

# KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

APRIL 2023

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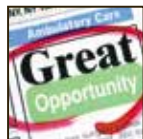
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Compassionate community leader  
'Most missed, but always remembered'

## TRIBUTE TO KANTI BAKARANIA OF TAMPA BAY

SEPT. 11, 1952-MARCH 4, 2023



By **NITISH S. RELE** – [editor@khaasbaat.com](mailto:editor@khaasbaat.com)

Writer John Bunyan said: "You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you."

If anyone exemplified Bunyan's ideal, it was our friend — the late Kanti Bakarania of Tampa Bay, a gentleman who truly lived a life of giving without expecting any return. All of us are indebted to him for his service, dedication and love for the community.

The soft-spoken Kantibhai, as he was known, was a native of Lathi, Gujarat. With a master's degree in chemistry as well as degrees in law and computer science, he worked as a senior tech support analyst until his retirement some years back. His cheerful disposition, obliging character and love for selfless work and commitment are unparalleled. While the Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay and Sanatan Mandir were two of the most fortunate recipients of his attention, he dedicated time for many other noble causes also.

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**ALL-ELECTRIC  
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# WHO'S WHO

Khaas Baat is a monthly publication that has been in circulation since August 2004. Issues are direct mailed to subscribers and also are available at South Asian grocery stores and restaurants. It presents exclusive, informative and relevant news about the Indian American community in Florida to its readers.

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## SIGNIFICANT DATES

- APRIL 4: MAHAVIR JAYANTI**
- APRIL 6: HANUMAN JAYANTI**
- APRIL 14: BAISAKHI**
- APRIL 22: RAMADAN ENDS**

## EVENTS

### TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG/CLEARWATER

**APRIL 1: UGADI;** organized by Telugu Association of Florida, Tampa Bay; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; for information, visit <https://taftampa.com>

**APRIL 11: HANUMAN CHALISA;** second Tuesday of month; Vishnu Mandir Tampa, 5803 Lynn Road; 7 to 9 p.m.; for information, call Deo Gajadhar at (813) 817-9714.

**APRIL 14: APTAPUTRA SATSANG;** presented by Tampa Dada Bhagwan Parivar; Clarion Inn and Suites, 20967 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater; 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. followed by dinner; free and open to everyone; for details, call 1-877-505-3232, Ext. 1015.

**APRIL 15: MUSICAL CONCERT;** Hindu Temple of Florida cultural hall, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 10.30 a.m.; Amrutha Venkatesh and group; organized by Swaralaya; for information, email [swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com](mailto:swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com)

**APRIL 19: ICC SENIORS GET-TOGETHER;** India Cultural Center, 5509 Lynn Road, Tampa; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; free seminar, lunch and entertainment; no age restriction; for information, text email address along with your name to Bhikhu Nayi at (631) 560-2718 to receive details about seniors gathering every month; or call Mahesh Modha at (813) 476-1540.

**APRIL 15: NACHANGE SARI RAAT;** dinner, dance, entertainment; organized by Punjabi Association of Tampa Bay; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; DJ music, Punjabi dhol; for information, call (813) 340-8640 or (727) 462-2320.

**APRIL 28: "SPRING GALA;"** hosted by Academy of Odissi Dance; Indian dances include Bollywood, bhangra, Odissi, and more, followed by dinner; \$35 per person; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; for information, call Gopa Rautray at (813) 992-5234.

**APRIL 29: "HI-GH-ON-MU-SIC;"** presented by Malayalee Association of Central Florida; Kerala Center renovation, activities and charity fundraiser; 5 p.m.; Wharton High School, 20150 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa;

book tickets at [www.macftampa.com](http://www.macftampa.com) or call (813) 461-6747.

**MAY 6: CARNATIC QUARTET INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT;** Hindu Temple of Florida cultural hall, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 10.30 a.m.; Shreya Devnath (violin), Mylai Karthikeyan (Nagaswaram), Praveen Sparsh (mridangam), Gummudipondi R.Jeevanathan (Thavil); organized by Swaralaya; for information, email [swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com](mailto:swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com).

### SARASOTA/BRADENTON

**ONGOING THROUGH MAY 28; "Gods & Lovers: Paintings and Sculptures from India;"** exhibit at John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 5401 Bay Shore Blvd., Sarasota; for details, visit [www.ringling.org](http://www.ringling.org)

### ORLANDO/CASSELBERRY

**APRIL 2: HSCF NEW AGE GROUP MEETING;** Hindu Society of Central Florida community hall, 1994 Lake Drive, Casselberry; 1:30 to 5 p.m.; games, tea, coffee, snacks; free for annual paid 2023 members, non-members \$5 per person; RSVP to [hscfnewagegroup@gmail.com](mailto:hscfnewagegroup@gmail.com)

**APRIL 8: CONSULAR SERVICES CAMP;** organized by Consulate General of India, Atlanta, and Indian American Chamber of Commerce; 9 a.m.; Hindu Society of Central Florida, 1994 Lake Drive, Casselberry; for more information, call Jam Gautam at (321) 302-1258; register at [www.iaccorlando.com](http://www.iaccorlando.com)

**APRIL 9: ONE-DAY YOGA CAMP;** organized by Sakthi Yogalaya & Prana Science; 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Hindu Society of Central Florida, 1994 E. Lake Drive, Casselberry; camp includes Thirumoolar Pranayama conducted by Dr. Sundar Balasubramaniyan, Wellness yoga for kids/adults conducted by Kavitha Ilayaraja, director of Sakthi Yogalaya; \$20 per adult; \$10 per kid (ages 5 to 12); register at <https://tinyurl.com/Yoga-Camp-Orlando>; email [sakthiyogalaya@gmail.com](mailto:sakthiyogalaya@gmail.com) or call (804) 300-7141.

