Bahubali-2, highest grossing Indian film, breaks many records

S.S Rajamouli’s box office-shattering Baahubali 2: The Conclusion has become the highest-grossing Indian film, crossing the 800 crore mark on 6 May, a first for an Indian movie, which leaves Aamir Khan’s previous record-holder, PK, in the dust at 792 crores.

Baahubali 2 was shot in Telugu and later dubbed in the other languages, including Hindi. The film that released in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam besides Hindi, has not only received an excellent response in the South but has also shown its popularity in the north. The film has already smashed many other existing records.

The epic historical fantasy film with spectacular sets and dramatic scenes of war is enthralling India. Widely touted as India’s answer to Game of Thrones, the success of Baahubali (Continued on page 6)

(Shows at Atlas Cinemas Eastgate: 3:45pm; 6:30pm; 9:00pm, 9:15pm)

Cleveland Thyagaraja Carnatic Music Festival celebrates 40th anniversary: About 1,500 artists (200 from India) gave 120 performances during the 13-day festival at CSU, attended by some 9,000 people. Picture above: a scene from the musical dance-drama “Rukmini Kalyanam.”

Photo by Prakash Sinha
An inspiring story of courage and hope

By Prakash Sinha

The keynote speech by Dr. Loi Nguyen at the Asian Service in Action (Asia Inc.) second annual “Spring Friendraiser” at Ariel International Center on April 27, was a story that would remind us of a Hollywood thriller. Her family escaped a village under enemy bombings as South Vietnam was falling to the Communists to a safer Danang town which too fell soon after they left to catch a boat and move to the sea, away from the infamy of a war. It was also a touching story of human suffering, courage, hope and success.

It was also an incredible story of a refugee family from Vietnam to a welcoming community in Cleveland, as Michael Byun, Executive Director of Asia Inc., said while introducing Dr. Nguyen to the audience that included many prominent members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in Northeast Ohio.

Dr. Nguyen was just two years old when her family left Vietnam after watching death and destruction and other horrors of the war, but she remembers vividly how they were picked up from their boat by an American ship and brought to the Philippines and then to a refugee camp in Florida, USA. Later, they were brought to Akron by the Chapel, a church and a service organization.

Her father found a job with Firestone Company and the Chapel also helped them settle down in America. The guest speaker Dr. Nguyen is today an educator, well-recognized for her work to advance ESL and foreign languages in the public schools in Akron area.

Interestingly, her family had left their village on April 27, 1975, and she was recounting her story to us on April 27, 2017, exactly 42 years later. She still remembers how her father used to tell them in Vietnam to live life as if it were your last day, “We learnt to appreciate life.”

Coming to the US, they found a safe haven, but it also was a cultural shock. There was no TV in Vietnam and it was different in many other ways too. But after making social adjustments, “America was a place where our dreams and aspirations came true.”

Today her father (82) is still serving the Chapel in Akron. Right now her dad and mom (79) are visiting Vietnam for the first time since their escape in 1975 to celebrate the 60th anniversary of their rebuild village church.

Left to Right: Dr. Hari Balaji (President, AIPNO), Mr. Rao Garuda of Associated Concepts Agency, Dr. Shanta Kampani and Dr. Homai Cupala of Medical Yatra.

Nabakalebara: New deities

By Prasanta Raj

A di Sanarkaracharya established Jagannath Temple as one of the four major Dhamas in Hindu religion. One can visit the deities of Eastern Puri Dhama at the Greater Cleveland Shiva Vishnu Temple, Parma, Ohio.

Puri Jagannath Temple was also a touching story of human suffering, courage, hope and success. It is believed that after Lord Krishna’s accidental demise by an arrow by a tribal hunter Jara, Arjun and others performed the last rites.

The central part did not burn completely so was offered to ocean and turned into a stone. The tribal kings worshiped that stone and kept it inside Lord Jagannath’s Danu (Neema Wood) body. Ever year Lord Jagannath, along with His brother and sister, travels in a 3-km distance in a grand procession where hundreds of thousands of people participate. They stay at Gundicha Rani’s temple and return back on the 9th day.

