

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATIONS (NFIA)



Serving the Indian American Community since 1980

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OCTOBER IS HALLOWEEN MONTH – AND THE LEGEND GOES THAT IRISH BROUGHT THE CUSTOM OF CARVING PUMPKIN AND MAKING JACK -O-LANTERN TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

All children look forward to the day of Halloween when they dress up in some funny, many sweet and fairy-tale like and many devil-like costumes to popularize the story and history of "stingy Jack". All parents get asked by their children and grand-children how they should be dressed for this event. It is believed in Ireland that the boundary between our world and the realm of the deities and the dead became one and it allowed the spirits of the dead to walk on Earth during this night of October 31 through November One. To represent the supernatural beings, but also to keep evil spirits away, people hollowed out turnips and other vegetables, carved them with scary faces and used them as lanterns.



History has recorded well its origin and how Irishimmigrant brought this tradition with them when they came to America in the 19th century. Since pumpkins were easier to find and better suited for carving, the immigrants started using pumpkins instead of turnips. Children want to be treated or they would trick you to doing something funny or bad. Mostly they get treated with sweets.

Why are carved pumpkins called "Jack-o'-lantern"? The term "jack-o'-lantern" (Jack of the lantern) is derived from the old Irish legend of Stingy Jack. According to the legend, Stingy Jack was an Irish blacksmith who loved to drink and also to deceive people. One version of the legend says that Stingy Jack was supposed to die on All Hallows Eve. Satan came to take Jack's soul, but Jack asked him for a favor. Before dying, he wanted to eat an apple. The devil climbed up an apple tree. But Jack carved a cross in the bark and the devil got trapped. In order to be free again, Satan promised Jack not to take his soul. When Jack dies, he can't go to heaven because of his sins. But he can't go to hell either, because the devil promised not to take his soul. Therefore, Jack has to wander the Earth, searching for a resting place. The devil gives him a burning piece of coal to lighten his path. Jack keeps the coal in a hollowed-out turnip that he uses as a lamp. That is why these Halloween "lamps" are called "jack-o'-lantern". Happy Halloween all!!

Angela Anand, NFIA Immediate Past President, Editor of the newsletter

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA ACCOMPLISHES HIS MISSION TO CONVINCING ITS ROLE IN WORLD ECONOMICS AND POLITICS ESPECIALLY IN INDO-PACIFIC REGION:

Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi Ji, paid a short visit to the United States, to attend the Quad Summit, at the White House. This summit was hosted by the president of the United States, Joe Biden. Prime Minister Modi also met with the Vice-President Kamala Harris in another meeting and discussed some issues and challenges faced by India internally. Modi ji also traveled to New York and addressed the United Nations General Assembly before returning to India.



He had traveled to the States in 2014 first time, then second time in 2017, and during this time which is his third visit, he met with CEOs of multi-national companies with a goal of convincing and encouraging them to invest and increase their presence in India. The same goal permeated in his talks with his counterparts from Australia and Japan.

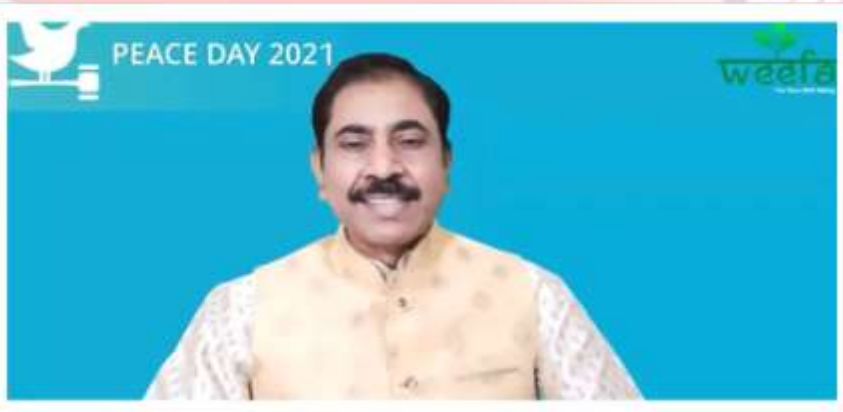
The press has called Prime Minister's visit as successful. He was also a recipient of 157 artifacts which he traveled with on his return to India. Out of these 157 artifacts, 71 were cited as of cultural nature, there were 60 figurines related to Hinduism, 16 to Buddhism, and 9 to Jainism, and included was also an 8.5 cm tall exquisite bronze Nataraja from the 12th century.

