

KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

FEBRUARY 2025

WWW.KHAASBAAT.COM • EDITOR@KHAASBAAT.COM • 813-758-1786

Inside:



Immigration
Birthright
citizenship

6



FL Event
East-West fest

10



Youth
Bonding
with roots

10



FL News
Sanatan
Mandir
kitchen

12



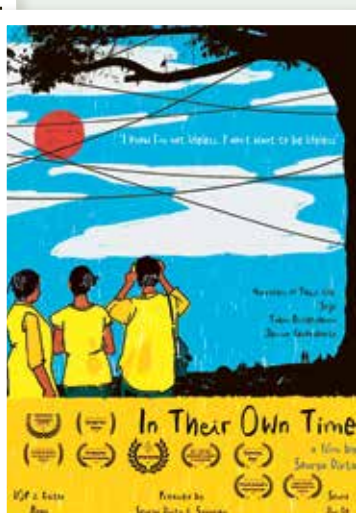
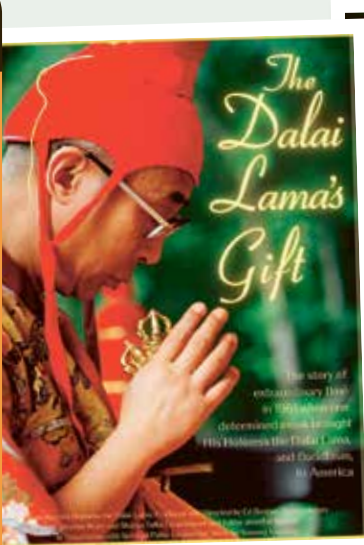
Astrology
February
forecast

14



Classifieds
Help wanted

15



SOUTH ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF FLORIDA RETURNS TO TAMPA FEB. 21-22

Story provided by SAIFF

The South Asian International Film Festival Florida (SAIFFF) will return to Tampa Feb. 21-22 at NCG Cinemas, Citrus Park Mall. This year's festival will feature two days of immersive screenings, showcasing an impressive selection of films, documentaries, and short films from India, the USA, Germany, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Bangladesh, Canada and Nepal.

SAIFFF aims to provide a unique cinematic experience, presenting stories and cultural narratives rarely seen on the big screen. Along with the film screenings, the festival will host activities, including yoga, meditation, a Bollywood workout session, and a Bollywood dance party to cap the festivities Saturday night.

Cont'd on page 15



UPCOMING
HOLI
FESTIVITIES

Watch for a roundup of
Florida communities
celebrating the festival of
colors in the March issue.

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 489
TAMPA, FLORIDA

KHAAS BAAT
8312 WINDSOR BLUFF DRIVE TAMPA, FL
33647

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.

EDITOR/PUBLISHER: NITISH S. RELE, M.A. IN JOURNALISM

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: SHEPHALI J. RELE, M.A. IN JOURNALISM

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: TIM LANCASTER

Khaas Baat, 8312 Windsor Bluff Drive, Tampa, FL 33647

Phone: 813-758-0518 • e-mail: editor@khaasbaat.com

Anything that appears in Khaas Baat cannot be reproduced, whether wholly or in part, without permission. Opinions expressed by Khaas Baat contributors are their own and do not reflect the publisher's opinion. Khaas Baat reserves the right to edit and/or reject any advertising. Khaas Baat is not responsible for errors in advertising or for the validity of any claims made by its advertisers. Khaas Baat is published by Khaas Baat Communications.



SHARE YOUR HAPPY OCCASION WITH A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT IN KHAAS BAAT

whether it's a birthday, graduation, engagement, wedding or anniversary.

For information and rates, email advertising@khaasbaat.com

KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

www.khaasbaat.com

(editor@khaasbaat.com)

813-758-0518

■ **ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION: \$24**

■ **FIVE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION: \$100**

To subscribe please send this completed form and check addressed to Khaas Baat to:

**KHAAS BAAT
8312 WINDSOR BLUFF DRIVE
TAMPA, FL 33647**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Credit Card# _____

Expiration Date: _____

Authorized signature: _____

EVENTS / SIGNIFICANT DATES

EVENTS

TAMPA/CLEARWATER/ST. PETERSBURG

FEB. 5: GSTB SENIOR DAY; organized by Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; \$10 for GSTB members, \$15 for non-members; lunch and entertainment; for information, call Mahesh Modha at (813) 476-1540.

FEB. 8: EAST-WEST MUSIC AND DANCE FESTIVAL; organized by Shruti Foundation; 2 to 7 p.m.; Water Works Park, 1710 N. Highlands Ave., Tampa; free; multicultural event with music bands, dance performances, food, vendors; for information, call (813) 549-9288 or visit www.shrutifoundationtampa.org

FEB. 8: SARASWATI PUJA; presented by Soikot - Bengali Association of Greater Tampa; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; \$180 family, \$100 adult, \$40 student; cultural performances, Bengali feast; for information, visit <https://soikot.org/>

FEB. 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.

FEB 19: ICC SENIORS GET-TOGETHER; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; free seminar, lunch and entertainment; only for 65 years and older; 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.

FEB. 21-22: 2nd ANNUAL SOUTH ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FLORIDA (SAIFFF); NCG Cinemas, Citrus Park Mall, 7999 Citrus Park Town Center Mall, Tampa; for details, visit www.saiff.org or call (312) 933-2251 or (347) 921-3316.



SIGNIFICANT DATES

FEB. 2: VASANT PANCHAMI/SARASWATI PUJA

FEB. 26: MAHA SHIVRATRI

FEB. 22: "MAYA SITA"; a thematic dance production; organized by Kerala Hindus of North America; St. Joseph's Syro Malabar Church, 5501 Williams Road, Seffner; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; for tickets and more information, call (813) 334-0123.

FEB. 22: SPIFFS INTERNATIONAL FOLK FAIR; presented by Saint Petersburg International Folk Fair Society (SPIFFS) and Volunteers of Indian Culture, Art and Science Society (VICAS); England Brothers Park, 5010 81st Ave. N., Pinellas Park; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; music, dance, crafts, and cuisine from various cultures, including VICAS; for information, visit <https://www.spiffs.org/>

MARCH 8: CARNATIC VOCAL CONCERT; organized by Swaralaya; performed by Vidwan O.S. Arun and team; Hindu Temple of Florida hall, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 5 p.m.; for information, email swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com

APRIL 13: VEENA CONCERT; organized by Swaralaya; performed by Vidwan Sri Ramana Balachandar and team; Hindu Temple of Florida hall, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 5 p.m.; for information, email swaralayaoftampa@gmail.com

ORLANDO/CASSELBERRY

FEB. 8: KEERTHANA - INDIAN AMERICAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA; musical gala presented by Hindu Society of Central Florida; HSCF temple hall, 1994 E. Lake Drive, Casselberry; 4 p.m.; free; donations welcome; for information, call Promod Dubey at (407) 221-5616.

Cont'd on page 9



JD Patel, Esq.
PERSONAL INJURY &
CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYER

EMAIL: jd@greeklaw.com
PHONE: (727) 441-9030/ (813) 223-6405
www.tragoslaw.com

**LAW OFFICES OF
TRAGOS, SARTES & TRAGOS**

BASED IN CLEARWATER • SERVING CLIENTS ACROSS FLORIDA

PERSONAL INJURY

CAR ACCIDENTS
SLIP AND FALLS
WRONGFUL DEATH

CRIMINAL DEFENSE

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE CONSULTATION!

BUYING SELLING INVESTING

YOUR
RESIDENTIAL
AND
COMMERCIAL
AWARD
WINNING
TEAM



**SHEETAL 'SHELLY'
SIDHU**



SIDHU TEAM

**BROKER ASSOCIATE
RE/MAX PREMIER GROUP
813.995.1600**



SUNNY SIDHU

SAVE THOUSANDS WHEN BUYING OR SELLING WITH US

**LIST WITH US AND GET TOP DOLLAR FOR YOUR HOME WITH
OUR EXTENSIVE MARKETING STRATEGY**

www.AllTampaHomes.com

SIDHU GETS IT SOLD



Tejal Dhruve CPA LLC

Count on us to Account for you

Dhruve Wealth MGMT Group

Taxes | Insurance | Financial Planning



Florida
29150 Chapel Park Dr.
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

813-675-3152
info@dhruvecpa.com
www.DhruveCPA.com

- Personal & Business Tax Preparation
- Small Business Accounting
- Payroll
- Retirement Planning
- College Planning
- Foreign Bank Account Reporting
- IRS Representation



Ohio
5178 Blazer Parkway,
Dublin, OH 43017

25
YEARS
OF
EXPERIENCE

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY

- 25+ years of experience
- 1 of only 78 lawyers in Florida to be Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law
- Florida's Super Lawyer in 2008 and 2009

We speak Gujarati.

અમે ગુજરાતી બોલીએ છીએ.