**APRIL 23: ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT;** organized by Indian American Chamber of Commerce; Eagle Creek Golf Club, 10350 Emerson Lake Blvd., Orlando; 7 a.m. register at [www.iaccorlando.com](http://www.iaccorlando.com)

**APRIL 30: EKAL FUNDRAISER CONCERT;** Sur Sangam band; Olympia High School, 4301 S Apopka Vineland Road, Orlando; 5 p.m. for information, call Suresh Gupta (407) 352-2889.

**MAY 6: INDIAN HERITAGE DAY;** organized by Indian Horizon of Florida and Central Florida Indian Cultural Association; VFW Post 10147, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka; 5:30 p.m.; \$10 per person; for information, call (321) 662-1887.

Cont'd on page 4





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<b>SATURDAY, APRIL 01 (6:30 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • SHRI JAGANNATH BHAJAN & EKADASHI	<b>EVERY MONDAY - 6:30 PM</b> • SHIV ABHISHEK AND PUJA
<b>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 05 (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • HANUMAN JANMOTSAV MARUTI YAGNA	<b>EVERY TUESDAY - 7:00 PM</b> • SUNDARKAND • HANUMAM KATHA
<b>SATURDAY, APRIL 08 (5:30 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • MATA KI CHOWKI	<b>EVERY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM</b> • SAI BABA SATSANG • MAHA PRASAD
<b>SUNDAY, APRIL 09 (6:30 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • CHATURTHI GANESH PUJA & HAVAN	<b>Pandit Manikya Sharma</b> 813-484-9568
<b>SUNDAY, APRIL 16 (4:00 PM to 6:00 PM)</b> • ANANDA NA GARBO	<b>Pandit Rushi Vyas</b> 813-503-3388
<b>MONDAY, APRIL 17 (6:30 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • PRADOSHAM SHIV PUJA	<b>Pandit Pranav Bhatt</b> 813-720-1460
<b>SATURDAY, APRIL 22 (6:30 PM to 8:00 PM)</b> • AKSHAY TRITIYA LAXMI NARAYAN PUJA	
<b>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30 (5:00 PM to 6:00 PM)</b> • SAI JHULAY LAAL BHERANO	

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**LIFESTYLE MEDICINE – PART 3: ‘THE HEALING POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTION’**

By **M.P. RAVINDRA NATHAN, M.D., FACC**



Growing up in India as a member of a close-knit family and part of local community networks, I enjoyed the interpersonal connection and social support we had and never was there a problem of loneliness or isolation. Often, neighbors dropped by spontaneously, bringing a sample dish or simply for a chit chat. And we referred the senior neighbors and friends, as uncle or aunty, which gave everybody a feeling of closeness and friendship. Things have drastically changed now, especially in the western world. Many children grow up in single-parent homes or, if both parents

are working, the children are being brought up by nannies. Feelings of isolation, loneliness and related depression have become all too common. Many elderly people live alone and hence, depression is one of the common problems we encounter in these people.

Recent studies found, “Social isolation significantly increased a person’s risk of premature death from all causes, a risk that may rival those of smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity. It was also associated with nearly 50 percent increased risk of dementia.” A well-known research review found that lack of friends and just living alone were risk factors for early mortality, with an increased likelihood of death ranging from 26 to 32 percent compared to the normal.

So, what is the leading cause of loneliness? And how can you tackle the problem? The most prevalent cause is just the sense of being disconnected. Many young adults get lonely when they feel unable to express themselves or talk about their issues. Some feel lonely when they acquire the feeling ‘they did not matter to others and were not understood.’ Loneliness results in elevated levels of anxiety and depression, deterioration of mental health, dietary irregularities, less physical activity and increased suicidal ideation. Research has also shown that depression can lead to people engaging in more adverse health behaviors such as smoking and alcoholism, as well as not complying with prescribed medical treatments. Depression is a common cause of obesity in the U.S. but the reverse is true in India – many depressed and lonely people lose considerable weight. Either way, it is bad. Studies have shown, “People 60 years and older who reported struggling with loneliness faced an increased risk of mortality compared with participants who do not report being lonely (22.8 vs. 14.2 percent).”

Our former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy noted, “During my years of caring for patients, the most common pathology I saw was not heart disease or diabetes; it was loneliness.” Now you know how prevalent the problem is.

