

Welcome to the latest issue of our quarterly newsletter the **Hyderabad Herald**, a publication intended solely for the American citizens residing in or visiting our consular district which includes the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha. We hope you find this informative and encourage you to send us your feedback. We also encourage you to submit items of general interest to our community.

While we can't accept advertising, we welcome other pieces of interest including events, meetings, or other activities. We also welcome your questions or suggestions on consular themes you would like us to address. To submit any contributions or to add or remove your name from our mailing list, just drop us an e-mail at: HydACS@state.gov and include "Herald" in the subject line.



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Your Little Piece of India:

Owning Property outside the U.S.

Owning property in a foreign country can be the realization of a dream for some, an excellent investment for others. But property laws in foreign countries can be different and difficult to understand. Even in the U.S., property ownership comes with its own challenges.

In some cases, U.S. Citizens who own a home or land in India report that they are the victim of threats or pressure from local nationals who want them to sell or flat-out hand over their deeds. This is an unfortunate situation, but you can reduce your risk by taking precautions.

1. Do your homework. Ensure there are no other legal claims on the property and if you are able, visit the property before you make a purchase.
3. Find a local lawyer. Having someone who understands local laws and regulations is important. The U.S. Consulate General provides a list of Indian attorneys on our [website](#) who have offered their services to American citizens. Please note that the U.S. Consulate does not endorse any specific practitioner and cannot vouch for the quality of their services.

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Midterms elections are right around the corner! If you have not yet registered to vote or requested your absentee ballot, do so as soon as possible!

If you have never voted from outside of the United States before, you can do it in three easy steps:

1. **Register or re-register to vote and request a ballot** - Go to [FVAP.gov](https://www.fvap.gov) to complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which allows you to register to vote and request your absentee ballot at the same time.
 - You will need access to a printer as you must print, sign and date the FPCA.
 - The quickest way to receive your ballot is to choose an electronic option. Depending on the state, this may be by email, fax, or online download.
 - Include your email address so that election officials can contact you quickly if needed.

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Labor Day, an annual celebration of workers and their achievements, originated during one of the most dismal chapters in America's labor history.

In the late 1800s, at the height of the Industrial Revolution in the United States, the average American worked 12-hour days and seven-day weeks in order to eke out a basic living. Despite restrictions in some states, children as young as 5 or 6 toiled in mills, factories and mines across the country, earning a fraction of their adult counterparts' wages.

People of all ages, particularly the very poor and recent immigrants, often faced extremely unsafe working conditions with insufficient access to fresh air, sanitary facilities and breaks.

As manufacturing increasingly supplanted agriculture as the wellspring of American employment, labor unions, which had first appeared in the late 18th century, grew more prominent and vocal. They began organizing strikes and rallies to protest poor conditions and compel employers to renegotiate hours and pay.

Many of these events turned violent during this period, including the infamous Haymarket Riot of 1886, in which several Chicago policemen and workers were killed. Others gave rise to longstanding traditions: On September 5, 1882, 10,000 workers took unpaid time off to march from City Hall to Union Square in New York City, holding the first Labor Day parade in U.S. history.

The idea of a "workingmen's holiday," celebrated on the first Monday in September, caught on in other industrial centers across the country, and many states passed legislation recognizing it. Congress would not formalize the holiday until 12 years later, when a watershed moment in American labor history brought workers' rights squarely into the public's view. In 1894, employees of the Pullman Palace Car Company in Chicago went on strike to protest wage cuts and the firing of union representatives. To break the strike, the federal government dispatched troops, unleashing a wave of riots that resulted in the deaths of more than a dozen workers.

In the wake of this massive unrest and in an attempt to repair ties with American workers, Congress passed an act making Labor Day a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories. On June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed it into law.

Labor Day is also considered the unofficial end of summer because it marks the end of the cultural summer season when public swimming pools close, many school districts resume classes, and fall sports begin. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) teams usually play their first games that Labor Day weekend, the NFL season starts the following Thursday, and it marks the middle point between weeks one and two of the U.S. Open Tennis Championships.



Ask the Consul

In each newsletter, we will attempt to answer a question commonly asked by citizens living in our district. If you have a one you would like to submit, please send it to HydACS@state.gov with the subject line "ask the consul."

Q1: I'm traveling to California to visit my son. He misses my home cooking and has asked me to bring him several jars of my mango pickle. Can I do this?

A1: To protect U.S. agriculture, bringing food products into the U.S. is carefully regulated. Many everyday food items are not allowed into the United States and those that are allowed must be declared on the customs form you fill out at the Port of Entry. Failure to declare will result in a fine and may have further legal consequences. By declaring all possible items of concern, you will avoid the fine and the worst that might happen is that you have to surrender the product at the border.

The list of allowed and prohibited items changes frequently. For current guidelines, visit <https://www.dontpackapest.com/>

Q2: We have an early morning appointment to renew our child's passport while visiting family in Hyderabad and will be coming to the Consulate directly from the airport. Can we bring our suitcases with us?

A2: According to current security regulations, large shoulder bags/purses, travel bags, backpacks, briefcases or suitcases are not permitted inside the Consulate. Only bags that can be carried by hand will be permitted, e.g. unsealed plastic bags containing application-related papers, small cloth bags and zip folders.

