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INDIA WEST

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THIS WEEK

Mixed Reaction to Immigration Bill

U.S. Urges India To Cut Duties

Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Karan Bhatia has urged India to cut import duties and other barriers to trade, saying it would help bring the two countries closer.



A2

\$1.2M Award in Virtual Slavery Case



U.S. District Chief Judge Claire Eagan has awarded a group of 52 Indian men more than \$1.2 million after finding an oil equipment manufacturer guilty of fraud, false imprisonment and civil rights violations.

A26

Vastushastra Had Tie Attendees Buzzing

Attendees at the recent conference of The Indus Entrepreneurs were unaware that their movements through the labyrinths at the Santa Clara Convention Center had been choreographed by an architect who used Vastushastra to encourage more interaction.



B1

Festive 'Rock Stars' Show Delights Fans



Salman Khan swaggered his way through "Rock Stars," a thrilling, three-hour Bollywood star show that brought together some of Mumbai's hottest names for a boisterous evening of movie magic May 27 at the Long Beach Arena and May 28 at the Oakland Arena.

C1



At the protest rally, Atashi Chakravarty, executive director of Narika, said the bill would discourage immigrant women who are abused from seeking help from the police. (Viji Sundaram photo)

Green card seekers pleased, others worry about backlog

By VIJI SUNDARAM
India-West Staff Reporter

SAN FRANCISCO – The U.S. Senate's immigration bill, which was approved last week by a 62-36 vote in a rare display of bipartisanship, is strongly favored by groups advocating increased immigration of skilled workers, but it falls short of what's needed to speed up reduction in the backlog of the family preference category visas, other advocates complain.

For the half a million skilled legal immigrants – 42 percent of them from India – waiting for employment-based green cards,

[Cont. on page A29]

Indians Sweep Geography Bee

By RICHARD SPRINGER
India-West Staff Reporter

Three Indian American eighth graders from Illinois, New Hampshire and Georgia swept the top three places in the 2006 National Geographic Bee, held May 24 in Washington, D.C.

After a final hour of nerve-racking competition, 12-year-old Bonny Jain from Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Moline, Ill., scrawled the word "Cambrian" to win a tiebreaker by answering the question: "Name the mountains that extend across much of Wales from the Irish Sea to the Bristol Channel." Jain, who represented his home state for the second year in a row and placed fourth last year, won a \$25,000 scholarship and a lifetime membership in the National Geographic Society, the sponsoring organization.

There were a total of seven Indian American students among 55 finalists representing the 50 states, the District of Co-

lumbia and four U.S. territories. Six of the seven made it into the top 10.

Taking second place and winning a \$15,000 scholarship was Neeraj S. Sirdeshmukh, 14, of Fairgrounds Middle School in Nashua, N.H., who answered "New Zealand" to the question: "Geothermal springs are an attraction near Rotorua in what country?"



Bonny Jain from Moline, Ill., holds up his check of a \$25,000 scholarship for winning the 2006 National Geographic Bee. (National Geographic photo by Gary Krambeck)

The son of Santosh and Shruti Sirdeshmukh, he said if he could be anyone in the world it would be the secretary general of the United Nations.

Capturing third place and a \$10,000 award was Yeshwanth R. Kandimalla, 13, of Simpson Middle School in Marietta, Ga., who was a repeat winner at the state level.

He answered correctly "Christmas Island" to the question: "Name the Australian island territory in the Indian Ocean that was named for the day it was seen in 1643." Kandimalla would like to be a banker one day.

Jeopardy! game show host Alex Trebek presided



Protesters in Delhi burning an effigy of former Prime Minister V.P. Singh. (AFP photo)

Court Demands Rationale For Quotas

From News Dispatches

NEW DELHI — The nation's top court has stepped into the controversy over educational quotas, asking the Indian gov

[Cont. on page A14]

Educator Running For Ariz. Treasurer

By VIJI SUNDARAM
India-West Staff Reporter

With a wide array of political experience under her belt, Rano Singh has announced she will run for Arizona state treasurer.

The 54-year-old Punjab-born Singh, a Democrat, will contest

what is considered the third highest office in the state that is currently being occupied by embattled David Petersen, R-Mesa, who is under criminal investigation. [Cont. on page A30]

Candidate Rano Singh speaking at a fund-raiser in Yuba City, Calif.



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SURENDER K. JINDAL

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