NRG Centre, Rajkot to promote awareness, preparedness and informed decision-making among young minds



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

"Marriage is a lifelong commitment, and when it involves different countries, legal systems and social environments, awareness becomes especially important. Initiatives such as this empower our young generation with knowledge, prudence and confidence to make informed decisions. I commend GSNRGF and NRG Centre, Rajkot, for undertaking this meaningful initiative for the benefit of our youth and families."







Recognising the growing need for awareness and informed decision-making regarding marriages with Indians residing abroad, the **Gujarat State Non-Resident Gujarati Foundation (GSNRGF), Gandhinagar, in association with NRG Centre, Rajkot,** organised an awareness seminar on **"Awareness Regarding Marriages with Indians Residing Abroad" at Harivandana College, Rajkot.**

The programme aimed to sensitise students and young adults to the importance of due diligence, legal awareness, verification and necessary precautions, while also highlighting potential challenges associated with overseas marriages.

The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by **Senior Advocate Dr. Bhavanaben Joshipura; Ms. Meetal Koticha Shah, Chairperson, NRG Centre, Rajkot; Mr. Rushikesh Pandya, Secretary, NRG Centre, Rajkot; Dr. Ashwin Rathod, Principal, Harivandana College; Dr. Madhuri Bhatt, Head, Department of Education; and Dr. Purvi Soneji, Head, Department of Law.**


Lightening the Lamp

Preparedness, Verification and Prudence

Addressing the students, **Ms. Meetal Koticha Shah, Chairperson, NRG Centre, Rajkot,** emphasised that marriage is a significant life decision that should be supported by awareness, responsible verification and factual information.


Ms. Meetal Koticha Shah

She stressed the importance of obtaining authentic and verifiable information about the prospective spouse and family, including marital status, employment, residential circumstances and legal status. She noted that adequate preparation and verification can help families make informed decisions and minimise the risk of future complications or fraudulent situations.She also appreciated the efforts of Government of Gujarat in promoting awareness, guidance and community welfare.

Awareness for Informed Decisions

Mr. Rushikesh Pandya, Secretary, NRG Centre, Rajkot, outlined the purpose of the seminar and introduced the vision and people-centric initiatives of NRG Foundation and NRG Centre. He highlighted the Centre's role in strengthening the bond between overseas Gujaratis and their homeland and also spoke about the Government of Gujarat's **'Vatan Prem'** initiative, which channels the emotional connect of global Gujaratis towards meaningful development.


Mr. Rushikesh Pandya

Practical Legal Guidance

The seminar featured guidance from Senior Advocate and legal expert Dr. Bhavna Joshipura on the precautions that should be considered before marriage with an Indian residing abroad. The discussions focused on the importance of informed decision-making, proper verification and awareness of the legal and practical aspects involved in such marriages. Participants were encouraged to appropriately verify the prospective spouse's background, marital status, employment, place of residence and legal standing in the country of residence. The importance of retaining copies of essential documents, including passport, visa, work permit or residency documents, residential address, contact details and professional information, was also highlighted.

NRG Centre, Rajkot



The awareness initiative forms part of the broader efforts towards strengthening engagement, awareness and access to services for Non-Resident Gujaratis and their families. Through its programmes and outreach activities, the NRG Centre, Rajkot, has worked towards reaching students, families and the wider community with relevant information and support.

Key Highlights

- 18 Awareness Seminars & Outreach Programmes Conducted
- 4100+ Students Reached through Awareness Seminars

Since 2011, Saurashtra Medical & Educational Charitable Trust, Rajkot, has been entrusted with serving as the NRG Centre for the Saurashtra & Kutch Region.

Guided by a simple yet profound belief - that Gujaratis may live across the globe, but their hearts remain deeply rooted in Gujarat - Project 'Life' serves as a bridge between the global Gujarati community and their ancestral homeland, fostering a sense of belonging, connection, and shared heritage.

For information regarding Gujarat Card registration/issuance, upcoming seminars, or other NRG Centre initiatives, interested individuals may contact the centre through the above channels. https://nri.gujarat.gov.in/nrigujarat/Home/gujarat_non_resident

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Akshaya Patra Tri-State Chapter Raises Over $3 Million In 2026, Including Annual Gala

By a Staff Writer

Dr. Sanjay Gupta's deeply engaging fireside chat and Abby V's spellbinding musical performance highlighted an evening dedicated to feeding children and supporting education

The Akshaya Patra Foundation USA's Tri-State Chapter celebrated its 10th annual gala on October 3, 2026, at World of Blue in East Rutherford, New Jersey, bringing together donors, volunteers and community leaders to encourage attendees to open their hearts and wallets.

Including funds raised through the gala, the chapter has raised over $3 million so far in 2026 to support Akshaya Patra's mission of nourishing children in India and helping them pursue an education, organizers said in a press release October 5.



PHOTOS: AKSHAYA PATRA

Dr Sanjay Gupta and Dr Rachana Kulkarni in fireside chat at the Akshaya Patra Foundation Tri State Chapter October 3, 2026, in East Rutherford, NJ.

A highlight of the evening was an engaging fireside chat with Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN's Chief Medical Correspondent and a practicing neurosurgeon. "His warmth and thoughtful insights captivated the audience," the press release said.

Also at the event was Padma Shri recipient Dr. Sudhir Parikh, President of the Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, and Chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media, and Dr. Sudha Parikh. Dr. Sudhir Parikh has been a longtime supporter of Akshaya Patra.

Singer Abby V delivered a "spellbinding" musical performance, bringing extraordinary vocal artistry and energy to the celebration. His performance added a joyful dimension to an evening centered on giving children the opportunity to learn and thrive, organizers said.

The gala underscored the belief at the heart of Akshaya Patra's work: no child should be deprived of an education because of hunger.

Contributions support the organization's school meal program in India, helping children receive nutritious meals daily during school, that support their well-being and learning.

"A nutritious meal can do more than ease hunger—it can help a child stay in school and build a brighter future. The generosity of our Tri-State community is helping make that opportunity possible for more children, and we are deeply grateful for their support," said Dr. Rachana Kulkarni, Vice Chair of the Akshaya Patra USA Foundation.



Dr. Anand Kulkarni on microphone, and Biren Shah, Akshaya Patra Tri-State Chapter Chairs, urging attendees to donate generously at the gala.