So, how can you overcome the feeling of loneliness, be fully functional and, lead a normal life? According to Mally Kartha, a Florida licensed independent clinical social worker, who has a vast experience in dealing with patients living alone, says: “As you grow older and, especially if you live alone, you need to become more flexible and open-minded and, accept what you like but learn to let go when needed. Try to make new connections and friendships because we live in an interconnected world. That’s the sobering truth.” How true! Most communities you live in have programs to keep their residents active and involved like yoga and Tai chi sessions, concerts, movies, lectures, ‘Meet and Greet’ programs, etc., that give opportunities to interact with others and to develop friendship.

Developing interpersonal connections and friendships is the key factor. Unfortunately, there is no drug treatment for loneliness. Many communities have their own ‘Togetherness programs’ for those who want to know others in the community and make friends. Religious institutions like temples and churches have prayer meetings, volunteer opportunities and other programs in which one can participate and develop friendships. In the schools too, for children lacking social skills, there are “special programs and practices that are integrated into the academic experience to develop a systematic approach to healthy social and emotional development for everyone involved.” Ultimately, developing a circle of friends that you can rely on and volunteering for whatever programs you like in the community will go a long way to improve one’s isolation. And don’t forget the importance of social media that connects us with friends and family.

For further reading, suggest: “Together – The Healing power of Human Connection” by Vivek Murthy, M.D.

*To be continued ...*

**M.P. Ravindra Nathan, M.D., is a cardiologist and Emeritus Editor of AAPI Journal. For further reading, “Second Chance - A Sister’s Act of Love” by Dr. Nathan from Outskirts Press, can be found at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)**

**EVENTS**

*Cont’d from page 2*

**FORT MYERS**

**APRIL 16: CARNATIC/HINDUSTANI JUGALBANDI;** presented by RAAGA; 4 to 6 p.m.; Rush Auditorium, J103, FSW, 8899 College Parkway, Fort Myers; free; for information, visit <https://raagafll.org/>

**SOUTH FLORIDA (FORT LAUDERDALE/PLANTATION)**

**APRIL 8: FESTIVAL OF COLORS;** inaugural South Florida edition inspired by Holi; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Esplanade Park, 400 S.W.

Second St., Fort Lauderdale; for information, visit [festivalofcolorsfl.com](http://festivalofcolorsfl.com)

**APRIL 16: “MUSIC FOR THE SOUL;”** vocal concert featuring Pallavi Joshi and Apoorva Gokhale accompanied by Sanjay Deshpande on tabla and Chinmoy Kohalatkhar



on harmonium; presented by Association of Performing Arts and Maharashtra Mandal of South Florida; 5 p.m.; ArtServe, 1350 E. Sunrise Blvd., Fort Lauderdale; \$35 online, \$40 at door; purchase tickets at <https://musicforsoul.eventbrite.com>

**MAY 6: CHEERS TO 20 YEARS;** conversation with



Suhag Shukla

Hindu American Foundation co-founders Suhag Shukla and Nikhil Joshi; annual gala/fundraiser; 6 to 9:30 p.m.; Renaissance Fort Lauderdale West Hotel, 1230 S. Pine Island, Plantation; purchase tickets at [myhaf.org/fllgala](http://myhaf.org/fllgala)



Nikhil Joshi

**Disclaimer: Event details are subject to change. Please check with local organizers. Event submissions are free, e-mail information to editor@khaasbaat.com by the 20th.**

**THAT'S IT? AM I DONE?**

By DR. ARUN GULANI



In this column, I will share an important category of patients who reach out to us from all over the world after repeatedly being told that nothing can be done for them.

These are not patients who are called "not a candidate" because of thin cornea, high astigmatism or dry eyes who their Lasik surgeons could not help, or patients who have complex cataracts, Keratoconus or previous surgeries such as radial keratotomy, etc., and are labeled as impossible. In past columns in this publication, I have shared with you that there is no such thing as "not a candidate" and all patients with the

above-mentioned conditions can be corrected, and in most cases, to life without glasses or contact lenses.

I'm referring to patients who may have retinal or optic nerve conditions like diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma or macular degeneration, or any such condition where their vision is permanently limited.

These patients most usually get filtered through cookie-cutter screenings into "not a candidate" categories, accept the label and stay with limited vision for the rest of their lives.

Certainly, the conditions of retina and glaucoma are irreversible, in most cases, and therefore should be vigilantly evaluated at regular intervals to make sure that the disease doesn't worsen. At the same time, there are ongoing newer therapies to improve damage (example, intravitreal injections for certain age-related macular degenerations), which could result in stabilizing or mildly improving vision, according to individual severity status.

Eye doctors who relegate these patients to no further improvement in vision and hand them over to a lifetime of dependence on glasses and contact lenses are doing anything less than an excellent job of patient care. But I personally feel that these are the very patients who deserve an extremely strong fight from eye surgeons to get them every little drop of vision possible in their already limited-potential eyes.

It is important to understand that the glaucoma, retina or macular condition needs to be stable and provenly steady over time. Then one can determine what final vision potential the patient may have and then proceed with any optical element in the eye which could yield

itself to surgery and bring forth any more vision possible.