Your Little Piece of India: Contd.

3. Have someone on the ground. It may be useful to give a Power of Attorney to a trusted family member, friend, or contact living in the area to help better manage a property while you are in the United States. That said, it is very important to review the power of attorney to determine what powers your representative has. You should also ensure the person is dependable and trustworthy as you may be legally bound by their decisions. You can decide which powers they have and limit the time during which they can serve as your representative. Again, consultation with a local attorney can be helpful.
4. In case of difficulties, go to the police. The U.S. Consulate General has no legal or law enforcement authority in India. We are unable to get involved in disputes between individuals or private companies. If you feel threatened or find yourself in a dangerous situation, *please* speak to the local police. Some Indian states have a dedicated Non-Resident Indian (NRI) cell to help with property disputes. Knowing about resources like these in advance will help you know what to do if the worst happens.



Again, many U.S. citizens maintain a residence or own property in India. It is important to understand both the local laws and the local customs surrounding property ownership and make sure you have a good and reliable team in India to avoid potential pitfalls. The U.S. Consulate General Hyderabad can offer you information resources, but we cannot directly assist with disputes.

Consulate Exchange Rate

Please note that on July 26, 2022, the Consulate's official rate of exchange rose to ₹82/\$1.



The U.S. Consulate in Hyderabad regularly monitors the U.S. Dollar to Indian Rupee exchange rate and future adjustments may be necessary. Please check our website before paying for services in Rupees to ensure you have the correct amount.

Relocating to the U.S. with Your Pet



Traveling with a pet can be stressful and present challenges. Some preparation in advance can help the journey go smoothly. The most up-to-date information on regulations for different types of animals can be found at:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/bring-pet-into-the-united-states>

To prevent the spread of rabies, **dogs** traveling to the U.S. require special treatment if they are coming from a country the Centers for Disease Control consider high-risk. **India is considered a high-risk country for rabies.** Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/high-risk-dog-ban-fn.html> to view the regulations and to apply for a permit as necessary.

Useful Websites

Indian Government

- Foreigner Regional Registration Office (FRRO): <https://indianfrro.gov.in/eservices/home.jsp>
- Bureau of Immigration: <https://boi.gov.in/>
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: <https://main.mohfw.gov.in>



US Government

- Embassy website: <http://www.in.usembassy.gov>
- U.S. Citizen Services: <https://in.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/>
- U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov>
- Travel information: <http://www.travel.state.gov/>
- Ordering vital records: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>
- Voting information: www.fvap.gov



Upcoming Holidays

Please note that the Consulate will be closed on the following days:

2022

- 15 August:
Independence Day (India)
- 31 August:
Vinayaka Chavithi (India)
- 05 September:
Labor Day (US)
- 03 October:
Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday (India)
- 05 October: Vijaya Dashami (India)
- 10 October:
Columbus/
Indigenous Peoples' Day (US)
- 25 October: Diwali (India)

Divorce in and outside the U.S.



An order of divorce is usually, but not always, issued by a court. In many countries, it is typical, and sometimes required, that a divorce order resolves all issues arising out of the marriage, including custody of minor children, financial support, and the division of property.

Will my U.S. divorce be recognized overseas?

Based on reciprocity, a judgment of divorce from a state court in the United States is generally recognized in a foreign country that has a secular legal system. You may wish to consult an attorney in the foreign country to determine if your U.S. divorce decree would be recognized there. Most U.S. embassies and consulates have lists of lawyers on their websites that you may use as a resource to locate a lawyer in that country.

Will a foreign divorce be recognized in the United States?

- A foreign judgment of divorce generally is recognized in a state in the United States on the basis of legal reciprocity where both parties had notice of the divorce proceeding and an opportunity to be heard within these proceedings. Marriage and divorce generally are considered matters reserved to the states rather than to the federal government.
- Specific questions regarding the validity of foreign divorces in particular states in the United States should be referred to the office of the Attorney General of the state in question. It may be necessary to retain the services of a private attorney if the office of the state Attorney General does not provide such assistance to private citizens.

For further legal information about recognition of a divorce obtained abroad, go to the Department of State website at [Divorce Abroad - Legal Issues](#).

Mid-term Elections Cont.



2. Receive and complete your ballot -

Depending on which state you are eligible to vote in, you might get your ballot electronically by email, fax, or online download.

Ballots are typically sent 45 days ahead of federal and midterm elections, and 30 days before primary, special and run-off elections for federal offices.

If you have not received your ballot by early October, [request a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot \(FWAB\)](#).

3. Return your ballot - Follow the instructions to submit your ballot as soon as you can. If your state allows you to cast your ballot electronically, we recommend that you do so. If you cannot cast your ballot electronically, you can:

- Mail your ballot directly to the local election officials in your state using the Indian postal system.
- Mail your ballot directly to the local election officials in your state using a private courier service. This is secure and faster option, but more expensive.
- Mail your ballot to the Consulate or use our "Ballot Drop Box" located at the main gate. Your ballot will be sent to the U.S. via the diplomatic pouch, sorted, and then sent to the USPS for delivery. This is a free service, but it is important to note the process takes approximately four weeks. Be sure to place your ballot in either a [postage paid envelope](#) or an envelope addressed to your state's election officials with U.S. stamps sufficient for delivery.