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President's Message

Pedam to all the KOJAIN Community members,

With daylight extending and temperatures rising, spring brings a new sense of excitement and joy.

I sincerely hope that everyone is looking forward to the wonderful season of spring flowers and blooms.

The year 2025 began with a remarkable chance to connect and collaborate with many community members, both from India and here.

During my recent India visit, some of us BOD members had the privilege to meet representatives from various organizations in Mumbai at Matunga Gymkhana. Very thankful to Lax Kenia for helping organize this meetup and fostering meaningful discussions.



I also had the pleasure of connecting with many KOJAIN members along with our past president Vijay Chheda during the stay at Bidada Sarvodaya Trust

Medical camp. It was truly a humbling experience to witness the dedication and selflessness of KOJAIN volunteers who have been tirelessly serving humanity at the camp in Kutch for many years.

With the help of our dedicated community speakers (Bharti Shah (MI), Nimit Maru (NY)), we have been able to host two virtual sessions in the first quarter of 2025. And thanks to technology and support from the community, these sessions are giving us a meaningful way to connect, learn and engage. If you have a suggestion for a topic or would like to be the speaker for a virtual session, please do reach out to us.

The youth retreat planning is in full swing and it is encouraging to see a waitlist in both east coast and west coast retreats. This energy from youth is very exciting and I am glad to connect and build meaningful relationships together. Very grateful to the youth team, helping shape up the future of KOJAIN.

Applications for the much-awaited 2025 high school merit scholarships open on April 1st. Thankful to the scholarship team for providing this wonderful service to the community.

We are looking to add a volunteer to the matrimonial committee. If you would like to make a difference this is an amazing opportunity to give back to the community and help evolve the [Matrimonial Activity](#). Let me know if you can spare some time and help out here.

Lastly, the room details for KOJAIN members' meetup at the 2025 JAINA Convention will be shared as we get closer to the actual date.

Continue sharing your thoughts, reviews, and articles with us at newsletter@kojain.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Bhavini Gada

President | KOJAIN 2024-25

High School Merit Scholarship 2025

A one time KOJAIN Merit Scholarship is awarded to North American High School graduating qualified students, entering college/university to pursue further studies. Up to 3 scholarships of \$1000 will be offered.

KOJAIN is soliciting applications for the 2025 Merit Scholarship. The application submissions dates are from **April 1, 2025 to May 31, 2025.**

Eligibility Criteria and submission requirements for the Scholarship are listed below:

- Applicants will be notified of Judges' decisions by the 1st week of July 2025.
- A list of winners will appear on the KOJAIN website at kojain.com and will be published in the September issue of KOJAIN newsletter.
- The KOJAIN Scholarship program is administered by the scholarship committee appointed by the KOJAIN Board of Directors and is made possible by KOJAIN members' tax-deductible contribution to the KOJAIN scholarship fund.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Graduating High School seniors planning to attend an accredited college or university full time in the fall of 2025.
- Applicant whose parents are **KOJAIN Life Members.**
- Grade point average of at least 3.0 on an unweighted 4.0 scale.

Your application must contain the following:

1. Submit an unofficial 4-year high school transcript, including the 2024-2025 school year. Photocopies are acceptable.
2. Copies of American College Testing (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Testing (SAT), or any other entrance examination scores.
3. List and briefly describe any extracurricular services and activities. Please provide enough information so that the selection committee will understand the nature of your services and activities.
4. Photograph of your face (head and shoulders only) in .jpg format.
5. Essay Requirements & Topics are given below

Essay:

Write a 500 word essay in which you develop your point of view on any one of the topics presented below. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your readings, studies, experiences, or observations.

Essay Topics:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
3. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. Where to send your application:

Upload your documents and essay by using the following Google Forms link:

[2025 Scholarship Application](#)

Be the host city for S sammelan 2026

Step into the spotlight and be the host city for KOJAIN S sammelan 2026. Your enthusiasm and support is crucial in taking KOJAIN legacy forward.

**A stage to bring us together
In your city, new ideas will gather
Connections will flourish, friendships will bloom
Creating a vibrant, lively room
Let's take a step forward, hand in hand
And create new memories, bold and grand !**

Thinking about S sammelan and don't know where to start? Read the handy [S sammelan Planning Guide](#) written by Jayesh Gada (San Jose, CA).

