

KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

MAY 2021

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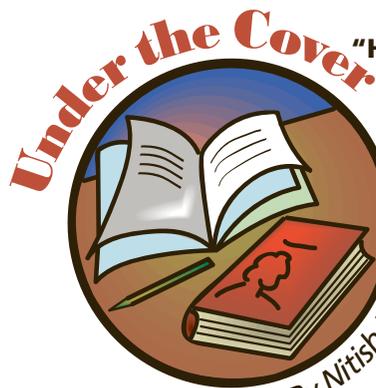


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NEW MOVIES TO WATCH: "The Disciple" (Netflix)

This Marathi language film is written, directed and edited by Chaitanya Tamhane whose directorial debut, "Court" won the National Award in 2014. Sharad Nerulkar has devoted his life to becoming an Indian classical music vocalist, conscientiously following the traditions and discipline of the old masters, his guru and his father. But as the years go by, he starts to wonder whether it's really possible to achieve the excellence he's striving for. This is a journey of devotion, passion and searching for the absolute in contemporary Mumbai. Tamhane's mentor and friend, Academy award-winning filmmaker, Alfonso Cuarón of "Roma" and "Gravity" is executive producer. "The story of 'The Disciple' came from my own search for excellence and direction. It's about how many of us follow all the rules and yet, sometimes, find that something is missing. We were blessed to have an extraordinary talent like Aditya Modak portray the protagonist, Nerulkar, through whose eyes we immerse ourselves in the fascinating world of Indian classical music," said Tamhane.

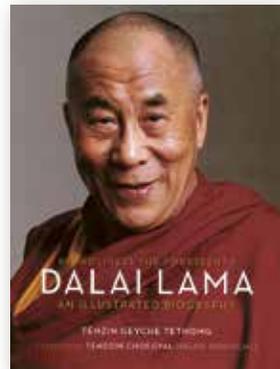
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"His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama: An Illustrated Biography" (352 pages; \$35) by Tenzin Geyche Tethong; photo editor Jane Moore; published by Interlink Books (www.interlinkbooks.com)

Did you know that the 14th Dalai Lama is a passionate watch lover, i.e. the monk who fixes watches. After he inherited an assortment of watches and clocks from the 13th Dalai Lama, he set up a small space with proper tools to repair watches, clocks, and even tape recorders, reveals author Tethong, a close aide of His Holiness for over 40 years. The Dalai Lama says, "As a child, I had always wondered what moved the hands of clocks, the same hands that make the world go around. So I got cracking on these tiny devices and experimented to the hilt with them." Another love is gardening, reveals the author.

Continued on page 3



ICONIC, RUGGED DEFENDER RETURNS TO LAND ROVER LINEUP

Test-drive review by NITISH S. RELE

Land Rover has reached 23 years into its off-roading history to revive its models Ninety and One Ten, the ultimate off-roaders, for the U.S. market. Designating its respective 90 and 110-inch wheelbases, the iconic square-jawed and rugged off-roading giants have once again been deemed safe for American drivers. On- and off-road motorists can again buy a new version of the purpose-built vehicle that first rolled off assembly lines in 1948. Under the clamshell hood sits an MHDV (mild hybrid with 48-volt lithium ion battery to store energy) 3.0-liter turbocharged inline-6 cylinder engine belting out 395 horsepower @ 5500 rpm and 406 pound-feet of torque @ 5000 rpm. The potent power train couples to a responsive 8-speed auto gearbox.

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ASTROLOGY

What's in your forecast for May? Read what columnist Pankaj Kohli has to say.
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Dear Readers:

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We hope those eligible in Florida have received the Covid-19 vaccine. In India, the second wave has led to a critical situation affecting the healthcare system. Looking to donate to the crisis there? Check our Facebook page for links to organizations providing aid and assistance – www.facebook.com/khaasbaat.florida

To highlight more community news, we request you to inform us about noteworthy professional accomplishments and also youth successes, academic or extracurricular.

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

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NEW MOVIES TO WATCH *Continued from page 1*

The film was awarded the FIPRESCI International Critics Prize (FIPRESCI, short for Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique) and the Best Screenplay award at the Venice International Film Festival in 2020. The cast includes Aditya Modak, Arun Dravid, Sumitra Bhawe, Deepika Bhide Bhagwat and Kiran Yadnyopavit.



"Sardar Ka Grandson" (Netflix, May 18)

To fulfill ailing grandmother's last wish, a U.S.-returned grandson is prepared to cross any borders. Arjun Kapoor plays Amreek Singh and is seen arranging things so his grandmother Rupinder Kaur, played by Neena Gupta, can visit her house in Lahore. She hasn't been able to revisit since partition forced the move to Amritsar. Aditi Rao Hydari and John Abraham play the younger version of Rupinder Kaur and Gursher Singh, who built their house with love and efforts. His attempt to get the grandma to the Lahore home fails but Amreek Singh has a solution – carrying the whole structure from Lahore to Amritsar! Debutant director Kaashvie Nair calls the film personal and a "delectable mix" of her attachment to her grandparents and her childhood home. "It celebrates the unconditional love between grandparents and grandchildren," she said. The cast also includes Rakul Preet Singh, Soni Razdan, Kanwaljit Singh, Kumud Mishra and Divya Seth. It is produced by John Abraham and written by Anuja Chauhan.



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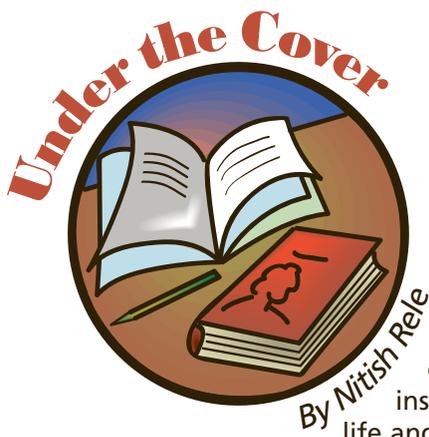
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MAY 12: RAMADAN ENDS



By Nitish Rele

Continued from page 1

“His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama: An Illustrated Biography”

“In both his residences in Dharamsala, he has had a greenhouse built to house a variety of flowers, including rare orchids ...” Also, an affection for birds and taking care of sick birdies in his garden. These are just a few of some insights offered into the Dalai Lama’s life and experience along with breathtaking

photographs in this well-illustrated book. The Chinese invasion of Tibet, people’s uprising in Lhasa, exile from Tibet and a new home in Dharamsala, along with winning the Nobel Peace Prize, and the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal provide deep understandings of the icon’s amazing journey. His Holiness observes, “Sometimes people consider the practice of compassion as a sign of weakness, but this is a mistake. It’s anger that is a sign of weakness, while compassion is a sign of strength ... compassion brings peace of mind, which gives rise to self-confidence. This enables us to do what we do transparently, and brings us more friends. Friendship depends on trust, and trust blooms when we show real interest in the well-being of others.” While affirming that empathy is the basis of moral principles, he notes, “The goodness of an action depends not just on the act itself, but on whether it arises out of concern for others and their rights. If we can install concern for others in young people, we can create a better world with greater trust and peace of mind – a more equal, more compassionate world.” The Dalai Lama, who turned 85 years old last year during the height of the pandemic, called upon well-wishers to pass on festivities for his birthday. Instead, he urged people to recite the Avalokiteshvara mantra, “Om Mani Padme Hum” 1,000 times. “Avalokiteshvara is my boss and I am his messenger.” Kudos to Tethong for writing a gem on one of the most extraordinary people of our times, who despite the hardships and struggles of the Tibetan people caused by the Chinese authorities, has extended kindness and prayers to its people.

See more book reviews on page 15

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC – XII: MORE QUESTIONS ...

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



It has been over a year since the arrival of coronavirus. No doubt, this pandemic has been a tragedy but it also exposed our lack of preparedness in dealing with such a crisis. Although many lives have been lost, with vaccination progressing at a rapid pace, the new cases are coming down along with the death rate. However, a new surge is beginning to occur and in certain states like Michigan, cases are skyrocketing, so beware!

At this juncture there are many questions and doubts in everyone's mind. Let's try to find out some answers.

1. How safe is it to move around after vaccination? Being vaccinated doesn't mean that you're totally immune to Covid-19 infections. It takes about 4-6 weeks to develop antibodies. Even if you have enough antibodies, infections can occur but they tend to be mild. I know at least two examples of this happening when a fully vaccinated physician couple attended a wedding ceremony in Mumbai and a few days later both came down Covid-19.

According to CDC, "If you, your family and friends are fully vaccinated, gathering in small groups without masks is considered low-risk. Although fully vaccinated people could still spread the virus, the vaccines are excellent in protecting you from severe illness, hospitalization and death.

2. What is causing the current surge of new cases? New mutated strains of corona virus called 'variants' are spreading all over USA. Florida has also seen an uptick in the number of cases, especially the Brazilian and South African strains. "Although the variants are playing a part, it is not completely the variants," say the experts. "What we're likely seeing is because of events like spring break and pulling back on the mitigation methods especially by the youngsters." Which means we need to continue all the precautions for a lot longer.

