

Doctor Discusses Complications in Health Care Delivery

BY A STAFF WRITER

Dr. Atul Gawande, renowned surgeon and best-selling author, visited Cleveland Clinic, a non-profit academic medical center in Cleveland, OH, on March 22, to join a panel addressing issues such as reducing complications and costs in health care.

Dr. Gawande, a regular contributor to the New Yorker magazine and a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Mass., is best known for his critically acclaimed book "Complications," and the recent best seller "The Checklist Manifesto." The latter outlines simple steps and checks for physicians and hospital staff to ensure safer procedures. His steps have proven to reduce mistakes in surgical and other healthcare delivery.

At Cleveland, he talked about how medicine is growing increasingly complex, and healthcare organizations around the world

are struggling with the challenge.

Gawande said when he looked at other industries such as aviation, to see how they dealt with increasing complexities, he found the answer was – checklists – simple tools designed to catch mistakes before they happen.

He believes this method will reduce cost and will become increasingly important in the new healthcare reform system. He is also one of the influential voices in President Obama's healthcare reform legislation. Born to Indian-Marathi parents who are also both physicians, Dr. Gawande grew up in the Ohio area.

The panel of doctors from Cleveland Clinic included, Dr. Purvi Parikh, an internal medicine resident completing her specialty training in allergy and immunology, Dr. Brian Mandell, a rheumatologist who is also chair of the Education Institute, and Dr. Gavin Falk, a surgical resident at the clinic. Dr. James Young, dean of the medical school and chairman of endocrinology was the moderator.



Renowned surgeon and author Dr. Atul Gawande attends a panel discussion at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH, March 22, to discuss issues of complications and rising health-care costs. Seen in the photo are, from left, New Jersey native Dr. Purvi Parikh, an internal medicine resident completing her training in allergy and immunology, Dr. Brian Mandell, a rheumatologist and chair of the Education Institute, Dr. Gawande, and Dr. Gavin Falk, a surgical resident.

Community Joins Redistricting Effort in New Jersey

BY ELA DUTT

Indian-Americans joined other Asian representatives in the effort to influence redistricting in New Jersey so that the community gets better representation in the Nov. 8 state elections. Among those campaigning for change were Democratic Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula and Hoboken Councilman Ravinder Bhalla, as well as organizations like the South Asian Bar Association of

New Jersey and South Asian American Leading Together.

The redistricting commission consists of five Republicans and five Democrats, and has been holding public meetings over the last few weeks. It is scheduled to submit its report April 3. Over these weeks, minorities like Indian-Americans, Asians, Hispanics and others, have been making their case to the commission that held its final public meeting March 17 at Passaic City Hall.

From Feb. 3, when the U.S. Census released population figures, the New Jersey commission was given 60 days to prepare its report for a new map for the state's 40 legislative districts, a few of which have grown significantly in size. Indian-Americans have a significant presence in a few counties. If the redistricting commission faces a tie, state Supreme Court Justice Stuart Rabner has appointed Rutgers Professor Alan Rosenthal as the 11th member, to break it.

"I submitted a plan to the redistricting commission on behalf of a coalition of Asian-Americans," Bhalla told Desi Talk regarding the March 17 meeting in Passaic.

"It was very well received by the 11 commissioners. They were impressed that at least on that day we were the only ones with a specific plan."

Bhalla and other Asian repre-

sentatives were pitching a plan that includes at least three districts where Asian-Americans would get to have some influence over those running for office even if there were no Asian candidate.

Their plan included districts with a population that was at least 25 percent Asian, Bhalla said. These include Middlesex County, which has the biggest concentration of Indian-Americans in Edison, Piscataway and New Brunswick; Hudson County, where Jersey City has a large concentration; and Bergen County, where Korean-Americans form a significant minority.

Edison has an Indian-American councilmember, Sudhanshu Prasad, a physician, who could not be reached for comment by press time.

According to population figures quoted in media reports, Hispanics make up 18 percent of the population of New Jersey and have only 6 percent of seats in the Legislature; Asians make up 8 percent, but hold just 2 percent of seats, including that of Chivukula, D-Somerset, the only Indian-American there.

All 120 seats in the New Jersey Legislature are up for grabs in November.

The state is likely to lose at least one congressional seat due to changes in population. The redistricting committee for the congressional delegation is expected to submit its report in early 2012.



Dr. Parikh with Dr. Gawande at the March 22 panel discussion at the Cleveland Clinic.

India's Youngest Sarpanch Attends U.N. Summit on Poverty



India's Permanent Representative to the U.N. Hardeep Singh Puri with Chhavi Rajawat India's youngest Sarpanch at the Indian Mission in New York, March 28. Rajawat, who is the head of her village Soda, about 30 miles from Jaipur, Rajasthan, was in New York to attend the 11th Info-Poverty World Conference at the United Nations, March 24-25. The conference highlighted how the civil society can implement its actions and discussed at length the role of society in fighting poverty and promoting development. Rajawat, an alumni of Rishi Valley, Bangalore and Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi, showcased the changing face of rural Rajasthan at the meeting, news reports said. Rajawat, who pursued her business management in marketing and IT from Pune, quit her corporate job to go back to work in her village.

GOPIO, Rotary Set Up Japan Disaster Relief Fund

BY A STAFF WRITER

GOPIO (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin)-GOPIO-Edison and Central Jersey Chapters in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Plainsboro, New Jersey have announced a Japan Disaster Relief Fund at a function held March 22, at the Guru Palace restaurant in North Brunswick, New Jersey.

About 50 people attended the event and some of the members pledged their contributions towards the Japan Disaster Relief, a press release said.

The drive will last until May 31. All funds will be routed through "GOPIO International" which is a 501 (c) (3) non profit entity.

Members were also encouraged to donate their time as volunteers to make phone calls, send emails, organize collection boxes, handle media messages, and collect funds, the release said.

For more information, visit www.GOPIOcentraljersey.org, www.meetup.com/gopio-edison, www.gopio.net or www.plainsbororotary.org

Indian Historian on Book Tour in the U.S.



Historian and author Ramachandra Guha, left, in a conversation with radio and Internet journalist Christopher Lydon at Asia Society in New York, March 25. Guha is in the U.S. on several speaking engagements and to promote of his latest book, "Makers of Modern India." Guha's new book presents 19 personalities who have played a critical role in India's emergence as the world's largest democracy and a rising economic colossus.