Feel free to reach out to anyone in the BOD team if you have any questions/suggestions.

Upcoming Regional Events

Here is a list of various upcoming regional events. Hope you are able to join one of the upcoming meetups in your area.

- **4th April** San Francisco Bay Area Bandhus Meetup
- **19th April** Southern California Spring Picnic
- **26th April** Atlanta Spring Picnic
- **27th April** Chicagoland Holi Meetup
- **3rd May** San Francisco Bay Area Spring Picnic
- **22nd June** NJ & NY Summer Picnic
- **12th July** Canada Summer Picnic

KOJAIN Mentor Mentee Program (MMP)

❖ Season 1 (2024-2025) Update

Dear Community Members,

Thank you again to each and every one of you who enrolled in the KOJAIN Mentor-Mentee Program. We're excited to share a quick update on our journey so far!

We're thrilled to report that over 115 participants signed up as mentors and mentees for Season 1 of the program. This amazing turnout speaks volumes about the growth mindset, entrepreneurial spirit, and strong support system that runs deep in the Kachchhi community.

What's heartening is that the number of mentors exceeded the number of mentees. It's a true reflection of the generosity and commitment we see from fellow Kachchhis—always ready to guide, mentor, and give back.

We're currently midway through Season 1, and already seeing meaningful connections forming. Some mentor-mentee pairs have met in person, while many others continue to stay connected virtually. The energy, enthusiasm, and learning we're witnessing is inspiring! Earlier this month, we sent out a [survey](#) to all participants to checkpoint and get feedback on how the program is doing. We appreciate all those who have provided their inputs and a reminder to others to provide this valuable feedback.

Looking ahead, we intend to kickoff Season 2 (MMP sign-ups and matches) in the second half of 2025, so stay tuned for more opportunities to engage and grow together.

Thank you once again for being part of this incredible journey. Let's continue to lift each other up and build a stronger future, together.

Warm regards,

Amit Shah, Nilam Maru & Priyank Chheda

KOJAIN MMP Core Team

KOJAIN YOUTH of America

❖ KYA Winter Ski Trip

Ki Ayo! KYA(Kutchi Youth of America) has been very busy with hosting exciting events and planning our upcoming retreats. We can't wait to share our progress and for everything to come together.

Additionally, KYA held its very first Winter Ski Trip on **Saturday, Feb 8, 2025** at Shawnee Ski Resort in Pennsylvania! As a fun way to connect the Kutchi community while enjoying the winter weather, we all gathered for a fun day on the mountain. A huge shoutout to Cavin Gada who helped plan and run this event. Cavin came to us with the idea for a ski trip and he absolutely delivered on the idea.



Finally, our favorite season of all, Retreat Season! We are so proud to announce that both our East Coast and West Coast Retreat are completely sold out with **86** excited attendees. Now our teams are working extra hard to bring their vision to life and create an unforgettable weekend. With that, we are looking to the community for help with making this weekend possible.

The success of all of these events and future events would not be made possible without the hard work of the KYA team! Thank you to everyone who made this a possibility and we can't wait for everything that is yet to come! All of these events are part of our plan to grow this organization and connect Kutchi Youth around the country. If you would like to run an event in your region, or help out with retreats and fundraising please reach out to youthkojain@gmail.com or follow us on instagram [@kutchiyouthofamerica](https://www.instagram.com/kutchiyouthofamerica).



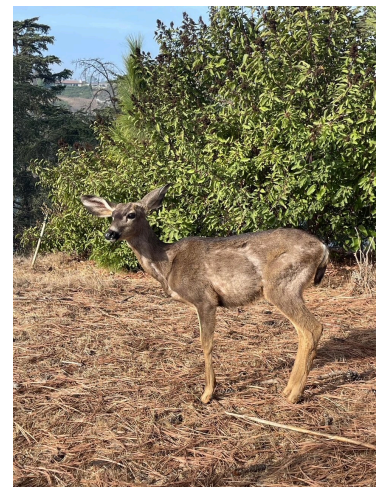
Regional News: Region 1

❖ Ringing down 2024 with a hike around Lake Hollywood

What a perfect way to wrap up the year—hiking with friends and family! 🏞️ Ahaana and Aanya, our youngest hikers, joined in the fun as we spotted majestic deer, admired the iconic Hollywood sign, and soaked up the beauty of nature. 🌿 ✨