Think about this as an analogy, for example, as the film (retina) of the camera is permanently damaged, so no matter what you do, the image created will be defective and limited in quantity and quality, including field of vision.

But for the same reason, once you determine that that film of the camera is damaged but at least stable, the rest of the optical elements of the eyes must be tackled by refractive surgeries like Lasik (or no blade, LaZrPlastique®), lens-based techniques like cataract surgery (custom-designed LenzOplastique®) or cornea-based techniques (Corneoplastique®). Any possible drops of vision could offer a life without glasses/lenses and thus freedom, which to a normal patient may not be significant, but to this particular patient means everything between a fully dependent to an independent lifestyle.

Several technologies today can allow the eye doctor to determine your vision potential despite a limiting eye condition; so, please encourage the surgeon to look for the same.

For example, despite having glaucoma, you may also suffer from existing astigmatism or near sightedness, maybe far sightedness or need reading glasses and, of course, age-related cataracts. Take advantage of modern technologies and proceed with options for vision improvement being fully aware that the outcome will be limited based on your ocular disease, compared to a normal eye.

Additionally, you might have dry eyes that are bothering and impacting your lifestyle, or red- looking eyes from pterygium or scars on your cornea. All can be corrected to at least decrease the burden of an uncomfortable and yet visually limited eye.

In summary, do not give up on the hope of vision either for yourself or loved ones and inquire with the eye doctor first and foremost about your continued care and future prognosis. As long as stability has been achieved even to that condition, which is irreversible, find out if you still need glasses or contact lenses to see better and if so, you may be a "candidate" for a custom-designed vision corrective surgery.

**Arun C. Gulani, M.D., M.S., is director and chief surgeon of Gulani Vision Institute in Jacksonville. He can be reached at [gulanivision@gulani.com](mailto:gulanivision@gulani.com) or visit [www.gulanivision.com](http://www.gulanivision.com)**



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**TRIBUTE TO KANTI BAKARANIA**

Cont'd from page 1

He was also past president, current treasurer of the board and former India Festival chair. When not in leadership roles, he was a tireless volunteer at numerous Samaj community events.



Kantibhai with his wife Mina

The Pandyas are among the families who have known Kantibhai since his India days. "He was my brother's friend and that acquaintance turned into lifelong family ties," recall Malti and Kirti Pandya. "He was married to Minaben in 1978. After we moved to USA, we rekindled our relationship and, after they moved to the Tampa Bay area, we followed them."

For the Pandyas, he was always Kanti mama (uncle), "one of the few people whom you can call in the middle of the night in need and count on. He was honest, open-hearted, wise and always willing to help. He did not let anyone know about his own hardships but was always there for others."

Dr. Pawan Rattan, founding member of Sanatan Mandir, couldn't agree more. "Kantibhai, one of our early trustees, was also our temple treasurer for over seven years," he says. "He is best remembered by Sanatan Mandir devotees for his welcoming big smile at the front desk. He was a constant at every temple event, serving with devotion for over two decades."

And he was always the first one to come and last one to leave at every mandir event, Dr. Rattan remembers. "He took on all aspects of service, from working on reception desk, welcoming devotees, service in the kitchen and even dumping the garbage in the dumpster," he notes.

Kantibhai made another close acquaintance at Sanatan Mandir in 2005. "He started a Rath Yatra event for the Tampa Bay community," reminisces Hindu Vedic priest Pandit Rajan Bhatt. "He came to the temple and discussed it with the temple chairman, Dr. Rattan, and other local Tampa Bay community leaders. Without hesitation, they approved and gave support for this historical event. Kantibhai

contacted with ISKCON Temple-Alachua and took over the responsibility for inviting Jagannathji and started the biggest Rath Yatra in the Tampa Bay area."

The entire Pandya family is heartbroken by the void left by Kantibhai's death and feel the pain of losing a Guru and mentor.

"He left so many memories around us, which remind us of his presence," they say. "And the Tampa Bay community lost a true friend and a compassionate community leader."

Dr. Rattan is appreciative of Kantibhai's donation of one of the most precious commodities, his time, which he gave in abundance to the temple and the community. "As a Board of Director (BOD), he insisted during our meetings that any planning of an event has a budget and all expenses be within the budget, emphasizing frugal practices and innovative ways to reduce expense," he recalls. "There cannot be a better treasurer than Kantibhai, accurate to the last penny. A shining example of selfless service, devotion and integrity, he will be most missed but always remembered."

The Rath Yatra was a tremendous success, thanks to Kantibhai's family and supportive friends, remembers Pandit Bhatt. "He worked very hard with a pure heart without any expectations for more than 10 days at Sanatan Mandir. Kantibhai loved to participate in anything, anytime, and anywhere for any religious group, community and social activities."

During this time, Pandit Bhatt realized that Kantibhai was spiritual, religious and supportive. "Soon after, my family became a part of their family," he proudly declares. "In the last 18 years, they taught our family 'we must not get tired, we must not give up, we must persist.' His legacy will stand as an example. The Tampa Bay community will forever miss his presence at all the events."