Dr Sanjay Gupta, center, flanked by, from left, Dr. Anand Kulkarni, Dr. Rachana Kulkarna, Dr. Sudhir Parikh, chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media and President of the Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, Dr. Sudha Parikh, at the Akshaya Patra Foundation Tri State fundraising gala.



PHOTO: SACHIN RAVINDRAN, ITV GOLD

Renowned singer ABBY V performing at the Akshaya Patra Tri-State Chapter fundraising gala.

The $3 million raised this year to date "reflects the generosity of the Tri-State community and its sustained commitment to this mission," Akshaya Patra noted. The chapter expressed its gratitude to donors, sponsors, volunteers and guests whose support made the gala possible and continues to advance Akshaya Patra's work throughout the year.

The Akshaya Patra Foundation USA supports The Akshaya Patra Foundation's efforts to address childhood hunger and promote access to education in India through nutritious school meals. For more information, visit www.apusa.org

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Gandhi's Legacy Shines In Skokie As Community Honors Mahatma Gandhi And Remembers Lal Bahadur Shastri

By a Staff Writer

Community observance at Heritage Park October 2, celebrated Gandhi's 157th birth anniversary and recalled Shastri's "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" message

The Gandhi Memorial Foundation of Chicago held its annual community observance on October 2 at the Mahatma Gandhi statue in Heritage Park, along McCormick Boulevard in Skokie. The gathering marked the 157th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and remembered former Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was also born on October 2.The Heritage Park statue was installed more than two decades ago through the efforts of community members and leaders.

Community members, civic leaders and guests gathered to honor both leaders and reflect on their enduring contributions. Special guests included India's Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, and India's Consul General for the Midwest, Dr. M. Anand Prakash. Skokie Mayor Ann Tennes, Trustee Jim Iverson and Village Clerk Minal Desai also attended, a press release from Asian Media USA said.

Minister Goyal unfurled the Indian national flag and offered floral tributes at the 12-foot bronze statue of Gandhi. The program opened with the bhajan "Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram," led by Pramod Joshi of the Gandhi Memorial Foundation Board and a member of the Skokie Fine Arts Commission. Attendees also observed moments of silence and joined in devotional songs.

Dr. Vijay G. Prabhakar, vice president of the Gandhi Memorial Foundation, moderated the program. Dr. Santosh Kumar, the Foundation's president and founder and executive director of Metropolitan Asian Family Services (MAFS), welcomed the gathering alongside Foundation officers, trustees and community leaders.

Speakers reflected on Gandhi's commitment to truth, nonviolence and peaceful resistance, and on the influence of his principles on India's independence movement and campaigns for civil rights and social justice around the world. Pramod Joshi recalled his family's freedom-fighter roots in Kheda district, where Gandhi had walked.

Ranjita spoke about connecting younger generations with India's heritage. Ashraf Hashim of the Deewan community emphasized service as a measure of leadership, while Dr. Vasanthi Chakka, a granddaughter of a freedom fighter, spoke about preserving the path for future generations. Foundation founding secretary Babu Varma urged attendees to practice truth, nonviolence and service in everyday life.

The gathering also remembered Shastri's leadership as prime minister from 1964 to 1966 and his enduring call, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan"—"Hail the Soldier, Hail the Farmer"—recognizing the service of India's armed forces and farmers.

In his remarks, Minister Goyal spoke about Gandhi's concern for the most vulnerable and the importance of ensuring that no one is left behind. He also reflected on Swami Vivekananda's historic address at Chicago's 1893 World's Parliament of Religions and his visit to Fullerton Hall at the Art Institute of Chicago earlier that day.

Dr. Kumar presented the MAFS Colors 2026 to Minister Goyal and Dr. M. Anand Prakash. She spoke about the importance of hard work, sincerity and service, and the affection Indian Americans carry for their heritage and homeland.

Suresh Bodiwala, is chairman of the Gandhi Memorial Foundation and founder of Asian Media USA, reflected on the significance of the observance: "Standing once again at the base of the Gandhi statue I helped safeguard as a trustee, I felt the quiet power of continuity. Events like this are not mere commemorations; they are living reminders that values outlast governments and generations."





PHOTOS: ASIAN MEDIA USA

Skokie Mayor Ann Tennes is addressing Community members, civic leaders and guests gathered GSA GLOBAK





Left: India's Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal is addressing Community members, civic leaders and guests gathered to honor the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, and remember Lal Bahadur Shastri who was also born on October 2. Right: Community members offered floral tributes at the 12-foot bronze statue of Gandhi.



Santosh Kumar, the Foundation's president presented the MAFS Colors 2026 to India's Union Minister of Commerce and Consul General Dr. M. Anand Prakash.

USCIS RFE vs. NOID: How to Respond and What Happens Next

IN MEMORIAM


Michael Phulwani


David Nachman


Ludka Zimovcak


Snehal Batra

By David H. Nachman, Esq



Photos: Adobe

A Request for Evidence and a Notice of Intent to Deny can both show up after you file with USCIS, and at first glance they look alike. They are different notices with different deadlines, and knowing which one you hold is the first step toward a response the officer will accept.

What Each Notice Means

A Request for Evidence, or RFE, tells you the record as filed does not yet establish eligibility. It identifies the evidence the officer wants and whether that evidence is initial or additional. A Notice of Intent to Deny, or NOID, carries more weight. The officer lays out specific grounds for a proposed denial, and the notice gives you a chance to rebut them before anything is final. USCIS must use a NOID for certain forms, and also when a decision would rest on adverse information the applicant has never seen.

The Deadline on the Notice Controls

Under 8 CFR 103.2(b)(8), the response period for an RFE cannot exceed twelve weeks, and the period for a NOID cannot exceed thirty days. The same regulation says additional time to respond may not be granted. Put the date on your calendar the day the notice arrives, and plan to be finished well before it. For how USCIS handles shorter deadlines and mailing time under its August 2026 guidance, see our post USCIS Can Now Deny Cases Without an RFE: 2026 Policy Update.

Send Everything Together

The regulations require all requested materials to be submitted at one time, along with the original notice. If you send only part of what was asked for, the officer will take that as your request to be decided on the file as it stands, so there is no second round to finish the job. Go through the notice line by line, match each item it lists to a document, and say in a cover letter where each one is.