We ended the day on a sweet and savory note with jalebi, fafda, and donuts—a delicious way to cap off an incredible adventure. ❤️

Here's to more memorable moments in 2025! 🌄 #HikingLife
#LakeHollywood #FamilyFun #GoodEats



Regional News: Region 2

❖ KutchValley's Winter Walkathon



On **Saturday, February 8th**, KutchValley hosted its annual walkathon at Almaden Lake Park in San Jose. The event brought together around 75 members for a delightful morning stroll around the picturesque 1.2-mile lake loop. Many participants walked 3-5 miles, soaking in the scenic views and embracing the vibrant community spirit.

There was fun in store for everyone! Adults enjoyed lively conversations while catching up with friends, kids had a blast riding their bikes, and toddlers enjoyed the play structure after their stroller adventures.

With perfect weather to compliment the day, the walkathon was a fantastic way to kick off the events of 2025. <https://www.instagram.com/p/DF9GKdT0c0H/>



❖ Volunteering in my hometown Kutch Bidada

Suchi Mehl Poladia (San Jose, CA) got a chance to volunteer for the first time at Bidada Sarvodaya Trust Hospital in Kutch in January 2025 and shares her rewarding experience.

As a volunteer, I had the opportunity to assist in patient care, help identify medical concerns, and see firsthand the impact of free and accessible healthcare in rural Kutch, witnessing the blend of compassion and medicine in the community.

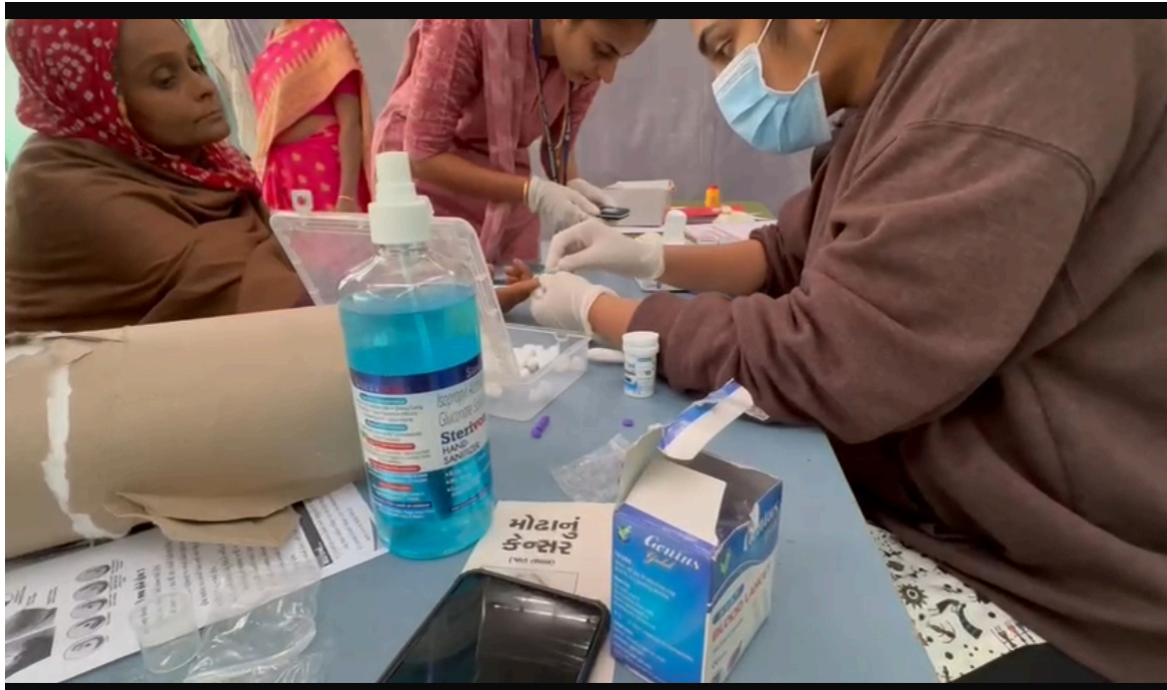
One of the main things I was in charge of was detecting individuals with high blood sugar (glucose) levels, many of whom were unaware of their condition. By identifying these cases early and guiding them to the proper treatments, we were able to teach and prevent potential complications. Working and educating people about their health regarding diabetes and seeing their gratitude reinforced how vital early detection and awareness are, especially in remote communities.