Kantibhai is survived by his wife Mina, brothers Ramanlal and Maganbhai, sister Hansuben, sons Jignesh and Nishit, grandson Aarav, and daughter-in-law Saloni.



Dr. Rakesh Sharma, left, Kanti Bakarania and Dr. Pawan Rattan.

**SANATAN MANDIR RECOGNIZES KANTI BAKARANIA DAYS BEFORE PASSING AT TRUSTEE MEETING**

By NARESH VISSA

On Feb. 26, Sanatan Mandir held its annual trustee appreciation dinner. Trustees not only donate money to keep the temple running, but also provide input to make the temple a success for the future through growth and positive experiences.

Several key areas were discussed and critiqued in breakout sessions and then presented to the temple's Executive Committee and Board of Directors: spiritual experience of devotees, kitchen and food, physical structures of temple, millennial/youth involvement, and cultural/musical/educational services.

Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Rakesh Sharma announced three awards to trustees of note:

Kantibhai and Mina Bakarania were recognized for being early trustees. They both always arrive early and leave last, always making sure the kitchen is clean, mopping floors, and cleaning up. Kantibhai had been a board member since 2014 and former treasurer.

Unfortunately, this public event was Kantibhai's last, for he suddenly and unexpectedly passed away a few days later. He was a past president of Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay and a recently retired IT professional.

Jagdish and Aruna Patel, along with Sudhir and Rita Patel, were also awarded and recognized for their contributions.

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**CHILD STATUS PROTECTION – IMPORTANT NEW DEVELOPMENT**

By **DILIP PATEL**



On Feb. 14, 2023, United States (US) Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced an important change regarding when an immigrant visa “becomes available” for the purpose of calculating the Child Status Protection Act (CSPA) age for noncitizens seeking lawful permanent resident status in a preference category. The change was effective with immediate effect and applies to all adjustment of status applications adjudicated on or after Feb. 14, 2023. Previously denied applicants who would

be eligible under the new guidance may be able to have their decisions reopened and reconsidered.

**Background**

CSPA is complex and its implementation and interpretation has been subject to much litigation. If your immigration eligibility is impacted by CSPA you should seek competent legal advice to see how the change may impact your individual situation. The following is general information but should not be relied upon as legal advice.

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) defines a child as a person who is both unmarried and under 21 years old. If someone applies for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status as a child but turns 21 before being approved for LPR status (also known as getting a Green Card), that person can no longer be considered a child for immigration purposes. This situation is commonly referred to as “aging out” and often means that these applicants would have to file a new petition or application, wait even longer to get a Green Card, or may no longer be eligible for a Green Card. Congress recognized that many children were aging out due to large USCIS

processing backlogs, so it enacted the Child Status Protection Act (CSPA) (effective Aug. 6, 2002) to protect certain children from aging out.

CSPA did not change the definition of a child. Instead, CSPA provided a method for calculating a person’s age to see if they meet the definition of a child for immigration purposes. The calculated age is the child’s “CSPA age.” This allowed some people to remain classified as children beyond their 21st birthday. However, CSPA did not change the requirement that the person must be unmarried in order to remain eligible for classification as a child.

Applicants under a family preference (including VAWA self-petition), employment-based preference, or the diversity visa program, could calculate their CSPA age by subtracting the number of days the petition was pending (pending time) from the actual age on the date an immigrant visa becomes available to them (age at time of visa availability).

The date the visa is considered available is the later of these two dates:

The date the petition was approved; or The first day of the month when the DOS Monthly Visa Bulletin shows that a visa is available for that applicant.

Prior to October 2015, the CSPA age calculation was straightforward because the Department of State’s monthly Visa Bulletin only contained a single chart listing the immigrant visa availability for each country and immigrant visa preference category.

In October of 2015, however, the Department of State began publishing two charts in its monthly Visa Bulletin: 1) a “Dates For Filing” chart (Filing Dates Chart) and 2) a “Final Action Dates” chart (“Final Action Dates Chart”). Since 2015, USCIS has designated one of the two charts, either the Filing Dates Chart or the Final Action Date chart, for applicants to use in determining when to file their I-485 adjustment applications. The Filing Dates Chart often allowed an applicant to apply for permanent residence earlier than if they had to wait for the Final Action Chart dates to move past their Priority Dates.

Until now, USCIS has issued and followed guidance that only the Final Action Dates Chart could be used to determine when a visa becomes available for CSPA calculations. This led to situations where applicants who were allowed to file Adjustment of Status applications based on the Filing Dates Chart, had their applications denied because they aged out while waiting for the Final Action Dates to reach their priority date.

**The Change:**

Under the new guidance, USCIS now considers an immigrant visa to have “become available” for the CSPA age calculation at the same time USCIS considers a visa immediately available for accepting and processing an adjustment application for permanent residence (I-485). Often, this means looking at the Filing Dates Chart and not the Final Action Dates Chart.

