

Happy India Independence Day from AIA!



Master of Ceremonies: Saira Anwar

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024

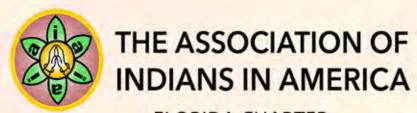
Alefiya Ghadiali Assad Mirza Lata Shintre Neha Verma Sharmistha Dutta Sid Anand Vishnu Sharma



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FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Colorful Threads and Tapestry

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Chairman Board of Trustees Dr. Samin K Sharma The Spirit of Democracy: Celebrating India's Independence Dear Friends,

As we come together to celebrate India's Independence Day, it is a poignant moment to reflect on the democratic values that bind us, both as Indian-Americans and as global citizens. With over 4.8 million Indians in America, our community plays a significant role in contributing to the democratic fabric of both our nations.

India, despite being one of the world's underprivileged countries just a hundred years ago, has shown remarkable resilience and progress through its democratic processes. The power of the vote, the voice of the people, and the peaceful transfer of power are cornerstones of both Indian and American societies. These principles have guided India from its struggle for independence to its current status as a vibrant democracy and a rising economic and world power.

The democratic traditions of both India and the United States underscore the importance of active civic participation and the strength of institutions in safeguarding the will of the people. Both nations exemplify the critical role of leadership in addressing challenges, committing to equality and secularism, and seizing opportunities for progress.

As Indian-Americans, we draw inspiration from the traditions of both our homelands. Our unique position allows us to contribute to the American democratic process while maintaining a deep respect for India's rich heritage and democratic journey. We embody the spirit of cultural amalgamation, fostering connections and building bridges across diverse religions and communities.

Today, as we celebrate India's Independence Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the democratic values of equality, unity, and active participation. The Association of Indians in America comes from all walks of life and religions, and we stand as a beacon of these principles. We are proud to be active participants in this journey.

With Warm Regards,

Executive Committee Association of Indians in America Florida Chapter



THE ASSOCIATION OF INDIANS IN AMERICA

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year!!!

The strength of National AIA is dependent on the workings of its chapters. We are proud to have vibrant chapters across the country each having its own strength, whether it is Deepavali, India's Independence Day, Gandhi Jayanti, Youth Festival, or recognizing students and the awards ceremony. Be it helping the needy all over the country or different places in the world, we could always do much more.

Florida Chapter is one of the most vibrant chapters of AIA. On behalf of National AIA, I would like to thank and congratulate the president of AIA Florida Chapter Ms. Alefeya Ghadiali, Sid Anand, Sharmistha Dutta, Uma Eniasivam, Ramola Motwani and the entire team of dedicated members for working very hard to organize the big upcoming Independence Day celebrations on August 18, 2024. I along with my National AIA executive team whole heartedly support the efforts of Florida Chapter to attract and engage younger members and will continue to support throughout my 2nd term as National President for 2024 & 2025.

AIA was founded on August 20, 1967, it is the oldest grass root national organization of Asian Indian Immigrants in the United States, fostered on the democratic principle of "one member one vote, with chapters and membership spread across the United States of America. It concerns itself with the social welfare of the Asian Indians in the United States, and to help them become a part of the mainstream of American life. AIA represents the hopes and aspirations of those immigrants who are united by their common bond of **Indian Heritage and American Commitment.**

When the first Deepavali public celebration, anywhere in the world outside India was envisioned in 1987, AIA approached the city of New York for Permission to use the iconic location of the South Street Seaport, the city and businesses located there were very skeptical to say the least. Now they look forward to the revenue it generates and the good will it fosters, as it used to attract about 100,000 people from the tristate area. In New York City Deepavali by AIA is celebrated in the open on the 1st Sunday of October every year since 1987.

Just to recapitulate some of the achievements of AIA, may I state:

- Successfully lobbied for Minority Status for the immigrants of South Asian Americans for civil rights purposes in 1970's
- Separate enumeration of Asian Indians in the "Asian/ Pacific Islander" category for the first time in the US Census in 1980, after AIA successfully lobbied. (NYT, week in Review, May 9, 1993). Before 1930 Indians were enumerated as Hindus in the US Census.
- Ananya: 900 pages book about India published by AIA in collaboration with India study center of SUNY Stony Brook University in 1997.
- Because of the efforts of AIA, Diwali was celebrated for the first time in the White House in the year 2003, and 1000 silver coins were issued to commemorate the occasion.
- Suspension of alternate street parking in NYC on Diwali day, which was passed and enacted in 2005.
- Diwali Postal Stamp: AIA was instrumental in introducing resolution in the House of Representatives advising USPS to issue Deepavali stamp in 2013, which finally got issued in October 2016.
- Diwali Declared as a Public School Holiday in New York City: AIA along with other non-profit organizations was instrumental in getting the declaration of Diwali as a public school holiday in New York City starting from 2023.