Lord Jagannath represents both male and female, signifying the concept of a single God, neither male nor female or both and also with the black color which is described as Sunya (Empty) and Nirodha (Goddess or or Form). The black color is also the amalgamation of all the colors, thus representing all race and religions, thus bearing the name Jagat (universe) Naath (Lord). In the Rathajatra, we feel that God is within us.

Every decade or so new deities are made and the inner sacred portion is transferred in to the new ones, which is celebrated as Naba (New) Kalyanara (Body). This celebration reinforces our fundamental belief that our soul never dies and just like changing in to new garments, we discard the old body and get in to new body and continue to do good deeds until we achieve ultimate salvation (Moksha).

This year the SV Temple is celebrating the Nabakalebara of Lord jagannatha, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarsanji. A free cultural program will be presented at Strongsville High School auditorium on 18 June, 3 to 5 pm. A Rathajatra will take place at Strongsville High auditorium and return festival on July 2 morning. Everyone is welcome to participate. For more information: 440 888 9433

MDRT Foundation grant for AIPNO

MDRT Foundation grant for AIPNO

Cleveland: The MDRT Foundation has awarded a $5,000 grant to the Association of Indian Physicians of Northern Ohio to support their Medical Yatra Program.

Representing the MDRT Foundation, Rao Garuda of the Associated Concepts Agency presented this grant to AIPNO on April 27 at the Holiday Inn, Independence, OH.

A non-profit organization, AIPNO is involved at local, national and international levels for education and charitable purposes. It has supported educational tour for local medical residents to various parts of the world via Medical Yatra which is a humanitarian mission organized under the umbrella of AIPNO reaching out to the poor, especially in underdeveloped countries. Trips to India during the month of January/February have been an annual event since 2001Gujarat earthquake.

Through its global grants programs, the MDRT Foundation helps build stronger families and communities around the globe. This year, it will award over $1 million in MDRT member-endorsed grants to more than 200 charitable organizations worldwide.

Left to Right: Dr. Hari Balaji (President, AIPNO), Mr. Rao Garuda of Associated Concepts Agency, Dr. Shanta Kampani and Dr. Homai Cupala of Medical Yatra.

To receive a FREE E-copy of India International, please send your request with email ID to indiant@aol.com

Printed copies are also available free (one copy per family) at all Indian stores and temples, besides all the 28 branches of the Cuyahoga County Public Library.

From Bud to Blossom Retreat, a journey from fear to unlimited trust!

Fairlawn, OH
May 26th, 6-9pm
May 27th/28th: 9am-7pm
Cost: $333
(Lunch & Breaks Provided)

The unfurling of a Flower, from tiny Bud to full Blossom, is a present moment journey. When we open our Hearts by removing Fear and developing Unlimited Trust, we experience Stability and Free Flowing Joy. In this retreat, we will practice being Present, Heart-Centered, and Trusting of life, so that we can express our full potential, bring our unique beauty to the world & enjoy fulfilling relationships.

You are invited to join Yolanda Beckers, Director of the Health and Wellness Sanctuary of SW Florida, and Vivek and Kristina Kasthup at My Present Heart for a weekend that nourishes all aspects of the self: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual and Energetic.

For more information, contact Kristina 216-262-0924

To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that’s all.

– Oscar Wilde

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International Hindi Association, Northern Ohio chapter, presents
Hasya Kavi Sammelan
An evening filled with poetry and laughter
Friday May 12, 2017
at Days Inn, 4742 Brecksville Road, Richfield
For more information and volunteering, please contact:
Dr. Harish Gatha: 216-831-0319; Dr. Lal Arora: 440-714-0252;
Satish Gupta: 440-823-0785; Raman Patel: 216-659-1102; Temple 440-888-9433. Lunch will be served

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Sunday & Monday: 5 PM - 9 PM
www.thejaipurjunction.com

Shiva Vishnu Temple & Association of Indian Physicians of Northern Ohio (AIPNO) will organize a health fair at the temple (7733 Ridge Road, Parma) On Sunday, May 21 – 9 AM to 12:30 PM Free Consultation: Blood Testing, Hypertension, Dentistry, Blood Pressure, CBC, diabetes, Internal Medicine, PA, Fundament, Pediatrics, Family Medicine, Bone Density, Cholesterol Test, Endocrinology, Ear, Nose & Throat Consultation by Pharmacist, TSH, Women’s Health, Eye/Vision
For more information and volunteering, please contact: Dr. Harish Gatha: 216-831-0319; Dr. Lal Arora: 440-714-0252; Satish Gupta: 440-823-0785; Raman Patel: 216-659-1102; Temple 440-888-9433. Lunch will be served