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Indian diplomats and press. It was believed that it strengthened the diplomatic relations that are considered to be at all time high at this moment. This has also made India and the World aware that India's role is an important one in Indo-Pacific region. His visit was determined to be an accomplished one by Indian diplomats and press. It was believed that it strengthened the diplomatic relations that are considered to be at all time high at this moment. This has also made India and the World aware that India's role is an important one in Indo-Pacific region.

NFIA MEMBER ORGANIZATION – EXCEL COLLABORATED WITH OTHERS AND SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY:

Excel Foundations USA in collaboration with Neo Hindu Movement and LA Ganesh TV celebrated an International Peace Day by hosting a Virtual Interfaith Musical "Peace Within" on Sunday, 26 September 2021. The event was emceed by Charu Shivakumar and Ramesh Thalli.



Sri Ravindra Prasad, CEO, WEEFA was the keynote speaker who highlighted the importance of feeding positivity to the Body, Mind and Soul. Highlight of the evening was messages about Peace and Harmony.

Jasmin Sivakumaran presented graceful Ganesh Vandana Devotional song. Many others, namely, Ramesh Thalli, Usha Shrita, Naindavi, Fez Meghani and Stella

Davies also rendered songs. Susan and Shan Ramani captivated the audience through their Instrumental music followed by Soundarya Lahiri recital by Nagesh Tavarageri. Charu Shivakumar explained how well-being is not just being disease free but is the experience of contentment, happiness and prosperity. Kewal Kanda, Aparna Hande and Rani Kuusto attended and the event and it concluded with the peace Mantra recited by Ramesh Thalli. It was a well-attended event and was enjoyed by all.

INDIAN FASHIONS AND WARE FEATURED IN LOS ANGELES FOR MOSTLY INDIAN AUDIENCE:

Sheraton Cerritos in the Greater Los Angeles area was the location of an interesting event of fashions. The event was held on October 3, 2021, and was envisioned and co-created by Smita and Dr. Kishore Vasant. The goal was to invite the younger generation of fashion-conscious Indians. The event succeeded in providing a platform for designers and vendors in showcasing and desiring to sell their fashion merchandise including jewelry, bags, clothing and home related goods to audience with the help of models.



The opening designer was Rohitava Banerjee who showcased his Indo-Western fusion collection. Rohitava uses high quality Indian fabrics with hand embroidered techniques and styles them with modern silhouettes to create exquisite garments.

The show finale was a Los Angeles based brand Namaslay that draws inspiration from Indian goddesses. Avnee, the designer of Namaslay Collective was born and brought up in the Los Angeles area. The City of Artesia and the City of Cerritos Council members were in attendance. The show was also supported by the Artesia Chamber of Commerce of which Smita is an active member and resident. Ms. Vasu Pawar, a long-time member of National Federation of Indian Associations also supported along with others this event of the LA FASHION WEEK.

NFIA MEMBER ORGANIZATION FROM SEATTLE WASHINGTON ALONG WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS CONDUCTED EVENT ON THE BIRTH DAY OF MAHATMA GANDHI JI:

The event was a collaboration between NFIA, FIAWA, and IACTA (Indo-American Cultural Trade Association). In Bellevue, Washington, in the park behind the library where the glorious Mahatma Gandhi statue stands, people gathered to celebrate Gandhi Jayanthi.



This event was conducted by the Executive Vice President of NFIA, Lavanya Reddy. The Regional Vice President (Pacific North) of NFIA, Prashanthi Harathi, Kriti and Nikshiya Reddy from IACTA, also helped conduct the event. This celebration was attended by multiple VIPs: Manka Dhingra (Washington State Senator), Vandana Slatter (Washington State Representative), Janice Zahn (Council Member,

City of Bellevue), and Conrad Lee (Former Mayor of Bellevue; Council Member, City of Bellevue). The event was supported by ICC, WATS, and the Brahma Kumaris.

An essay competition on the topic of Gandhi's Role in Achieving Indian Independence was held as a part of the celebrations. Multiple entries were received, and the prizes were sponsored by ICC. Patriotic songs were sung by local talents, and Indian Classical Kuchipudi Dance was performed by Tanya Harathi. The event was successful as it brought people together to celebrate Gandhi ji's birthday.

