

Expat Telugus seek ambassador Ronen Sen's help

New York: The expatriate Telugu community in America has sought intervention of the Indian Ambassador to the US, Ronen Sen, in bringing to justice those involved in murders of half-a-dozen Andhra students in the United States in the last one year and taking steps to ensure their safety.

In a petition urging the envoy to prevent the current spate of atrocities on Indian students, the Telugu Association of North America (TANA) said: "What bothers us most is the fact that the incidents are forgotten as soon as they are reported."

Observing that with none of the family members of the deceased in the US follow up with the police as they are not here, TANA said the law enforcement agencies and foreign students of universities "tend to grow complacent" in their due diligence in pursuit of the criminals in short period of time.

"There does not seem to be a proper closure for the families either of finding out what actually happened or of seeing the criminals brought to justice and punished," TANA interim president Jayaram Komati wrote on November 10 on behalf of the expatriate Telugu community in the US. "The parents are helpless

because they cannot stay here for long, and in the midst of their grief and agony, they are least likely to be thinking of the criminal justice system in America," she said.

As such TANA has urged the Indian Ambassador to set up an office in the Indian Embassy in Washington and its other consulates in New York, Houston, Chicago and San Francisco, to work with the federal investigative and law enforcement agencies and to ensure that the Indian stu-

dents not only get justice but also those responsible for crime against them are brought to justice.

TANA also urges the Ambassador for creation of a database of Indian students in the US and develop necessary educational and advisory mechanisms to be imparted to all students going overseas.

Finally, TANA urged Sen to set up an emergency team of counselors, who will work with university, local Indian groups as well as with next of kin to

help tackle the issues related to medical, legal, financial, grief counseling and transportation / logistics of sending back the body.

Komati said the association has established "TANA Emergency Assistance Management" to help out Telugu NRIs in case of emergencies.

Aparna Jinaga, 24, was the latest of the Andhra students to be killed by an unidentified assailant in the wee hours of November 1 in her apartment on the outskirts of Seattle. No

arrest has been made so far.

In September Soumya Reddy Tummala, a post-graduate student at Southern Illinois University and her cousin Vikram Kumar Tummala were killed in Chicago.

In March, Dr. Srinivas Akkaladevi, a post-graduate medical student was found murdered in Scranton, Pennsylvania. In December last year, Kirankumar Allam and C. Reddy Komma, both PhD students, were shot dead at Louisiana University.

Youth indicted for drunk driving

Jersey City, NJ: A New Jersey grand jury on November 7 indicted an Indian youth of killing his two roommates in a case of drunk driving in July this year.

If convicted, Kapil Goel, 24, face imprisonment that could last as much as 60 years.

The police said the incident occurred on July 3 when Kapil Goel was drunk and speeding his car with two of his roommates, Amarinder Cheema and Karam Bhandari.

Kapil lost control of his car and crashed into a utility pole in Edison, an Indian-American neighborhood in New Jersey, resulting in the death of both Amarinder and



Wearing handcuffs, Kapil Goel, 24, of Highland Park, is escorted into his arraignment at the Middlesex County Courthouse in New Brunswick.

Karam. Kapil suffered an elbow injury.

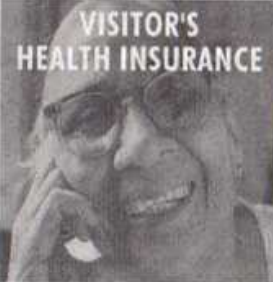
All the three shared an apart-

ment in Highland Park. While Kapil worked on a temporary visa at the time of the accident, Amarinder and Karam were graduate engineering students at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Following investigation, police found that the blood alcohol count of Kapil was 0.164 - more than double the permissible limit.

A Middlesex grand jury on November 7 indicted Kapil on two counts of aggravated manslaughter and vehicular homicide.

Kapil, who worked as an assistant scientist with a biotechnology company, has pleaded not guilty.



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India Tribune - Nov 22, 2008