Indian Ethnic Wear for Sale
Looking for vast variety of casual and party wear punjabi suits, anarkali suits, salwaar kameez, lenghas, lacha, sarees and fashion accessories with high level of customization and satisfaction?
Please contact: Agya Kaur
Phone 440-232-1746; Mobile 440-829-1418
Email: agya_kaur@yahoo.com
32582 S Roundhead Dr, Solon, Ohio 44139

Summer Chess Camps for Kids!
Cleveland’s Premier Chess Teaching Organization, Progress with Chess, is conducting one week chess camps at eight different area locations. Don’t pass up the opportunity to have your child engage in this fun and intellectually stimulating activity. All levels welcome!!
Did you know?
Many colleges are now offering chess scholarships. Chess has exploded in India and among Indian American youth. Many studies have demonstrated that chess improves critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills.

Summer Chess camps:
Shaker: Hathaway Brown School ....................... June 5-9
Hudson: Hudson Montessori School .................... June 5-9
Westlake: Riverside Elementary School ............... June 5-9
Cleveland West: Birchwood School of Hawken .......... June 26-30
Akron: Old Trail School ................................ June 24-28
Rocky River: West Shore Unitarian Church ............ July 24-28
Beachwood: Beachwood Community Center .......... July 31 – Aug. 4

Activities include a healthy mixture of interactive lessons and unsupervised open play, with a short recess in the morning and afternoon for physical activity. We provide a supportive environment, with plenty of individual attention in small groups. Our professional staff works year round teaching chess in over 50 area schools and recreation centers. Please visit our website: www.progresswithchess.org to register on-line, access mail-in forms, and view all of our scheduled chess activities, classes, tournaments, etc.
Progress with Chess, 216-321-7000, mdjoelson@progresswithchess.org

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Progress with Chess, 216-321-7000, mdjoelson@progresswithchess.org
SAFEGUARDING the rights of minorities is an essential core of the policy in India. Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi told the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on May 4, rebuffing attempts by Pakistan to point fingers at New Delhi for attacks on minorities. Mr Rohatgi, who led the Indian delegation to the meeting that reviewed the human rights record of member states, stressed that India was a secular state with no state religion that enshrines provisions for the protection of the minorities.

“As the world’s largest multi-layered democracy, we fully recognize a followed by a desire of free speech and expression. Our people are conscious of their political freedom and exercise their choices at every opportunity,” Mr Rohatgi said at the review meeting held every four years. At the meeting, the country’s top law officer repeatedly mentioned the pivotal role played by the judiciary in upholding human rights in the country along with other institutions.

On one occasion, without naming Yaku Sen Moho, he mentioned how he was summated 2 in the morning by the Supreme Court to hear his appeal. On others, he spoke about the top court’s direction to declare transgenders persons as the third gender, holding the right to clean environment as a part of an individual’s right to life and its rejection of the govern¬ment’s stand that AFSPA gave blanket immunity to the armed forces for perpetrators of unjustifiable crimes.

Each country presents a report ahead of the meeting; other countries are entitled to raise questions and seek clarifications on this document. There were some for India too.

Italy, Japan and South Korea asked India to abolish death penalty and ratify the international convention against death penalty that New Delhi had signed nearly 19 years ago. A bill to make changes to the criminal law was introduced in parliament in 2010 but never passed. The United States and Germany were among those who wanted the Indian government to review the 2010 law that tightened the screws on civil society groups that received funds from abroad.

Others wanted changes in the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, or AFSPA, that gives the armed forces extraordinary powers in certain disturbed areas, and decriminalize homosexuality. Mr Rohatgi held his ground, telling the review meeting that “the concept of torture was completely alien to our culture” and reiterated India’s commitment to ratify the convention. He gave no assurances on removing AFSPA, which more than one government panel have said should be repealed.

“Whether this Act should be repealed or not is a matter of on-going vibrant political debate in my country,” he said.