152ND BIRTH JAYANTI OF MAHATMA GANDHI – CELEBRATION WAS HELD AT LAKE FOREST VEDIC MANDIR IN SOUTHERN CA:

India Association of California and few NFIA officers jointly celebrated Gandhi Ji's 152nd birth anniversary on October 2nd, 2021 with marigold flower garlands. Also, few candles were lit on the table to honor his presence in everyone's heart. Day started with his favorite bhajan Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram by Pandit ji of Vedic Mandir, Mr. Anil Sharma.

Young boy Kavya Honda spoke about Gandhi ji's life story. He had researched well for his speech. How he became icon and nonviolence leader of the world. He said Gandhi ji was given the title of Mahatma by a well-known Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore. Great leaders of the world followed Non-Violence movement of Gandhi ji such as Dr. King, Nelson Mandela, and Dali lama. Ronit Khanna young student of 7 grades also gave his speech about Gandhi ji.

It was delightful to hear from young people the life story of Gandhi ji. They both spoke well and understood how India had gained freedom with nonviolence means. Kamini khare shared her own experiences. One time she was visiting her senior client and when she reached at his office that gentleman stood up and greeted her with words "Jai Gandhi". He was from middle east. She was surprised that people of India have been connected with name of Gandhi ji in the world. President of NFIA, Mr. Ajoy Dube, spoke about Gandhi ji's life in south Africa and how he had influenced them for their own Freedom. He gave brief description about all Andolons such as salt movement, Dandi march, Kisan Andolan and quit India movement. It is sad to acknowledge that Mahatma who led the nonviolence movement in his country was shot to death in his own country.

Mr. Dube thanked everyone for coming to prayer meeting to mark the 152nd birth Jayanti of father of nation. Late prime minister Shri Lal bahadur Shashtri ji was remembered on his birthday also. He was well liked and one of the best prime ministers of India. He gave the slogan Jai Jawan Jai Kisan. Mr. Dube provided refreshments for the attendees.

GOPIO ORGANIZED TWO PROGRAMS TO WELCOME INDIAN STUDENTS TO THE UNITED STATES UNIVERSITIES:

In cooperation with the Consulate General of India in New York, GOPIO-Manhattan organized a 'Meet & Greet' for Students from India studying in the Northeast. The purpose of September 20, 2021, according to the press release was to connect them to the community and provide mentoring opportunities. Additionally, to make them aware of Consular services available to them. Students from 21 universities participated in person or virtually.

The host for the evening was Ambassador Randhir Kumar Jaiswal. The students were also welcomed virtually by the Indian Ambassador to the Unites States, Tarajit Singh Sandhu from the Indian Embassy, Washington DC virtually.

It was an event where many reputed highly placed successful people were invited to share their experiences and offer suggestion for adopting to a different academic and cultural environment. GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham, who also serves as an advisor to GOPIO-Manhattan. Dr. Abraham encouraged

the speakers to mentor, motivate and guide the students. Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu, via a video message said, "Indian Students continue to be a strong bridge between India and USA..." The education and knowledge partnership are an area that holds great potential in our bilateral relations. During my visits across US, I've always made it a point to visit universities and visit faculty and students there." He further added "We have an active student hub and a dedicated student wing at the Embassy. You can count on them for any assistance."



Ambassador Jaiswal said, at consulate they, "welcome all the students from India with open heart as you pursue your future studies here in the North-East region and help in the growth of economy here in USA and back home in India." He further highlighted the goal to expand this program to include more students, from the pool of 200,000 students that come to the USA for further studies, to attend in person more interactive sessions and gain exposure to various services offered by the Consulate for the benefit of the students from registration at the Consular Portal, to cultural events to mental health support initiatives.



Those who spoke included GOPIO-Manhattan Executive Vice President Professor Rajasekhar

Vangapaty, Ms. Abha Kumar, Business transformation leader, Advisory Board Shopelier, Former CIO-Corporate & International Vanguard, Mr. Prasan Kumar, Senior VP & Strategy Director at Publicis Group & Lecturer at Glasgow Caledonian New York College, Mr. Ankit Chaudhari, Associate Vice President at JP Morgan Chase, Mr. Neil Datta, Head of Due Diligence at Forbes Family Trust & Co-Founder Meritas, Ms. Apeksha Tewari, Master of Laws from Penn State Law and Lawyer, Akshat Singh and many more offered suggestions and shared their experiences.