Bhavsar Law Group
Attorneys & Counselors at Law
Offices in Orlando

407-425-1202
information@kiblawgroup.com
www.kiblawgroup.com



SANATAN MANDIR TAMPA

HINDU SAMAJ INC. (501 C (3) RELIGIOUS ORG)
311 East Palm Avenue, Tampa, FL 33602

| MONTHLY EVENTS | WEEKLY EVENTS |
|--|---|
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SARASWATI PUJA AARTI (VASANT PANCHAMI CELEBRATION BHAJAN KIRTAN) | EVERY MONDAY - 6:30 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHIV ABHISHEK AND PUJA |
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8 (6:30 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAYA EKADASHI | EVERY TUESDAY - 7:00 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUNDERKAND PATH • HANUMAN CHALISA |
| WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12 (6:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAGI PURNIMA • GROUP SATYANARAYANA KATHA | EVERY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALL SADGURU & SHIRDI SAI BABA BHAJAN SATSANG |
| SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15 (6:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SANKAT CHATURTHI | |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23 (6:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIJAYA EKADASHI | |
| TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25 (7:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRADOSH VRAT KAL START • MAHASHIV RATRI (4 PRAHAR POOJA) | |
| SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 (5:00 PM to 7:00 PM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAHA MRUTUYANJAY YAGNA | |

ANNPUERNA KITCHEN

Timings
Tue - Fri : 11 am - 2 pm & 5 pm - 9 pm
Sat - Sun : 11:30 am - 9 pm

Range of Dosa, Idly & Wada
Snacks & Punjabi Thali
Gujrati Thali
Catering Services Available

Call Kitchen
(813) 999-1098

Phone: 813-221-4482 Email: info@sanatanmandirtampa.org Web: www.sanatanmandirtampa.org

STROKE

By **DR. VENKIT IYER, MD, FACS**



Stroke, also known as cerebrovascular accident (CVA), occurs when blood supply to part of the brain is reduced or interrupted, preventing the brain cells from getting the necessary oxygen and nutrients to maintain function. Brain cells are so sensitive compared to other organs that they tend to die within seconds, with irreversible damage setting within four minutes, to result in sudden paralysis or collapse.

After heart attack, it is the second most common cause of death in the United States. It is estimated that 15 million people die from stroke every year worldwide.

Disability from paralysis, loss of speech, inability to move or eat leads to more devastating sequel such as malnutrition, contractures, bed sores, urinary infection, personal care issues, emotional trauma, depression, or pneumonia, eventually a slow miserable death.

Most common cause of stroke is atherosclerosis or plaque buildup and hardening of the arteries to result in blockage of circulation, called ischemic stroke. Obstruction of the arteries can also occur from an embolic episode, when a fresh blood clot that originates elsewhere floats up into the brain vessels. Another cause is bleeding into the brain tissue called hemorrhagic stroke. This can happen from hypertension, head injuries, falls or rupture of blood vessels (aneurysms). Other triggers are aging itself, cancers, metabolic problems or severe infections.

Risk factors for causation of stroke include smoking, alcoholism, obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cardiac problems, irregular heartbeats, or atrial fibrillation, myxoma of heart, septal defects, high cholesterol levels, poor quality

diet and genetic factors. There is a higher chance among males and African Americans.

Symptoms can be sudden onset of a fainting episode, paralysis of one side of body or limb, slurring of speech, drooping of one side of face, loss of consciousness, confusion, loss of balance, drooling, sudden visual problems in one eye, severe headache, difficulty in swallowing, or vertigo. Stroke can affect one half of the brain, a brain stem or just a small patch of brain.

Recovery from stroke depends to some extent on how quickly the problem is diagnosed and treated. Hence, it is up to every citizen to be aware of the above symptoms, call 911 immediately and have the patient taken to a hospital emergency room quickly. Many hospitals have a stroke team on call who specialize in providing instant management. If a stroke is properly diagnosed and treated within four hours of onset, there is better hope for full or partial recovery.

This involves immediate confirmation of diagnosis by CT or MRI scans of brain, blood tests and EKG. Carotid ultrasound/angiogram may be done, with intention for endovascular interventions. If it is confirmed to be an ischemic stroke, with no evidence of intracranial bleeding, then immediate administration of thrombolytics such as TPA can be lifesaving. In selected cases, carotid artery embolectomy can be done. Anticoagulation is administered to follow.

If the stroke is due to intracranial hemorrhage, then urgent neurosurgical intervention is requested to decompress the brain, evacuate the hematoma and stop the bleeding. Thrombolytics and anticoagulants are contra-indicated here.

Once full stroke has set in, the above procedures are of no use. Various supportive measures are planned for slow recovery. This involves physiotherapy, speech therapy, swallowing studies, and intense personal care. If there is difficulty in swallowing, then nutritional care may be provided via tube feeding such as gastrostomy or jejunostomy. Care is taken to prevent decubitus ulcers, urinary tract infections, aspiration or pneumonia. Occupational therapy, psychosocial support and cognitive therapy are initiated. Durable medical equipment such as a wheelchair or walker may be needed. Often left with permanent disabilities, some individuals may recover over time.

Prevention of stroke is done by avoiding atherosclerosis. This is possible through healthy diet, regular exercise, stoppage of smoking or alcohol, control of obesity, hypertension, renal diseases and diabetes mellitus. Regular doctor's visit and blood tests are conducted to ensure cholesterol, blood sugar and renal functions are maintained at normal levels.

Some individuals may get a warning signal of impending stroke called transient ischemic attacks (TIA). These are symptoms of mini stroke, when the person experiences a transient weakness of one limb or other, transient blindness of one eye or other, slurring of speech or syncopal episode. The patients are evaluated with carotid duplex ultrasound examination, to be followed by MR or CT angiogram, to identify blockage of carotid artery. At times during a routine physical examination, a bruit is heard over the carotid artery, which indicates narrowing of the blood vessel. If there is more than 70% narrowing of the carotid artery, a prophylactic carotid endarterectomy or angioplasty and stent placement can offset a potential stroke.

Stroke is a devastating condition for both the patient and family. Many people suffer for months or even years and become dependent on caregivers for daily functions. It is a slow painful end to life. At the same time, some patients do regain a good part of their body function slowly with perseverance.

Dr. Venkit S. Iyer, MD, FACS, is a retired general and vascular surgeon. He has authored six books: "Decision making in clinical surgery" first and second editions; "Aging well and reaching beyond," "The Clinic," "Geriatrics Handbook" and "Iyer's story book for children." They are available through Amazon or from the author. His website venkitiyer.com has necessary links and contact information.

INDIAN ASTROLOGER & PSYCHIC READER

Most powerful Pandit: YOGI

ONE CALL, ONE VISIT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE

KNOW YOUR PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

SPECIALIZED IN : BRINGING LOVED ONES BACK, EVEN HOPELESS CASE

Expert in Removing BLACK MAGIC Bad Luck, Voodoo, Obeah, Witchcraft, & Evil Spirits

100% GUARANTEED RESULTS

YOGI IS AN EXPERT IN REMOVING PROBLEMS LIKE

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| * BUSINESS | * DEPRESSION | * COURT CASES |
| * EVIL SPIRITS | * WORK PROBLEM | * DRINKING PROBLEM |
| * BAD LUCK | * FINANCIAL PROBLEM | * HEALTH PROTECTION |
| * BLACK MAGIC | * HUSBAND & WIFE PRO. | * CHILDLESS COUPLES |
| * REUNITE LOVERS | * CHILDREN MISTAKES | * SEXUAL PROBLEMS |
| * STOP DIVORCE | | |

PROMISE NO-BODY CAN BREAK MY PROTECTION

CALL FOR APPOINTMENT PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

813-502-7988

4008 Ashford Green Pl Tampa Fl 33613

(Private House)

SAVE MONEY TODAY!

REDUCE YOUR CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES

% Rates As Low As 0.05%*



Accept EMV/NFC
(Apple Pay, etc.) EBT,
Snap, Checks and more



Pay-at-the-pump
compatible



Next Day Funding with
weekend settlement

SWITCH NOW AND GET YOUR **FREE TERMINAL***

SMART TERMINAL



Bonus Features

FREE Credit Card Terminal Placement*
Wireless/Landline/High-Speed/Dial-Up

Easy Setup
Quick Approvals and Setup Support

Access to Payments Hub
Our Secure, Online Merchant Portal

\$295* Towards Your Early Termination Fee
(If You Have One) with Your Current Processor

Free Paper*



Send Digital Receipts
Email or SMS a Receipt



Send Invoices*



**Integrate to Your
Point of Sale**

STANDARD TERMINAL



Optional Program

**EDGE: The Best CASH
DISCOUNT PROGRAM
from North**

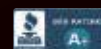
Are you ready to get rid of the impact of payment processing costs on your business? Edge is a true dual pricing program that combines flat rate processing for card transactions and a discount for cash transactions.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS. Partner with North Today!

866.481.4604

North
WWW.NYNAB.COM

© 2024 North is a registered DBA of NorthAB, LLC. All rights reserved. NorthAB, LLC is a registered ISO of BMO Harris Bank N.A., Chicago, IL, Citizens Bank N.A., Providence, RI, The Bancorp Bank, Philadelphia, PA, and FFB Bank, Fresno, CA.
*some restrictions apply. Merchant agreement required. Hardware is free for use while processing and must be returned upon termination of merchant agreement. Other fees may apply. Contact 866-481-4604 for details.



TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER ON BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP: A NEW LEGAL BATTLE

By **DILIP PATEL** and **KHUSHBU PATEL**



In an era marked by a polarized political climate and ongoing debates over immigration, identity, and civic responsibilities, President Donald Trump has issued a significant executive order titled "Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship." Released on January 20, 2025, the order aims to reaffirm the importance of citizenship in the United States while outlining the administration's approach to managing its implications.

Birthright citizenship was a right enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution over 150 years ago. The order has sparked significant controversy and a swift legal response, challenging its constitutionality and potential implications for countless families.

1. The Key Provisions of the Executive Order

At the heart of President Trump's executive order is a directive to federal departments and agencies to deny U.S. citizenship to children born in the United States under specific conditions. The order stipulates that citizenship will not be granted to children born to mothers who are unlawfully present in the country, nor to those whose mothers are in the U.S. on temporary visas — such as work, student, or tourist visas — if their fathers are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. In other words, at least one parent must be a legal permanent resident or a U.S. citizen prior to the child's birth in order for the child to be qualified as a citizen.

It is important to note that this order applies to children born on Feb. 19, 2025, and onwards, and does not apply retroactively to children already born in the United States to parents who are not legal permanent residents or U.S. citizens.

This shift could affect approximately 150,000 children born annually to parents lacking (permanent) legal status, a statistic highlighted in a lawsuit filed by a coalition of immigrant rights groups and 22 Democratic-led states. Critics argue that this policy would render many of these children deportable and potentially stateless, stripping them of their rights to participate fully in American society, including work, voting, and running for office.

2. Impact on Citizenship Documentation

If implemented, President Trump's order would have far-reaching consequences for various official documents typically issued to newborns recognized as U.S. citizens. These include passports, Social Security cards and certificates of citizenship — documents crucial for accessing government services and benefits. The order instructs federal agencies to develop new guidelines to prevent individuals from receiving

these documents based on the criteria outlined in the order.

While the executive order does not directly impact birth certificates, which are managed at the state level, its implications could extend to essential services such as healthcare and food assistance, fundamentally altering the landscape for many American families.

3. The Legal Challenge

The moment the executive order was announced, a coalition of immigrant rights organizations mobilized to contest it, filing lawsuits in multiple federal courts. These legal challenges center on the assertion that the Fourteenth Amendment firmly establishes the principle of birthright citizenship, ensuring that all individuals born on U.S. soil — notwithstanding their parents' immigration status — are granted citizenship.

The plaintiffs argue that Trump's interpretation of the Amendment's language, particularly the phrase "subject to the jurisdiction thereof," is a radical departure from established legal precedent. This phrase traditionally excludes only children of foreign diplomats, whose parents hold diplomatic immunity and are not subject to U.S. laws. Legal experts assert that the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment intended to create a broad guarantee of citizenship to protect formerly enslaved individuals and their descendants, making the exceptions narrow and specific.

Further, just three days after the executive order was issued, a federal judge temporarily blocked President Trump from restricting who is eligible for automatic U.S. citizenship at birth, an early legal setback for the new administration's hard-line immigration agenda.

US District Judge John Coughenour in Seattle called Trump's executive order "blatantly unconstitutional" and questioned the quality of lawyering within the administration.

4. Constitutional Authority and Implications

The core of the executive order hinges on President Trump's ability to persuade courts to accept his interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment. Legal scholars emphasize that the principle of birthright citizenship has been upheld as settled law for over a century and a half. They contend that the proposed changes ignore both the text of the Constitution and the historical context in which the Amendment was crafted.

As the legal battles unfold, the implications of President Trump's order extend beyond citizenship. If upheld, it could reshape the demographics of American society, affecting the lives of thousands of children born in the U.S. to non-citizen parents. The prospect of these children being deemed deportable raises ethical questions about the treatment of individuals who may find themselves caught in a web of legal complexities that jeopardize their status in the only country they have ever known.

5. Public Response and Future Outlook

Public reaction to Trump's executive order has been overwhelmingly negative among immigrant rights advocates, who view the move as an attack on fundamental American values of inclusivity and fairness. The lawsuits filed against the order signal a strong commitment from various states and organizations to protect the rights of those affected.

As the legal proceedings advance, there is a strong expectation that the matter could ultimately reach the Supreme Court, where the justices will need to grapple with the historical and constitutional implications of Trump's order. The outcome could have lasting repercussions for immigration policy and the interpretation of citizenship rights in the United States.

6. Conclusion

President Trump's executive order on birthright citizenship represents a significant shift in the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, igniting a contentious legal battle that underlines the ongoing debates surrounding immigration and citizenship in America. As the nation watches closely, the unfolding legal challenges will not only determine the fate of countless children born in the U.S. but also test the resilience of constitutional guarantees that have shaped American identity for generations.

Dilip Patel of Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC, a board-certified expert on immigration law, can be reached at (813) 222-1120 or email dilip.patel@bipc.com



Premier | Sotheby's

INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Global. Elevated. Bespoke.

With more than 15 years of experience as a full-time real estate advisor, I am licensed in both Florida and Illinois, and have achieved over \$100 million in individual sales volume.



Follow me on Instagram!



Discover your home's value!

CheenaChandra.com

 [buylivesellnaples](#)

 [cheenachandra](#)

Cheena Chandra


GLOBAL REAL ESTATE ADVISOR

Cell: 312.953.6011

Cheena.Chandra@PremierSIR.com

Each office is independently owned and operated. Equal Housing Opportunity. Source: SWFLA MLS.

Scan the QR code to experience a day in the life of a Shorecrest student!



It starts with a *Spark*

Shorecrest Preparatory School — serving a diverse community of students from 3 years old through 12th grade.

Discover your **SPARK** at **Shorecrest**
SINCE 1923

Dental Excellence...
Compassionate Personalized Care!!!



Dentistry done differently! Bliss Dental Lounge offers a luxurious spa-like dental experience. Equipped with the latest innovative technology and services which include general dentistry, Invisalign, Implants, Botox/fillers and much more.

Dr. Sheetal's 20+ years of expertise and all-women's team by her side, you are sure to feel like a member of the Bliss Family! Her warm and gentle approach to your dentalcare will exceed your expectations and ensure your journey to dental wellness is as seamless and stress-free as possible.

Schedule online today!



★★★★★

FREE
Invisalign consultation
plus up to \$1,000 OFF
treatment.

With this coupon.
Offer expires Mar. 31, 2025

\$25 OFF
New Patients
1st Visit

Restrictions apply.
With this coupon.
Offer expires Mar. 31, 2025

FREE
Second
Opinion

With this coupon.
Offer expires Mar. 31, 2025

CONTACT US 813-995-6178

17735 Hunting Bow Cir. Lutz
www.blissdentallounge.com Bliss Dental Lounge





**Here's the deal,
home + auto =
savings.**

Ardeshir K Khorsandian Ins Agy
Adi Khorsandian, Agent
20752 Center Oak Drive
Tampa, FL 33647
Bus: 813-991-4111

Combine home and auto and save an average of \$1,127* I'm ready to help you get the right coverage at the right price. Call me for a quote.

Like a good neighbor,
State Farm is there.®



*Average annual per household savings based on a 2021 national survey by State Farm® of new policyholders who reported savings by switching to State Farm.

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
State Farm Indemnity Company
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company
State Farm General Insurance Company
Bloomington, IL

State Farm County Mutual Insurance Company of Texas
State Farm Lloyds
Richardson, TX

State Farm Florida Insurance Company
Winter Haven, FL

2001299

TOP-DOWN MOTORISTS, YOUR MANUAL 2025 Z4 HAS ARRIVED!

Test-drive story by NITISH S. RELE motoringflorida@gmail.com

And we thought it was all over for the manual! But thanks to BMW, for the first time, the 2025 Z4 will come with a 6-speed gearbox option, part of the \$3,500 Handschalter package ("hand shift" in German). That should bring plenty of grins to the faces of stick-shift aficionados! To accommodate for this welcome addition, the German carmaker has retuned the handsome roadster's chassis, suspension and steering systems.

Under the long bulging hood of the two-seater sits a 3.0-liter turbocharged inline-6 engine. This power plant delivers an enormous 382 horsepower at 6500 rpm and 368 pound-feet of torque at 5000 rpm. That translates into 0 to 60 in just 4.2 seconds and a top speed of 155 mph. Incredible for a slightly 3514-pound vehicle? You bet. Push the starter button to summon the twin-scroll turbocharger, and the rev-happy Z4 emits a throaty exhaust roar.

Keeping that muscle on the road is a double-joint spring McPherson strut front end and a multilink rear suspension that provides a stable refined ride even on harsh streets and in bad weather. An adaptive M suspension instantly adjusts damping force in response to driver input and road conditions. And before we forget, you have a choice of eco pro, comfort and sport modes.

Quick turns and bends are no challenge as the M Servotronic electric power steering with variable sport takes over. Active M Differential distributes drive torque evenly to the rear axle for more control and stability.