Indian-American enters race for NJ governor

WASHINGTON: A 31-year-old Indian-American entrepreneur has entered the governor’s race in New Jersey, the elections for which are scheduled for later this year.

Vishal Varshar Singh, a Republican, entered the race with a promise to cut property taxes and make New Jersey a national technology leader.

If elected in the November gubernatorial elections, Singh would succeed outgoing Governor Chris Christie.

However, he faces a tough Republican primary on June 2, 2016.

There are at least four popular Republican candidates in the race.

New Jersey is predominately a Democratic State, but it currently has Republican Governor Chris Christie, who can’t see a third term because of term-limit.

If elected, Singh would be the third Indian-American ever elected as a Governor of a State.

Bobby Jindal was the first Indian-American ever elected as a Governor of a State.

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**Hate crime against Indian-Americans disturbing, says Preet Bharara**

NEW YORK: India-born former top federal prosecutor Preet Bharara has called the growing incidents of hate crimes against Indian-Americans “disturbing” and said the US long tradition of embracing immigrants from all over the world as its own what makes “America great”.

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Singh, who hails from Punjab, India by way of New Jersey, “nearly 19 years ago. A bill to make changes to the criminal law was introduced in parliament in 2010 but never passed. The United States and Germany were among those who wanted the Indian government to review the 2010 law that tightened the screws on civil society groups that received funds from abroad.

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“Whether this Act should be repealed or not is a matter of on-going vibrant political debate in my country,” he said.

He said there was a hopeful story in the tragedy of the Kansas shooting in the form of Ian Grillot, the young American who got injured as he tried to intervene and stop Purinton. Bharara noted that Indian-Americans raised $100,000 for Grillot as a mark of their gratitude.

He quoted Grillot’s message of helping empower people and spreading hope and love, saying “that is the America we love and that is America we don’t want to lose”.

“I do not know the future of immigration of this country... but I love America as much as anybody born here... I feel a deep debt for what I have been given,” said Bharara.

“And now even after being fired by a president, is improbably addressing an audience in a hall where Abraham Lincoln once spoke, which I think is not bad for a kid like me named Preet Bharara who hails from Punjab, India by way of Jersey,” he said.
Six Indian-Americans get Ellis Island Medal of Honor

PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi, author Fareed Zakaria are amongst six Indian-Americans nominated for the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor 2017 — the highest civilian honor, NECO said. The 2017 recipient will be announced at a May 13 event on Ellis Island in New York.

Paliwal has served as the president and CEO of Harman International Industries since 2007. He has also served as a columnist at Newsweek, an editor at Newsweek International and editor-at-large of Time.

Nooyi has been the CEO at PepsiCo since 2006 and chairman since 2007.

She was previously the president and chief financial officer at the company, as well as senior vice-president, and senior vice-president of corporate strategy and development.

Zakaria is the host of CNN’s “Fareed Zakaria GPS” as well as a columnist for The Washington Post. He has also served as a columnist at Newsweek, an editor at Newsweek International and editor-at-large of Time.

Where to find printed copies of INDIA INTERNATIONAL

Westside
• S.V. Temple, Parma
• Jaipur Junction, North Royalton
• Cuisine of India, Parma Heights
• Luxmi Groceries, Parma Heights
• Bamboo Garden, North Olmsted
• Crown of India, Strongsville
• Rikki’s, Westlake

Eastside
• Asian Food & Spices, Solon
• Lakshmi Plaza, Mayfield Heights
• Indo-American Conveniences, Mayfield Heights
• Taste of Kerala, Northfield Heights
• Indo-American Foods, Northfield Heights
• Saffron Patch, Shaker Hts

It’s also available at all the 28 branches of the Cuyahoga County Public Library system.

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. – Helen Keller

Remember, today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday. – Dale Carnegie

Man is what he believes. – Anton Chekhov

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do. – John Wooden

Courage is the discovery that you may not win, and trying when you know you can lose. – Tom Krause

Singleness of purpose is one of the chief essentials for success in life, no matter what may be one’s aim. – John D. Rockefeller

Ability is a poor man’s wealth. – John Wood

Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions. – Dalai Lama

Honor 2017 — the highest civilian award in the US for immigrants.

Among 68 named recipients, the four other Indian-Americans are Harman International Industries chairman CEO Dinesh Paliwal, Dr Annanopoma S Kiri, Rashwant Patel and Mohan H Patel.