3. How about vaccines and blood clots? Johnson and Johnson's single dose corona vaccine has reportedly caused blood clots in six people recently and it has created a lot of anxiety and hesitancy to vaccinate among the public. And this particular vaccine is on pause right now. But please note, this is a rare event considering millions have already been vaccinated without any major side effects. "The overwhelming likelihood

is that you will be just fine," says Dr. Vivek Murthy, our surgeon general. So, please go ahead and get vaccinated. In India, there has been an explosion of cases among the unvaccinated young and middle aged people primarily because of the severe decline in compliance of Covid-appropriate behavior. So they are bringing back the 'lockdown' and other restrictions! This can happen in the U.S. too if we are not careful.

4. How do you deal with vaccine hesitancy? Sadly, recent national polls continue to show a significant number of patients are still reluctant to get vaccinated. So, every one of us who believes in science and follow the CDC guidelines should act as the ambassadors for vaccination. Already 31 percent are fully vaccinated and the numbers are going up daily. As it is for any complex project, the last mile is the hardest, so we have to continue to persuade and convince the naysayers that this is the only way to achieve herd immunity and win against the pandemic.

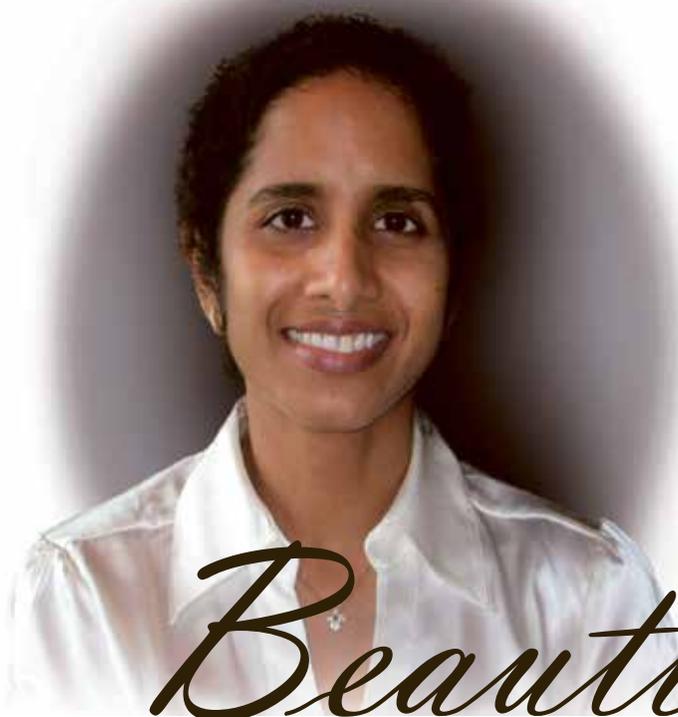
5. How about travelling by plane if you're vaccinated? CDC is still cautioning against nonessential travel even for those who are vaccinated. For short distances, travel by the road may be safer but for long distances, you may travel by plane as long as you follow all precautions.

6. What about post-Covid-19 syndrome? Sadly, a subset of patients who have recovered from Covid-19 may continue to experience symptoms like fatigue, shortness of breath, joint pains, intermittent chest pains, sleeping difficulties and even brain fog. The risk is not confined to the elderly and we do not know how long this will last. Once again, prevention is the best strategy.

We are not yet close to the end of the pandemic. "Summer should be fairly quiet in terms of Covid, if vaccinations rise and people don't stop wearing masks. But a considerable surge will occur over next winter because the new variants are more transmissible, and people will likely relax social distancing and mask wearing," predicts the experts. So, continue all the precautions, get vaccinated as soon as possible and try to boost your own immunity to build resistance against any and all infections.

To be continued ...

M.P. Ravindra Nathan, M.D., is a cardiologist and Emeritus Editor of AAPI Journal. For further reading, "Second Chance - A Sister's Act of Love" by Dr. Nathan from Outskirts Press, can be found at www.amazon.com



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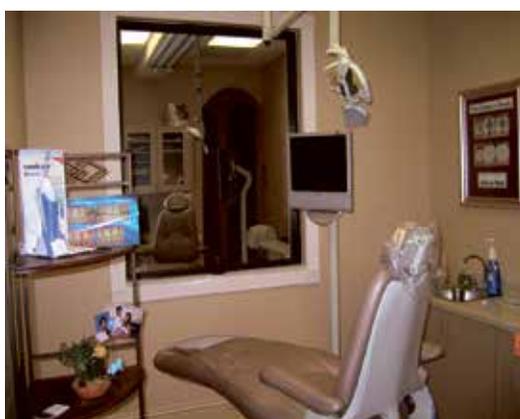
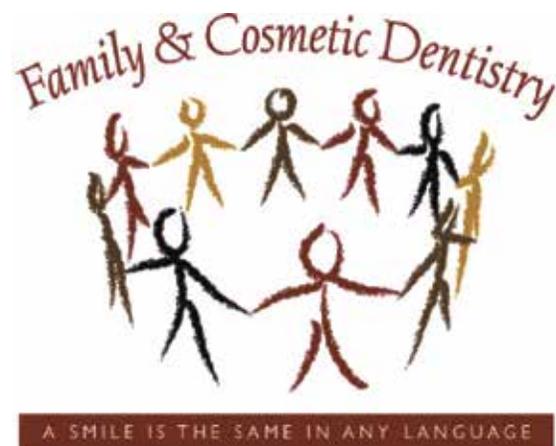
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PROLOGUE ON POSTBIOTICS

By BHAVI NIRAV



Microorganisms that inhabit our body, their environment and metabolites are known as microbiomes. They can be isolated from every part of our body; however, they are well populated in the gut (digestive tract). A true symbiotic

relationship is seen between our body and the gut microbiota; our body provides a constant, nutrient-rich environment for the microbes, and in return, receives a number of benefits: strengthening of the immune system, optimal absorption and digestion of food, reduced growth of harmful bacteria, and maintenance of intestinal barrier integrity. These beneficial effects are observed locally and in distant organs due to systemic distribution of the metabolites.

First, let's review prebiotics and probiotics, prebiotics are substrates in simple words- mostly fiber selectively used as food for probiotics; probiotics are good microorganisms that reside in the gut and improve the health of the gut. There are currently three main ways in which the microbiota can be regulated: use of prebiotics, probiotics, postbiotics.

The bacteria in our gut, called probiotics, metabolize the fiber (or prebiotics) in your diet, it generates something called short-chain fatty acids, which are postbiotics. The short-chain fatty acids, peptides and other metabolites have direct or indirect beneficial effects on our gut health, thereby improving our overall health.

Postbiotics do not contain live microbes, so its intake does not pose any health risk; it supports their health in a number of ways. Examples of postbiotics include short-chain fatty acids, such as acetate, butyrate and propionate. These are produced by fermenting undigested carbohydrates in the intestine. It provides fuel for the cells of our gut lining, and supports immune

system functions. They impact many metabolic processes like insulin resistance. Postbiotics are studied more closely for their potential health benefits, including anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, anti-obesogenic (anti-obesity), antihypertensive, hypocholesterolemic, and antioxidant activities. Postbiotics are researched for boosting gut health in critically ill patients, young children, and premature neonates who are immunocompromised and shouldn't consume live, active cultures.

Sourdough bread partly delivers health benefits from the impact of its fermentation process on the carbohydrate content of bread. Fermentation lowers the content of FODMAPs 9 short chain carbohydrates that are poorly absorbed in the small intestine and prone to absorb water and ferment in the colon) causing discomfort for sensitive guts, so people with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and sensitivities to FODMAPs can more easily tolerate it. The high temperature for baking sourdough bread typically kills the live microorganisms, but metabolites remain intact. In comparison, unprocessed fermented food delivers both postbiotics and the live microorganisms that produce the postbiotics.

Boost probiotics in your diet found in:

Fermented foods

Yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, idli, dosa for fiber

Increase your intake of beans, legumes, fruits, vegetables, seeds and nuts.

Foods rich in butyrate

Ghee and butter are good food sources of butyrate, it has gut- healing properties. For lactose intolerant people supplements can be taken. Other foods that can help your body produce more butyrate include legumes such as lentils, chickpeas and red kidney beans as well as cashews, oats, cooked and cooled rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes and green banana.

Recipe of the month:

Homemade prebiotic granola

Ingredients

Gluten-free oats or regular oats- 3 cups
Almonds with skin sliced in half lengthwise- ½ cup, walnuts ½ cup
Pumpkin seeds ¼ cup, sunflower seeds ¼ cup, hemp seeds ½ cup
Coconut shreds ¼ cup
Maple syrup 1 cup or per taste, ghee ½-¾ cup
Orange rind 2 tbsp (optional)
Vanilla extract 1 tsp (optional)

Preheat the oven to 325 F. Mix ¾ of maple syrup and ¼ cup ghee with oats and place it tightly or single layer depending on your preference in a baking tray lined with parchment paper, on the middle rack. Bake for 15-18 minutes, stir the oats. Mix nuts and seeds with remaining ghee and maple syrup. Toss the oats in the baking tray and mix in nuts. Bake for 15 minutes and then add coconut and orange rind. Bake for another 7-8 minutes or until the oats turn medium brown.