If You Miss the Deadline or the Case Is Denied

Silence past the due date gives USCIS three choices under 8 CFR 103.2(b)(13): denial for abandonment, denial based on the record as it stands, or denial on both grounds. After a denial, the remaining options are narrow. A motion to reopen or reconsider, or an appeal, goes on Form I-290B, generally within 30 days of the decision. Building the response carefully the first time is much easier than trying to repair a denial later.

Is it possible to get an extension on an RFE deadline?

No. 8 CFR 103.2(b)(8) rules out extensions for both RFEs and NOIDs, so plan your work around the date printed on the notice.

Is an RFE the same as a denial?

No. An RFE means the officer needs more information before deciding. The case stays open while you respond, and a complete answer can lead to an approval.

What if I can only gather part of the requested evidence?

USCIS reads a partial submission as a request to decide the case on what is already in the file, without issuing another request. If a document is truly unavailable, say so in the response and attach whatever supports your explanation instead of counting on a second chance.

What if the deadline passes before I respond?

The case can be denied as abandoned, on the existing record, or both, even when the documents were within reach. The only protection is to send your response early.

Should I have an attorney help with my response?

Many people respond on their own, but the response becomes part of the record that any later motion or appeal is built on. An immigration attorney can review the notice, identify what the officer is really asking, and organize the evidence before the deadline.

If you or your family members have questions about how this or other immigration and nationality matters may affect you, 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 visiting our website at* ***www.visaserve.com*** *for more information.*

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Michigan Congressman Thanedar Slams Green Card Move As Politically Motivated

Indian-American Congressman Shri Thanedar has criticised the Trump administration's decision to suspend certain companies from the Permanent Labor Certification (PERM) programme, opposing restrictions affecting H-1B visa holders seeking Green Cards and warning that the move could harm the United States' economic innovation.

In a post on X on Friday (local time), Thanedar, a member of the US House Homeland Security Committee, said he strongly disagreed with the administration's decision to suspend the ability of H-1B visa holders working for major technology companies to apply for Green Cards.

My statement on President Trump's latest attack on our immigrant communities. https://t.co/rKaHiu58q3

— Congressman Shri Thanedar (@RepShriThanedar) October 10, 2026

"As a proud immigrant and a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I strongly disagree with the Trump Administration's decision to suspend the ability for H-1B visa holders who work for major tech companies to apply for Green Cards," Thanedar said.

He said H-1B workers were highly skilled professionals who made significant contributions to the American economy, adding that the programme played a key role in maintaining the country's global leadership in economic innovation.

"H-1B workers are highly skilled workers who make incredible contributions to America, and this program is a key way our country continues to be the world's leader in economic innovation," he said.

Thanedar called on the Trump administration to use existing laws to address fraud and abuse, increase the Green Card cap and expand funding for training American workers in the technology sector.

"If the President truly wants to combat fraud and increase economic innovation, he should use existing laws to curb fraud and abuse, increase the Green Card cap, and increase funding to train American workers in the tech sector," he said.

He further warned that decisions driven by political considerations could undermine the country's technological competitiveness and its ability to counter China's growing influence.

"Making politically motivated decisions about these important programs that help tech companies maintain America's world-class innovation and to effectively stand up to increasing Chinese aggression will deeply harm America," Thanedar added.



PHOTO: ANI

Congressman Shri Thanedar



PHOTO: DREAMSTIME

His remarks come amid a broader debate in the United States over the H-1B visa programme and the Trump administration's action against companies applying for permanent labour certifications for foreign workers.

On Thursday (local time), US Labour Secretary Keith Sonderling announced the suspension of certain major technology and IT outsourcing companies from the PERM programme, citing multiple active federal investigations. The companies named included Cognizant, Infosys, Tata, Wipro, HCL and Capgemini, along with US technology companies Microsoft and Adobe.

Sonderling said the department would neither accept new applications nor process pending permanent labour certification applications involving the companies.

The announcement followed remarks by US Vice President JD Vance, who alleged widespread fraud in the H-1B visa programme and argued that companies should prioritise American workers. Vance specifically cited Microsoft, alleging that the company had laid off American employees while benefiting from thousands of H-1B visas and Green Cards.

Meanwhile, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) clarified on Friday that the suspension of certain companies from the PERM programme was distinct from the H-1B visa programme and did not, by itself, affect the validity of existing H-1B visas or the status of visa holders and their dependents.

During a weekly media briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the decision could, however, affect the permanent-residency process of eligible employees at the companies concerned.

"The suspension of PERM application does not by itself affect the validity of H-1B visas or the status of H-1B visa holders and their dependents," Jaiswal said, adding that "there could be some impact on the permanent residency or green card process of eligible employees of the affected companies."

Responding to Vance's remarks about the programme, Jaiswal said comments that failed to recognise the contribution of Indian professionals to the American economy were unwarranted.

He also criticised the terminology used to refer to foreign workers, saying, "Resorting to terminology that carries painful historical and colonial legacy connotations is deeply offensive."

The MEA emphasised that the movement of skilled professionals benefits both countries by supporting innovation, research, productivity, competitiveness and job creation.

"Talent mobility adds value to both economies, that is, the economies of India and the United States. While it creates opportunities for Indians, it equally helps US companies with cutting-edge talent, innovation, research, productivity, competitiveness, and job creation," Jaiswal said.

"The steps announced by the US do not advance the shared ambitions of both countries," he added, reiterating India's position that talent mobility remains an area of mutual benefit for New Delhi and Washington.

-ANI

Fourth Defendant Convicted In Indian Call Center Elder Fraud Scheme

By a Staff Writer

Bhavesh Kumar Thakkar was directly connected to over $150 million in fraud proceeds scammed from elderly victims across the United States.

A federal jury in Austin convicted an Indian national for two counts related to wire fraud and money laundering, announced U.S. Attorney Justin R. Simmons for the Western District of Texas October 5, 2026.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, Bhavesh Kumar Thakkar, 45, was in the United States on a spousal visa. Thakkar conspired in a fraud scheme with co-defendants Rakesh Barot, Dhruv Rajeshbhai Mangukiya and Kishan Rajeshkumar Patel, from at least September 2022 and continuing until Sept. 17, 2025.

Thakkar served as a U.S.-based coordinator for the receipt and laundering of fraud proceeds in the form of cash and gold obtained from elderly victims across the country, the press release said.