Nooyi has been the CEO at PepsiCo since 2006 and chairman since 2007. She was previously the president and chief financial officer at the company, as well as senior vice-president, and senior vice-president of corporate strategy and development.

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Indian film distributors claim that it has made 5bn rupees ($86m; $96m), which would make it one of India’s most successful movies ever. There has been a long-standing view that films from other parts of the country are not given their due simply because they do not belong to the glitz and glamour of Bollywood, which is based in the financial capital Mumbai.

The triumphant reaction of south Indian film fans is something to behold as they mock Bollywood over the success of the epic. For fans in the region, Bahubali is more than a film. It has brought regional pride, resistance to Hindi as a language and loyalty to its language to the fore.

The hero, Prabhas, who plays King Bahubali in the film has become a sensation, with people “swooning” over his looks. Fans in the southern states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh erected mammoth cut-outs of him outside cinemas.

Some went to the extent of pouring milk over the image in an oblation ritual reserved for idol worship in Hindu temples. And savvy business owners are seeing an opportunity in all this madness.

Cinema halls have been festooned with his posters and cut-outs. Gyms are offering a Bahubali workout regime that promise the fabulous abs of the leading male actors, whose famous hand-to-hand combat in the thunderous climax had them baring their torsos.

And many female fans have been spotted at cinemas dressed in Bahubali saris with prints of the hero and heroine. In truth, this is a mania that has swept all of India, north and south alike, but for the southern Indian fans who feel their film industry has played a subordinate role to Bollywood for so long, this is a big moment.

An appeals board of India’s film censor authority has cleared an award-winning Hindi film for limited release. Lipstick Under My Burkha was earlier refused certification because it was too “lady oriented” and contained sexual scenes and abusive language.

The film examines the lives of four women from small town India. The appeals board has given the film an adult certification and asked the director to make some cuts. The film, starring Konkona Sen Sharma and Ratna Pathak Shah, had its world premiere in Tokyo a few months ago and has since then won several awards at global film festivals. The appeals board said the film would be granted adult certification with “voluntary and some additional cuts and deletions”.

It also asked the filmmaker to mute a few Hindi words - including one referring to cities in Punjab and some additional cuts and deletions. The Central Board of Film Certification had earlier complained that the film “has abusive words, audio pornography [meaning phone sex], and a bit of sensitive touch about one particular section of society [implying it could hurt Muslim religious sentiments]”.

The film’s director Alankrita Shrivastava had described the ban as an assault on women’s rights, and challenged it in the appeals court. Last year, India’s censor board had asked the makers of a Hindi film, Udta Punjab, to make 94 cuts, including removal of expletives, references to cities in Punjab and any shots of drugs being consumed, ironically in a film about drug abuse.

But director Anurag Kashyup and other producers decided to challenge the order in a Mumbai court, which eventually allowed the film’s release with just one cut. In 2015, the censor board asked the producers of Hindi thriller NH10 to shorten the duration of a violent scene that showed honor killing, had the word “lesbian” muted in romantic comedy Dum Laga Ke Haisha. The board also shortened the duration of two kissing scenes in Daniel Craig’s Spectre before giving it an adult certification.
The best portion of a good man’s life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. -William Wordsworth, poet 1770-1850).

A pastor of a church is sitting in his study when the phone rings. “Hello, is this Reverend Jones?” the caller asks. “It is,” replied the pastor. “This is Bill Johnson with the Internal Revenue Service. I was wondering if you could answer a few questions?”  
“T’ll try.” said the pastor. “Do you know a John Timmons?” “I do.” “Is he a member of your congregation?” “He is.” “Did he donate $10,000 to the church?” “He will.”
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Friendships Can Enrich your life and improve your health

Discover the connection between health and friendship, and how to promote and maintain healthy friendships.

Friendships can have a major impact on your health and well-being, but it’s not always easy to build or maintain friendships. Understand the importance of friendships in your life and what you can do to develop and nurture friendships.

What are the benefits of friendships?

Good friends are good for your health. Friends can help you celebrate good times and provide support during bad times. Friends prevent loneliness and give you a chance to offer needed companionship, too.

