

'Politics And Spice' Podcast In N.J. Highlights South Asian Success

By A Staff Writer

-JERSEY CITY, NJ

The New Jersey Leadership Program (NJLP), a non-profit focused on promoting South Asian American youth participation and education at the local level, announced on May 17, the official launch of its podcast called "Politics and Spice." The podcast plans to highlight the achievements of South Asians around the United States in various fields of endeavor.

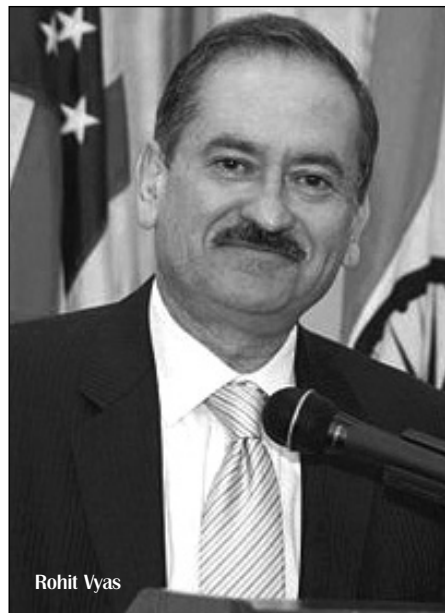
"There's nothing like this podcast in New Jersey," Amit Jani, president of NJLP, told Desi Talk.

"Through the Politics and Spice podcast, we hope to highlight the amazing successes and contributions of South Asians in their respective professions," Jani said in a press release. "Hopefully this will also show South Asian youth that they can also take part in generally underrepresent-



Vikrum Aiyer

ed professions within the community such as politics, government and media, as well



Rohit Vyas

as other sectors." Current guests on the podcast have

included elected officials including Congressman Frank Pallone, D-N.J.; Edison Councilwoman Sapana Shah, Chief Policy Advisor to Vice President Dick Cheney and Founder of the Daily Cally Neil Patel, Senior Advisor to President Barack Obama Vikrum Aiyer, and TV Asia News Director Rohit Vyas.

The podcast runs every other Monday on a bi-monthly basis. Politics and Spice can be found on all major podcast providers including iTunes, Google Play, Stitcher, and more, according to the press release.

The NJLP also has a fellowship program which it says, focuses on developing leadership skills, building public policy knowledge, and filling the pipeline for South Asian Americans to work in government or pursue public office at the local, state, and federal levels.

Asian-American Heritage Festival Attracts Thousands To Celebrate Diverse Cultures

By A Staff Writer

Close to 5,000 people gathered at the New Jersey Expo and Convention Center in Edison to celebrate the Asian American Heritage Festival on May 21. The "Lifestyle" festival brought diverse cultures and traditions of Asians under one roof and covered all aspects of the life of a typical Asian American family.

The show kicked off with stirring vocal and dance performances and an assortment of performances by children from the top dance academies in the area. There were classical Indian dance performances, elegant and graceful Chinese dances, electrifying Bollywood dance sequences and several fusion dances. In the evening, there were more Indian, Korean, Chinese and Japanese vocal and dance performances.

One of the highlights of the festival was guest of honor Tapsee Pannu, a Bollywood star, and a symbol of women's empowerment embodied in the roles she chooses to play in movies.

Pannu, looking resplendent in Indian dress, interacted with the audience, winning them over with her combination of

intellect, humor and humility. She danced to the tunes of some of her famous Bollywood numbers and thanked sponsors and the audience for their heartfelt response. The celebrity segment was capped off with photo opportunities with Pannu in a celebrity booth that was designed like an Indian wedding stage.

Corporate sponsors, vendors, media organizations, community organizations, dance academies and others collaborated to make the event a success. Some of the prominent sponsors included AARP, Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, United Healthcare, Wells Fargo, Asian Real Estate Association of America, New York Life, Mass Mutual, Princeton Healthcare System, New Millennium Bank, National MI, Guaranteed Rate, KWIK Mortgage and Cathay Bank.

"We wanted the Asian American community in the Tri-state area to experience an event that they would remember for a long time to come, in terms of quality, experience and style. And we were able to do exactly that," Mamta Narula, the CEO of Ultimate Media, the main organizer of the event, is quoted saying in a press release.

From left to right actress Tapsee Pannu receiving a plaque from event organizer Mamta Narula.