The fraud proceeds were obtained by call center scammers based in India. He also personally received some of those funds from couriers such as Mangukiya and Patel. The funds were shipped to Los Angeles and New York before being laundered overseas. According to authorities, Thakkar was directly connected to over $150 million in fraud proceeds scammed from elderly victims across the United States.

"Foreign actors, both abroad and here in the United States, cannot be allowed to target Americans, especially our most vulnerable citizens," said U.S. Attorney Simmons. "Many victims lose a significant portion of their life savings to these scammers, leaving victims vulnerable and hopeless. When we find them, we will do all we can to take from them the same sense of freedom and comfort they stole from their victims."

FBI San Antonio Division Special Agent in Charge Daniel Faith said, "We're grateful to all of our partners in this case, including numerous FBI Field Offices, Indian authorities via our Legat New Delhi and the Granite Shoals Police Department."

In 2025, Mangukiya and Patel were sentenced to 97 months and 63 months in federal prison, respectively. Barot pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit money laundering and is awaiting sentencing.

Indian Seniors Of Chicago Celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi And Janmashtami At Manav Seva Mandi

By Bhailal M. Patel

Festive gathering at Manav Seva Mandir featured prayers, a devotional discourse, processions, birthday wishes and information on community services.The Indian Seniors of Chicago (ISC) brought together 380 members for a grand celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmashtami and members' birthdays at Manav Seva Mandir in Bensenville.

ISC Treasurer Hemant Modi conducted the program. Bhupendra Suthar opened the gathering by leading Ganesh Stuti, an interfaith prayer and the Hanuman Chalisa. Special guests Bharati-ben and Ashwin Bodivala welcomed attendees with floral bouquets. Suthar also extended birthday greetings to members by singing the popular song "Baar Baar Yeh Din Aaye."

Representatives of Metropolitan Family Services—Radhikaben, Subramanyam and Roshita Pandey—shared information about services available to community members, including the Hot Lunch Program, Medicare and Medicaid, immigration assistance, food stamps and Social Security.

The celebration continued with a devotional program led by renowned storyteller Rajendraprasad Bhatt. ISC President Kantibhai Patel welcomed Bhatt with a floral garland. In his discourse, Bhatt explained the spiritual symbolism associated with Lord Ganesha's head, ears, eyes and belly, as well as his vehicle, the mouse. He also sang dohas and bhajans, including Ramdev Pir no Helo and devotional songs associated with Ganga Sati and Panbai, accompanied by music.

The festivities then filled the temple with song and color. Led by Kantibhai Patel and Navinbhai Patel, 25 members took part in a procession honoring Lord Ganesha, chanting "Jai Ganesh." About 30 members dressed as gopas and gopis, along with participants portraying Nandbaba and Yashoda Maiya, carried the infant Lord Krishna in a decorated basket. The gathering joined in the joyful chant, "Nand Gher Anand Bhayo"—"Joy has filled the home of Nanda."

Members worshipped the idols of Lord Ganesha and infant Lord Krishna, followed by the aarti ceremony.

In closing, Hemant Modi thanked everyone who contributed to the event. Lunch was sponsored by Bharatiben and Ashwinbhai Bodiwala. Sweets were sponsored by Kamleshbhai and Maltiben Vyas; Mukeshbhai and Hiranben Joshi; Hiren Trivedi and Sangeetaben Trivedi; Rameshbhai and Bharatiben Shah; and Sarojben Upadhyay.

PHOTOS: JAYANTI OZA



High profile guests including Bollywood actress Ameesha Patel, and spiritual speaker Govind Krishna Das.



A section of the audience at the ISKCON fundraiser.

Ask A Doc: Measles Can Erase Up To 73 Percent Of Your Immune System's Memory

By Trisha Pasricha, MD, MPH

My sister says there's no real difference between a child getting the measles vaccine and just catching measles, since either way the child ends up immune. Is she right?

I wouldn't describe it as "just catching measles." In the United States, about 1 in 5 unvaccinated people who get measles is hospitalized, and 1 to 3 of every 1,000 children infected will die, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

But let's suppose a child gets measles and has no immediate complications, while another gets the vaccine. Both will be protected against measles afterward.

The problem is the unvaccinated child's immune system may never be the same.

THE LONG-LASTING EFFECTS OF MEASLES

Doctors have observed for more than a century that measles infection temporarily suppresses the immune system. Children with measles become more susceptible to other infections like ear infections or diarrhea. Today, the most common cause of death among young children with measles is pneumonia.

But in recent years, scientists have found something unsettling. How measles changes the immune system is neither simple nor brief.

In a study published in Science in 2015, researchers analyzed decades of childhood mortality data from the United States, England and Wales, and Denmark. They noticed that in the pre-vaccine era, when measles cases spiked, deaths from other infections rose, too – and not just immediately but for the subsequent two to three years. This pattern didn't happen when they looked at other vaccine-preventable diseases such as pertussis, a.k.a whooping cough.

When the measles vaccine arrived, and measles cases fell, deaths from other infectious diseases fell along with them. The scientists estimated that where measles was common, measles infections could have been implicated in as many as half of all childhood deaths from infectious disease.

This could no longer be explained by a transient dip in immune functioning. It pointed to something more long-lasting.

Scientists call this phenomenon measles-induced "immune amnesia," and it's one of the most underappreciated – though potentially devastating – consequences of the disease.

HOW MEASLES MAKES THE IMMUNE SYSTEM FORGET

Over the course of childhood, our immune system builds a library of memory B cells, T cells and antibodies against the viruses and bacteria we encounter. This library gives our bodies the knowledge and power to respond rapidly the next time we meet the same germ. That's partially why both a vaccine and an infection provide immunity. Both add to the library to protect against future encounters.

But measles does something most infections cannot: It sets the library on fire.

Researchers have found that within two months of infection, measles wiped out 11 to 73 percent of the range of antibodies children had acquired over their lifetimes. Think about it: all those years of stomach bugs and colds, and within weeks, your immune system forgets how to defend against them.

Children with more severe measles infections tended to lose more antibodies. Meanwhile, children who were vaccinated against measles with the MMR vaccine saw no such losses in their antibody library.

Those antibodies can come back with time, but only by reencountering the germs, which often means getting sick all over again. For three years after a 2014-2015 measles outbreak in Berlin, children infected with measles were 60 percent more likely to return to the hospital with a different infection compared to children in a control group originally seen for a noninfectious condition. Even compared with children initially hospitalized for other infections, those who previously had measles were 30 percent more likely to come back with a new one.