Friends can also:

- Increase your sense of belonging and purpose
- Boost your happiness and reduce your stress
- Improve your self-confidence and self-worth
- Help you cope with traumas, such as divorce, serious illness, job loss or the death of a loved one
- Encourage you to change or avoid unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as excessive drinking or lack of exercise

Friends also play a significant role in promoting your overall health. Adults with strong social support have a reduced risk of many significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index (BMI). Studies have even found that older adults with a rich social life are likely to live longer than their peers with fewer connections.

Why is it sometimes hard to make friends or maintain friendships?

Many adults find it hard to develop new friendships or keep up existing friendships. Friendships may take a back seat to other priorities, such as work or caring for children or aging parents. You and your friends may have grown apart due to changes in your lives or interests. Or maybe you’ve moved to a new community and haven’t yet found a way to meet people.

Developing and maintaining good friendships takes effort. The enjoyment and comfort friendship can provide, however, makes the investment worthwhile.

What’s a healthy number of friends?

Quality counts more than quantity. While it’s good to cultivate a diverse network of friends and acquaintances, you also want to nurture a few truly close friends who will be there for you through thick and thin.

What are some ways to meet new people?

It’s possible that you’ve overlooked potential friends who are already in your social network. Think through people you’ve interacted with — even very casually — who made a positive impression.

You may find potential friends among people with whom:

- You’ve worked or taken classes
- You’ve been friends in the past, but have since lost touch
- You’ve enjoyed chatting with at social gatherings
- You share family ties

If anyone stands out in your memory as someone you’d like to know better, reach out. Ask mutual friends or acquaintances to share the person’s contact information, or — even better — to reintroduce the two of you with a text, email or in-person visit. Extend an invitation to coffee or lunch.

(To be concluded next month)
Laughter is the shock absorber that eases the blows of life.

Child asked his father, "How were people born?" So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on." The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like them." His father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies had a chance to compete in the Olympics, lots of records would be broken, such as the record for most Facebook posts while running a marathon.

They argued back and forth, then they stopped for lunch. At the counter, the husband asked the not-so-bright waitress, "Before we order, could you please settle an argument for us? Would you please pronounce where we are?"

She leaned over the counter and said, "Burr-rrrrrrr Kiiing."

(Natchitoches is pronounced naukitosh)

S\pending more time with family. Families are considered the most important thing in life, but things become even more confusing after my father decided to get married to my brother's mother-in-law. "Now I can't make up my mind whether he's my dad or my father-in-law," says my brother, "or if my mother-in-law is now my stepmother, or whether my child is my daughter or my niece."

— Oscar Reagan

All the things I like to do are either immoral, illegal, or fattening.

—Alexander Woollcott, actor

A sports columnist recalled the story of a flight attendant who asked Muhammad Ali to fasten his seat belt.

Ali replied, "Superman don't need no seat belt."

The flight attendant retorted, "Superman don't need any airplane either."

When a fan asked Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart for tips on writing symphonies, the composer is said to have suggested, "Begin with some simple lover and work your way up to a symphony."

"But Herr Mozart," replied the fan, "you were writing symphonies when you were eight."

"Yes," said Mozart, "But I never asked anybody.

George goes to the Birth Registration Office to register his pet.

The man behind the counter asks the name he wants to give to the boy, and the father says, "Euro."

The man says that such a name is not acceptable, because it's a currency.

Says George: "What? There weren't any objections when I called my first two sons Mark and Frank."

If your Facebook friends aren't inspiring you, you need to try mine.

If I post this on Facebook, maybe it will convince Melvin to get his butt off the couch and join me in the next marathon. And maybe he'll be close enough to take pictures of me from another angle.

Whenever they post something on Facebook or other social media, they're taking a risk that people will think they're showing off, that people won't realize the motivational service they're providing. They're also taking a risk that researchers will conduct studies about them and make misleading conclusions.

Indeed, researchers at Brunel University in London conducted such a study and concluded that people who share their exercise routines on social media tend to be narcissists. Narcissists are people who are obsessed with themselves. (Donald Trump, in case you're wondering, isn't a narcissist. He's the Narcissist-In-Chief.)

The main goal of these people is to brag about how much time they invest in their exercise, how well they're doing compared to others. In the middle of a brag, but to inspire me and partly because I want to encourage them and partly because I want Facebook to stop showing me the past over and over.

