

New professorship in Jain studies established at UT-Austin

New York: A \$1 million gift from a few donors in North America established a new professorship in Jain studies at the University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin). The Tirthankar Sumatinath Distinguished Professorship in Jain Studies is the 24th endowed professorship created by JAINA's Academic Liaison Committee (ALC) and will be housed within the university's Department of Asian Studies.

The announcement was celebrated at an event on July 19 at the Jain Vishwa Bharati (JVB) Center in Houston. The gathering included six UT-Austin faculty members, along with nearly 100 members of the Jain community, donors, diplomats, and civic officials from across Texas and the United States. The ceremony began with a recitation of the Navkar Mahamantra, the central prayer of Jainism, by four Jain nuns. Dr Swatantra Jain, Chairman of JVB, recognized the major donors whose collective contributions made the professorship possible.

This professorship is particularly significant as it completes a lineage



Prominent members of the Jain community, donors, diplomats, and civic officials from across Texas and the US attended the event. (Photo courtesy: Sulekh C Jain)

of 24 endowed positions established by the ALC, mirroring the 24 Tirthankaras, or spiritual teachers, of Jainism. The ALC's founder, Dr Sulekh C Jain, highlighted the growing global interest in Jainism and its core values, such as Ahimsa (non-violence), Anekantavada (tolerance for multiple perspectives), and Aparigraha (non-possessiveness and sustainable living). These principles have influenced historical figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr Jain noted that the first endowed professorship in Jain stud-

ies was established in 2010 at Florida International University. Since then, Jain studies programs have expanded to 55 universities in 13 countries. In 2025 alone, the ALC has funded new programs at the Claremont School of Theology, the Arihanta Institute, and the University of Arizona, as well as new PhD research and a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Oxford.

The new professorship at UT-Austin will be overseen by Professor Donald R Davis, who chairs the Department of Religious

Studies. The position will facilitate year-round courses and research opportunities, offering students and scholars the chance to study Jain philosophy and its practical applications. The curriculum will cover topics like ethics, non-violence, environmentalism, peace studies, and sustainable development.

Speaking at the event, UT-Austin faculty members, including College of Arts Dean David Sosa and Professor Akbar Hyder, praised the philanthropic gift. They emphasized that the professorship will support a variety of learning methods, from academic studies to field visits and seminars, to prepare students for real-world leadership roles. They also noted the university's plans to extend the program's outreach beyond the campus to local high schools, junior colleges, and the interfaith community.

DC Manjunatha, the Honorable Consul-General of India in Houston, congratulated the initiative, sharing how he was personally influenced by ancient Jain sages. He also cited Indian Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's recent call to action on Navkar Mahamantra Divas, urging people to follow Jain teachings for a more sustainable life.

Dr Jasvant Modi, a major benefactor and President of the Vardhaman Charitable Foundation, reflected on the evolution of the Jain community in the diaspora. He explained that early settlers focused on building temples, but the focus has now shifted toward creating knowledge centers. This new professorship, he stated, is an investment in peace and a way to nurture compassionate global citizens for future generations.

Dr Manish Mehta, Vice-Chair of the ALC, added that studying Jain philosophy provides a science-based understanding of ethical living.

He believes this ancient wisdom, which dates back 5,000 years, can help modern students navigate the balance between development and environmental stewardship. The philosophy encourages a deep respect for all life and an appreciation for the interconnectedness of all living beings.

Google TV's Shobana Radhakrishnan wins Hedy Lamarr award for innovation in Entertainment Technology

New York: Shobana Radhakrishnan, Google TV's Senior Director of Engineering has won the Digital Entertainment Group's (DEG) 2025 Hedy Lamarr Award for Innovation in Entertainment Technology.

In its ninth year, the Hedy Lamarr Award recognizes female executives in the fields of entertainment and technology who have made a significant contribution to the industry.

Radhakrishnan will be presented DEG's 2025 Hedy Lamarr Award at a ceremony in Los Angeles in fall, according to a media release.

Over a career spanning more than two



Shobana Radhakrishnan (Photo courtesy: www.shanthamohan.com)

decades, Radhakrishnan has been a technology visionary bringing AI-based innovation to many products.

As the head of engineering at Google TV, she launched the first AI-driven innovation for TV OS in the history of Google, ushering in a new era of innovation with Gemini and AI on TV and setting a high standard for personalized recommendations for the entire industry with a multiplatform

and multimodal vision. Prior to Google, Radhakrishnan held various technical leadership roles at Roku, Mindflash Technologies, Yahoo and Netflix.

Procter & Gamble appoints Shailesh Jejurikar as next CEO

New York: American FMCG major Procter & Gamble Company has named India-born Shailesh Jejurikar as its next Chief Executive Officer, who will lead the consumer goods multinational from January 1, 2026.

Jejurikar (58), who joined Procter & Gamble (P&G) as an assistant brand manager in 1989, will replace Jon Moeller as part of a top leadership transition, according to a statement from the Cincinnati, Ohio-based company.

He is serving as Chief Operating Officer of P&G for over last six years and is also a board member of vertical transportation systems maker Otis Elevator Co.

"Shailesh Jejurikar...will succeed Jon Moeller as Procter & Gamble's President and Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1, 2026. The Board has also nominated



Shailesh Jejurikar joins the highprofile league of Indian American CEOs (Photo courtesy: www.pginvestor.com)

Jejurikar to stand for election as a Director at the annual shareholder meeting in October 2025," a statement from P&G said.

He helped build several of P&G's core businesses, including global Fabric Care and Home Care in regions including North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America. He has also helped lead the development of the company's renewed strategies and operational results in the Supply Chain, Information Technology and Global

Business Services. P&G is a leading FMCG company in India market also, operating with brands including, Ariel, Tide, Whisper, Olay, Gillette, Ambipur, Pampers, Pantene, Oral-B, Head & Shoulders and Vicks.

Jejurikar, an alumnus of IIM Lucknow, is the latest to join an elite league of India-born C-suite executives at global giants.

Saikat Chakrabarti to challenge Nancy Pelosi in SFO race

New York: Saikat Chakrabarti, an Indian-origin progressive left-wing activist, has announced his ambition to run against 84-year-old House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi to represent San Francisco in the US Congress.

The progressive activist has set his sights on unseating Pelosi, who is seeking her 21st term in Congress.

Chakrabarti, former chief of staff to Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, made the announcement on the social media platform X.

"I've decided to run against Nancy Pelosi to represent San Francisco in Congress. I know some of you might be surprised that Speaker Emeritus Pelosi is running again, but she is — for her 21st term," 39-year-old Chakrabarti said.

"Watching Trump and Elon freely unleash chaos in their illegal seizure of government, it's become clear to me that the Democratic Party needs new leadership. I don't understand how DC's Democratic leaders are so paralyzed and



Saikat Chakrabarti (Photo courtesy: www.saikatforcongress.com)

unprepared for this moment after living through President Trump's first term - and after Trump and Elon warned us exactly what they planned to do," he added.

For his congressional campaign, Chakrabarti said he will adopt a different approach that will be voter-driven rather than donation-driven.

"Now, I want to bring those solutions to Congress. I'm going to run a very different kind of campaign than most. Instead of spending hours each day doing 'call time'

with big money donors — I'm going to spend every day talking with voters. I know! What a radical idea," he added.

Saikat Chakrabarti hails from Texas. He is a political advisor, left-wing activist and a Harvard-qualified software engineer.

His political career started in 2016 when he became part of Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign.

Later, he helped launch Ocasio-Cortez's successful 2018 congressional campaign.