The Association continues to work for the under privileged, the deprived and to extend a helping hand in worldwide disasters natural or manmade. AIA rose to the occasion during Covid and sent oxygen concentrators to the needy people in India and extended help in the construction of schools in India during 2020 & 2021.

Last year AIA National celebrated the 75th anniversary of India's independence on May 6th, 2023 at the beautiful venue Terrace on the Park in New York on May 6th, 2023. It is a matter of pride for AIA that the function was attended by dignitaries like Senate Majority leader Chuck Schumer and NYC Mayor Eric Adams along with distinguished Honorees such as world renowned economist Arvind Panagariya, Professor of Economics at Columbia University and Renu Khatore, Chancellor and President of University of Houston.

I am very humbled and honored to be elected to serve as the National President of this esteemed organization for the 2nd term 2024 & 2025, which has nurtured me on how to serve humanity and the community.

Let us keep serving the community and helping the less fortunate. Wishing you all a very Happy and Prosperous year ahead of us.

Gobind Munjal

National President AIA Email: gpmunjal@gmail.com Tel No: 646-209-8244

रमेश बाबू लक्ष्मणन Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan



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MESSAGE

I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the Association of Indians in America, Florida Chapter (AIA), the members of the Indian-American community in Florida, and all friends of India on the joyous occasion of the 78th Independence Day of India.

I commend the AIA, Florida Chapter for organizing a cultural event to celebrate this significant occasion. Organizing such events is a testimony of conscious efforts to keep our glorious traditions alive and to remain in constant touch with our rich culture abroad.

Over the years, the AIA has been instrumental in uniting the vibrant Indian-American community and advocating for their rightful causes. It has also played a significant role in strengthening the bond between India and the United States. I am confident that AIA's dedication will inspire future generations to contribute to the growth of both India and the USA while maintaining a deep connection to their motherland.

I wish the AIA, Florida Chapter and all its members great success in organizing the event.

(Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan) August 8, 2024





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WHEREAS, for nearly four decades, the Florida Chapter of the Association of Indians in America (AIA) has shown exceptional dedication and resilience, creating a platform for cultural exchange that fosters unity, inclusiveness, and collaboration within the community; and

WHEREAS, the AIA Florida Chapter's India Independence Day Celebration has become a cherished tradition, showcasing India's rich heritage, music, dances, and cuisine to the local community, advancing cultural understanding and appreciation; and

WHEREAS, the AIA Florida Chapter has forged meaningful partnerships with numerous organizations in the tri-county area, including Art Serve, Boys and Girls Club, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and others, promoting cultural exchange, community engagement, and charitable endeavors; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the AIA Florida Chapter partnered with the Lori Brener Scholarship Fund, raising over \$70,000 through a Bollywood-themed fundraiser that exemplified the power of unity and cultural celebration in philanthropy, marking the most successful fundraising event in the organization's history; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the AIA Florida Chapter continued its commitment to community service by partnering with The Lori Brener Scholarship Fund and Big Brothers Big Sisters for Bollywood-themed event that raised \$100,000 to support scholarship for children in need, setting a new standard for success as the most successful fundraising event in the history of the Lori Brener Scholarship Fund; and

WHEREAS, the AIA Florida Chapter exemplifies passion and dedication towards the upliftment of the Indian American diaspora, fostering a strong sense of pride and identity; and

