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Swine Flu Claims Atlanta Resident Visiting Gujarat

Atlanta: Pravin Patel, a 43-year-old Atlanta resident who was visiting relatives in Ahmedabad, succumbed to Influenza A (H1N1) in August, becoming Gujarat's first, and India's fourth swine flu victim, according to reports. Patel's wife Naina, who was also diagnosed as H1N1 positive, was hospitalized soon after at the Civil Hospital there. Her condition was reported to be stable.

"Pravin Patel was brought with a very heavy higher respiratory tract infection to the Civil Hospital and was under ventilation between Aug 5 and Aug 7. He was taken off the ventilator for a few hours on Aug 8 as his condition improved. He was put back on ventilation Saturday night as his condition again started deteriorating," a senior resident of the government civil hospital said.

Gujarat Health Minister Jaynarayan Vyas told IANS: "This is the first swine flu death in Ahmedabad. The patient had earlier complications as well - he had viral pneumonia, which is very difficult to treat, his haemoglobin was low. All

these outer problems added to the complications of swine flu and he passed away."

The Patels owned a store in Atlanta. Pravin Patel reportedly landed in Ahmedabad on July 31 along with his wife. His three children, who are 11, 14 and 16 years old, were in Atlanta with his mother when they heard about the tragic news. According to reports, Patel has another brother, Shailesh Patel, who also owns a store in Atlanta.

After arriving in Ahmedabad, Patel complained of fever and cough. He was taken to a physician, who gave him medicines for three days.

Patel's elder brother Dashrath, said that a more intensive screening at the airport could have prevented his death. "He was having slight fever and cough and cold when he arrived from the US. Had the medical team screening patients at the airport been more careful to spot the symptoms, they could have warned him of swine flu and advised him to go for special medical care. My brother would have been alive had there been more vigilant action at the airport," he said. The visiting couple was staying with Dashrath at his Ranip residence in Ahmedabad.



Anand Jon Gets 59 Years

Los Angeles: (IANS) Indian-born fashion designer Anand Jon, convicted of sexually assaulting several girls and young women, has been sentenced to 59 years in prison by a Los Angeles court.

The designer, who appeared on the reality television show "America's Next Top Model", was Nov 16 convicted of 16 charges, including rape and sexual assault. According to prosecutors, he enticed the girls, mostly aspiring models, with the promise of modeling jobs and forced them into sex, the Los Angeles Times reported.

The sentence came two weeks after the designer's sister Sanjana Jon pleaded with the Indian government to extradite her brother for a fair trial because "being an Indian in the US, I know we won't get justice".

Jon, who dressed celebrities like Janet Jackson and Paris Hilton, was arrested in the US in 2007 on charges of raping more than a dozen models. He has been in jail for the last 30 months.

Jon, acting as his own attorney, presented a lengthy argument in the court and urged a new trial, citing the inadequate defence by his former attorneys.

However, Judge David Wesley denied his motion and handed down the the maximum sentence for all but two of those counts, saying he showed no remorse for his actions and posed a danger to other young women.

Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Sanjana Jon said: "We have been subjected to racism. Even mass murderers are not treated that way, the way Anand is treated in jail."

"All I want is that the government should intervene and do something to save my brother who has been suffering due to racism and indiscrimination towards Indians," said Sanjana.

"I am here not only as Anand's sister but as an Indian who is suffering because we are just guilty by color. Anand deserves a fair trial and the only way to get that is by extraditing him back to India," she maintained.



IACA Festival of India Draws Huge Crowds



A little girl waves the tri-color as her grand parents dotingly look on, during the Festival of India held at the Gwinnett Civic Center on August 15th. Photo by Gita Kotecha. Report on Pg 4

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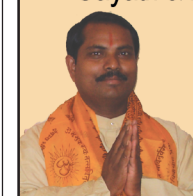


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