Researchers have been working on possible treatments in animal models to help prevent immune amnesia, but the research is in early days. For now, vaccination is the only reliable protection.

WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

This year, the CDC has recorded over 3,800 measles cases – well past the 2,289 cases reported in 2025. As numbers grow, we'll need to watch survivors not just in

-Continued On Page 17

ASTROLOGY



This week for you

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

ARIES: Changing circumstances may encourage you to rethink. Financial conditions are likely to become more favourable. Those dealing with health concerns may notice improvement. Aly relaxed schedule is indicated for people working in hospitality. Students can look forward to satisfactory progress in their studies. A leisure trip could provide the perfect opportunity to refresh your mind.

TAURUS: If you need assistance, be willing to approach others. Recent developments at home may leave you unsettled. Competition could make you work harder. Retailers and business owners may have to deal with slower sales during this period. Protect yourself from sudden weather changes to maintain your wellbeing. A familiar person may turn to you for a favour.

GEMINI: Your ideas are ready to move from planning to execution. Someone who has genuine feelings for you may show increased interest and attention. A refreshing getaway to a cooler destination could be on the cards. Professional matters are likely to settle smoothly without creating major complications. You may need to reconsider health advice if it does not suit your daily routine.

CANCER: Your support may be needed by someone within your social circle. At the same time, certain interactions with people close to you may leave you feeling that your kindness is being taken for granted. Work may continue to present small issues that require your attention. A promising deal could face unexpected delays before reaching completion. Keeping unnecessary spending under control will help maintain financial stability.

LEO: Seeking assistance from an experienced person may help you achieve your academic goals more effectively. Adopting better lifestyle habits can bring benefits. Stay attentive to workplace developments, as minor matters could become difficult to manage. If a major purchase is currently beyond your budget, postponing it may be the wiser choice. A break from your usual routine may appeal to some of you.

VIRGO: Make suitable arrangements for a travelling companion, . Your consistent efforts to establish a strong professional reputation are likely to receive recognition. Money that has been pending for some time may finally come through. New ideas and a more expressive approach can bring renewed excitement to your romantic life. A family outing may also be planned, giving everyone an opportunity to spend quality.

LIBRA: Making your abilities more visible will be important. Some students may successfully overcome a academic challenge. Mutual understanding, loyalty and respect can make your relationship satisfying. Those looking to improve their fitness may begin exercising or join a gym. Before putting your savings into any investment, examine conditions carefully. Unfavourable weather could affect your travel plans

SCORPIO: Taking a step back and observing the situation may help. Positive news could arrive regarding your career. Those uncertain about their future may finally gain greater confidence. Financial efforts are likely to bring rewards. Staying committed to fitness can leave you feeling healthier. Spending time on a hobby will provide an escape from monotony.

SAGITTARIUS: A smart decision can help you transform a challenging situation into an opportunity. Consistency between words and actions will strengthen trust between you and your partner. A close person may invite you on a holiday. You are likely to come across a property. Handling workplace challenges while maintaining a positive equation with your superior will give you a sense of accomplishment.

CAPRICORN: Spending too much time thinking about matters could create unnecessary mental pressure. Not everyone you approach for advice may offer the genuine support. Your partner is likely to stand firmly by you. A much-anticipated journey may require postponement. Stay alert to promising professional openings. Assistance from an influential contact may prove valuable. Give proper attention to your wellbeing and trust yourself.

AQUARIUS: A new development may bring much-needed reassurance. Harmony is likely to prevail within the family. A younger member of the family may accomplish something. You may not currently have the enthusiasm to take on unfamiliar responsibilities at work. Those involved in activities may find the period challenging. Romance looks promising as you make efforts.

PISCES: Recognition may boost your confidence. A warm atmosphere is indicated in family matters. Your social calendar may become quite active, with you taking an enthusiastic role in gatherings. Businesspeople can expect encouraging returns from a profitable transaction. Students may move closer to achieving a long-held academic ambition. Your contribution at work is likely to be valued by influential people, supporting continued professional growth.



The Era Of Male Birth Control May Be Nearing (Thanks To Dr. Sujoy Guha)

By Margaret Hetherman

For nearly a half-century, Sujoy Guha has worked to perfect a male contraceptive. Now the 86-year-old Indian doctor's idea is gaining momentum, raising the prospect of changing the way birth control is practiced across the globe.

Injecting hydrogel into the vas deferens – the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles – temporarily blocks sperm from passing through. Guha's injectable contraceptive, known as RISUG, remains under development in India after decades of research, regulatory review and bureaucratic obstacles. But now companies in the United States are pursuing their own versions, racing to bring "vas-occlusive" contraceptives to market.

Next Life Sciences has been developing Plan A, which uses Vasalgel, tracing its lineage directly to Guha's work. The nonhormonal contraceptive is designed to last about 10 years and can be reversed with a second injection of sodium bicarbonate solution, which dissolves the gel.

"You don't have to worry about daily compliance, which is a massive issue with birth control," says L.R. Fox, founder of Next Life Sciences. "You turn off your fertility until you're ready to intentionally turn it on."

Fox describes the interest in male contraception as "explosive," with 55,000 men on the company's interest list. One Plan A video received 4.5 million views overnight, he said.

Contraline is developing ADAM, a nonhormonal hydrogel that also blocks sperm passage through the vas deferens, initially designed to degrade on its own over two years.

Brian T. Nguyen, an OB/GYN and male-contraception researcher at University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine, said he is optimistic about broad-scale adoption of reversible male contraception.

"From a structural standpoint, one of the main issues actually is not necessarily whether or not men want to do it, but it's when they do want to do it, who can provide it, and can they afford it? Can they access it?" Nguyen said.

"With the advent of the first male reversible contraceptives, you're going to have more men entering into conversations about it, whether directly relevant to them, or in abstract, or in ways that just put the idea of pregnancy prevention being in a man's hands into social consciousness," he said. "And that is paradigm-changing."

Men currently have only two widely available contraceptive methods: condoms and vasectomies. Women have more than a dozen options, many with side effects. A 2024 KFF survey found that 82 percent of reproductive-age women had used contraception in the prior 12 months. Among contraceptive users who said they would prefer another method, 23 percent said they prefer that their partner get a vasectomy.