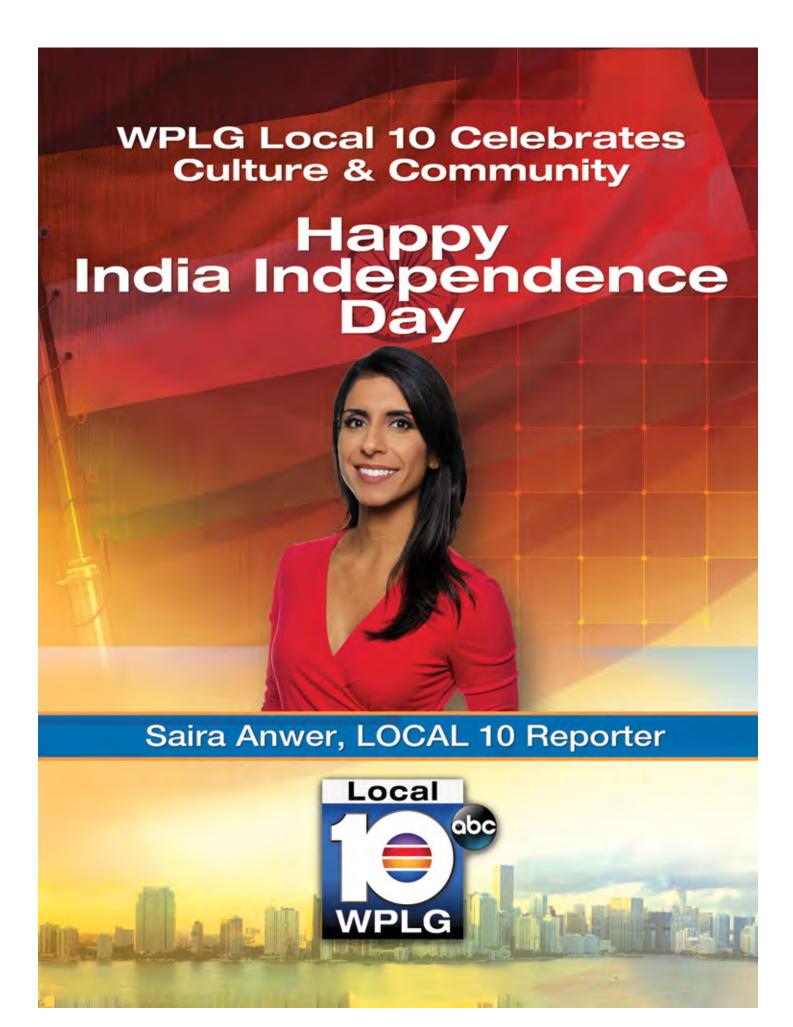
WHEREAS, through unwavering commitment, the AIA Florida Chapter continues to preserve the values, hopes, and aspirations of Indian Immigrants, who are united by their shared heritage and deep-rooted loyalty to the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Youth Executive Leadership Committee of the AIA has displayed exceptional dedication, vision and initiative while actively engaging and empowering Indian American youth, with members such as Michael Ghadiali, Rahil Ghadiali, Aditya Sharma, Sophia Mirza and Arav Shintre demonstrating superior leadership and teamwork in alignment with the mission of the AIA Florida Chapter;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESPECTFULLY PROCLAIMED, that Representative Chip LaMarca and the Florida House of Representatives hereby recognize the AIA Florida Chapter for their continued dedication to cultural exchange, community engagement, and charitable endeavors, and honors them their outstanding contributions to the Indian American community and beyond, and encourages all Floridians to observe their many contributions.











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INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM LIST 2024

