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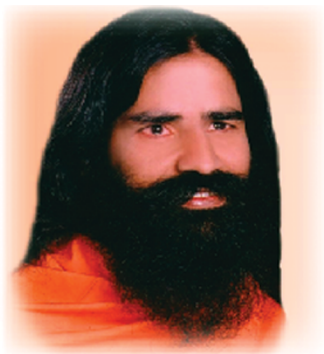


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Rajiv Shah Takes Over As USAID Chief

Washington: (IANS) Indian-American Rajiv Shah has become the head of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), charged with disbursing US foreign aid, making him the highest ranking person of Indian origin in the Obama administration.

"I believe Dr. Raj Shah will be the transformational leader that USAID has been waiting for," said Secretary of State Hillary Clinton swearing in Shah, 36, who worked with the Gates Foundation till 2008.

"It takes an exceptional person to walk into this with his eyes wide open and to embrace the multitude of challenges that we face," she said at the ceremony watched by Shah's wife Shivam, son Sajam and daughter Amna.

With Obama administration making development a key tool of its foreign policy, Shah is expected to play a major role in the agency's mission "to advance America's interests by strengthening our relationships abroad," as President Barack Obama put it announcing his nomination in November.

USAID, formally part of the State Depart-

ment, manages the bulk of US international aid with a budget of some 53.9 billion dollars for 2010, up nine percent over 2009. It has more than 6,800 people working in some 80 countries worldwide.

Describing Shah as a "passionate, visionary, experienced development expert," Clinton said, "he brings determination and an unwavering belief that anything is possible, yet he also brings the humility and quiet confidence instilled by his family."

"One only needs to ask his wife Shivam the lengths to which Raj will go to achieve important goals. After all, this is a man who flew to India for one day to propose to her at the Taj Mahal when she was travelling there alone," Clinton said.



TAMA Elects New Office Bearers

BY RAVI R. PONANGI

Atlanta: Madhu Tata, Ravinder Reddy Allala and Venkat Veeraneni were elected with impressive majority as president, vice president and sec-

legal battle and elections were held on December 6 under court directions. The campaign was vigorous between the two panels, one headed by Madhu Tata and the other by Tanuja Puvvada, outgoing vice president. For the first time elections were tightly contested

— no one was unopposed. Ravinder Reddy and Suneel Katepalli were the only two elected from the panel of Tanuja Puvvada. All other seven members were elected from the Madhu Tata panel.

The campaign stooped to low levels and most of the community members were unhappy about the turn of events. Since TAMA came into

being in 1981, never has an election for office bearers generated so much interest like. But election officers that included Dr. Manga Raju Vanapalli, Ramakanth Rallapalli, Venkat Reddy and Surrender Mutyala conducted the election process smoothly without giving scope to any complaint from both the panels. It was a relief to the Telugu community here.

Tata, newly-elected TAMA president, in the presence of other winners, told this reporter: "It is incumbent upon us to protect the 30-year legacy of TAMA and Telugu community. As president of TAMA, I will work with the executive committee to instil firm commitment and accountability towards all members."



retary respectively in a tightly contested election for the Telugu Association of Metro Atlanta (TAMA) for 2010.

The other members elected were Aluwal Reddy Seelam (treasurer), Mahesh M. Pawar (cultural coordinator), Sunil Katepalli (education coordinator), Sandhya Yellapragada (literary coordinator), Suresh Babu Peddi (media coordinator), and Vara prasad Yadana (technology coordinator).

This was the first time in the history of TAMA that all the incumbent contesting office bearers lost. There were allegations of mismanagement of membership, ethical improprieties, etc. against them. TAMA was even dragged into a



Christmas celebrations at the First Asian Indian Baptist Church. Full report on Pg 7.

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