Remove and cool, then snack as is or enjoy with any milk or yogurt.

Probiotics along with prebiotic rich foods like apples, whole grains, legumes, onions, leeks, garlic, spinach, blueberries, etc.

Taking supplements is an option.

To Our Health!

Bhavi Nirav is a certified Iyengar yoga teacher, Registered Dietitian/M.S., R.D., L.D., and can be reached at swarayog@gmail.com

SETTING SMART GOALS DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU ARE THAT SMART!

By DR. KARYN MATHURA-ARTHUR and KAMLESH DARJI



Among some of the difficult decisions that one will make, especially in business, is answering the question: What is a "SMART goal?" Is it because it worked in the past? Or is utilitarian in nature? Or it just seemed the right thing to do?

It is not hard to notice that there is usually a thin line

between a SMART or reckless goal. One way to look at it: SMART goals are reckless ideas that worked out. Still, what every goal need is a smart plan, different from SMART goals.

A SMART goal is a concept set up as a play on the word as well as an acronym of five starting letters (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound). Most people still don't agree with the concepts of SMART goals and even further argue that it is stifling.

Since the days of Henry Ford, it has become harder to tell the differences between a "smart move" and a "reckless move." Even Aristotle agrees that "no moment of brilliance was born without a touch of madness." To shed some light on why SMART goals do not make business decisions that smart:

• Too much emphasis on the concepts

If you aim towards a goal where there is "special" emphasis on the concepts, it becomes hard. Goals should be crucial and not the concept or tactics (which makes it boring).

• They are not spontaneous

Things like intuition, passion, and intelligence are many of the things that lead to making smart moves. Using the SMART goals concept can be a very boring path. It requires you to gather tools, statistics, data, courage, figures, and a lot more. And with such complexities, sometimes those goals are abandoned.

Data can be used to help you develop concepts based on what is already in the marketplace. Do you think Elon Musk used data to develop the SpaceX program? His approach is to goal setting is to:

1. Think big
2. Start small
3. Move fast.

• Short-term vs. long term

When you set a goal, it might not always be the best decision in the long run. It could well affect the business or long-term success of your plan, SMART goals are culpable of this. Being smart means choosing long-term and steady success over short-term ones.

The very nature of SMART goals means that the success of all concepts is the main and immediate focus

• Smart is bold, not SMART

Henry Ford already believed in building a way to for us to drive and if he believed in what people needed, would not have accomplished his goal: "If I had asked people what they wanted, they

would have said faster horses."

SMART goals have limitations to how much further they can go. The "Achievable" and "Realistic" in the term mean that goals do not need to "stretch" the person or organization, which is wrong in many cases.

• Loss of innovation and originality

Setting up SMART goals for yourself or anything is one major step away from your individuality. Since you are out chasing something else, you start to compromise on big issues and beat yourself up to reach some targets. Being smart, however, means being original, spontaneous, flexible and agreeable without stumping on your values.

Goals should be for the aim of self-discovery, improvement, expansion and fulfillment, rather than stifling, unbending and boring.

In an organization, forcing the SMART narratives on your employees could lead to the conundrum of "more bots and fewer humans." Keep this in mind as you continue to traverse in an Agile approach to goal setting.

Dr. Karyn Mathura-Arthur is an agile implementation leader with experience in Operational Excellence, Continuous Process Improvement, Business Transformation, Process Engineering and Organizational Change Management across multiple industries (banking, insurance, healthcare, telecom, government, retail, etc.). For comments and suggestions, email editor@khaasbaat.com



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WEAR BLACK, ALL-GOLD OR SILVER, BANGLES? HERE ARE THE ANSWERS!

By KIRAN BAHL



Happy Mother's Day! The weather is beautiful, Covid-19 is finally in a better situation and 'tis the month to celebrate all the beautiful moms in our lives. In honor of this, we asked mothers from all over their burning fashion questions. And we answered!

WHY IS WEARING BLACK SO FROWNED UPON IN CERTAIN GATHERINGS?

Not to be so superstitious, but wearing black at a festive occasion is considered unholy and bad luck. It's something that's told in the Indian culture from generation to generation. Scientifically too, black

absorbs light and may make your face appear and even feel more heated, something uncomfortable during a pooja or wedding already involving a fire! But really, the color black symbolizes sadness or mourning in India. Go instead for bright jewel hues or pretty pastel notes!

WHY DOES WEARING ALL GOLD OR ALL SILVER FEEL WRONG IN OUTFITS?

All over metallic looks are so in right now on Indian runways and fashion look books everywhere. But we understand, maybe wearing all silver head to toe can make you look like a crumpled piece of aluminum foil. Wear the silver gharara, just offset it with a multicolored or solid bright dupatta. Wear the gold Oscar statue looking sari, just contrast with matte makeup, heels and jewels – minimalism in jewels is important here!

FLORIDA CAN GET REALLY HOT AND HUMID. HOW TO FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WHEN WEARING INDIAN CLOTHING?

Yes, the rainy season doesn't help either! Let's go from head to toe. Wear your hair up! A ponytail or bun work beautifully especially with fuller outfits

like a lengha or sleeved outfits in general for a balanced look. Go sleeveless and more open necked or backless on tops. Less layering overall helps too. Drop the vest on suits and the extra waist belts or arm bands with your sari. When you look lighter, you'll feel lighter! For shoes, simple heels or juttis do the trick. Very embellished stoned or beaded shoes can weigh your outfit down.

BANGLES OR KADAS, BOTH HANDS?

We get this question asked a lot. Trend-wise, bangles are in, and lots of them too on both hands. But otherwise, preference is really the answer here. Some love wearing dozens of solid bangles on both wrists with their suit. Others love the ease and look of wider kadas, sometimes on just one wrist (dupatta side) of their suit or sari. These are one of those fun looks to play around with each and every time.

ARE CRAZY SARI FUSION TRENDS STILL IN?

Yes, we remember these, and they seem so far off into the past! The dhoti sari, the sari worn with leggings, even the sari worn with a blazer. Right now, with events and gatherings slowly and cautiously opening back up, foundation and tradition is at its best. Wear your sari with a regular petticoat – it is simply pretty!

Once again, Happy Mother's Day to all. Love is not seen, it is felt. It's not necessarily in the gifts we present, but the presence of having one another, together. Love those in your lives hard and, as always, remember to 'gro' with style!

Kiran Bahl of Gro Styles, an Indian Boutique (www.grostyles.com), can be reached at (813) 843-9040 or kiran@grostyles.com

PREVENTION OF FALLS

By Dr. Venkit Iyer, MD, FACS

This may sound silly when we say to the elderly: "Many problems start with a simple fall."

Statistics show that a total of 29,688 Americans older than 65 years old died from falls and related problems in the year of 2016. About one in four senior citizens sustain a serious fall each year prompting three million visits to emergency department of hospitals across the country.

A number of these falls are seemingly minor at home but result in serious problems such as fractures, chest injuries and head injuries. More over the fall and subsequent interventions can leave the person permanently disabled and can snow ball into an end of life situation.

Conditions that make one more likely to fall include the following:

Elderly state	
Toddlers	Alcohol intake
Neurological deficits	Drug abuse
Lower body weakness	Improper footwear
Vitamin D deficiency	Balancing problems
Vision problems	Attention distractions
Hearing problems	Careless attitude
Medication effects	Hypoglycemia, diabetes mellitus.

Mobile phone (cell phones) have caused new set of problems such as: Listening to music or talking while walking or crossing roads, when warning sounds are cut off;

Texting while walking, climbing into public vehicles or driving;

Playing games such as Pokemon while walking;

Taking pictures and selfies without watching for hazards;

Use of headphones or ear plugs that cut off sounds of alert;

Watching videos while walking.

Sporting injuries are another main reason for falls. They are higher with contact sports such as football, basketball, hockey, or soccer. Injuries are higher with skiing, snow boarding, roller blading, horseback riding, parasailing, bungee jumping, parachute jumping, where there is less chance of balancing and control by the individual.

One should consider risk-reducing measures in the house such as:

Living in a one story house compared to two story house with a staircase;

Even flooring throughout the house instead of having steps between rooms;

Rugs and mats to be flat and with tight placements;

Keeping slippers and foot wears away from doorsteps and bottom of stairwells;

Installing holding bars in shower stalls, toilets and other wet areas;

Having handrails on both sides of staircases;

Adequate lighting inside the house;

Keeping the floors with maximum open and walking space instead of cluttering it with objects and furniture;

Keeping the house clean and tidy;

Balancing exercises;

Having medical checkups to ensure safety.