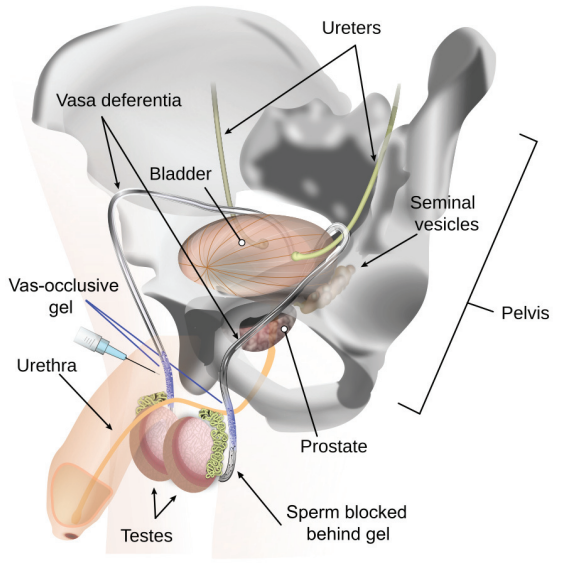


PHOTO: CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION-SHARE ALIKE 4.0

Vas-occlusive Contraception Diagram

In a new documentary, "Give It a Shot," Vaishali Sinha throws a spotlight on the long-running effort to bring a reversible male contraceptive to market while examining why responsibility for birth control has fallen so heavily on women.

"I think it's really important that men ask themselves what they can do, what's inside their body, what are they responsible for," Sinha said in an interview. "Let's turn the lens and see what that can do truly in moving the needle towards gender equity."

There's also the appeal of convenience and control.

"The holy grail of contraception is something that's long-lasting and reversible," Fox says in "Give it a Shot."

Both Plan A and ADAM are well on their way down the regulatory path in the U.S.

Next Life Sciences recently completed Phase 2 clinical trials, according to Fox, with results he described as "showing incredible safety and efficacy." In a trial involving 40 men, Plan A was successfully placed in the vas deferens and reduced sperm counts to zero. The company is testing whether the procedure can be reversed and sperm levels restored.

Phase 3 trials will begin soon, Fox said, adding that the company is aiming to win approval from the Food and Drug Administration in 2028. "We are laying the groundwork now to ensure a worldwide launch," he said.

ADAM's first human study was proof of concept – a first step to assess safety and feasibility, before a larger efficacy study to gain regulatory approval.

Kevin Eisenfrats, co-founder and CEO of Contraline, said in an email that ADAM "could be placed into the vas deferens and could quickly reduce sperm concentration to very low levels without doing so permanently."

Contraline has since redesigned the product to be faster to use and extend the hydrogel's lifespan.

"The next major step is a clinical study of ADAM 2.0, including evaluating the reversal procedure," Eisenfrats said.

The company recently received $92.5 million in financing, Eisenfrats said. The larger share will go toward NES/T, the company's hormonal contraceptive arm/shoulder gel for men, as it is the more clinically advanced program, he added.

RISUG, meanwhile, has traveled a much longer path.

"Give it a Shot" highlights the evolution of the technology, as well as the history behind it – the massive 1970s "sterilization drive," in which more than 6 million men were targeted for forced vasectomies. Since then, the focus has shifted to women.

Today, sterilization is the dominant contraceptive for women across the world.

The documentary spends time in Chittorgarh, a major Indian city in the western state of Rajasthan, where about a dozen women spoke about their experience with sterilization. One woman drew laughs when she shared that the only man she knew who agreed to a vasectomy had 14 kids and a wife who refused the operation.

"There was a great sense of joy between these couples," Sinha said, "and equity that I sensed from their conversation when they would talk about RISUG and how that was navigated and negotiated." She noted that 500 men in India stepped up to participate in a clinical trial.

Sinha identified hurdles the contraceptive has faced in India, including lack of interest among major pharmaceutical companies and "the lack of this being on anyone's agenda, whether nonprofits, governments, or capitalists."

To administer it, a pinhole-size opening is made to expose the vas for injection, followed by a bandage and brief observation.

Sinha recalls one man proudly telling her, "Madam, in 30 minutes, I was good to go back home on my scooter."

The filmmaker says that's a badge of honor in India. "It means you put your balls on your motorbike and you're good to go on the bumpy roads."

-Special to The Washington Post

Ask A Doc: Measles Can Erase Up To 73 Percent Of Your Immune System's Memory

-Continued From Page 15

the first few weeks but years afterward.

Measles is transmitted by respiratory droplets and is incredibly contagious – far more so than Ebola, the flu or covid-19. Consider this: The virus stays suspended in the air, so it can linger in a room for up to two hours after an infected person leaves.

It's no surprise that 90 percent of nonimmune people who are exposed to measles will become infected. But alarming as this is, we have had a remarkably effective tool for decades: two doses of the MMR vaccine provide 97 percent protection against measles. Most people who are vaccinated are protected for life

WHAT I WANT MY PATIENTS TO KNOW

I have several patients who are worried about vaccinating their children. While I know the data on the enormous benefits of vaccines, I also know this: Those parents and I want the same thing, which is a healthy child and safe community. It's easy to shame people for not getting vaccinated or bury them in statistics. In my experience, doing so can quickly shut the door to more dialogue, and it can cause worried, even scared, parents to dig in their heels. Changing minds takes time, empathy, and real curiosity about their concerns before attempting to correct them.

When it comes to measles, I share the idea of immune amnesia often. The difference between the vaccine and the infection isn't just the risk of the illness itself, which alone can be profound.

It's the immune library that the illness can harm on its way out.

Trisha Pasricha is an instructor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.

-Special to The Washington Post

The Washington Post

You can stay overnight in a Frank Lloyd Wright house. But first, a few rules.

By Ashley Stimpson

When you request to book a stay in Gary and Sue Cox's short-term rental property in Ann Arbor, Michigan, you must first fill out a brief intake form stating your name, address, the number of overnight guests in your party and how you intend to use the 2,000-square-foot house, which sits on two wooded acres adjacent to the University of Michigan arboretum.

If you're not planning to throw a wedding, a bachelor party or a family reunion, the Coxes will generally accept your request.

But you're not in the clear yet.

Next comes a phone call from Sue. She'll ask a few more questions and give you a comprehensive rundown of the house rules: no fiddling with the thermostat, no fires in the fireplace and no children younger than 6 - the house is too treacherous for little ones. "It's concrete and brick and wood and sharp, sharp angles," she says.