Mr. Shivender Sofat, President GOPIO-Manhattan, who joined virtually told the importance of mentoring to the students, discussed chapter activities and motivated everyone to volunteer and become members at future events held by GOPIO Manhattan. Mr. Siddharth Jain, GOPIO Manhattan Board Member & Program Coordinator; conducted the questions & answers session and concluded with vote of thanks.

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT INDIAN STUDENTS WERE INVITED TO A RECEPTION ORGANIZED BY GOIPO-CT:

Global Organization of People of Indian Origin Connecticut Chapter (GOPIO-CT) organized a program of welcoming new students from India at the Univ. of Connecticut, School of Business from its Stamford and Hartford campuses with a networking dinner on Friday, Sept. 24th at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Stamford.

While it was networking event for the students and the Indian American community, it also served as an interactive session with a high-profile panel of Indian American Corporate Achievers and entrepreneurs. Global Organization of People of Indian Origin Connecticut Chapter (GOPIO-CT) organized a program of welcoming new students from India at the Univ. of Connecticut, School of Business from its Stamford and Hartford campuses with a networking dinner on Friday, Sept. 24th at the Hampton Inn and Suites in Stamford. While it was networking event for the students and the Indian American community, it also served as an interactive session with a high-profile panel of Indian American Corporate Achievers and entrepreneurs.



The program started with a welcome by GOPIO-CT President Ashok Nichani who told the students to consider GOPIO-CT as their big family and that they could seek help from the chapter. GOPIO International Chairman and GOPIO-CT Trustee Dr. Thomas Abraham moderated the interactive panel session. The panelists included Anand Chavan, founder and CEO,

GuardX, Inc. (New York, NY); Ramya Subramanian, Co-Founder and COO of Docty Inc. (Stamford, CT); Pradeep Govil, Program Manager, ASML (Wilton, CT); Sunita Menon, Global Data Advisor & Adjunct Prof. at U. of Florida and formerly with IBM Data-Driven Business (Stamford, CT); Prasad Chintalapudi, Vice President, Panzer Solutions (Norwalk, CT); Siddharth (Sid) Jain, President, AAAUM (OM)/Co-Founder, HVB 88 Angels LLC (Pelham, NY) and Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty, Registrar, Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), SUNY (New York, NY).

REMEMBERING INDER SINGH, A FAMILY MAN, A COMMUNITY WORKER, AND PAST PRESIDENT OF NFIA FROM 1988-1992 AND CHAIRMAN FROM 1992-1996 ON HIS SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY:



Inder Singh lived in Los Angeles, CA for a long time. He is very fondly remembered by his family, friends, and fraternity of NFIA as well as by GOPIO, another association that he was Chairman President from 2004-2009. Upon retiring from the Los Angeles County, he devoted most of his time doing community work and writing about Indian diaspora.

Inder Singh was born on October 1, 1932 and died on September 27, 2019. His community involvement started when he worked for the Los Angeles County and developed good relations with the Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Michael D. Antonovich. He would secure county grounds to celebrate India Independence Day.

To this event many important celebrities from politics, academia, and culture were invited and outdoor booths were constructed

for merchants to showcase their wares and for artists to show their talents in performing arts. This event became so popular that thousands of people would participate each year and it brought many merchants and performers together for this great celebration.

This started in 1981, when he became the founding president of the Federation of Indian American Associations (FIA) of Southern California and got another community leader, later president and chairman of NFIA, Dr. Rajen Anand established as the secretary of the association. Mr. Singh never stopped doing community work until it became difficult for him to drive distances due to health reasons and then he curtailed his activities but never stopped completely. Mr. Singh founded the Indian American Heritage Foundation (IAHF), a society that celebrates and honors academic excellence and achievements of children of Indian origin at a later date. He is remembered by those students who received awards each year.