CDC has a website for instructions and educational materials at cdc.gov/steady (which stands for Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries). Another site for information is ncoa.org (National Council on Aging) and enter falls in the search box.

Excerpted with permission from "Aging Well and Reaching Beyond" by Venkit S. Iyer, MD, FACS; published by Evershine Books (www.amazon.com)

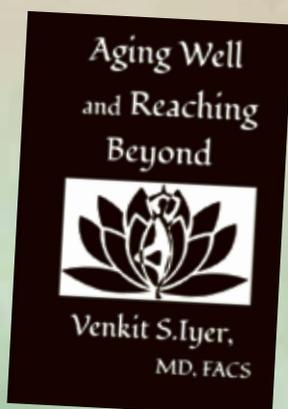
NEW BOOK PUBLISHED

Aging Well and Reaching Beyond



Dr. Venkit S. Iyer, a retired general and vascular surgeon and a long time resident of Palm Harbor, Florida has recently published a new book with the above title. It contains

useful information on preventive health, wellness measures, elder care and end of life issues. Aging is a process and not a disease. Part of it is due to built in codes in our genes, which is "Nature". However part of it is due to our habits, behavior and conduct, which is "Nurture". The book is based on facts and science. It is a must read book for senior citizens, providing information as to how to live well, age gracefully and end the journey of life peacefully.



Available at www.amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com

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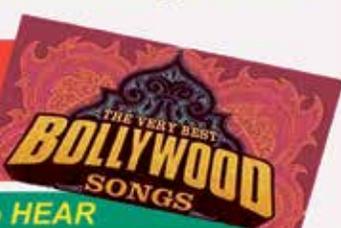
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WATCH YOUR SPEED IN CHARGER SRT HELLCAT REDEYE WIDEBODY!

Test-drive stories by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

Zero to 60 in the 3.6 seconds, ¼-mile in 10.6 seconds and top speed at 203 mph. Impressed? You ought to be. The 6.2-liter supercharged Hemi SRT engine in the Dodge Charger boasts robust acceleration, superb handling and steering feel. Our Hellcat Redeye Widebody test-drive version is all-new for 2021.

Step on the throttle and the V-8 engine blasts off 797 horsepower (yes, you read that right!) at 6300 rpm and 707 pounds-feet of torque at 4500 rpm. Mated to an 8-speed auto transmission, the Charger is equipped with a razor-sharp electric power assist, rack-and-pinion steering. Front suspension is handled competently by an independent SLA with high upper 'A' arm while the rear gets a five-link independent system. Both ends have coil springs to improve ride quality and comfort. Bringing the speed demon to a halt are Brembo high-performance 15.7-inch front six-piston caliper and 13.8-inch rear four-piston caliper discs, both vented and slotted. To vary the driving experience, this version of the Charger comes in street, sport and track modes.

Walk around the rear-wheel-drive vehicle and the first element that will grab your attention are center air intake and dual heat extractors atop the bulging aluminum hood. The air-intake hood joins a daunting mail-slot honeycomb grille

and Redeye logo, surrounded by quad bi-functional HID projector headlights with LED accents. Fender flares integrated into the front/rear fascia boost the width by 3.5 inches. That this is a race-

inspired cabin is evident from the rounded 220 mph speedometer (customer preferred package option) and 7000 tachometer gauges with fuel and temperature readings, and a driver information center. Lending further taste and elegance are aluminum lithographic splashes on the center stack, shifter, dash and door-switch bezels. The cabin is roomy and elegant with dual auto a/c, eight-way driver power and four-way front-passenger seats, power and flat-bottomed tilt/telescopic steering column, heated/cooled front seats with the SRT/Readeye logo, six Alpine speakers, 7.5-inch reconfigurable instrument cluster, 8.4-inch UConnect for audio, phone and navigation controls, spacious 16.5-cubic-foot trunk, distinctly designed T-handle shifter and a 60/40 rear seat.

CHARGER SRT HELLCAT

Tires: 305/35ZR20
Wheelbase: 120 inches
Length: 201 inches
Weight: 4,610 pounds
Fuel capacity: 18.5 gallons
City: 12 mpg
Highway: 21 mpg
Base price: \$69,995
Price as tested: \$88,065
Web site: www.dodge.com



Dual front and side airbags, side curtain airbag for both rows, electronic stability and traction control, four-wheel antilock brakes with brake assist, blind spot monitor and rear-cross path detection, active head restraints, rear backup camera, tire pressure monitoring system and daytime running lights are standard.

Muscle-car aficionados, crave for that throaty exhaust growl (it's a Hemi!) as you turn on the ignition? Like to mash the pedals for a speed-demon-like takeoff? Then the Charger Hellcat Redeye will fit the bill. To a T.

SPORT TRIM ADDS PIZZAZZ TO 2021 CADILLAC XT6

Just a few months after driving the Premium Luxury version of the XT6, Cadillac dispatched over the 2021 XT6 Sport AWD for us to test. This one is even more fun to drive, responding with quickness in any driving situation while loaded with luxury and tech goodies.

Like in the Premium Luxury model, the Sport also is equipped with a 3.6-liter V6 engine cranking out 310 horsepower @ 600 rpm and 271 pounds-feet of torque @ 5000 rpm. It is mated to a smooth 9-speed auto gearbox. A MacPherson strut front and a five-link independent rear sport suspension work well to absorb unpleasant road bumps or curves. Steering response with the electric power rack-and-pinion is instant and precise. Tow capacity is a reasonable 4,000 pounds. Drive modes include tour, sport and snow/ice.

A V-Series inspired mesh grille with heavily darker accents and details, flanked by LED headlights, boost the aggressive appearance of the XT6. Step into the cabin and performance-inspired carbon fiber trim provide an upscale and well-appointed look. An 8-inch



color touchscreen in the center stack includes capacitive controls, haptic feedback, gestures and voice recognition (yes, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are available). To accommodate drivers of all heights, Cadillac has equipped the XT6 with a power tilt/telescopic three-spoke steering wheel. There is plenty of room – 78.7 cubic feet behind the first row; and total passenger volume is a laudable 149.9 cubic feet. Amenities are tri-zone auto a/c, eight-way

XT6 SPORT

Tires: P235/55R20 all season
Wheelbase: 112.7 inches
Length: 198.8 inches
Width: 77.3 inches
Height: 68.9 inches
Fuel capacity: 19 gallons
City: 18 mpg
Highway: 25 mpg
Weight: 4,690 pounds
Base price: \$57,195
Price as tested: \$72,165
Web site: www.cadillac.com

power driver and front-passenger heated seats, remote start, sun roof, third-row power fold seat, hidden cargo hold bin, hands-free lift gate and hands-on CUE (Cadillac User Experience).

Dual front and side airbags, side curtain airbag,

driver knee airbag, four-wheel antilock brakes, forward collision, rear cross traffic, lane change and side zone blind alerts, lane keep assist with lane departure warning, front/rear park assist, stability and traction control, rearview camera, tire pressure monitoring system and daytime running lights come at no extra cost.

If in the market for a midsize SUV with a forceful engine, decent gas mileage and bountiful creature comforts, the XT6 fits the bill. The Sport bundle adds even more spark and adventure to the ride!

CORSAIR DESERVEDLY REPLACES MKC IN LINCOLN LINEUP

The Latin word for Corsair is "cursus," which means journey. And the entry-level luxury SUV in the Lincoln roster offers just that and more – quick acceleration, exceptional handling and balance and remarkably good body control. Replacing the MKC last year, the compact Corsair is available as a front-wheel or all-wheel drive, which was our test for a week.

The five-passenger SUV comes in a 2.0-liter turbocharged and intercooled inline-4 cylinder engine that puts out 250 horsepower @ 5500 rpm and 280 pounds-feet of torque @ 3000 rpm. That is plenty for the 3,842-pound vehicle to scoot from any speed. The 8-speed auto gear box is effortless.

A split-winged grille with the centered Lincoln emblem plays host to floating chrome ovals in a black lattice background. The rear shows off full-width horizontal tail lamps joined by a LED tail lamp strip, roof spoiler and dual-exhaust tips, to convey a powerful stance. But it is in the lavish, modish and beautifully made cabin that the Corsair justly shines. As soon as you take a seat, the floating center stack with knobs for audio and temperature controls catches your attention. The push-button gear selector may take some getting used to but it saves space on the dash.



The user-friendly Sync3, an interface to control audio, phone and navigation systems via voice, touch or both, is easy to use. Passenger and cargo room is plenty with 27.6 cubic feet behind the second row and 57/6 cubic feet behind the first row. Dual-zone auto a/c, three-spoke power leather steering wheel, panoramic roof, Revel audio with 14 speakers, 10-way power front seats, 60/40 flat second-row bench, hands-free lift gate and the Lincoln welcome/farewell light elements when you enter or exit are standard.