Weekends during football season require extra vetting, according to Sue - two, maybe even three calls. "I don't want six guys from the visiting team with a keg of beer and a dog. That's my nightmare."

Sue, 78, and Gary, 81, aren't just finicky landlords - they're fastidious stewards of an architectural gem. Multiple times a week, they hand over the keys to the William and Mary Palmer House, designed in the late 1940s by Frank Lloyd Wright, the legendary architect and pioneer of "organic architecture," the idea that homes and buildings should exist in harmony with the natural environment. Built of cypress and brick, the three-bedroom home features an equilateral triangle motif, with hexagonal beds and interior walls that meet at 60 and 120 degrees.

There are about 400 Wright-designed homes still standing in the United States, and 74 of them are open to the public for guided tours. There are only about a dozen you can rent for the full experience. The owners of these homes are driven by a desire to share a piece of architectural heritage while also protecting a historic landmark - not to mention their own budgets. It's a delicate balance.

"You've got an icon that you need to preserve but you're trying to run a business," Sue says. "There are years that we don't make a profit because we hit that decline button an awful lot."

The Coxes never intended to rent out a Wright home. But their son, Jeff Schox, a lawyer in San Francisco, became enamored of the Palmer House while out on runs during his years at the University of Michigan. When the 1952 property went on the market in 2008, Schox and his wife, Kate, scooped it up for $900,000 - but not to live in. Schox had a vision, Sue says, "to give people the opportunity not to just go through a house and stay behind the velvet rope and end up in the gift shop, but to experience it." His parents, approaching retirement and living in nearby Plymouth, Michigan, would be its custodians.

The original owners had taken such meticulous care of the house that there was almost no work needed before the Coxes posted it on short-term rental sites. In the summer of 2009, when the first guests arrived, "I felt like I had dropped the baby off at the day care center," Sue says. "And I just had to trust the people that took it."

Michael Ditmer, 65, was a self-described Frank Lloyd Wright enthusiast when he purchased the Bernard and Fern Schwartz House, also known as Still Bend, in Two Rivers, Wisconsin. The home is based on a design that Wright completed for a Life magazine feature called "Dream House," for which the architect was asked to design the perfect home for a family of moderate income.

In 2003, when Still Bend hit the market, Ditmer couldn't afford to buy it outright. So he and his brother, Gary, hatched a plan to fund the purchase and upkeep by renting it out to other Wright enthusiasts. But first they had to repair a sunken fireplace, replace the roof and remove the siding that covered the 3,000-square-foot home.

"The first year, we spent more money than we paid for the house just to stabilize it," Michael Ditmer says.

Ditmer speaks with every guest before confirming their stay, asking innocuous-seeming questions about their interest in the house or familiarity with Wright. "It may not sound like they're being screened," he says, "but they're being screened."

But from the beginning, Ditmer has been pleasantly surprised by his guests' thoughtfulness. "People are so reverent to make sure they take good care of it," he says.

When Thomas Papinchak was growing up in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a visit to nearby Fallingwater - by far Wright's most famous home - kick-started his lifelong fascination with the architect. He started giving tours of his childhood tree house, which he had built beneath a cantilever roof.

Today Papinchak, 49, owns Polymath Park, a 130-acre resort in the Laurel Highlands region of Pennsylvania that features four rental homes, two designed by Wright apprentice Peter Berndtson (the Blum and Balter houses) as well as two designed by Wright (the Donald C. Duncan House and the R.W. Lindholm, or "Mäntylä" House) that were disassembled and moved from Illinois and Minnesota, respectively, where they were slated for demolition.

The homes at the resort, 30 minutes from the Wright masterpiece Fallingwater, offer visitors a more intimate experience - without the tour guide.

"You can always get an hour-long feel of a space," Papinchak says, "but here you can immerse yourself, really make the house your home for one night, and see how it felt to be a client of Wright's."

Papinchak, a home builder and restaurateur who runs Polymath Park with his wife, Heather, is purposeful about giving guests "a really true feel" of what the houses would have been like when they were finished in the 1950s and '60s, incorporating period furniture, kitchenware and literature. "You're not walking into an Ikea," he says. "You're going back in time."

But going back in time has its drawbacks, too.

"I tell all the clients you are back in 1952, whether you want to be or not," says Sue Cox. The Palmer House does not have a TV or a programmable thermostat.

Ditmer warns guests that the bedrooms in Still Bend, which are compact by modern standards, should be thought of more as sleeping rooms.

The properties are also full of expensive and sometimes original items. Guests at Still Bend have scraped the board-and-batten walls, while an errant headphone cord sent an antique lamp crashing to the concrete floor.

A guest at Polymath Park once put his foot through a barrel chair designed by the influential Japanese American designer George Nakashima while standing on it for a photo.

"Beautiful $12,000 chair," Papinchak says. "But after that, everything felt kind of incidental."

In addition to the occasional mishap, maintenance is an ongoing challenge for the hosts.

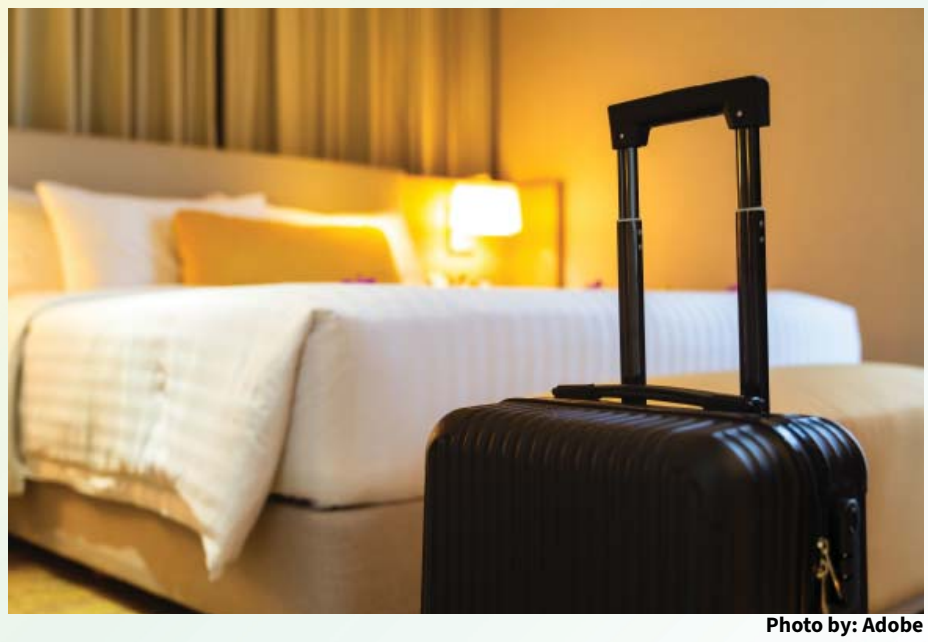


Photo by: Adobe

"When you have a plumbing problem, you need a plumber that understands how they used to do it in the old days," says Gary Cox. The Coxes rely on the sons of the original team of tradespeople who built the house in the 1950s. When the original Thermador stove needed a new burner, a replacement part was no longer available. Now the six-burner stove is a four-burner stove.