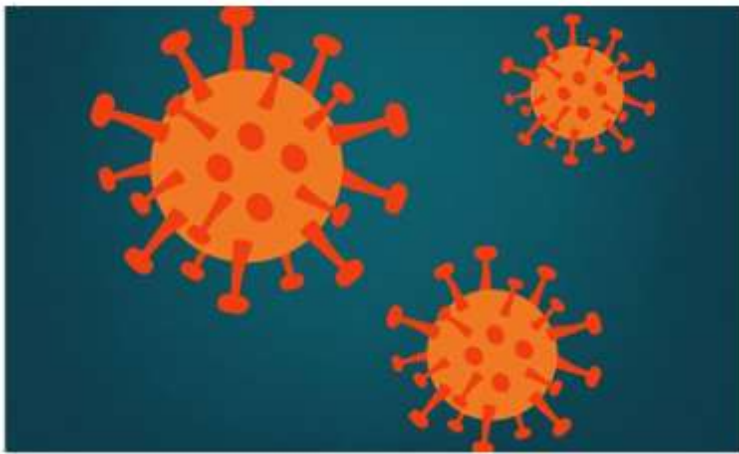


One year, he was not able to secure the grounds for this mela and I (Angela Anand) was able to get the Promenade of Long Beach for this annual festival. At that time, I was working at the City Hall as an analyst and was responsible for monitoring grant-funded programs of the city. The city declared the India Independence as the India Festival Day and the boardwalks were all decked and the city and the neighboring cities enjoyed having Indians showcase their best merchandise and performers. I still have great memories of receiving the proclamation from the mayor of the City of Long Beach along with Inder Singh and we enjoyed the ambiance of the city and the windy Long Beach.

All old timers miss him and so does his son and daughter and their families, along with NFIA, GOPIO family, and Southern California community. He left a great legacy behind and is always remembered by all Los Angeles community who saw him work tirelessly for the benefit of the community.

PFIZER BOOSTERS ARE AVAILABLE AND COVID DEATHS AND CASES ARE STARTING TO DECREASE BUT CAUTION IS RECOMMENDED IN THE UNITED STATES :

The Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center maintains an ongoing count of the COVID-19 cases and deaths in the United States and worldwide. As of 5:15 p.m. on October 7, 2021, the tally is:



Total cases worldwide: 222,989,119 (up from 222,372,295 Wednesday)

Total deaths worldwide: 4,602,538 (up from 4,593,268 Wednesday)

Total cases in the United States: 40,572,631 (up from 40,412,799 Wednesday)

Total deaths in the United States: 654,268 (up from 652,175 Wednesday)

Pfizer has filed emergency use of vaccine for children and the sad part of the pandemic is that there are over 1200 children who have lost their prime caretakers due to spread of this virus. Pfizer and BionNTech said on Thursday that they are seeking U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) emergency use authorization for their coronavirus vaccine for children ages 5 to 11, as it was reported by the CNN.

Due to holiday season upon us, travel, social gatherings, and festivals are ensuing this month. All healthcare agencies are suggesting precautions and use of masks for more time until such times when the numbers will get smaller.

Healthcare agencies and Internet blogging sites have been mentioning that Pediatric infections continue to be high. The number of new child COVID-19 cases remains exceptionally high. Latest figures from the American

Academy of Pediatrics show that as of September 30, nearly 5.9 million children have tested positive for COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic. Over 173,000 cases were added the past week, with nearly 850,000 child cases added over the past four weeks. As has been the trend since late August, children accounted for just over a quarter of reported weekly COVID-19 cases. Kids, however, are seldom hospitalized and make up less than 1 percent of COVID-19 deaths.

NFIA is a 501c (3) association. NFIA's newsletter aims to inform and to mobilize the Indian American community nationally. It was founded four decades ago and has been continuing to work with the community organizations in large metropolitan areas of the United States. Your suggestions on topics of interest and NFIA's member organizations activities and projects can be featured here and circulated with the help of this communication tool.

Please let us know if you like to receive the newsletter by giving us your best email address. Editor: Angela Anand, angela_anand@yahoo.com Contributions to this issue were made by the following individuals. Contributing Members: GOPIO former treasurer and NFIA's Administrative Director II, Kewal Kanda, GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham; Prashanti Harathi, NFIA Regional VP; Charu Shivkumar, president of Excel; Vasu Pawar of SteptoStepUp; President of NFIA, Ajoy Dubey; and Editor of NFIA newsletter, and former president of NFIA, Angela Anand; and Also credited for information here are Everyday Health and John Hopkins data base, and CNN.
