

## Indian-Americans

NEXT UP



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Internationally known researcher Prakash Nagarkatti, vice I

### Congressman praises IAFC's emerging political voice

By Aziz Haniffa

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IAFC Chairman Dr. Krishna Reddy, President Prasad Thotakura and International Council of Jurists President Adish Aggarwala honor Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) with a plaque during IAFC 20th anniversary celebrations in Washington, D.C., Oct. 31.

WASHINGTON, D.C. | Looking back at the two decades of history behind the Indian American Friendship Council (IAFC), and then looking around at Capitol Hill and various state houses around the U.S., Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) declared at an IAFC

celebration: **‘We’ve come a long way.’**

Created to encourage Indian-Americans to run for office, the IAFC was formed by Dr. Krishna Reddy at a time when there were no Indian-Americans in Congress, said Pallone, the founder and former co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans.

Pallone was speaking at IAFC’s 20th anniversary legislative day and celebration on Capitol Hill, Oct. 31. Pallone represents the Edison district in New Jersey, which has one of the biggest Indian-American populations in the country.

**‘We would have these meetings about improving U.S.-India relations, but one of the goals that we always had was trying to get more Indian-Americans elected, not only to Congress, but to the state legislatures, as governors, and also have them appointed to the Cabinet,’** he said.

**‘So tonight, 20 years later,’** he said, **‘when I am able to be here with members of Indian descent,’** you have to say, Krishna [Reddy], we have come a long way.’ He noted the presence of Democrats in the House of Representatives, including Hawaii’s Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, a practicing Hindu as well as Democratic Sen. Kamala Devi Harris of California. He also noted the presence of Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley **‘the keynote speaker at the IAFC event’** a former governor of South Carolina.

Pallone said this metamorphosis of political involvement and empowerment of the Indian-American community was **‘very important because having Indian-Americans involved in politics, not only in terms of electing politicians, but also in terms of serving. And, the same could be said of India-U.S. relations. They continue to grow regardless of whether it’s a Republican or Democratic president or Republican or Democratic Congress. India’s position in the world and its importance in the world, continues to grow as does the Indian diaspora here in the United States.’**

He said the next important step would be to get India’s status as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. He noted that during Secretary of State Rex Tillerson’s recent visit to India, **‘he was signaling once again that India is one of our most important allies in Asia’** more important than any other country economically, strategically and from a defense point of view.’

He told the more than 300 guests at the reception and dinner that the reason the Indian diaspora continues to grow in its importance is **‘because all of you are involved in business and you create jobs and Indian companies have set up local manufacturing plants and we continue to see that trade between our two countries benefits both countries.’**



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## **Tell-all book by Larry Pressler recounts failed push against Pakistan**

Larry Pressler, the former United States senator whose long service in Congress was dominated by his untiring efforts to curb a nuclear arms race in South Asia, looks back in anger and disillusionment in a new book describing in rich detail how successive administrations in Washington failed to fend off an army of corporate and military lobbyists.

## Red, White and Krishna Blue

After finally putting down my deposit, I could finally tell Naila Aunty that I would be attending Cornell in the Fall. I lapped up the devotion our community lavished on me, especially since it came after my much gossiped-about high school rejection from Brown Hogwarts.

## Fair is not always beautiful

Many of us with a darker skin, growing up in India have faced discrimination and been subject to comments and the advent of Fair & Lovely cream became an epitome of the bane of society.

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