**General**

In order for family-sponsored and employment-based preference and DV adjustment applicants to benefit from the CSPA age calculation, they must seek to acquire lawful permanent residence within 1 year of when a visa becomes available for accepting and processing a potential adjustment of status application. This requirement does not apply to refugee derivatives, asylee derivatives, and IRs. There are specific rules for determining whether an applicant has met the “1 year sought to acquire requirement.” The USCIS guidance also confirms that adjustment applicants who fail to fulfill the sought to acquire requirement within 1 year of visa availability may still be able to benefit from CSPA if they can establish that their failure to meet the requirement was the result of extraordinary circumstances.

As is clear, application of CSPA to individual situations is complex and can lead to different results based on the slightest changes to individual circumstances. There is no substitute for advice from an attorney experienced in immigration law.

**Dilip Patel a partner at the Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney Law Firm is a Florida Bar Board Certified expert on immigration law and can be reached at (813) 222-1120 or dilip.patel@bipc.com**

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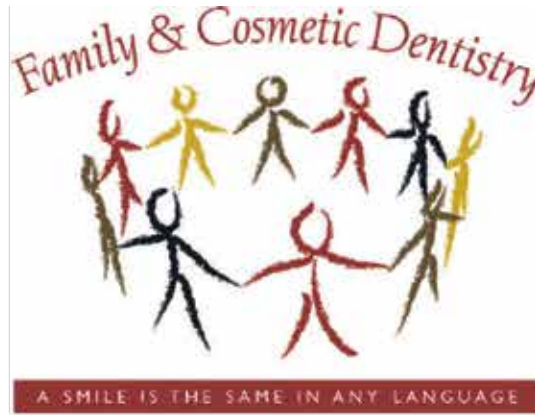
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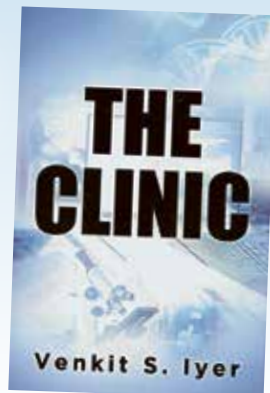
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by Venkit S. Iyer, MD, MS, FACS, FRCS-C



Dr. Venkit S. Iyer

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## SELECTING CLASSES

By ROBERT LEVINE



"What classes should I take?"

"Are these courses ok?"

"To get into the best colleges, which is better: IB or AP?"

We receive so many questions from our clients about course selection. "Should I take an easier class to ensure a higher GPA or a harder class to show that I'm challenging myself?"

Our first advice is relax. Your curriculum isn't going to get you into a top college. It's your performance that counts.

Still, there are general principles to guide you in making the right educational choices. For class selection, UCA offers a "rule," an "exception," a "tip" and a "word of caution."

**The Rule:** You do not need to take all of the highest-level classes. In fact, many of the top private high schools will not allow you to take more than three of the most rigorous courses. Why? More is not necessarily better.

Taking all the hardest courses creates three hazards. First, the hardest courses are the most challenging to achieve top grades, putting your GPA at risk. Second, the hardest courses take the most time for studying, thereby distracting you from the non-intellectual, extra-curricular activities that U.S. colleges covet. Third, because of the extra difficulty and time commitment, taking all hard courses steals your sleep which ... endangers both your help and your grades.

Our advice is to challenge yourself with the most robust coursework in areas that are relevant to your interests and/or your future. If you like or care about a subject, you are more likely to learn it easily. If you do not think a subject is important to you, learning the material will be an awful chore. Thus, for subjects that do not inspire you, go ahead and select standard-level courses. It will be fine!

**The Exception:** Once you make a tentative decision about which classes to take, always check with your high school counselor to make sure that you are not making any mistakes in your schedule. For example, some universities have absolute minimum requirements in core subject areas. Your counselor will know this and warn you against missing something important. Plus, on the reports that your high school will send to your desired colleges, there are rules and thresholds about reporting whether you have challenged yourself with the highest rigor. Your counselor can help you ensure that you qualify for them to "check the best box" on their forms.

**The Tip:** Before finalizing your course selection, do not assume that a course will fit your interests just because it sounds good. Do some research. Most courses have their syllabi available online. Review the actual material you will study in a course before selecting that course. Compare and contrast courses with similar names. AP Lang is really different from AP Lit! If you cannot find enough information online, ask the instructor(s) about what they teach in their classes. Just be sure you are taking classes that inspire you.

**A Word of Caution:** Do not take courses just to raise your GPA. You cannot fool admissions professionals. Colleges are very, very, very experienced in evaluating academic records. It is fine to take a dual enrollment course if that subject is not available in your high school. However, if your high school does offer a similar course, it may appear that you have chosen dual enrollment merely to take advantage of a multiplier given to "college" classes. Some admissions professionals consider that tactic to be form over substance and might downgrade you for partaking in the competition to be valedictorian. Education is about learning, not accolades.

In the end, focus on subjects that you like best. Challenge yourself where appropriate, but don't take hard classes just to take hard classes. And always remember to check with the professionals who have been hired to assist you. Talk with your counselors!