Index enderice bill into divini bioi 2021			
	Item Name	Item Description	
•	Ribbon cutting and welcome ceremony	Honorary Dignitaries: Consul General of India, Atlanta Ramesh Babu Lakshmanan, Representative Robin Bartleman, and Mayor Dean Trantalis	
•	American National Anthem	Students of Aarohi Music School - Ms Heer Bhavsar, Vimala and Valini Goolcharan	
•	Unfurling of the Indian Flag		
•	Indian National Anthem	Students of Aarohi Music school - Ms Heer Bhavsar, Vimala and Valini Goolcharan	
•	Inauguration and lighting ceremony		
•	Welcome address by President		
1.	Slide Show		
2.	Festivals of India prsented by Rhythms School of Dance This item celebrates Indian festivals and deoicts its natural beauty. We visit the regal MAMANGAM festival of Kerala with Kalari Payattu style, Joyous Christmas time, Springtime through Kathak style and vibrant Bhangra of Punja	Participants: Harshita Karumuri, Hridya Govind, Jesna Thomas, Gia Joseph, Anugraha Pereppedan, Darshana Vikas, Disha Krishna, Harshita Karumuri, Hridya Govind, Jesna Thomas, Kimaya Joshi, Mahitha Gundre, Rishita Vijay, Riya Bor, Yashika Masuram, Ashna Zacharia, Julia Pulimootil, Seira Eldho, Justina Shibu, Nandita Gopisetti, Lakshika Sakhivel, Irene Thomas Choreographer: Ranjana Warior	
3.	Patriotic performance by Boom Claps Dance Group	Participants: Disha Thakkar ,Divyasri K, Reetika Tayal, Priyanka Singh, Devyanshi Singh, Neisha Thakkar, Adriaan Tayal, Aavya Garg, Risha Gundecha, Aadisha Gundecha, Nidhish K, Anjanaye Singh Choreographer: Disha Thakkar & Divyasri K	
4.	Nataraja Deva presented by Rhythms School of Dance A Bharatanatyam dance depicting the beauty and characteristics of Lord Nataraja	Participants: Aaradhana Vinodhkanna, Adithi Ajith, Amaya Serasinghe, Ann Abhilash, Daya Ashok Nair, Krisha Nalluri, Madhula Madhan, Mahatthi Premkumar, Mokshitha Channa, Nandana Sijith, Sia Gupta Choreographer: Ranjana Warior	
5.	Swans of saraswati presented by Nrithya Haermans	Participants: Hanna Zacharia, Smitha Nair, Sruthi Nambiar, Vidya Nair Choreographer: Sruthi Namibiar	
6.	Koli dance presented by 'Koli Twister Squad' this is a traditional folk dance from Maharashtra performed by the Koli community, is renowned for its lively rhythms and colorful costumes, reflecting the cultural heritage of fishermen.	Participants: Tanush joshi, Anvit choudhari, Eva joshi, Aditya sardesai, Sanvi phadtare, Rheya Vijay, Syon Chavan, Riaan Chavan, Rajveer Dhokade, Divyanka Dhokade, Adit Jaiswal, Alenka Gupta, Rihaan Roy-Yadav, Vihaan Shah, Reyansh Shrivastav Choreographer: Priti Joshi & Vedavati Joshi	
7.	Santoor duo' presented by APAI Song - Nanna Munna Rahi Hoon	Participants: Viral Gandhi and Meera Gandhi -Father-daughter duo	
8.	Guru Garjana: The Roar of Independence	Participants: Prasad Telavne, Saurabh Chaudhari, Amit Nagarkar, Asmita Nagarkar, Akshat Nagarkar, Yogesh Jawanjal, Sanay Lunavat, Radhika Patil	

INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM LIST 2024

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	Item Name	Item Description	
9.	Gujarati Garba Dance presented by Dance Rhythms group A traditional authentic garba dance from the state of Gujarat	Participants: Bhairavi Pandya, Bhagirathi Sahasranaman, Seema Anand, Padmini Pillai, Umarani Eniasivam, Vibha Thacker Choreographer: Bhairavi Pandya	
10.	The RKanyas presented by Kahini Dance Company A Semi classical and Rajasthani folk with a twist.	Participants: Zara Patel, Zavi Patel, Raaga Deepa, Samaira Paikaray, Amaya Serasinghe, Priyanshi Grover Saaya Shah, Reya Patel, Vanaja Raju, Anvita Narasimhan Choreographer: Kahini Chandriani	
11.	Patriotic and classical fusion presented by Nritya School of Indian Dance and Music	Participants: Riya Sharma, Nyla Sharma, Aanya Manikundalam, Tvisha Raj Chaswal, Tanvi Raj Chaswa Choreographer: Hema Sharma	
12.	Modern Tandav presented by The Fierce Kumaris A mindblwing dance performance depicting inner goddess Kali and bring out their feisty side.	Participants: Laya Nambiar, Anya Ahire, Shriya Telavane, Prajna Bhadauria, Tanvi Bhide, Arya Doshi, Diya Deepak Tanisha Srivastava, Bhumi Harpalani, Eesha Shah, Anjana Andapally, Vernica Pulukuri, Shriya Sardesai, Srimayi Yeedara, Aarushi Bavdekar, Tanvi Sama, Olivia D'sa, Shania Srivastav, Vinisha Gurud Choreographer: Kahini Chandriani	
13.	Aaya Saawan Jhoom Ke" presented by Yaden group	Participants: Manisha Damle, Ruchi Gupta, Basant Madnani and Sanjiv Anand	
14.	Lavani presented by Nrityangan School of Dance Lavani is a traditional folk dance from Maharashtra, celebrated for its energetic rhythms, colorful costumes, and expressive movements.	Participants: Shivani Lakkad, Shailaja Mali, Snehal Kasodekar, Vedavati Joshi, Payal Tade, Priya Dixit, Priti Joshi Choreographer: Shivani Lakkad	
15.	"ParamShakti" presented by Reva Dance Group "Param" meaning supreme and meaning power. Together, they represent the infinite and all-encompassing power of the cosmos. Paramshakti is said to be the driving force behind all life and existence, embodying qualities such as strength, compassion, and nurturing.	Participants: Chaitali Barve, Archana Joshi, Swati Tapkir, Roshani Jaiswal, Anita Naik Satam, "Shakti" Pooja Joshi, Anushka Godse, Shraddha Jawanjal, Avanti Shewalkar and Sachin Chavan Choreographer: Chaitali Barve Chavan	
16.	Kashmiri Folk dance presented by Sheli's Dance Academy This kashmiri folk dance forms is usually presented onset of the spring season. and it has always been an integral part of Kashmiri people	Participants: Ganga Patil, Anita Madan, Sheli Modak, Jasbeer Chabbra & Sudha Chowlur. Choreographer: Sheli Chakraborty	
17.	Bihu presented by Miami Jhankar Folk dance from state of Assam	Participants: Megha, Rakesha, Hema, Shruti Niru, Chanchal, Desika Choreographer: Megha Gupta	
18.	Garba presented by Nara Bollywood Dance Academy a traditional Garba dance infused with a modern twist, combining classic moves with contemporary flair in an exciting and fresh performance	Participants: Anamaria Zambrano, Apeksha Milind, Dennis Arrevachala, Erica Morrillo Narayani Maharaj-Duncan, Olga Giraldo Choreographer: Narayani Maharaj-Duncan	