The doctors at the hospital were incredibly supportive and took the time to teach me about patient care. They explained the importance of a structured approach, how to communicate effectively with patients, and the nuances of diagnosing and managing various conditions. Their dedication to serving the underserved was truly inspiring, and I learned not just medical skills but also the human side of healthcare.

However, my time at the camp also exposed me to the heartbreaking realities of chronic illnesses. I saw a father suffering from a severe neurological disorder that had left him unable to speak or eat. His family stood by helplessly, burdened not only by the emotional toll but also the financial strain of long-term care. Cases like his were harsh reminders that while medicine can do a lot, there are still conditions that have no cure.

I truly enjoyed my time volunteering at Bidada Sarvodaya Trust Hospital, helping to serve my Kutchi community.

It was a fulfilling and humbling experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute in whatever way I could.



❖ Glitter-N-Giggle - Sakhi Meetup 2025

On **Friday, March 7th**, over **95 KutchValley Sakhis** came together for an evening filled with **glitz, laughter, and camaraderie** at this year's **Glitter-N-Giggle** event.

Continuing the **KV Sakhi tradition** since **2016**, the annual meetup around International Women's Day was once again a spectacular celebration of joy, friendship, and shared experiences.

The event kicked off with side-splitting comedy acts by the Bay Area's Masala Comedy Club members, setting the perfect tone for an evening of fun. With their sharp wit and relatable humor, the comedians had the audience in stitches and the room filled with laughter.

In anticipation of the meetup, the Sakhis enthusiastically participated in hilarious reels. And a game of scene replays, brought their playful side on stage. As part of the evening's excitement, a raffle giveaway was held, and two lucky winners walked away with free tickets to an upcoming Masala Comedy Club show.

After an evening of giggles and entertainment, it was time to indulge in a delicious dinner spread, where Sakhis bonded over great food and endless conversations. The night wrapped up on a high-energy note with a DJ hour, where everyone hit the dance floor and grooved to their favorite beats, adding a perfect sparkle-filled ending to an already amazing night!

This Glitter-n-Giggle filled evening was made possible by our dedicated KV Sakhi 2025 Event Organizing Team (Bhavini Gada, Dimple Dedhia, Forum Gala, Jinisha Vora). From planning every detail to ensuring everything ran smoothly, their efforts made this event special. Relive the fun! Check out one of the reels from the event here:

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHFnA1VMAG0/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link





Regional News: Region 3

❖ Congratulations to Sukhmani



Heartfelt Congratulations to **Sukhmani**, Daughter of Sheetal Gadda (Carrollton TX, Kutch:Dumra) .

The entire Kutchi community takes immense pride in celebrating the extraordinary success of Miss Sukhmani, who has achieved a remarkable milestone in the field of education in the USA.

With unwavering determination, hard work, and perseverance, Sukhmani has excelled in her academic journey, securing the #1 rank in her class for all four years of high school and earning the prestigious honor of valedictorian.

Her dedication to academics and extracurricular activities has opened doors to incredible opportunities. In 2029, she will be graduating from **Dartmouth**, an Ivy League institution in the USA. This achievement sets the foundation for a promising future.

A Story of Dedication & Perseverance

Success is easy to admire, but behind it lies relentless effort, resilience, and countless sacrifices. Despite the challenges, Sukhmani has demonstrated unwavering determination, proving that with hard work, anything is possible. Beyond academics, she has also showcased her exceptional talents by securing the prestigious title of National Champion in Mock Trial, further solidifying her position as a role model for young students.

Her journey is not just an individual accomplishment but an inspiration for aspiring students, proving that dedication, discipline, and perseverance can turn dreams into reality.