*Robert Levine is the founder and CEO of University Consultants of America, an independent educational consultancy assisting students around the world with applications to colleges, universities and graduate schools. For more information, call University Consultants of America, Inc. at 1-800-465-5890 or visit [www.universitycoa.com](http://www.universitycoa.com)*



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**ALL-ELECTRIC GENESIS GV60 IS A REVOLUTIONARY RIDE!**

Test-drive story by NITISH S. RELE [motoringtampabay@gmail.com](mailto:motoringtampabay@gmail.com)

And so it begins, as they say. Genesis has launched the first dart from its arsenal, possibly causing disarray among established electric vehicles companies (Tesla, pay attention!) Within no time of hitting the roads, the stunning all-electric 2023 GV60 has won numerous accolades from the automotive press.

Sharing a platform with the Hyundai Ioniq 5 and Kia EV6, the compact SUV is equipped with a 77.4 kWh lithium-ion polymer battery that assures the driver of going almost 240 miles on a full charge. Dual 160 kW front/rear electric motors crank out 429 horsepower and 516 pounds-feet of torque. Believe it or not, that takes the GV60 just four seconds to reach 0 to 60 mph in boost mode. Not bad for a vehicle that weighs nearly 4,890 pounds! On a 240-volt, it will take about seven hours but a fast DC charge (350 kW) can load up 80 percent in just 18 minutes. The good news is that Genesis is offering a three-year courtesy charge at any Electrify America station. The single-speed direct transmission is instant and seamless.

Up front, a clamshell hood meets up with jewel-like, parametric-pixel two-line LED headlights to convey a distinctive presence. As you near the vehicle, flush automatic door handles are a sight to behold! Our Performance test version came with two high-tech 12.3 screens for infotainment and a digital instrument cluster of speedometer,

power gauge, charge level and trip odometer. The floating center console features an illuminated Crystal Sphere shifter that rotates 180 degrees when the car is turned on. Switch off the GV60 and the orb floats emanating ambient lights. Other high-tech perks include: electronic active sound design (e-ASD), so you can choose E-motor (reimagines motor sounds), G-engine (sounds like a gas engine) and futuristic (signifies imminent mobility); facial and finger detection to enter without a key. And with Vehicle-to-Load feature, you can charge electric bikes, scooters and other gadgets via the outside port or another interface. A vision roof with power shade, heated/cooled front Nappa leather seats, dual auto a/c, 17-speaker Bang & Olufsen audio, head-up display, heated rear seats and hands-free liftgate come at no extra cost.

Its innovative looks, inside and out, plus cutting-edge technology make the GV60 an enticing choice. And with scarcely a carbon footprint to leave behind. Move over, Tesla, for this sensational electric Genesis entrant into the market, with more promising EVs on the way.



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**APRIL FORECAST**

By PANKAJ KOHLI



**ARIES / Mesha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (March 21-April 20) Mars Sign – Stars covered Ashwini, Bharani, Krittika (1st Part)** You put on a victorious attitude, pride, ambition and leadership traits. You are self-motivated and self-inspired; do not let your spirits down. Your attitude will help boost family spirits. Domestic happiness, material comforts and worldly pleasures are at your disposal. Expect good news. People are happy in your company.

**TAURUS / Vrushabha (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (April 21-May 21) Venus Sign - Stars covered**

**Krittika (last 3 parts), Rohini, Mrigashira (first 2 parts)** Fortune and good luck shine on you with sign lord Venus' blessing. You enjoy elevated social status, name and fame. You will achieve whatever you set your eyes upon. Domestic happiness, material comforts and worldly joys are for you to enjoy. Do not let this opportunity slip from you. Good news is all around you. With little push, you can gain in career boost or change too.

**GEMINI / Mithuna (Air sign, ruling planet is Mercury) - (May 22-June 21) Mercury Sign - Stars covered Mrigashira (last 2 parts), Ardra & Punarvasu (first 3 parts)** There can be some difficulty in domestic happiness. You may find it difficult to take decisions as the mind will be in a state of confusion. On the money front too, you need to be careful. Your virtues and luck will be shining and blessing you though. Do not be negative, so stay firm.

**CANCER / Kataka (Watery sign, ruling planet is Moon) - (June 22-July 22) Moon Sign – Stars covered Punarvasu (4th part), Pushya, Aslesha**

Keep away from confrontation, arguments and litigation. Domestic peace can be disturbed, and material comforts may also take a back seat. One may suffer from headaches and mental confusion. Keep a tight control on finances as a little extra care can help you save money in a big way. Job front, be careful. Health needs additional attention.

**LEO / Simha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Sun) - (July 23-Aug. 22) Sun Sign – Stars covered Magha, Purva Phalguni, Uttara Phalguni (1st part)**

Do not be indifferent, skeptical and fearful. Your indifference can lead to misunderstandings; instead communicate and be open and genuine. Loss of material benefits might accrue. Despite best efforts, there might be confusion, jealousy and obstacles on the way. Control over emotions and anger; Health conditions need to be taken care of at slightest provocation.

**VIRGO / Kanya (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Mercury) (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Mercury Sign – Stars covered Uttara Phalguni (last 3 parts), Hasta, Chitra (first 2 parts)**

Despite best efforts, you will find it difficult to maintain speed with which you work. Results may get delayed, but one can be sure to they will reward one in the end. Your sign lord remains powerful to ensure luck shines. Happy domestic conditions prevail. Despite higher earnings, possibility of elevated expenses cannot be ruled out.