Fast Facts about Our Countries INDIA UNITED STATES

https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/india







- OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of India, Bharat
- FORM OF GOVERNMENT: Federal republic
- CAPITAL: New Delhi
- POPULATION: 1.296.834.042
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Hindi, English, 21 others
- MONEY: Rupee
- AREA: 1,269,345 square miles (3,287,590 square kilometers)
- MAJOR MOUNTAIN RANGE: Himalaya
- MAJOR RIVERS: Ganges, Yamuna, Indus, Brahmaputra

- OFFICIAL NAME: United States of America
- FORM OF GOVERNMENT: Constitution-based federal republic
- CAPITAL: Washington, D.C.
- POPULATION: 330,175,936
- LANGUAGES: English, Spanish (no official national language)
- MONEY: U.S. dollar
- AREA: 3,794,083 square miles (9,826,630 square kilometers)
- MAJOR MOUNTAIN RANGES:
 Rocky Mountains, Appalachian Mountains
- MAJOR RIVERS: Mississippi, Missouri, Colorado



Other Interesting Facts about India

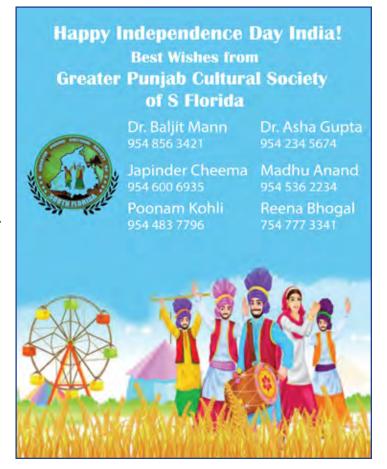
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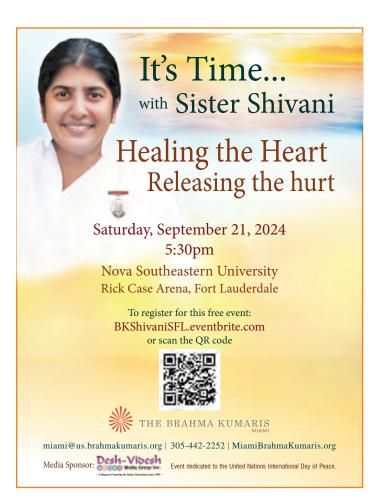


- 5. The game of 'Snakes and Ladders' came from India! Historians place the game in India somewhere between the 2nd and 13th century BC. The game was used The ladders represented virtues such as generosity, faith, and humility, while the snakes represented vices such as lust, anger, murder, and theft.
- 6. There are over 19,500 languages and dialects recorded as mother tongues in India's 2018 census. English is one of 23 officially recognized languages in the country.