(Unfortunately when Al Gore invented the Internet, he also created something that determines what Facebook shows me on my news feed – an "AI-gore-ly.")

Am I annoyed by these posts? Well, it depends. If a friend is updating me about the marathon he just went for a 20-minute run, then I'm a little annoyed, because I know that I could easily get myself off the couch, run for 20 minutes and post about it on Facebook.

On the other hand, if a friend is updating me that he just went for a 20-minute run, then I'm a little annoyed, because I know that I could easily get myself off the couch, run for 20 minutes and post about it on Facebook.

The humor of Melvin Durai

LIFE CAN BE SO FUNNY!

If your Facebook friends aren't inspiring you, you need to try mine.

Melvin Durai is an Illinois-based writer and humorist, author of the humorous novel "Bala Takes the Plunge." A native of India, he grew up in Zambia and has lived in North America since the early 1980s. Read his humor blog at www.Nshima.com.

Write to him at melvin@melvindurai.com
WASHINGTON: Acknowledging that there are problems with the guest worker visa program, the Trump administration last month issued tighter norms on issuing H-1B visas, while suggesting that previous US administrations had been lax in the matter.

“This Justice Department will not tolerate employers misusing the H-1B visa process to discriminate against US workers,” said Acting Assistant Attorney General Tom Wheeler of the Civil Rights Division. “U.S. workers should not be placed in a disfavored status, and the department is wholeheartedly committed to investigating and vigorously pursuing these cases.”

Separately, USCIS, the agency involved in the visa issuance process, now requires a 2.5-fold increase in audit requests in deciding H-1B petitions. The notification essentially calls for more evidence and paperwork from applicants to show that they are qualified for a particular job rather than merely presenting their degrees.

Although laws calling for such scrutiny have been in the statute books for more than a decade, officials suggested they have been loosely interpreted and poorly enforced over the years, allowing rampant misuse by petitioners who are not really qualified or have the skill set to take up the jobs they are aiming for.

The Trump administration’s crackdown on the alleged misuse of the H-1B visas came on the opening day of the application season on April 3 when USCIS begins accepting H-1B petitions for the upcoming fiscal year. Indian IT workers typically snag more than 50 percent of the 65,000 H-1B visas that are up for grabs, with petitions usually outnumbering the quota available by more than three to one. The H-1B rush began even as US pressure groups, which contest the American tech companies’ claims that there is a shortage of skilled workers in the US and foreign workers are needed, began a ferocious online campaign to stem the inflow for the year.

“April 3rd Sad day for America. 85,000 H-1B visa foreigners allowed to take American jobs,” one US campaigner wrote on social media. Another added “Still waiting for H-1B reform. It is incredible what a stranglehold these H-1B shops have here. It is a form of cheap labor inside USA.”

The Trump White House responded to the concerns, with Presidential spokesperson Sanders saying the administration will “take action” after the daily briefing that there were problems with the H-1B visa program and pledging that the administration would not allow misuse.

Meanwhile, H-1B visa applications reached the program’s annual cap just five days, federal officials said on April 7. “U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has received the congressionally mandated 65,000-H-1B cap for fiscal year 2018,” the federal agency stated.

B U S I N E S S

Hinduja brothers rank UK’s 2017 list of the richest people

LONDON: The Hinduja brothers have topped the 2017 list of the richest people in the UK with an estimated fortune of 16.2 billion pounds, while the Jhunjhunwala family has moved down to the 194th spot after the 3.2 billion pounds they were reported to have made in the UK with an estimated 5.2 billion pounds.

The figure in 2016 was 103 billion pounds; Sunil Vaswani and family are ranked 133rd on the list with a fortune of 1 billion pounds; while Issac, whose Euro Garages is the UK’s largest independent fuel retailer, is ranked 194th.

Answer to Mother’s Day Quiz


Hinduja brothers crack on misuse of H-1B visas with tighter norms

DETROIT, MI — The Henry Ford Health System has fired Dr. Jumana Nagarwala, the Detroit area doctor at the center of a first-of-its-kind critical prosecution for female genital mutilation. Nagarwala is accused of forcing the procedures on women, who are being held without bond.