**LIBRA / Tula (Air sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Venus Sign – Stars covered Chitra (last 2 parts), Swati, Vishakha (first 3 parts)**

You will be happy though some unforeseen difficulties may arise. There may be some obstacles in the way; people may feel jealous of your success and happiness. Financial gains are on the increase. Love and romance is in the air. Health-wise, you feel great, full of energy and enthusiasm and a positive outlook toward life.

**SCORPIO / Vruschika (Water sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Mars Sign – Stars covered Vishakha (4th part), Anuradha, Jyestha**

Your social status will improve and bring rich gains. You will feel energetic; your actions will be purposeful. You will have to work hard on the domestic front; happy conditions will prevail, take care of health. Professionally, no job changes for now. Do not count much on luck; instead, work hard and you will be a winner on all fronts.

**SAGITTARIUS / Dhanush (Fire sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Jupiter Sign – Stars covered Moola, Purva Shada, Uttara Shada (first part)**

You may face problems on domestic and financial fronts. They have both been main issues for some time now. Deal with utmost care and caution. Practice meditation, turn more spiritual and stay away from eating spicy food, which causes heat and anger in the body. On health issues, you might face liver, ear, sinus and allergy problems. Take care.

**CAPRICORN / Makara (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Saturn) - (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) Saturn Sign – Stars covered Uttara Shada (last 3 parts) Shravana, Dhanistha (first 2 parts)**

Domestic hardships are possible; money conditions have also been strenuous for some time now; approach cautiously on these two fronts. Be wise while spending money, save more, spend less. Health may be affected by Kapha-related issues like sinus congestion, throat, allergies, etc.

**AQUARIUS / Kumbha (Air sign, ruling planet is Saturn) – (Jan. 21-Feb. 19) Saturn Sign - Stars covered: Dhanishta (last 2 parts) Satabhisha, Purva Bhadra Pada (1st 3 parts)**

Some have more enemies than friends, count less on them. Domestic peace and happiness must be enjoyed with good health. Windy (Vaata) and phlegmatic (Kapha) diseases, troubles in the legs, laziness, weakness due to over-exertion, mental affliction, and stomach troubles can erupt; so, be careful. Money wise, you will be able to balance income and expenses.

**PISCES / Meena (Water sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Feb. 20-March 20) Jupiter Sign - Stars covered: Purva Bhadra Pada (last part) Uttara Bhadra Pada, Revathi**

You are creative and think of doing things differently. You have the fire in you and the ability to do things differently, whichever way, you are a winner. Take care of health, especially skin issues, problems related to Pitta (boils, ulcers, intestinal problems). Control your short temper and aggressive behavior. Fasting on milk and banana on Tuesday and Thursday will be beneficial. Monetary expenses will rise, spend wisely.

*For detailed horoscope analysis and chart reading, courtesy Pankaj-Astro Jyotish, call Pankaj Kohli at (905) 910-1441 or e-mail Pathofastrology@gmail.com*



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### TAX IMPLICATIONS WHEN EMPLOYED IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS

By TEJAL DHRUVE



When a family member employs someone, the tax implications depend on the relationship and the type of business. Taxpayers and employers need to understand their tax situation. Here is what to know:

#### Married People in Business Together

- Generally, a qualified joint venture whose only members are a married couple filing a joint return isn't treated as a partnership for federal tax purposes.
- Someone who works for their spouse is considered an employee if the first spouse makes the business's management decisions and the second spouse is under the direction of the first spouse.
- The wages for someone who works for their spouse are subject to income tax withholding and Social Security and Medicare taxes, but not to Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) taxes.

#### Children Employed by Their Parents

If the business is a parent's sole proprietorship or a partnership in which both partners are parents of the child:

- Wages paid to a child of any age are subject to income tax withholding.
- Wages paid to a child age 18+ are subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes.
- Wages paid to a child age 21+ are subject to FUTA taxes.

#### If the business is a corporation, estate, or a partnership in which one or no partners are parents of the child:

- Payments for services of a child are subject to income tax withholding, Social Security taxes, Medicare taxes, and FUTA taxes, regardless of age.

#### Parents Employed by Their Child

If the business is a child's sole proprietorship:

- Payments for services of a parent are subject to income tax withholding, Social Security taxes, and Medicare taxes.
- Payments for services of a parent are not subject to FUTA taxes regardless of the type of services provided.

If the business is a corporation, a partnership, or an estate:

- The payments for the services of a parent are subject to income tax withholding, social security taxes, Medicare taxes, and FUTA taxes.

If the parent is performing services for the child but not for the child's trade or business:

- Payments for services of a parent are not subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes unless the services are for domestic services and several other criteria apply.
- Payments for services of a parent are not subject to FUTA taxes regardless of the type of services provided.

#### Questions?

Many people work for a family member, whether a child is helping at their parent's shop or spouses running a business together. If you are one of them, your tax situation may be more complicated than you think. Please call the office for assistance if you need help understanding how your work situation affects your taxes.

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