Dual front and side airbags, front knee airbags,

CORSAIR (RESERVE)

Tires: P225/55R19
Wheelbase: 106.7 inches
Length: 180.6 inches
Width: 76.2 inches
Height: 64.1 inches
Suspension: MacPherson strut front, multilink rear
Steering: electric power
Fuel capacity: 16.2 gallons
City: 21 mpg **Highway:** 29 mpg
Base price: \$45,090
Price as tested: \$56,780
Web site: www.lincoln.com

side curtain airbag, four-wheel antilock brakes with electronic stability and traction control, lane-keep and pre-collision assists, reverse park aid, rearview camera, blind-spot monitor with cross-traffic alert, front and rear three-point seatbelts, tire pressure monitor and daytime running lights.

Undoubtedly, the Corsair is a welcome replacement for the outgoing MKC. Indulge yourself and the passengers in this most affordable, remarkably smooth and exceptionally quiet Lincoln. Plus, it is attractive to the eye inside and out.



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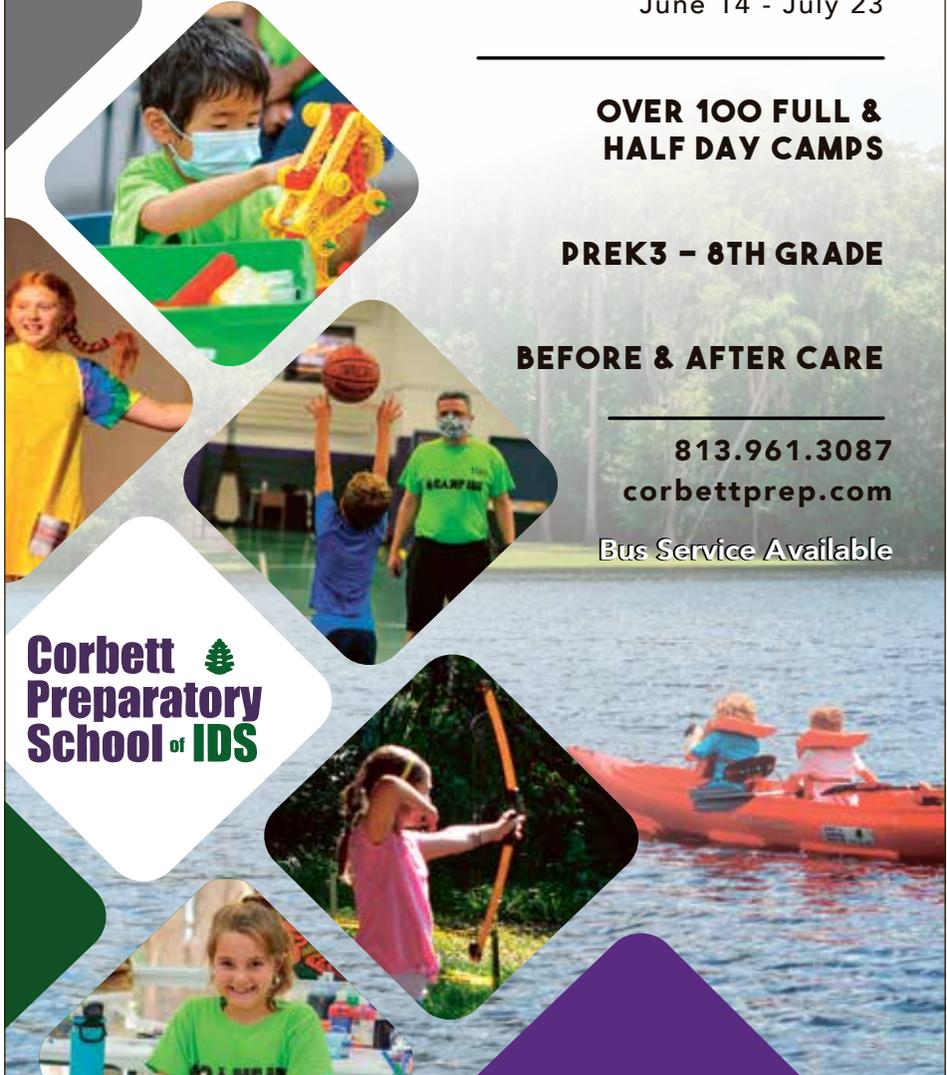
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COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CHANGES – THIS YEAR AND NEXT

By **ROBERT A.G. LEVINE**



For the better part of last year, we discussed and opined about how COVID and other imperatives would alter student opportunities for college. When we finally observed the college results in March and April, the predictions felt real, but things turned out very much as we expected. As we look towards this year's season,

and even the year after that, we see different trends approaching.

First, let's take a look back.

In 2020, related events obviously affected student opportunities: Covid-19 and the advance of test optional policies. Not having to submit SAT, ACT or Subject Test scores increased the number of applications by 30-40 percent at most colleges. Within college admissions offices, not having standardized test scores removed a useful data set from consideration. Together, those two "side effects" of test-optional policies delayed many admissions decisions and raised applicant competition in new ways.

But the online learning required by Covid-19 and the health concerns of so many students and families created an even greater effect: a tremendous increase in students deferring their college enrollment for one year. In record numbers, students from the high school class of 2020 decided not to start college right away. Gap year requests increased, on average, by a factor of three. Thus, when the high school class of 2021 came looking for places to enroll, many of their spots were already taken by the class of 2020.

Seeing fewer acceptances per applicant (and many more wait list results), we reviewed our students' work and discovered an obvious factor: quality of application essays determined student results. However, when discounting how Personal Statements, Activities Lists and Recommendation Letters could not have explained the results – they are sent universally to every college without change – we looked at our students' Supplemental Essays. Voila! When students wrote amazing essays, they achieved amazing results. Pretty good essays often led to the wait list, while average essays invariably resulted in rejections.

Nobody – and I mean nobody – writes amazing essays every time. UCA tries to guide you in terms of the order in which you write your essays, the timing and schedule within which you write, and of course the content and voice of your essays. Please pay attention to these instructions. Remember that "why do you want to attend our school" is a very difficult topic, one for which you know little about the school while the admissions reader knows everything about their place. One of our students was rejected by almost every school for which he wrote a "why" essay, but accepted at every school that did not require that prompt. The sole exception? USC, for which he wrote an extraordinary "why" essay along with several other essays that rounded out a brilliant presentation.

So, the high school class of 2021 endured the most difficult admissions year in history. What challenges does the class of 2022 face?

We foresee two issues for this year's admissions class. First, with SAT and ACT test dates no longer being universally cancelled because of Covid-19, admissions officers will be faced with

"apples and oranges" evaluations. Unlike last year, in which many, many students had no test scores to report, this year many students will report their scores, while others will choose not to report. Therefore, strategy concerning which schools YOU will provide your test scores, and which schools you should not, can make the difference between acceptance and rejection. That decision is going to be complicated, so let us guide you with individualized strategy.

Second, because so many high schools closed because of Covid-19, and because so many extracurricular activities were cancelled, the Activities Lists (application resumes) for this year's class will look very different than normal. How those lists are written will be more critical than ever. If you have not done so already, begin a log-type document and collect the specifics and details of what you have been doing. That will help you immensely in writing those very spartan (40-word) descriptions within the Activities List.

For the Class of 2023, we see a different change. Because College Board eliminated its Subject Tests in favor of more emphasis on AP exams, there will be ... more emphasis on AP exams! Your AP results will take the place of your Subject Test results in college considerations. As a result, UCA is instituting new support strategies for AP classes. Contact us for further information.

Let's do this!

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

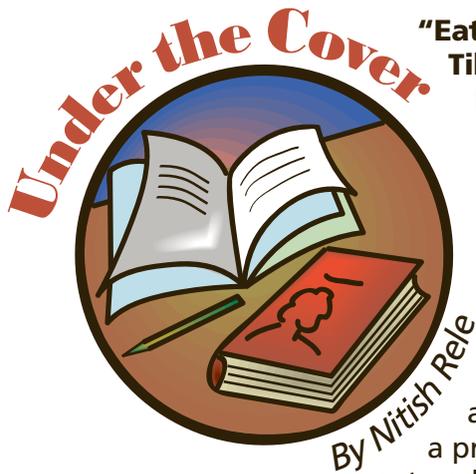
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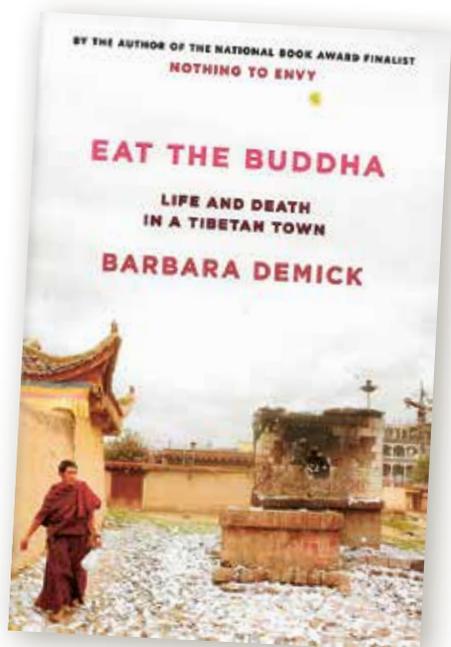
SIGN UP NOW