Owning a Frank Lloyd Wright rental, Ditmer adds, is certainly not for those looking for an investment property.

"It took many, many years before we were in the black, and we still put money in every year," he says. "It's more a labor of love than a transaction in the market."

Ditmer, though, is sustained by the avalanche of gratitude he receives from his guests, a feeling that goes both ways. "They keep thanking me and thanking me, and I thank them for helping us to restore and maintain the house."

The guest book at the Duncan House at Polymath Park is filled with grateful messages in a variety of languages; the words "bucket list" and "dream come true" are written on many pages.

"I like to hear the word 'magical,'" says Papinchak. Guests often mention how the house takes on different moods depending on the time of day. Wright was known for orienting his homes to take advantage of the sun's light and heat.

"Early in the morning, the light is very crisp, and then the afternoon light is mellow, and you're ready to relax," Papinchak says. "And then in the evening, the soft light makes it very romantic, almost spiritual."

Guests at Ann Arbor's Palmer House are also captivated by the light. "I check in on people, and they planned to go to the Henry Ford Museum, planned to go here, and go there," says Gary Cox. "And instead, they say they just sat there for three days and watched the house change with the light."

Veteran Actor Nana Patekar Dies At 75; Cinema Loses Its Powerhouse Performer

What would Indian cinema look like without the unmistakable voice, intensity and screen presence of Nana Patekar?

Veteran actor Nana Patekar, one of the most respected performers in Hindi and Marathi cinema, passed away on Thursday at the age of 75 after suffering a severe cardiac arrest at his residence in Goa.

Patekar was reportedly found unconscious at his home and was rushed to Manipal Hospital in Dona Paula for treatment. He was declared dead at 5:20 am. Doctors tried to revive the actor for around 45 minutes, but he did not respond to the treatment.

Dr Shekhar Salkar, Chief of the Oncology Department at Manipal Hospital, confirmed the actor's death to news agency ANI and said that a medico-legal case has been registered. A post-mortem examination will also be conducted.

The news marks the end of a long and distinctive acting career that saw Patekar move comfortably between Hindi and Marathi cinema. He was never an actor who needed elaborate introductions. His voice, expressions and ability to bring a certain intensity to even a few lines of dialogue made him instantly recognisable to generations of film audiences.



PHOTO: ANI FILES

Nana Patekar.

Born Vishwanath Patekar in Murud-Janjira in Maharashtra's Raigad district, Nana Patekar studied at Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art in Mumbai before entering the world of acting. He made his Bollywood acting debut with the 1978 film Gaman and went on to establish himself through a series of challenging roles.

His breakthrough came with films that allowed him to showcase the range that would eventually define his career. His performance in Parinda earned him the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actor, while Krantiveer brought him the National Film Award for Best Actor. He also received acclaim for films such as Agni Sakshi, Khamoshi: The Musical, Ab Tak Chhappan and Apaharan.

For many viewers, however, Patekar was not limited to serious dramas or intense characters. He could be equally effective in commercial cinema and comedy. His performance as Uday Shetty in Welcome introduced him to another generation of viewers and turned the character into one of the most remembered comic roles of his later career.

Patekar's work also extended beyond acting. He directed Prahaar: The Final Attack and was involved in writing and filmmaking, further reflecting his interest in different aspects of cinema. His career was marked by an ability to move between mainstream films and more performance-driven projects without being easily confined to one particular image.

Over the years, Patekar received several major honours for his contribution to cinema. He won three National Film Awards and four Filmfare Awards, apart from Maharashtra State Film Awards and other recognitions. In 2013, he was conferred the Padma Shri for his contribution to cinema and the arts.

Away from the screen, Patekar's life also had its share of personal struggles. He married Neelkanti Patekar in 1978. The couple had two sons, Durvasa and Malhar. Their elder son, Durvasa, died at a young age due to illness. Nana and Neelkanti later lived separately for several years due to personal differences, though they remained legally married.

Patekar was also known for his association with social causes and his connection with rural Maharashtra. He remained involved in efforts aimed at supporting farmers and people affected by difficult circumstances, adding another dimension to his public life beyond cinema.

But it was his work as an actor that ultimately left the strongest mark. Whether playing a volatile protagonist, a menacing villain, a police officer or a comic character, Patekar had a way of making his presence felt. He did not rely on conventional glamour. His performances were often built around voice, body language, silences and an intensity that could change the mood of a scene.

His passing leaves behind a body of work that stretches across generations and genres. From Parinda and Krantiveer to Ab Tak Chhappan and Welcome, Nana Patekar created characters that audiences continued to remember long after the films ended.

Indian cinema has lost an actor whose presence was difficult to replicate. Nana Patekar may have been known for many different roles, but his greatest legacy remains the same, an unmistakable performer who brought his own voice, temperament and personality to every character he played.

"Like a bird, he soared freely across the skies of cinema": PM Modi pays tribute to late actor Nana Patekar.

-ANI



REUTERS/MANAV MANGLANI (INDIA)/FILE PHOTO

Bollywood actor Nana Patekar (L) and choreographer Ganesh Acharya rehearse during the shooting of their forthcoming film 'Horn OK Please' at a studio in Mumbai March 26, 2008. Picture taken March 26, 2008.



REUTERS/SHERWIN CRASTO SC/CP/FILE PHOTO

Bollywood star Nana Patekar, who plays the role of a policeman, poses for photographers during a media gathering to speak about his role in the Indian movie "Ab Tak Chhappan" (56 Until Now), in Bombay March 3, 2004.

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