A Proud Moment for the Family & Community

On behalf of the Sheetal Gadda family and the entire Dallas community, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to Sukhmani on this incredible achievement. Well done... You are a great inspiration!

May she continue to reach new heights and inspire future generations with her success!

Regional News: Region 9

❖ Mrs Universe USA Pageantry



Confidence, resilience, and empowerment — these values defined Anushka Chhadva's (**Gaam:Bhachau**) journey to the Mrs. Universe USA 2025 stage, where she proudly earned the title of **Mrs. Universe USA New York 2025** and was named **1st Runner-Up for Mrs. Universe USA 2025**.

Anushka's story proves that women don't have to choose between ambition and self-expression — they can have it all. With a bachelor's degree in computer science and a master's in data analytics, she built a successful career in technology while also pursuing her passion for fashion and pageantry. She uses this platform to empower women and inspire confidence, showing that strength comes in many forms.

During the interview round, Anushka spoke about sustainable fashion and its role in empowering women, helping them express themselves while making mindful choices. In the costume round, she embodied a swan, a symbol of grace and transformation — representing her belief that every woman has the power to evolve, embrace change, and shine.

Through this journey, Anushka has learned the power of kindness, grace, and gratitude — not just in competition, but in life. It has reinforced the importance of lifting others up, embracing every experience with an open heart, and appreciating the support that makes every achievement possible.

Her journey would not have been possible without the unwavering support of her loved ones. She is grateful to her husband, Jainish Shah, and their family, whose encouragement and belief in her made this achievement even more meaningful.

Passionate about giving back, Anushka hopes to help others in the community build confidence and embrace their unique strengths. She welcomes the opportunity to support and uplift anyone on their journey to self-growth.

For those interested in competing in pageantry, Anushka encourages everyone to give it a try — there are no limitations when it comes to confidence and self-expression.

If you are interested and you'd like to learn more, you can reach out to MyDreamTV or contact Anushka (Email: anushkachhadva@gmail.com) directly for a referral.



KOJAIN Matrimonial

If any eligible matrimonial candidate would like to become a member of KOJAIN Matrimonial WhatsApp group, please visit <https://kojain.com/matrimonial/> for signup details.

Hemen Narendra Shah [Visaria]

Age: 29 Years

Height: 5' 8"

City: Atlanta, GA

Brief Intro:

My name is Hemen Shah, I came to the USA from Mumbai, India, when I was 11 years old. I am working as a data engineer in Catalyst Nutraceuticals in Atlanta, GA. I completed my BS in Computer Science from GA Tech Univ, in Atlanta, in 2016. I am a loving, helpful, happy, respectful, caring male and I am an avid reader. I enjoy music, board games and computer games, and I also enjoy hanging out with family & friends. I follow Jain Diet, and am a Non-Smoker, Non-Drinker, No Drugs, No Vices. I love intelligent conversations.

Parents:

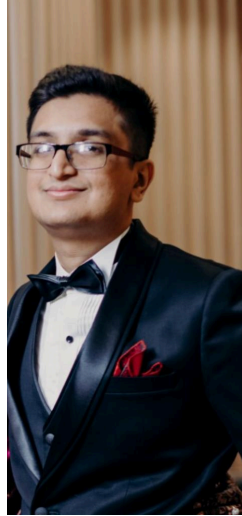
Mr. Narendra Ramjibhai Shah [Visaria]
Dr. Mrs. Trupti Narendra Shah [Visaria]

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<https://www.facebook.com/hemen.shah.12>

Email: NarendraRS@gmail.com



Mayank Rajesh Dand

Age: 27

Height: 5' 9"

City: Toronto / Canada

Education:

B.E (Computer Engineering)

Brief Intro:

I am working as a software developer in Tata Consultancy Services Canada Inc. I am currently in Canada from 2024 on a long-term work permit, planning to get PR soon. My hobbies are Reading, Travelling, Sports (Cricket, Chess).

Parents: Rajesh Chandrakant Dand (Business), Toral Rajesh Dand(Homemaker), Mumbai

Parents' contact: +91 9167791088 / +91 9594445034

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🌸 Spring into action and make the KOJAIN community the best it can be 🌸