In a statement after Nagarwala’s arrest, Henry Ford Health System condemned the practice of female genital mutilation, or FGM, as it is commonly known. “We absolutely refuse to be complicit in the destruction of the human rights of girls and women,” the health-care system said. “…despite her oath to care for her patients, Nagarwala is alleged to have performed horrifying acts of brutality on some of the most vulnerable victims.”

According to Nagarwala’s phony in the Henry Ford Health System website, she speaks English, Gujarati and Hindi. According to the complaint, some of the minor victims allegedly traveled inter-state to have Nagarwala perform the procedure.

The federal complaint alleges that Nagarwala performed FGM on girls who were approximately six to eight years old. This is believed to be the first case brought under a US law, which criminalises FGM.

The number of girls under 18 at risk for FGM in the US and will use the full force of the law to ensure that “no girls suffer such physical and emotional abuse”.

The complaint said federal agents reviewed Nagarwala’s telephone records and further investigation revealed that parents of two minor girls had traveled to Michigan.

The girls were later interviewed by a forensic expert and one of them said she was told she was coming for a “control” for a “special” girls trip, but after arriving at the hotel, she learned that she and the other girl had to go to the doctor because “our tummies hurt”. The girls were then taken to Dr. Nagarwala, who performed the procedure on them.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said that female genital mutilation comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, where FGM is concentrated.

WHO said, FGM which is performed on young girls between infancy and age 15, is a violation of the human rights of girls and women.

Doctor in girls’ genital mutilation case is fired by hospital

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India Supreme Court upholds 4 rapists’ death penalty

NEW DELHI: India’s Supreme Court has upheld the death sentences of four men convicted of the gang rape and murder of a student in Delhi.

Akshay Thakur, Vinay Sharma, Pawan Gupta and Mukesh were given the death penalty by a court in 2013.

Rejecting their appeal, Justice R Banumathi said the men committed “a barbaric crime” that had “shaken society’s conscience”.

The brutal gang rape led to nationwide outrage and new anti-rape laws.

The 23-year-old physiotherapy student was attacked on a bus that she had boarded with her male friend as they returned home after watching a film in December 2012. Her friend was also beaten up.

Yoshi Singh - whose name was publicly revealed by her mother only in 2015 - died from injuries in a hospital 13 days later.

Media reports said relatives of Ms Singh applauded as the judgement was read out in court.

Legal experts say it could still be months or even years before the sentences are carried out.

The four men still have the right to file a review petition in the Supreme Court. Their last hope lies with a plea for clemency from President.

Six men were arrested over the attack on Ms Singh. One suspect, Ram Singh, was found dead in jail in March 2013, having apparently taken his own life.

Another, who was aged 17 at the time, was released in 2015 after serving three years in a reform facility — the maximum term possible for a juvenile in India.

Convicting the four men in 2013, Judge Yogesh Khanna said the case fell into the “rarest of rare category” which justifies capital punishment in India.

NEW DELHI: Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh has said that five Sikh ministers in the Justin Trudeau government in Canada were Khalistani sympathisers, adding that he would not have taken their defence minister, Harjit Sajjan, when he visited India.

Capt Singh’s remarks kicked up a storm as Sajjan visited India for six days, beginning April 19 and visited Amritsar, Jalandhar and Chandigarh.

“Harjit Sajjan is a Khalistani sympathizer. There are, in fact, five ministers in the Justin Trudeau government. I will not have any truck with them. These Khalistani sympathisers had prevailed upon the government to prevent my entry into Canada, where I wanted to go to meet my Punjabi brethren, not to campaign for elections,” said Capt Singh.

In her response, Swaraj said the Indian government had opposed Pakistan’s move the very day it got to know about it.

“Even raising a doubt over this government that it will let go of some area will be wrong,” the minister added.

She noted that both Houses of Parliament had passed resolutions which had, according to the government, “considered the occupation and the Pakistani occupation of the territory as illegal, against the will of the people and outside the UN Charter.”

She also quoted a BJP slogan which underlines India’s claim over the territory and noted that its founder Shyama Prasad Mukherjee had “sacrificed” his life for this.

“We are bound by parliament’s resolutions and also our resolve,” she said.

5 Canadian ministers Khalistani sympathisers, says Punjab CM

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