“Eat the Buddha: Life and Death in a Tibetan Town” (330 pages; \$28) by Barbara Demick; published by Random House (www.randomhousebooks.com)

That the Tibetan faith, cultural identity and language is under a threat of extinction from Chinese imperialism is a given. To elucidate in details the history and struggles of Tibet, the author recounts personal stories of a princess, young nomad, schoolgirl, poet and an upwardly mobile entrepreneur

from Ngaba, an Eastern Tibetan town perched 11,000 feet above sea level. The city is also the place where the Chinese communists and Tibetans encountered each other in 1930s. The book’s title is inspired from religious statues made of flour and butter that the soldiers pillaged from the monasteries as if implying to ‘eat the Buddha.’ It may surprise you to know the Tibetan plateau, which extends from Mouth Everest all the way to northern Pakistan, and then to the Gobi desert, is as large as India – one million square miles. Of course, extremely harsh weather, high elevation and arduous landscape, makes it one of the most thinly populated areas on earth, with fewer than six people per square mile. The resistance in Ngaba against Chinese aggression was strong and at one time (beginning in 2009), the town was known to be the world capital of self-immolations. Demick reveals that as of November 2019, 156 Tibetans had self-immolated. However, the 14th Dalai Lama is overly optimistic about the future of Tibetans within China. As he told the author, “I don’t consider China powerful at all. They may be powerful in their economics and weapons, but in terms of moral principles, they are very weak. The whole society is full of suspicion and full of distrust.” As if to prove the point, the author unveils that by 2020, China was supposed to have 626 million closed-circuit cameras installed, that’s one for every two people. Shedding light on Tibetan population in India, she notes that it peaked at 118,000 in mid-1990s. It slipped to 94,000 by 2009, mainly because some have left for Western countries and also since the Chinese have succeeded in plugging leaks in the borders. Demick, author of “Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea,” is an experienced and talented journalist. She was a reporter/correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, New Yorker and The Philadelphia Inquirer. She has painstakingly researched Tibetan culture and their people to pen a spellbinding, touching and somewhat infuriating story. It should offer a distinctive, enlightening look at a group of people who may soon see their identity wiped out if the Chinese government has their way. And that would be a sad and tragic finale to the Tibetan Plateau saga.



“I Am A Rockstar: An Expert Guide to Success” (210 pages; \$9.99) by Uma Vanka; published independently.

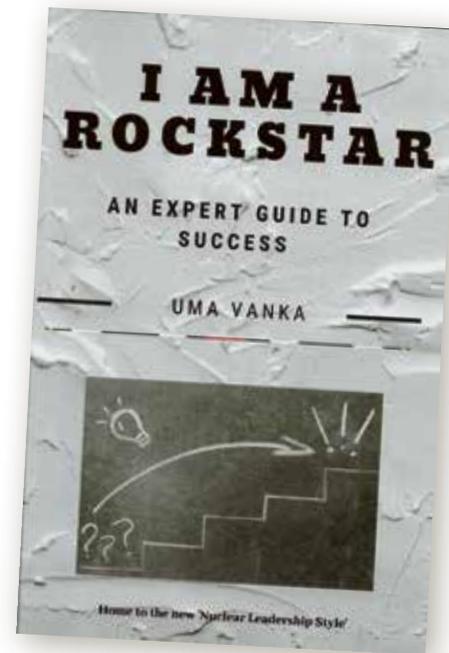
Who doesn’t want to be successful? Indeed. A partner at TCS America, Vanka shares the lessons he learnt while climbing the career ladder through interesting anecdotes and experiences instead of dull textbook comparisons. Written humbly and straightforward so even a teenager can understand, the title hints that the first step at success is to believe in yourself.

Toward that end, the author maps out a blueprint in 13 chapters. In the first, “Life is simple. Keep it simple” means precisely that.

“Choose love over hate. Choose courage over fear. Choose smile over worry. Choose to be active, not lazy. Choose to lead a healthy lifestyle. Choose not to engage in negative criticism. Choose a successful way to live,” he suggests.

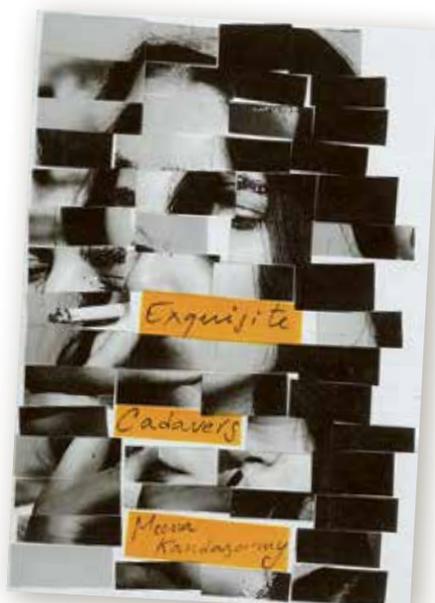
“Everyone wants a sausage” focuses on how you can become an excellent

communicator. “Transform into a Nuclear Style Leader” puts the emphasis on the “trust but verify” approach, i.e. empowering people so there is a sense of ownership and accountability. In “Celebrate Criticism,” Vanka reminds us that denunciation is part of life. Welcome constructive criticism but if it is destructive, ignore it. In “Appreciation should precede Aspiration,” he recommends taking a moment to be thankful what you have before chasing what you don’t have. “You may fall but you never fail” is about pursuing your passion. “Be prepared to fail. Be prepared to fall. Falling and failing is a part of life. Try to learn every time you fall. And bounce back stronger than before ... Put boundaries around your path. Use my simple process. Evaluate the best case and worst case. Prepare for the worse case. Then, just start working for the best case.” Branding is not just for Instagram influencers but for one and all, pens Vanka in a chapter. So, take steps to raise your chances of right timing, meaning make sure your efforts are higher than others. In “I don’t have a drinking problem,” the author demonstrates how to learn to convert weaknesses into strength, save for the future while living the present and face harsh times with a smile. Stressed? Take a break, he counsels. Exercise. Talk to people or indulge in your favorite hobby. He sums up the book nicely, “Life is full of opportunities. It’s up to us to grab those. Life is created to be very simple. It’s us who complicate it. Once you learn how to navigate through life’s challenges easily, success will follow.” Packed with inspiration and thoughtful insights, we look forward to more work from this motivational author.



“Exquisite Cadavers” (112 pages; \$8.49) by Meena Kandasamy; published Atlantic Books (www.atlantic-books.co.uk)

A 2-in-1 book, that’s how we would term this experimental form of writing. The main fictional story is about the love troubles of a young Tunisian immigrant-filmmaker Karim and the English Maya in London. Things get only worse when Karim’s brother disappears in Tunis, and leaves Maya in a conundrum: should she go in search of Karim or stay in the city? In the margins of the book, in smaller print, is the author relating her life, her memoir, so to speak, while penning the Karim and Maya saga. Just so there is no confusion, we recommend you read the barely 100-page book in two sittings. Truly, the author of the acclaimed “When I Hit you” is an immensely gifted prose writer. Wait, let’s make that poetry, for activist and translator Kandasamy’s writing style is nothing short of lyrical (previously published two collections of poetry, “Touch” and “Ms Militancy”). Here are a few examples: “It rains



with a vengeance; the sky an angry spouse keeping score. The seagulls sound needy, quarrelsome, crying for pain-relief.” “One has to breath fire in order to breathe life into love. These jolts, this insistent thrashing is what it takes to get to its jolly, bumping heart.” “Hopes soar, then plunge like the gnawing noises of his childhood sea at sundown.” “Occasionally love is a realization of porosity.” “The whiteboard in the kitchen is hungover Hemingway; adjective-free, pruned and purposeful, displaying the timing of Spanish lessons, errands for an elderly parents, grocery shopping lists, bills to be paid – they hide botched suicide attempts, emotional breakdowns.” “Plates, hand-painted bowls, fancy wine glasses, empty beer bottles need to be knocked out of their inertia, shaken up, smashed. Fragility as a force-field does not allow itself to be perturbed. The clattering waits in the wings, romps around within four walls, impatient to join the chequerboard of greyscale cityscapes, wills itself to collapse into familiar rhythm.” It is apparent Kandasamy has a mastery over the expressive language. And she delivers a punch with her unusual two-columnar narrative, leaving the reader asking for more.



COMPACT BENZ GLA35 SUV BOASTS A CAR-LIKE RIDE

Test-drive stories by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

It's 3 inches higher and 0.6 inches shorter than its predecessor. Best of all, the front seats get a boost of 3.8 inches so that there is a clear view of the road. Undoubtedly, the redesigned 2021 Mercedes-Benz GLA35 is a fine, snug and effective ride that can go 0 to 60 in just 5 seconds with top speed limited to 155 mph.

