

## Glenn Beck Sorry For Offensive Remarks About India

Washington DC: India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) in a statement circulated to the media, accepted the apology issued by Fox News TV Commentator Glenn Beck for his disparaging remarks about India's religious heritage. Beck had made these remarks after watching a video testimonial of Karlyn Zimbelman, an American who underwent a successful hip replacement surgery in India recently. Beck went on to insult the River Ganges, holy to a billion Hindus worldwide.



USINPAC had immediately condemned the remarks by Glenn Beck as offensive and in poor taste and demanded an apology. USINPAC had been overwhelmed by the response to its action alert from Indians and Indian American community. Beck recently addressed the issue and his previous comment that Ganges River "sounds like a disease," and conveyed that he "didn't mean to offend anybody".

USINPAC Chairman, Sanjay Puri said that "Glenn Beck has issued a brief apology about his comments on the Ganges River but his apology does not go far enough in addressing the core issue of his long rant that mocked India, its education and health care system as well as Indian American Physicians in the US who were educated in that medical system. Glenn Beck owes an explanation about his outburst since a lot of his 3 million viewers take his opinions seriously."

Earlier, Puri had said, "I am deeply disappointed at the conduct of Glenn Beck. In trying to get some cheap laughs, Beck has ridiculed India's heritage by low and derogatory comments. His remarks about the River Ganges, an important part of a lot of Indians' spirituality and culture, are especially offensive."

## Headley 'Misrepresented' Personal Info In Visa Application

Chicago: (IANS) Mumbai terror suspect David Coleman Headley seems to have deliberately kept out information that could have raised suspicion while applying for an Indian visa.

"In applying for his visa to travel to India, Headley misrepresented his birth name, father's true name and the purpose for his travel," according to charges filed by US federal prosecutors against him.

This has been independently borne out by the information gathered by IANS. It was learnt that Headley gave his father's name as William S. Headley. He seemed to have misrepresented his birth name in his first visa application made in June 2006 and left it unspecified in the second one in July 2007.

Headley's visa application was supported by a formal letter from Chicago attorney Raymond Sanders, who had also applied for an Indian visa along with Tahawwur Rana and his wife Samraz, privileged sources told IANS. The purpose of the Ranas' visit was given as monitoring the Mumbai office of their immigration business First World Immigration Services. The Mumbai address was given as Office Number 2 & 3, First Floor, Tardeo Air-conditioned Market, Tardeo Road, Mumbai 400034. This office was subsequently raided by the Indian authorities.

Headley changed his birth name Daood Gilani on or about Feb 15, 2006, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania "in order to present himself in India as an American who was neither Muslim nor Pakistani", according to the charges filed by the US attorney's office. Barely four months later, he travelled to



Chicago to lay the groundwork for his first visit to India.

According to the official court documents Headley had obtained the Lashkar-e-Taiyyba's (LeT) approval to open the Mumbai office of First World. A LeT operative, identified by the court documents only as "Individual A", "instructed an employee of First World to prepare documents to support Headley's cover story" and advise him on how to obtain a visa for travel to India.

IANS has also learnt that there was at least one supporting letter in the visa applications that came from the Immigration Law Center, which was a properly registered entity in Cook County since 1995.

On the face of it nothing appeared to be out of the ordinary in the visa applications which may have triggered the Chicago consulate to seek intervention from the home ministry in New Delhi. It is not clear what, if any, official explanation has been asked of Consul-General Ashok Kumar Atri. Other than saying that all procedures were followed in issuing the visas to Headley and Rana, the consulate has refrained from any more detailed comment.

While Headley at least had a past criminal record because of his drug related arrest in February 1997 in New York, Rana had no brush with the law until now. Headley's valid US passport and supporting documents were viewed as enough by the consulate to issue him a visa twice 2006 and 2007. Rana and his wife on the other hand were given a one-year tourist visa in 2008.

## Vikram Buddhi Sentenced To 57 Months In Jail

Chicago: IIT alumnus Vikram Buddhi was recently sentenced to 57 months in prison and three years of supervised release for posting hate messages in 2006 to the then President George W Bush.

Buddhi, who was arrested in 2006, was sentenced by senior Judge James T Moody after being convicted of making threats to Bush, the then Vice President Dick Cheney and their wives, and calling for bombings of US infrastructure.

The 38-year old Phd student of Purdue University, will have to spend an additional three years under "supervised release" under the supervision of a probation officer, the court said.

He can though appeal the sentence in a Chicago court within 10 days of this judgement. Since he has already been in prison since April 2006, the months are likely to be deducted from his sentence term.

Buddhi, who represented himself during the sentence hearing after firing his lawyer, said earlier that he was given the short end of the stick, and claimed the trial had been unfair.

Before the sentencing Buddhi submitted to the judge that he had got "ineffective assistance" of the counsel and said it was the "gravest error of justice".

Buddhi had fired his lawyer Arlington Foley for not discussing the case properly, and said would "involuntarily represent himself" at the hearing.



## Indian American Fails To Get Son's Custody

Hyderabad: (IANS) An Indian American man is making desperate efforts to get custody of his seven-year-old son, who remains untraced even after the Supreme Court ruled that the boy and his mother should go back to the US.

V. Ravichandran, who is currently residing here, fears for the safety of Aditya as his ex-wife Vijayasree Voora is taking him from one city to another.

Ravichandran said at a news conference here that Vijayasree was not only flouting the court order but was even using police in Chennai to threaten him.

It was in October last year that on the directions of the Supreme Court, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) traced Aditya to Chennai and produced him before the court.

The apex court Nov 17 ordered Vijayasree, a Green Card holder, to take Aditya back to the US so that his father gets equal access to him.

Ravichandran, who had been fighting a legal

battle in India for 30 months to get custody of his son, said the two Chennai addresses which his ex-wife had given to the CBI proved fictitious.

He alleged that Vijayasree's father Narayana Voora threatened him at a police station in Chennai in the presence of an assistant commissioner of police and asked him to stop pursuing the custody of Aditya.

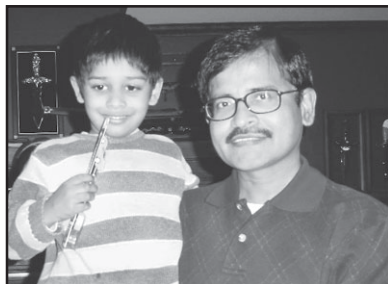
Ravichandran, a pharmaceutical scientist, intends to again move the Supreme Court.

He also appealed to the people to help him trace his son and launched a website [www.rescueaditya.org](http://www.rescueaditya.org).

Ravichandran, also hailing from Chennai, married Vijayasree, a double masters in IT and French, in 2000.

The couple was staying in Dallas. Aditya was born in New York in 2002. However, the couple divorced in 2005 and a US court in April 2007 ruled equal custody of the child. Two months later Vijayasree came to India with Aditya.

Bangalore-based Children's Rights Initiative For Shared Parenting (CRISP) is backing



Ravichandran.

"Vijayasree is taking undue advantage of being a woman and a mother. We are not anti-woman. We are fighting for the rights of children, who should have equal access to their fathers," said CRISP president Kumar V. Jahgirdar.

"At a time when divorce rate is increasing and 30 percent marriages in cities are breaking up

it is time the society realise the importance of father. The father is not only for giving maintenance. He should also have a right to equal custody of the children," said Kumar, who himself fought a long legal battle to get equal access to his daughter from his wife Chetana, who is now married to former Indian cricket captain Anil Kumble.

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