Stopping the two-seater, which rides on 19- and 20-inch alloy wheels, are 13.7-inch ventilated front discs and 12.7-inch rear disc brakes. Four-wheel antilock brakes, traction and stability control join in to avoid any mishaps. Safety is built into the Z4 with dual front and side airbags, side curtain, front knee airbags, and a pre-collision system with pedestrian detection, lane departure and forward-collision warnings, active cruise control (varying speed and maintaining a safe distance from vehicle in front), blind spot monitor, rear-cross traffic alert, rearview camera, rollover protection



Z4 M40i

Tires: 255/35R19 front; 285/30R20 rear

Wheelbase: 97.2 inches

Length: 170.7 inches

Width: 73.4 inches

Height: 51.3 inches

Fuel capacity: 13.7 gallons

City: 19 mpg

Highway: 26 mpg

Base price: \$66,450

Price as tested: \$74,520

Web site: www.bmwusa.com

and parking sensors with emergency brakes.

No matter where you travel, the convertible sportster displays its attractive presence. A black mesh kidney grille hosting the BMW emblem is flanked by swept-back LED headlights and gloss black accents on badging and mirror caps, and red caliper brakes. Step into the cabin and luxury trimmings will envelop you. The 12-way power front seats, all decked in gorgeous Vernasca leather, are a sight to behold and then ensconce in. The 10.3-inch touchscreen for infotainment is easy to use and control. Want to do some top-down motoring? Just push a button on the center console and within seconds, the sky will open up! Our cognac-colored test drive also came with a manual tilt/telescopic steering column with paddle shifters, dual auto a/c, Apple CarPlay/Android Auto and a piano-black shifter.

The rev-happy and smooth Z4 powertrain provides plenty of punch around town while its two occupants are coddled in a lavish, tech-laden cabin. Once again, kudos to BMW for integrating the stick into the shift! Indeed, it is open-air riding at its finest!

Premier **HINDU FUNERAL SERVICE** in Tampa

Our HINDU SERVICE PACKAGE includes...

- Funeral Service and Cremation conducted on same day. Crematory located on our premises.
- Custom HINDU themed rental casket.
- Funeral Service accessories per the Pandit Ji.
- Live internet streaming of the Funeral Service.
- Renovated Chapel with large seating capacity.
- Ample parking facilities.



Call to learn about
Pre-Planning discounts
and financing.



Contact Lou Bravo
for more details...

813-920-4241 • 727-376-7824

12609 Memorial Dr. • Trinity, FL 34655



EVENTS

Cont'd from page 2

FEB. 16: VALENTINE'S DAY DINNER, MUSIC AND DANCE; hosted by senior committee of Gujarati Society of Central Florida, 5 to 9:30 p.m.; Shri Laxminarayan Mandir, 251 N. Klondike Ave., Orlando; for GSCF members only, \$10 per person; text Kam Shah at (321) 689-6368.

FEB. 23: PICNIC; PRESENTED BY GUJARATI SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA; Bill Frederick Park-Turkey Lake, 3401 S. Hiawassee Road, Orlando; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; games, entertainment, food; free for members, \$15 non-members; for information, call (407) 600-0971.

FORT MYERS/NAPLES

FEB. 15: INDIA FEST – CELEBRATING UNITY EMBRACING DIVERSITY; organized by India Association of Naples; Cambier Park, 755 Eighth Ave. S., Naples; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; music, dances, food; for information, email naplesindia@gmail.com

FEB. 22: KUCHIPUDI DANCE RECITAL; organized by RAAGA; Dr. Yamini Saripalli presents Krishna Leela in Kuchipudi tradition; Rush Auditorium, J103, FSW, 8099 College Parkway, Fort Myers; 4 to 6 p.m.; free but donations encouraged; register at raagaf.org

MELBOURNE

MARCH 8-9: INDIAFEST; presented by Manav Mandir; Wickham Park, 2500 Parkway Drive, Melbourne; fashion shows, henna, arts and crafts, Indian cooking demo, food, raffle drawings, etc.; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday; \$8 for adults, \$4 for children 12 and

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.

under; kids younger than 5 years are free; for information, call Nina Gadodia at (321) 779-0110, e-mail info@indiafestbrevard.org or visit www.indiafestbrevard.org

SOUTH FLORIDA (POMPANO BEACH/MIRAMAR/MIAMI/SOUTHWEST RANCHES)

FEB. 1: NAMASTE! presented by Akshaya Patra; Indian art/food festival; Pompano Beach Amphitheatre & Grounds, 1806 N.E. Sixth St., Pompano Beach; 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; visit www.namastefl.com

FEB. 22-23: 30TH ASIAN TRADE, FOOD FAIR AND CULTURAL SHOW; presented by Bangladesh Association of Florida; Miramar Regional Park Amphitheater, 16801 Miramar Parkway, Miramar; 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. both days; Bollywood musical duo Kunal Pandit and Neelanjana Ray to perform; for information, call (754) 246-2801 or visit www.asianfair.org

MARCH 1: 34TH ANNUAL ASIAN CULTURE FESTIVAL; Tropical Park, 7900 S.W. 40th St., Miami; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; purchase tickets at www.AsianCultureFestival.net

MARCH 16: "SHIVA AS A LORD OF DANCE – NATARJA"; organized by Association of Performing Arts of India; dance program presented by South Florida choreographers Dr. Madhavi Menon, Dr. Neha Shah, Sangeetha Sridhar and Ranjana Warier; South Florida Hindu Temple, 13010 Griffin Road, Southwest Ranches; 5:30 to 7 p.m.; purchase \$25 tickets online at <https://waffl.link/EBPZKTUX>

'SUPERBOYS OF MALEGAON' TO RELEASE FEB. 28

Amazon MGM Studios, Excel Entertainment and Tiger Baby have announced Feb. 28 as the theatrical premiere date in U.S., India, U.K., UAE, Australia and New Zealand for "Superboys of Malegaon." The film, set in Malegaon, a small town in the state of Maharashtra, is inspired by real events.

Produced by Ritesh Sidhwani, Farhan Akhtar, Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti, the film is directed by Reema Kagti and written by Varun Grover.

It features Adarsh Gourav, Vineet Kumar Singh, Shashank Arora and Anuj Singh Duhan in lead roles.

"Superboys of Malegaon" is based on the life of Nasir Shaikh, an amateur filmmaker from the town of Malegaon. The residents of the town look to Bollywood cinema for a much-needed escape from daily drudgery. Nasir gets inspired to make a film for and by the people of Malegaon. He bands together his ragtag group of friends to bring his vision to life, thereby bringing a fresh lease of life into the town.

After the theatrical run, "Superboys of Malegaon" will debut on Prime Video.



Manav Mandir Presents

IndiafestSaturday, March 8th: 10:00am – 6:00pmSunday, March 9th: 11:00am – 5:00pm**Wickham Park - 2500 Parkway Dr, Melbourne, FL 32935****Adults: \$8.00 • Children under 12: \$4.00 • Children under 5: Free**

Advance tickets can be purchased on the website

Cultural Shows, Traditional Indian Cuisines, Fashion Show, Music, Henna, Indian Cooking Demo, Arts & Crafts, Yoga Demo, Great Raffle Prizes, & More

Indiafest has donated over \$1,300,000 to various charities & assist in disaster relief.

indiafestbrevard.org

* No Pets Allowed Except Service Animals

BONDING WITH MY ROOTS, CULTURE AFTER 7 YEARS

By DEV SHAH

I didn't know how to feel as I boarded the plane, bags clambering into the cargo hold. This was my first trip to India in seven years; it wasn't just about exploring the country but about immersing myself in a culture and language I had long struggled to connect with.

I was also nervous about my Gujarati. Though I could understand most conversations, speaking was difficult. Just before I tried to speak, I'd get confused between the similar-sounding endings, and a long "uhhh" would drawl out. Whenever I called my relatives, I'd stumble over my broken sentences, mentally sweating as I translated English into Gujarati, while they couldn't help but laugh. It had been years of a plateau — no improvement.

Even though I'd studied hundreds of thousands of words for the National Spelling Bee, from languages like Swahili and German, Gujarati had left me baffled.

So, going to India, my goal was to finally crack the language of my home.

When I landed in Ahmedabad, it was as if I entered a whole new world. Inside, workers hollered directions as passengers poured in. Outside, flotillas of rickshaws honked and blared as they steered through large crowds. I tried to cross the road like everyone else, but cars would zoom by, leaving me flustered.

In this different world, it hit me why I hadn't made any progress with Gujarati. I'd been trying to force translations from English into Gujarati, as if people here spoke, ate, and lived in English. If I wanted to master Gujarati, I needed to appreciate my roots as distinct and unique from America.

That understanding took shape in the smallest of moments, like when I tried to learn shaak (vegetable dish). In Florida, I eat them every day, but in Gujarat's tawny air, sitting cross-legged with a silver thali, they tasted better. I asked my uncle, pointing to the verdant scoop of giloda, "How do you say this in English?"

He sat in thought, searching, and said, "I don't know." I had never seen giloda in America — just in the produce aisle of Patel Brothers. That's because giloda is only found in India. And giloda shaak can only be found in Gujarat, in Ahmedabad.

Ahmedabad is not just a place of food, but also a world of fashion.