Under the hood sits a 2.0-liter inline-4 cylinder turbo engine putting out 302 horsepower @ 5800 rpm and 295 pounds-feet of torque @ 4000 rpm. The 4MATIC all-wheel-drive vehicle is mated to a standard 8-speed automatic, which can be driven in slippery, individual, comfort, sport and sport+ modes. The independent MacPherson strut front and trailing link rear suspension works splendidly to absorb unpleasant highway bumps and sudden sharp turns. Returning a weighted response to the driver's input is a razor-sharp electromechanical power rack-and-pinion system.

Up front, the familiar three-pointed star on the power dome hood meets up with another Benz emblem centered in the radiator grille with several slats, which are surrounded by horizontal LED headlights. A lavish, elegant cabin is expected of any AMG-equipped Benz with dual auto a/c, power lift gate, 60/40 rear seat, steering wheel paddle shifters, Apple



GLA35
Tires: 235/50R19
Wheelbase: 107.4 inches
Length: 174.6 inches
Width: 79.5 inches
Height: 62.5 inches
Fuel capacity: 13.5 gallons
City: 23 mpg
Highway: 29 mpg
Weight: 3,704 pounds
Base price: \$47,550
Price as tested: \$53,230
Web site: www.mbusa.com

CarPlay and Android phone capabilities, wireless charge pad, illuminated door sills, panoramic sunroof, steering wheel-mounted shifters, and heated front seats. AMG enthusiasts will quickly notice the emblem imprinted on the seat backs. All materials and craftsmanship are top-notch. A touchpad controls audio, navigation and phone infotainment on the large 12.3-inch display dash screen. A similarly sized screen displays the digital instrument cluster.

Dual front and side airbags, side curtain airbag, four-wheel antilock brakes, electronic stability

program, pre-safe (partial braking in an emergency), active brake and blind spot assists, forward collision warning, rearview camera, keyless go/start, daytime running lights and tire pressure monitoring system are standard.

There is no doubt that the overhauled entry-level GLA enhances the Benz lineup of SUVs. If in the market for a small SUV that drives like a car while boasting strong acceleration, admirable cargo- and passenger-hauling capabilities, take the GLA35 for a test-drive. It will be well worth your time and effort.

2021 BMW M550i OFFERS LUXURY ... AND YES, EXHILARATION TOO!

More lush and plush than sport. That's been the recent discussion around the BMW 5 Series. But the 2021 M550i should put that notion to rest. First introduced in 1972, the midsize luxury sport sedan is an incredibly lively and thriller of a ride to take to the streets. Zero to 60 is an impressive 3.6 seconds in this extraordinary car with top speed at 155 mph.

Under the hood of the attractive sedan resides a 4.4-liter twin-power turbocharged V-8 cylinder gas engine cranking out 523 horsepower @ 6000 rpm and 553 pounds-feet of torque @ 4600 rpm. It is mated to a standard and flawless 8-speed auto gearbox, which is even more fun with moves via the steering paddle shifters. Suspension is handled competently via a double wishbone front and a 5-link rear system. However, the standard adaptive M suspension is specially tuned to enhance nimbleness and poise when pushing pedal to the metal. And the electric power rack-and-pinion steering has a solid and communicative feel, making the car easy to place at sharp curves.

For 2021, BMW designers have restyled the front end with a taller and wider kidney grille

BMW M550i

Tires: P245/35R20 front, 275/30R20
Wheelbase: 117.1 inches
Length: 195.8 inches
Width: 73.5 inches
Height: 58.4 inches
Fuel capacity: 18 gallons
Mileage: city 17, highway 25
Weight: 4,275 pounds
Base price: \$76,800
Price as tested: \$93,735
Web site: www.bmw.com



that shows off more pronounced vertical slats while adaptive LED headlights have been re-sculpted. M Sport brakes with blue calipers and the M logo are sure to grab any bystander's attention. Walk to the rear and you will notice black edges around the fresh L-shaped tail lamps and trapezoidal tail pipe finishers assimilated into the lower bumper area. As soon as we stepped into the airy and well-appointed cabin, we

observed that the digital instrument display and the infotainment touch screen are now a massive 12.3 inches each (up from previous 10.2 inches). The cognac Dakota leather seats are not only eye-catching but snug. Trunk volume (with a hidden bin) is a cool 14 cubic feet. Other niceties include auto a/c,

power moon roof and tail gate, Anthracite headliner, 20-way power front seats, 40/20/40 fold rear seat, and more.

As we said at the outset, the M550i is not just about indulgences. The forceful engine with over 500 horses and the M label add more pizzazz and sport to the pricey ride that nears \$100K price tag.

Continued from page 1

DEFENDER RETURNS TO LAND ROVER LINEUP

Electric power steering provides superb driver feedback. It's noteworthy that the nearly 5,035-pound vehicle can go 0 to 60 mph in just 5.8 seconds with a top speed of 129 mph.

A permanent all-wheel drive delivers necessary torque to the rear wheels. The updated Terrain Response 2 now automatically picks one of several gears for the driver depending on road/weather conditions:

- General (for daily driving),
- Grass/Gravel/Snow,
- Mud/Ruts,
- Sand,
- Rock Crawl
- and Dynamic.

A new addition is Wade Sensing. Credit an independent short-long arm suspension with double wishbone front and integral rear suspension (raises the frame by 1.6 inches for easy ingress/egress) for a remarkably supple ride on the 20-inch-wheel SUV. Tow capacity is a remarkable 8,201 pounds.

The Defender is designed for off-road conditions such as traction, ground clearance,



Tires: P225/5
DEFENDER X (110)
Wheelbase: 119 inches
Length: 197.6 inches
Height: 77.4 inches
Width: 78.6 inches
Fuel capacity: 23.8 gallons
City: 17 mpg
Highway: 22 mpg
Base price: \$80,000
Price as tested: \$85,750
Web site: www.landrover.com

maneuverability, articulation, and water fording (35.4-inch depth). Skid plates will protect the front, transfer case and fuel tank. Check out the degrees: approach angle of 38, break over of 28, and departure of 40, with ground clearance of 11.5 inches, more than enough to instill confidence in the driver on those off-the-beaten-path trips.

Ensnared on the aluminum monocoque structure with its short overhangs is an upright front grille, flanked by rounded LED headlights housed in horizontal encasing. Alpine light windows in the roof (with black rails) keep its heritage alive. As do the trademark side-hinged

rear tail gate and externally amounted spare wheel. If you are looking for the hidden shifter dial that would magically pop out in recent Land Rovers, it's gone. The Defender acquires a PIVI Pro infotainment with just a sole 10-inch touchscreen for audio, phone and nav controls. An exposed magnesium cross beam with incorporated hand pulls in the center boosts the standing of the quintessential SUV. Just above the lockable glove box is a storage shelf for personal belongings. Other comforts include dual-zone auto a/c, power tilt/telescopic steering column and panoramic roof, heated/cooled front seats, premium Windsor leather upholstery, and an astonishing 700-watt Meridian sound system. With its off-road prowess, bold looks and open-air capability, this utilitarian workhorse is a tremendous and much-needed addition to the already-impressive Land Rover lineup. Jeep and the new Ford Bronco have their work cut out for them with the commendable rebirth of the Defender.



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Live-in caretaker needed for independent and ambulatory mother in Hernando, Florida. Gujarati or Hindi speaking preferred. Excellent salary. Contact (937) 726-8415 or ketakibirthday@gmail.com

COOK/CHEF WANTED
Looking for a cook/chef for daily/weekly/few times per week cook/meal prep for family of four, healthy Indian vegetarian food. Location: Seminole in Pinellas County. Contact patelss4@gmail.com or call (914) 338-8260.

HELP WANTED
Seeking live-in babysitter for kids age 6 and 1½-year-old in Odessa. Additional help with cooking, light housekeeping is preferred; please contact Archana at (201) 780-7000 for more information.

HELP WANTED
Days Inn Motel in Saint Augustine, FL, looking for housekeeping couple. Accommodation will be provided. Call Vijay at (904) 671-3147 or email daysinn2560@gmail.com

HELP WANTED
Front desk and housekeeper needed in local motel in St. Petersburg. Both are in day shift. Accommodation provided. Contact (727) 686-0807.

HELP WANTED
Help wanted in convenience store located near Tampa. Require experience to run store. We will help with accommodation. Please contact Andy at (732) 925-9250.

HELP WANTED
Wyndham motel – now hiring. Looking for experienced professional couple to operate and manage Wyndham franchised motel in Sarasota. Will help with accommodation. Motel managing experience required. Call or text Ankit Shah at (732) 925-9250 or Ken Amin at (727) 597-0897.



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MAY 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) Arian ascendants, self-ego and confidence will have no bounds! One may be irrational, abrasive and tonal language can be objectionable. With Sun exalted in the first half of the month, attitude can be authoritarian and perceived as aggressive. Matrimonial/business partnerships may develop too. No job changes recommended, expect recognition at place of work. However, the second half of the month may see open friction and animosity with friends, colleagues or at work place. Earnings, ego and energy may still continue to operate at optimum level. **Precaution:** Keep ego under check.