- 1. India is the most vegetarian country in the world, with 38% of its population identifying as vegetarian. And 80% of the population 'limit their meat consumption'.
- 2. The Taj Mahal is not a palace but a mausoleum or monument to the deceased. Commissioned by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife, the Taj Mahal was constructed between 1632 and 1653. The architectural masterpiece is renowned for its symmetrical beauty and exquisite craftsmanship and was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983.
- 3. India is the tiger capital of the world! Tiger Kings and cool cats and kittens know 75% of the global tiger population calls India home. These majestic creatures roam across various landscapes in India, from dense forests to grasslands.
- 4. India is home to some of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities. The oldest of India's continuously inhabited cities is Varanasi, located along the banks of the sacred Ganges River. This North Indian city has a 3000+ year history dating back to at least 1200 BCE.

7. India is the largest producer of films in the world, makingbetween 1500 and 2000 films a year in a variety of languages. Have you seen a Bollywood film lately?











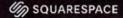


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Indians surpass Chinese as largest 'Asian-alone' group in U.S.

Looking to the 2024 elections, experts say the Indian American vote is becoming harder to ignore.

By Sakshi Venkatraman

Indian Americans are now the most populous Asian-alone group in the United States, according to a new report from the Census Bureau.

They have surpassed Chinese Americans, who were previously the largest in that category, though when the populations are counted with multiracial people included, Chinese Americans still make up the largest share of the country's Asian population at 5.2 million.

Those who identified as "Indian-alone" – that is, as 100% Indian – on the 2020 census numbered

nearly 4,400,000. It represents a 55% growth over the course of a decade, and experts say the U.S. is already seeing the impacts.

"It is momentous," said Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder of nonprofit group AAPI Data. "Americans' perception of who is Asian is still very much informed by demographic patterns from a century ago. They think of East Asians as quintessentially Asian and are less likely to think of South Asians as Asian ... Well, the demographic realities have shifted away from the stereotype."



What is behind the rapid growth

The rapid increase in the population can be traced back to the 1990s, when the tech boom coincided with the start of the H1B visa program for high-skill workers, said Gaurav Khanna, an assistant professor of economics at the University of California at San Diego.

Engineers and computer scientists trained at top schools in India began to immigrate by the thousands with their families, and U.S. tech companies turned their attention to the subcontinent.

"At the time, people were talking about who would be feeding this workforce, and a lot of people thought it was going to be China," Khanna said. "But in India, people are very comfortable with English ... it was a British colony, and that matters quite a bit."

America has also become a very attractive place for South Asian students on F1 and J1 visas looking to enter high-skill fields, he said. And though there is a burgeoning population of U.S.-born Indian Americans, the vast majority of the population is made of immigrants, according to Census Data.

Among H1B petitioners, Indians make up almost 75%. Chinese nationals, the next largest pool of petitioners, make up only 12%.

"People then go from H1Bs to ultimately applying for and getting green cards, even though there are long delays in those processes," Ramakrishnan said.

Impacts of the shift

This weight shift in the Asian-alone category is something sociologists say they saw coming for years. And while not as populous as Indian Americans, other South Asian groups are seeing rapid growth as well.

The Nepalese population saw a substantial uptick, the report said, with a 250% overall increase between 2010 and 2020. The Bangladeshi population also grew by 85.4%, due in part to family sponsorships, Ramakrishnan said.

With the 2024 presidential election on the horizon, political experts say it's a change that is hard to ignore – and one whose impact shouldn't be underestimated.

"The political parties, when they are looking at Georgia, Virginia, Ohio, Michigan, they need to actually think through, 'OK, it's no longer just about Chinese or Koreans. I actually need to have a strategy to actually engage Indian Americans," said Christine Chen, executive director of civic organization Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote.

With a largely English-proficient population, reading and submitting ballots don't pose barriers to the same degree as with other Asian communities, Chen said.

"Not only are they growing in population, but their tendency is to lean in more and participate at a higher rate," she said.

Political issues important to the diaspora, like discourse around Hindu nationalism and caste oppression, are also making their way into U.S. life, she said. And Indian American figures, like presidential candidates Vivek Ramaswamy and Nikki Haley, are gaining major attention, Khanna said.

"The second generation especially ... they're becoming politically active themselves," he said.

Ramakrishnan says that, with the recognition of the Census and a new community milestone, both Asian Americans and Americans at large should be paying attention.

"My hope is that this will spark important conversations about the role of South Asians in Asian America," he said.

Happy Independence Day!!

From The Motwani Family



Ramola, Dev, Nitin, Anshu, Arin, Shaan & Kai



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- Initiated The First Ever Diwali at The White House 2003

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