Photo by E. M. Pio

I stopped by a roadside market. Handmade embroidery lay on the ground, sandwiched between dhoti and kurta shops. I followed my mother as she bargained in Gujarati, spitting out numbers rapid-fire. I tried to follow along, at first translating the syllables into English, but for once, I stopped and focused on the language. I absorbed the moment and the context clues. Even though I didn't understand everything, I got the gist. If my mom turned as the vendor raised his voice, that meant the price was too high for its quality. Then the vendor would finally budge, shout a reduced price, and my mom would return. You'd never see this roadside market in America, and I realized that putting myself out there is how I'd learn Gujarati.

The next day, I attended a Gujarati pottery workshop. Molding the moist clay with my fingers, I nearly toppled the rotund pot, but the teacher said, "Arram ti." I knew that arram meant rest, and I also knew that I couldn't just 'rest' or the clay would fall. He took over, moving slower and more intentionally, and it just made sense.

I didn't have to translate arram ti; I associated it with carefulness.

Moreover, the language reflects its culture, and in just two weeks, speaking felt like second nature. Playing badminton with my cousins, I'd shout directions, and if it was a 2 vs. 1, I had no option but to speak Gujarati — or I would lose to a seven-year-old. But one situation that truly reflected Gujarati and how it connects to culture was kite-flying — and butterflies. The Gujarati word for butterfly is patangiyu, and a kite is patang. Gujarati named this flamboyant insect after the kite because that's what the society is.

These moments — whether in the bustling market or the pottery workshop — taught me that Gujarati language is inseparable from its culture.

Although I ate the tastiest food and desserts and hiked across vast salt deserts, the most important takeaway from my trip was how I learned Gujarati and how it connected me to my family. I've gotten closer to my roots, and I appreciate my culture as unique.

Dev Shah, a 10th grader in Largo, won the 2023 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

5TH ANNUAL EAST-WEST MUSIC & DANCE FESTIVAL FEB. 8 IN TAMPA

Shruti Foundation will hold its fifth annual East-West Music & Dance Festival on Feb. 8 in Tampa. The free event will feature performers of both Eastern and Western styles.

Food vendors, jewelry, clothing and other service vendors with family activities will also be present. More than 100 dancers from around the world, including different forms such as Indian folk, Bollywood, Flamenco, Hawaiian and belly dances, will take the stage.

Live bands performing at the festival are Shankh & Friends, AboveOnlySpace, Mike Quick Band and Shruti School of Music Ensemble. Dance performers include Vanessa Cerolio (Flamenco Dance Group), BollySoulFit (Indian Dance Group), Floreos (FCBD Belly Dance Group), Tatiana Olga (Fusion Dance), Sway with Sur (Indian Dance Group) and Hawaiian Cultural Dance Group.

"This festival is a celebration of diversity and connection. It's an opportunity for our community to come together and experience the beauty of cultural expression through music and dance," said Shankh Lahiri, founder and director of Shruti Foundation.

The family-friendly event will be from 2 to 7 p.m. Feb. 8 at Water Works Park, 1701 N. Highland Ave., Tampa.

DATE: Saturday, Feb. 8
LOCATION: Water Works Park, 1701 N. Highland Ave., Tampa
TIME: 2 to 7 p.m.
ADMISSION: Free



The East-West Music & Dance Festival is supported by a Special Events Partnership Grant from the Cultural Arts Commission, part of the Arts Council of Hillsborough County.

For more information, visit shrutifoundationtampa.org or call Shankh Lahiri at (813) 549-9288.



TypTap
Insurance

Simplified HOME INSURANCE

Providing Quality Insurance, Without the Hassle

TypTap.com

devi

Indian Bridal Collections



1218 E. Fowler Avenue • Tampa, FL 33612
For info please call: 732-809-7359



WHY PAY MORE?
GET THE LOWEST FARES
WITH US!

OUR SERVICES:

- ✓ CHEAP AIR TICKETS FROM INDIA TO USA FOR ALL MAJOR AIRLINES
- ✓ GROUP TOUR PACKAGES
- ✓ DISCOUNTED VACATIONS PACKAGES
- ✓ ALL INCLUSIVE PACKAGES & CRUISE VACATIONS
- ✓ WE SPEAK IN GUJARATI, HINDI, PUNJABI & ENGLISH

CALL NOW >>>>

813 344 0744 ,
714 522 8200

info@pujatravels.com

Toll Free: 1 866 554 7852

www.pujatravels.com



WHEN SHOULD WE START?

By ROBERT A.G. LEVINE



Prospective clients always come to us with worries. “I don’t know how it works” is a universal concern. “What schools can my child get” is a common question, too. Yet because these questions are not asked until a consultation is scheduled, one important consideration is pre-determined without advice:

“When should we start?”

Working with any professional is time dependent. Obviously, getting to an oncologist when the cancer is Stage 1 leads to better outcomes than starting during Stage 4. But in college consulting, earlier is not

necessarily better. For students who are entering high school, talking about college may seem pre-mature. While you might believe that it’s a good idea, when your child does not agree, the client-consultant relationship will be strained. On top of a professional relationship, you will want a strong personal relationship that allows the consultant to mentor and push your child to do their best. Once the relationship is broken, it takes a lot of time to rebuild (and it never becomes optimal).

So, rule 1 in determining when to meet with a consultant is “when your child is ready.”

Note: That does not mean that you – the parent – cannot get advice for college planning. We believe that good information helps parents be better parents. Ask if the consultant provides hourly services.

For those seeking direction on undergraduate admissions, there are three typical times when clients sign up. The first is during grades 9 or 10. The second is around January of grade 11. The third is when grade 12 starts around August. If your needs are merely “help us with essays,” it would appear that August of grade 12 would work well. Yes, and no. As consultants, we can do our job well, but there are three problems. First, when you start towards the end, the calendar is shorter and the work is rushed. That puts extra pressure on the student, and stress leads to inferior work. Second, because there is not enough time to build a strong personal relationship, students do not respond well to constructive criticism; it just feels like criticism. Third, there are lot of misconceptions about “how admissions works,” and without sufficient time to decondition you away from everything you have heard previously, your pre-conditioning will cause you

to resist even the best-intentioned directions.

Starting before grade 12 is strongly recommended. We can get the work done well, but can you?

But should you start earlier in high school or in the middle of grade 11? That depends on your college goals.

Students and families who wish to pursue “the best of the best” of U.S. universities – say, the 25 or so at the top of the rankings – often need guidance on what to do in school and beyond. While there is some time to “build a resume” during grade 11, it’s a little late to get started (or re-started) on that effort. For that reason, those who wish to apply to the world’s most selective schools should probably begin working with a consultant earlier. Not only will that provide more time to guide the student towards more robust activities, but it will also allow time to mentor the student into becoming a more mature adult. We always say: “Don’t build a resume; build a person. With a strong person, the resume happens naturally.” We also say, “At UCA, we mentor changemakers.” So, for those who want to be great on a worldwide school, allow us the time to help your child grown into their best self.

Yet it is not necessary to hyper-focus on college so early. There are lots of amazing universities in the U.S. (and beyond), and regardless of name brand or reputation, “fit” between student and schools is paramount for college and lifetime success. If starting later is your preference, that works too. Our recommendation, however, is to begin working with a consultant in January or February of grade 11. That allows us enough time to help you prepare for the admissions season without overburdening the student with too much time or effort while they are busy with high school. A few extra months before summer starts can make a significant difference.

Whether to work with an educational consultant – and when to start – are questions that often vex parents. Don’t be paralyzed: ask questions so that you can make your best decisions for your child.

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

ANNAPURNA KITCHEN OPENS AT SANATAN MANDIR IN TAMPA

Story provided by NARESH VISSA



Sanatan Mandir recently held a grand opening of Annapurna Kitchen, a brand-new cafe serving an array of delectable Indian dishes. More than 60 percent of temple trustees joined the celebration at which over 250 people were served meals from the canteen. Lohri celebrations were simultaneously held, which included a ceremony by the priests and distribution of sweets. Located within the mandir premises, the construction of the commercial kitchen was completed by Pawan Sharma of Royal Construction & Fixtures in November. Subsequently, the City of Tampa granted the certificate of occupancy in December.

Yatendra and Rani Kumar’s generous donation and unwavering support helped make this project a reality. Gateway to India restaurant owner Sanjeev Kumar is supervising and running the temple kitchen.

The canteen offers a diverse range of mouth-watering options, including dosa, idli, wada, thalis, and Punjabi and Gujarati meals. The café is open all day until 9 p.m. on weekends and during normal lunch/dinner hours Tuesday to Friday.

Sanatan Mandir is at 311 E. Palm Ave., Tampa. For information, call (813) 221-4482 or visit <https://sanatanmandirtampa.org/>



Yatendra and Rani Kumar

THE EYES OF LOVE: HOW VISION SHAPES CONNECTION AND LIFE

By Dr. ARUN C. GULANI



February is the month of love – a time to celebrate relationships, connections and the beauty of seeing the world clearly, both literally and metaphorically. Yet, how often do we stop to consider how our vision impacts the way we experience life and the people we love?

From the first glance that sparks a connection to the shared joy of watching a sunset or admiring a loved one's smile, clear vision is at the heart of our most cherished moments. Vision doesn't just help us see; it allows us to feel deeply, connect meaningfully, and live fully.