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)Taurus ascendants, major planets govern your mindset. Well-thought and planned decisions will pave way for positive results; otherwise, vice versa is also possible. Cleverness, selfishness, aggressiveness may be on the mind. Tonal language may create many enemies; watch your words! As Sun is eclipsed by Rahu, one may feel powerless to act or take decision. Best is to minimize unnecessary activities. Luck plays a lesser role. Lawyers, IT professionals, consultants, financial analysts may stand to gain. Expenses outweigh income. Watch out for pancreas, UTI and kidney-related problems this month. **Precaution:** Watch your words and tone.

GEMINI / Mithuna (Air sign, ruling planet is Mercury) - (May 22-June 21) Mercury Sign - Stars covered Mrigashira (last 2 parts), Ardra & Punarvasu (first 3 parts) Gemini ascendants, anger management, control over emotions need to be watched! Business or matrimonial relations may not be at their best, both needs to handle carefully. Stomach or intestinal disorders can be troublesome. Expenses outweigh income, though first half of the month is more positive. Sound decisions are based on calm mind; turbulent mindset may not produce proper results. Due to duality of this sign and turbulent mindset, ability to take correct decisions may be lacking. **Precaution:** Stay away from taking important decisions.

CANCER / Karaka (Watery sign, ruling planet is Moon) - (June 22-July 22) Moon Sign – Stars covered Punarvasu (4th part), Pushya, Aslesha Irrational decisions or actions may drive some to suffer financial losses. On professional front, refrain from taking risks. However, this month also brings a lot of cheer and positivity. Positive financial health, increase in income, comforts and earning also mark this month for some with a powerful Moon. Routine life sets in matrimonial alliances; it is time to rekindle and reaffirm love for the partner. Business alliances may need a fresh outlook. For some, this is a start of spiritual quest. **Precaution:** Think, plan well before you act!

LEO / Simha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Sun) - (July 23-Aug. 22) Sun Sign – Stars covered Magha, Purva Phalguni, and Uttara Phalguni (1st part) House of luck, profession and income play a vital role. Sun, the sign lord, remains exalted for first half bringing gains through luck. Income generation, gain in profession, promotion and increase in status are seen for many who have a powerful Moon. Matrimonial or Business alliances may develop. This is a gainful month and with proper actions, one could see success at every step. Do not waste time or procrastinate. Victory in legal battles cannot be ruled out too! **Precaution:** Make use of every opportunity this month.

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) Windy (Vaata) and phlegmatic (Kapha) diseases, troubles in the legs, laziness, back, stomach, liver, intestinal problems could be troublesome. Spousal health may be concerning for some. Business or marriage alliances should be avoided. Hold on, if you are buying property. Professional gains and financial progress are seen. **Precaution:** Be careful in what you eat.

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) For some, medical problems related to prostate, colon or urinary tract need attention. Now is the time to make corrections to wrong financial judgments! Business partnerships or marital alliances may suffer in some cases. Professionally, no job changes for now. Stomach, liver and intestinal problems may be troublesome. **Precaution:** Health should be top priority.

SCORPIO / Vruschika (Water sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Mars Sign – Stars covered Vishakha (4th part), Anuradha, Jyestha Influential contacts develop, chance of new proposal for joint partnership seen. Excellent time for career growth, salary increases in current jobs seen! Income sources rise, however, expenses are high too. Some marital issues may crop up, communicate, listen and resolve amicably. Be sympathetic toward younger siblings. On professional front, no job changes for now. **Precaution:** Work hard on domestic front.

SAGITTARIUS / Dhanush (Fire sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Jupiter Sign – Stars covered Moola, Purva Shada, Uttara Shada (first part) Marital and family atmosphere becomes better. Loss in land deals, property-related tension prevails, especially ancestral property. Much expense on vehicle or electronic appliances is seen. Children's study should be handled properly. On health issues, chance of liver, ear, sinus and allergy problems can erupt. **Precaution:** Be careful in all your dealings.

CAPRICORN / Makara (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Saturn) - (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) Saturn Sign – Stars covered Uttara Shada (last 3 parts) Shravana, Dhanistha (first 2 parts) Month is positive, which may fetch good results in personal matters. Major planets are favorably posited blessing you with divine grace. Venus brings success almost everywhere. Some planets might cause bit of health problems, due medical care is to be taken. Family life and financially, it is a good time. Professionally it is a positive and a good period for a change. Growth in income in near future! Kapha-related issues, sinus congestion, throat, allergies, diabetes may affect some. Be extra careful while driving, do not gamble and work hard. **Precaution:** Take care of health.

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) Saturn along with other major planets is powerfully placed rewarding you with personal and financial success. Expenditures are on the heavier side and cannot be ruled out. Family life is good. Health and happiness is great. Windy (Vaata) and phlegmatic (Kapha) diseases, troubles in the legs, unforeseen dangers, laziness, weakness due to over-exertion, mental affliction and stomach troubles can erupt. **Precaution:** Be careful while planning finances.

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 Your sign lord Jupiter brings the best in everything almost everywhere. Jupiter aspects the house of comfort, bringing handsome gains. It is not a good time to change jobs or expect promotions. Major planets bring bhagya (luck), professional and financial gains on every front. It is a positive month. Positive time for economic and financial growth! Take care of well-being, especially skin problems related to Pitta (boils, ulcers, intestinal problems). **Precaution:** Be careful in your actions.

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



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WORDS MATTER!

By **DILIP PATEL**



U.S. immigration enforcement agencies will no longer use the term "illegal alien" in official communications to refer to immigrants in the country.

Some terminology is on its face offensive and unacceptable. Readers who lived in New Jersey or England in the early 1970s will have bad

memories of terms such as "Dot -Busting" or "Paki-Bashing."

However, some terminology which while acceptable at one time becomes unacceptable because of its use to offend and disparage certain groups. Clear examples are the N-word and the B-word. We need to be extra vigilant about the use of such terminology. The words "alien" and "illegal alien" have long appeared in U.S. immigration laws, but in recent years have been used in a disparaging manner. We therefore welcome the April 19 actions by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to establish updated language practices.

The U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021 proposed by the Biden Administration also contains provisions to eliminate those words from the immigration laws. Until the laws are changed, applicable terms may be used as defined in the Immigration Nationality Act in legal or operational documents, including when completing required forms, particularly where legally required or necessary to ensure the procedural rights of those whom the agencies encounter.

For CBP, Troy Miller, senior official performing the duties of the commissioner, issued a memo dated April 19 establishing guidance on the preferred use of immigration terminology within

the federal government. A similar memo was issued by the acting head of ICE, Tae Johnson. The CBP memo states, "As the nation's premier law enforcement agency, we set a tone and example for our country and partners across the world. The way we communicate and conduct our agency's business must reflect the inherent professionalism of the men and women of CBP. We enforce our nation's laws while also maintaining the dignity of every individual with whom we interact. The words we use matter and will serve to further confer that dignity to those in our custody."

ICE Acting Director Tae Johnson said in an email to employees announcing the change, "In an effort to rebuild public trust and reshape our agency's image, ICE will make efforts to avoid using terminology that might be perceived by others as offensive or otherwise disparaging,"

The memos provide new terminology to use moving forward. "Noncitizen or migrant" instead of "Alien." The words "undocumented noncitizen" or "undocumented individual" can be used instead of "illegal alien."

Words matter, and we need to continue to take steps to make sure our policies and our language reflects recognize the vital role of immigrants and immigration to our families, communities and economy.

Alert: Delays in Issuing USCIS Notices Continues

It is taking significantly longer for USCIS to process applications. Especially impacted are delays in the issuance of receipt notices for Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status; Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Workers; and Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization (EAD), filed with USCIS lockbox facilities. If you filed a concurrent or stand-alone Form I-485 for adjustment of status (AOS) in September, October

or November 2020, you may be experiencing severe delays in receiving a receipt notice.

While some people have received their receipts, it is not unusual to have to wait two-three months at minimum to get receipts.

There are many factors for this backlog, including, but not limited to: Increase in the number of filings in the month of September due to anticipated fee hikes; Unexpected increase in filings due to visa bulletin movement in fall 2020; and COVID-19-related reduction of employees at the USCIS lockbox.

Due to these combined factors, it is taking significantly longer for USCIS to process applications. Although the USCIS website says that the average wait time is 30 days, customers are reporting lengthier delays.

In particular, those who have applied for an AOS along with an EAD or Employment Authorization Document (Form I-765) and an advance parole document (Form I-131) have experienced significant delays not only in receiving proof, but also in the time it has taken for their applications to be processed. Whereas previously, the average processing times varied from ninety days to six months, these cases can now experience delays for as long as eight or nine months. For EAD and/or advance parole delays of six months or longer, it may be helpful to contact USCIS through Emma, USCIS's online virtual assistance; via telephone; or by filing an e-request (all links are at www.uscis.gov). If those actions produce no results and the delays are egregious, you may wish to contact your local congressional representative or senator. Federal litigation is also under way, but no results yet.

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

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