As an eye surgeon with a worldwide patient clientele of practically every culture, I've had the honor of witnessing how life changes when vision improves.

They may have come to me to get rid of their glasses and contact lenses due to their astigmatism, nearsightedness, farsightedness and even reading glasses or cataracts, and my patients often share stories that are more than medical – they're deeply personal. One patient who traveled to me from Switzerland recently described the profound emotion of seeing their partner clearly for the first time in years: "It was like falling in love all over again." Another patient from India talked about the simple but life-changing experience of reading their grandchild's handmade Valentine – every heart, every word glowing with love.

These stories aren't unique. For countless individuals, vision is a key part of how they experience the world and express their emotions. Yet, many of us take our eyesight for granted. We adapt to blurry vision or live with discomfort, not realizing how much of life's vibrancy we're missing.

Seeing Beyond the Surface

Vision, in many ways, is a metaphor for life. It's not just about clarity; it's about perspective. When I work with patients, I see how their journey toward better vision mirrors a journey of rediscovery. Whether they're regaining the ability to read, drive or simply recognize the faces of their loved ones, the change is profound.

But vision is not just about overcoming problems; it's also about thriving. In this season of love, consider what it means to truly see – to take in the details,

the colors, the expressions and the moments that make life beautiful.

Here are a few tips to keep your vision – and your connection – strong:

1. Protect Your Eyes: Whether it's wearing sunglasses to shield against UV rays, using safety goggles during activities, or ensuring proper lighting when reading, small preventive measures can make a big difference.

2. Stay Hydrated and Moisturized: Winter's dry air can irritate your eyes. Use humidifiers at home and artificial tears to maintain comfort and eye health.

3. Prioritize Your Vision: Regular checkups with an eye doctor can catch issues early, preventing them from escalating into more complex problems. Don't wait until something feels wrong – our eyes deserve proactive care.

4. Embrace Modern Advancements: Today's technologies, such as those I have pioneered, can not only correct vision problems from cataract or glasses prescriptions, but even bad outcomes from Lasik or cataract surgery. From laser surgery to personalized solutions for extreme cases, the possibilities for clear vision are remarkable.

The Gift of Sight: A Love Letter to Yourself

Imagine what you could see, feel and experience if your vision weren't holding you back. Whether it's reading the fine print on a love letter, watching your favorite film, or seeing the details in your loved one's face, clarity can transform the way you experience life's most meaningful moments.

As someone who has spent over three decades helping people achieve this transformation, I can confidently say that clear vision isn't just a medical outcome – it's a gift. It's the difference between living in the shadows and stepping into the light, between missing moments and cherishing them.

This Valentine's season, as you celebrate love in all its forms, take a moment to consider the gift of sight. Whether for yourself or a loved one, clear vision is an investment in life, love and connection. After all, life is best lived with open eyes and an open heart.

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 or visit www.gulanivision.com



**To-go and dining available
Safety is our priority
100% halal meat**

Minerva

INDIAN RESTAURANT

Introducing Thursdays and Sundays Special Biryani \$10 Only

\$5.00 OFF
Any Order of \$40 Or More
Dinner Menu Only.
When You Bring in this Ad!
Cannot be combined.
Expires 6/30/2025

**Buy One Get One
1/2 OFF ENTRÉE**
2nd Entrée of Equal or Lesser Value
When You Bring in this Ad!
Cannot be combined.
Expires 6/30/2025

**\$2.00 OFF
LUNCH BUFFET**
When You Bring in this Ad!
Cannot be combined.
Expires 6/30/2025

www.minervatampa.com
19050 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa, FL 33647 • (813) 978-8586



Amit Dehra, Attorney at Law
LL.M, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
LL.B, Punjab University, Chandigarh, India

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY

DEHRA MIOTKE, LLC

Legal Services provided:

- Family-based Immigrant Visa Petition
- Employment-based Nonimmigrant Visa Petitions (H-1B, E-1/E-2, L-1A/L-1B, etc.)
- Employment-based Immigrant Visa Petition
- Deportation Defense • Asylum • Naturalization
- And all types of representation before the U.S.C.I.S. and the U.S. Immigration Court • U Visa, Federal Court Litigation

Practice Limited to Immigration & Nationality Law only.

Call us on update for new immigration policy
We speak: Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi

FULL SERVICES IMMIGRATION LAW FIRM



TAMPA
5404 Hoover Blvd,
Unit 26,
Tampa, FL 33634
(813) 221-0733
E-mail: adehra@dmimmigration.com

ORLANDO
5401 S. Kirkman Rd.,
Suite 310
Orlando, FL 32819
(407) 965-2455



DM
IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS

FEBRUARY 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) Your social circle expands, creating new friendships and collaborations! While Saturn's influence may slow things down, exercise patience when dealing with career and personal goals; being persistent may bring long-term rewards. Be mindful of impulsive decisions. Stay open to teamwork and new projects; strategize before acting!

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) Your career and public life take center stage! Sun highlights professional growth, and Saturn ensures that hard work pays off. Meanwhile, planetary combination could bring unexpected social and financial blessings — stay open to new alliances. Stay balanced — avoid overindulgence and think long-term.

GEMINI / Mithuna (Air sign, ruling planet is Mercury) - (May 22-June 21)

Mercury Sign - Stars covered Mrigashira (last 2 parts), Ardra & Punarvasu (3 parts) Just be mindful of restlessness — channel your enthusiasm into productive pursuits, and exciting doors may open! The planetary effect boosts your confidence. However, be wary of coming across as overly aggressive. This period also favors adhering to rules in professional matters.

CANCER / Karaka (Watery sign, ruling planet is Moon) - (June 22-July 22) Moon Sign – Stars covered Punarvasu (4th part), Pushya, Aslesha Deep transformation is at play, use this time for introspection, healing and financial planning. Planets suggest a need for rest and reflection. This is an opportune time for spiritual practice and looking into subconscious patterns. Deep transformation is underway as self-discovery comes to the forefront. Don't push yourself too hard. Instead, focus on healing and renewal.

LEO / Simha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Sun) - (July 23-Aug. 22) Sun Sign – Stars covered Magha, Purva Phalguni, and Uttara Phalguni (1st part) Work relationships take center stage and may even test patience in partnerships. Be open about communication and commitment, which in turn may help build trust. Financial or emotional variance can arise for some but staying grounded and focused may help one navigate with grace.

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) Focus attention on health, daily routines and service. This time some may see increased workload, requiring efficient time management. Mercury, your ruling planet, helps enhance communication skills. Strive for balance between work obligations and personal relationships.

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) Creativity, romance and self-expression are highlighted with a touch of responsibility to everything you do. Be adaptable and prioritize well-being. Let your inner artist and dreamer thrive! Unexpected changes in daily routine or health may be possible for some. Make good use of the month.

SCORPIO / Vruschika (Water sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Mars Sign – Stars covered Vishakha (4th part), Anuradha, Jyestha Home and family matters take priority as the Sun transits. Whether it's a physical space or emotional foundation, restructuring is on the horizon. It urges you to embrace change and transformation. Trust the process — growth is happening behind the scenes!

SAGITTARIUS / Dhanush (Fire sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Jupiter Sign – Stars covered Moola, Purva Shada, Uttara Shada (first part) Communication, learning and short trips are in the spotlight! The Sun boosts one's ability to express yourself while Saturn encourages disciplined learning, thinking as well as enhancing family and home-related discussions. Focus on clear communication to navigate domestic challenges. Speak with clarity and confidence — your words have power!

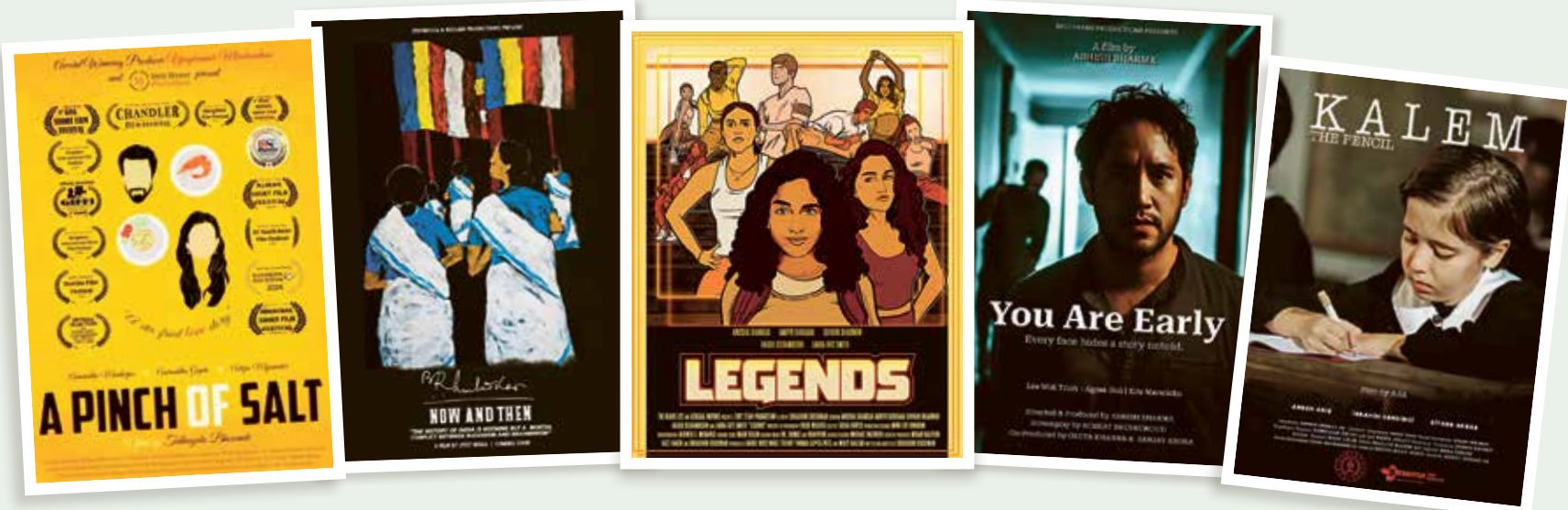
CAPRICORN / Makara (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Saturn) - (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) Saturn Sign – Stars covered Uttara Shada (last 3 parts) Shrivana, Dhanistha (first 2 parts) Finances and personal values are key themes for you. The Sun in your 2nd house, along with Saturn's presence, urges smart financial planning. It may bring unexpected but positive results. Stay focused on long-term stability, and success could follow! Manage your resources wisely and think before you speak to avoid misunderstandings.

AQUARIUS / Kumbha (Air sign, ruling planet is Saturn) – (Jan. 21-Feb. 19) Saturn Sign - Stars covered: Dhanistha (last 2 parts) Satabhisha, Purva Bhadra Pada (1st 3 parts) It's your time to shine! With the Sun in your sign, personal goals and self-image receive a boost. Saturn asks for disciplined efforts while embracing personal growth opportunities. The Saturn conjunction may prompt self-reflection. Make dreams come true, work towards them seriously – this is your moment!

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 A deeply introspective month as Sun moves through your 12th house. Time helps communicate your emotions more effectively and it may also lead to spiritual discipline. Prioritize inner peace and self-care – your intuition is your superpower! The latter part of the month enhances emotional intelligence.

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

SOUTH ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF FLORIDA



The festival is supported by Khaas Baat, Groundgame Health, Sakar Trust and Convergent Media, with a dedicated team of volunteers working to promote diversity, culture, and creative expression. Festival Director Hemant Dinkar shared that this year's festival has received a record number of submissions, with a selection of 25-30 films chosen by a panel of judges.

Prominent Bollywood celebrities, including Neelam Kothari, Aryan Vaid, Sunny Hinduja and Omi Vaid are expected to attend, along with 12-14 filmmakers from around the world. Additionally, the festival will screen "Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Now & Then," a documentary produced by Tampa's Santosh Govindaraju, which delves into the themes of liberty, equality and social justice through the life and legacy of Ambedkar.

For more information, schedule of films and to purchase tickets, visit www.SAIIFF.org or contact Hemant Dinkar at (312) 933-2251.

WHAT: South Asian International Film Festival of Florida

When: Feb. 21-22

Where: NCG Cinemas, Citrus Park Mall, 7999 Citrus Park Town Center Mall, Tampa

TICKETS, INFO: www.saiiff.org, call (312) 933-2251.

Some key films include:

- "The Caregiving Connection" – A documentary exploring South Asian caregiving traditions.
- "Almost Home" – A short film following a Muslim-American Marine's internal struggle.
- "Soch" – A Hindi feature film addressing communal tensions and social justice.
- "Me, Raani" – A short film about a single mother's dreams for her daughter's education.
- "Aftershock of a Trauma" – A film following Afghan students in the U.S. amid political upheaval.
- "Legends" – A short film about a dance scholarship and self-discovery.
- "Andhela Ravamidhi" – A Telugu feature celebrating the empowerment of women through art and culture.
- "Blind Spot" (Chasma) – A short film confronting religious and societal biases in 1992 India.
- "Paper Flowers" – A feature film exploring love, loss and resilience in the face of illness.



CLASSIFIEDS

To list your classified ad (for sale, help wanted, services offered, matrimonials), call (813) 758-1786 or e-mail editor@khaasbaat.com

HELP WANTED I am looking for a Gujarati/Hindi-speaking caretaker to live at home with my 82-year-old mom helping her to mobilize, cook and watch over. Will provide a good salary and accommodations. Call (941) 518-6298.

HELP WANTED St. Petersburg motel is looking for Front Desk Clerk and Housekeeper. Accommodation will be provided. Call (727) 686-0807 or email npatel50@gmail.com

HELP WANTED Job opportunities in Tampa for Goldsmiths and Diamond Repair Specialists at Malani Jewelers. Please call (404) 298-7811 or email info@malanijewelers.com for details.

HELP WANTED Tampa restaurant is looking for servers, food runners and front host. Good pay. Call (972) 900-1526 or email minervatampa@gmail.com

THE RAM LAW FIRM PA

IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS

★ EMPLOYMENT / WORK VISAS

★ INVESTOR / EB-5

★ PERM / EB-2 NIW / EB-1

★ NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS

★ NATURALIZATION / CITIZENSHIP

★ FAMILY-BASED IMMIGRANT VISAS

★ INADMISSIBILITY WAIVERS

★ DEPORTATION DEFENSE

*PRACTICE LIMITED TO IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY LAW
We also speak ESPAÑOL and PORTUGUÊS

ORLANDO
5812 S. Semoran Blvd
Orlando, FL 32822
(407) 270-9554

TAMPA
15310 Amberly Dr. Suite 250
Tampa, FL 33647
(813) 726-9338

WWW.RAMIMMIGRATIONLAW.COM

RAM BALARAMAN, ESQ.*
E-MAIL: INFO@RAMIMMIGRATIONLAW.COM

CELEBRATING THE ARCHITECTURAL BRILLIANCE OF AIRAVATESVARA TEMPLE AT DARASURAM

By **BRINDA PAMULAPATI**



Just a short drive from Kumbakonam, the Airavatesvara Temple in Darasuram stands as a testament to the grandeur of Chola architecture. Built during the reign of Rajaraja II between 1143 and 1173 CE, this temple is not just a religious site but a canvas displaying the zenith of Chola artistry.

Unlike many other temples of its era, the Airavatesvara Temple is noted for its unique architectural design. The sanctum, remarkably, lacks a circumambulatory path, directing all focus to the sanctity of the deity's abode. The temple's front mandapa, inscribed as "Rajagambhiran-

tirumandapam," is conceived as an ornate chariot complete with wheels — a rare architectural feat that accentuates the temple's divine purpose.

The pillars of this mandapa are lavishly decorated, showcasing the intricate craftsmanship of the Chola artisans. Among these sculptures, the narratives of the sixty-three Tamil saints (Nayanmars) carved into miniature friezes around the temple not only adorn its walls but also celebrate the profound Saivism rooted in this region.

One of the crowning jewels of the temple is the sculpture of Annapoorani. Renowned for its exquisite detailing, from the finely shaped nails to a delicate smile, the temple priest lovingly claims, "The smile is better than Monalisa." This sculpture alone draws numerous art enthusiasts and devotees alike, who marvel at its serene expression.

The temple also houses an intriguing collection of acrobat and yoga position carvings — each posture frozen in stone yet fluid in interpretation. These carvings include three complex poses in one sculpture: where the legs are thrown over the shoulders, hips artistically twisted to the right and then towards left, each telling a story of bodily mastery.

The complex features a stunning array of 108 pillars, each intricately carved with the classic poses of Bharatanatyam, India's ancient dance form. This not only serves



captivating sculpture is that of Kannapan, a figure so ancient yet whose stylings, like the rope sandals that are carved in 12th century is considered vogue even in today's fashion.



as a pillar of support but also as a dance heritage that has been preserved through millennia.

In addition, the temple boasts beautifully inscribed oil lamps, which were historically used to illuminate this majestic site with oil and wicks. Another

Furthermore, the temple presents the divinely scholarly Jnana-saraswathi sculpture, poised in padmasana with the chin mudra, symbolizing the pursuit of knowledge.

The temple's minute sculptures, such as a 1-inch depiction of Shiva and Parvathi and a 1½-inch dancing Ganapathi, demonstrate the exceptional skill in creating detailed art in confined spaces.

The Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram is not merely a place of worship but a grand narrative sculpted in stone, preserving the artistic and cultural ethos of its time. It invites all who visit to gaze in wonder at the legacy of the Cholas, captured forever in the timeless dance of stone and spirit.

Brinda Pamulapati, owner/managing director, of Venvi Art Gallery in Tallahassee, can be reached at (850) 322-0965 or visit www.VenviArtGallery.com

Cinematic Video & Photography

Krishna
VIDEO & PHOTO STUDIO

Dilip Panchal 863.651.8899

Lakeland, Florida
kvp1758@gmail.com





SEEMA RAMROOP, CRPS®
Financial Professional
The Prudential Insurance Company of America
2300 Curlew Rd Ste.212
Palm Harbor, FL 34683
seema.ramroop@prudential.com

INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Insurance Issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, Newark, NJ and its affiliates.
PAM-211



CAMP IDS

AT CORBETT PREP

STUDENTS ENTERING PREK3 THROUGH 8TH GRADE

SUMMER 2025

6 WEEKS OF OPTIONS
JUNE 10 - JULY 19

100+ FULL- AND HALF-DAY CAMPS
BEFORE- AND AFTER-CARE

813.961.3087 • www.corbettprep.com • campids@corbettprep.com • Corbett Preparatory School of IDS • 12015 Orange Grove Dr. Tampa, FL 33618



Blissful Living
ANAND NILAY
Blissful Living

Discover luxury living redefined at our newest premier 55+ active-adult community in the Tampa Bay area. Anand Nilay will feature 111 single-family detached homes with spacious 2,3 and 4 bedroom floorplans. Delight in first-class dining and daily activities in our upscale state-of-the-art clubhouse.

Crafted by the developers that brought you Anand Vihar. Come experience Blissful Living today!

AnandNilay.com



VEDIC POOJA VIDHI (METHOD)

**“For a Pooja to be beneficial,
it must be done in Your Name,
Gotra, Nakshatra, Rashi Lord, Isht
Devi/Devata, and Lagna Lord”.**



Also know your **“Janmaank or Lucky No.”**, **“Tattwa or Element of Air, Water or Heat”** in your body; coz **imbalance of these Tattwas’ is the root cause of our ailments!**

If you don't know the above, contact, **Astrologer and Vedic Mantra Therapist, Pankaj Kohli** to create your Horoscope and perform a Personalized **Pooja that Blesses YOU with Positive results.**

Call: Pankaj Kohli, Astrologer & Vedic Mantra Therapist
T: 905-910-1441

Now We Can Help You Buy, Sell & Finance Commercial or Residential Properties.

- Licensed Mortgage & Real Estate Broker
- Commercial Loans from \$350,000 to \$50,000,000
- Purchase, Rehab, Refinance, Office, Industrial, Retail, Hotel, Motel, Gas Station, Strip Centers, Multi Family, Senior Housing, Nationwide Loans
- Bridge Loans
- Residential Loans
- SBA, Conventional, 504, 7A
- Quick Pre Qualification
- Serving Florida Community for Last 31 Years



Raja Paleja



Rakhee Shahdarpuri
Sales Associate, REALTOR®
Email: rakheepaleja@gmail.com
Phone: 407-222-6171



Ph: 407-262-0470 • Fax 407-262-0474 • Cell 321-689-6568
1073 Willa Springs Dr., Suite 1001, Winter Springs, FL 32708
Email: Rajapaleja@gmail.com • www.maharajafinancial.com

AccounTax Services

“PROUD TO BE BORING ACCOUNTANTS”

- Monthly & Quarterly Bookkeeping
- Payroll & Sales Tax
- Personal Tax Returns
- Business Tax Returns
- New Business Formation
- Business Licensing
- SNAP (EBT) Retailer Services
- WBENC (Women Owned Business) Certification
- Debt Consolidation Assistance
- Management Svc for Sr. Citizens
- Check Cashing Business Services



BOB PATEL
(407) 710-5818
bob@accounttaxservice.net

2323 TOPAZ ISLE LANE • APOPKA, FL 32712

GEARING UP FOR 2025 TAX SEASON

By **TEJAL DHRUVE**



Right now, you may be more focused on what you'll owe (or receive as a refund) when you file your 2024 tax return in April than on tax planning for the new year. However, as you work through your annual tax filing, you should familiarize yourself with amounts that may have changed for 2025 due to inflation adjustments.

Here are four commonly asked questions (and answers) about 2025 tax figures:

1. How much money can I contribute to an IRA? If eligible, you can contribute up to \$7,000 to a traditional or Roth IRA (but only up to 100% of your earned income, if less).

If you're age 50 or older, you can make another \$1,000 "catch-up" contribution. (These amounts are the same as for 2024.)

2. What's the maximum I can contribute to a 401(k) plan through my job? The amount you can contribute is up to \$23,500 to a 401(k) or 403(b) plan (up from \$23,000 in 2024). Those 50 or older can add a \$7,500 catch-up contribution (unchanged from 2024). New in 2025, employees ages 60 through 63 can make enhanced catch-up contributions of up to \$11,250 (including the \$7,500 standard catch-up contribution).
3. How much must I earn not to pay Social Security on my entire salary? The Social Security tax wage base rises to \$176,100 (from \$168,600 for 2024). You don't owe Social Security tax on amounts earned above this threshold. (Medicare tax must be paid on all amounts earned.)
4. How much can I give one person without requiring a gift tax return? The annual gift tax exclusion is \$19,000 (up from \$18,000 in 2024).

Married Filing Separately: When It May Make Sense

Filing joint tax returns generally results in the lowest tax bill for married couples. However, in some circumstances, they may pay less taxes if they file separately, such as when one spouse has large medical expenses. Medical expenses are deductible only to the extent that they exceed 7.5% of adjusted gross income (AGI). So if one spouse would have significantly lower AGI filing separately, it may increase the deduction.

But be mindful of the downsides of filing separately. Certain tax credits, for instance, are generally unavailable to separate filers, specifically for child and dependent care and education. Also, the capital loss deduction for separate filers is limited to \$1,500 (as opposed to \$3,000 for married couples filing jointly).

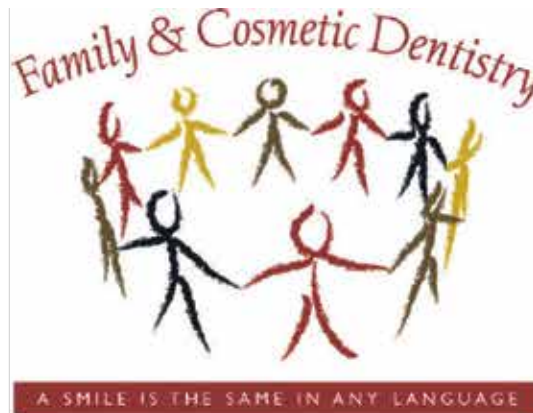
Yet there may be reasons filing separately is better even if the tax cost is higher, such as if one spouse has an income-sensitive repayment plan for student loans. Contact the office to weigh all the factors and determine the most advantageous strategy for your situation.

A Better Way to Help with Tuition

Another year is here, and that comes with a new school semester and tuition bills for many people. If you're considering helping a grandchild or other loved one with their college expenses, first take time to review the tax implications. If the total amount you give to the student in 2025 exceeds the annual gift tax exclusion, you might owe gift tax on the excess. In 2025, this exclusion is \$19,000 per recipient or \$38,000 for married donors who split gifts (up from \$18,000 and \$36,000, respectively, in 2024).

To avoid tax implications on gifts over the exclusion (or to preserve the exclusion for other gifts), you can pay tuition directly to the school, which qualifies for an unlimited gift tax exclusion. This exclusion applies only to tuition, not to room, board, books or supplies.

Tejal Dhruve, CPA, LLC, a full-service tax and wealth management firm with offices in Wesley Chapel, Florida, and Dublin, Ohio, can be reached at (614) 742-7158 or email info@dhruvecpa.com



Dr. Jasthi

Beautiful Smiles

Created by: Dr. Neeraja Jasthi

High Tech Digital Dental Office

Crowns • Veneers • Implants

Invisalign®
Braces without wires

ZOOM!™
Professional Whitening System

Most Insurance
and Credit Cards Accepted
Finance Options Available

20441 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33647

*Across the Street from Wharton High School
Just North of Wal-Mart*

New Patients Welcome

(813) 866-9913

www.drjasthi.com

FOR ALL HINDU RELIGIOUS POOJA

Highly Qualified Priest
Fluent in English, Gujarati,
Hindi & Sanskrit

Expert in:
Shrimad Bhagwat Saptah
Ramayan, Sundar Kand,
and Bhajan Programs

AACHARYA RAMESH MEHTA
TRIPLE AACHARYA M.A. MEDALIST

Cell: 813-453-9334 or Hm: 813-661-6297

Dinesh Gandhi
CA license # 0G95100
 Qualified Member MDRT 2009-2010-2013
 Financial Services Professional*
 New York Life Insurance Company

Licensed Agent
 Life Insurance - Long Term Care Insurance - College Funding
 IRA Funding - Key Person Protection

Cell 727 858 4123

dpgandhi@ft.newyorklife.com

LLC, Member FINRA, A licensed Insurance Agency
 3109 West Milk Blvd, Suite 300 Tampa FL 33607

"AGENT YOU TRUST"

Happy
Valentine's
Day!



MALANI

— Since 1897 —

HAPPY
Valentine's
DAY

Shop Luxurious
**Gifts Under
\$1000**



**\$35
FREE***
Jewelry
Travel Case

(with any jewelry
purchase from the Gifts Under
\$1000 category)

T&C Apply* | *Offer valid only on the website until February 20th, 2025



Showroom in Tampa
14424 N Dale Mabry Hwy
Tampa, FL - 33618

☎ (813) 866-4652

MALANIJEWELERS.COM



Malanijewelers



malani_jewelers



malani_jewelers



malani_jewelers