

IN THE MATTER OF THE	*	BEFORE THE ALCOHOLIC
APPLICATION OF VENKATA	*	
KRISHNA KUKATLA, JAY PARIMAL	*	BEVERAGE HEARING BOARD
GANDHI AND MUKESH BHIKHUBHAI	*	
PANCHAL ON BEHALF OF BANDH	*	FOR
DARWAZA, LLC T/A BANDH	*	
DARWAZA FOR A NEW CLASS D	*	HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND
BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR 7-DAY	*	
ON SALE LICENSE	*	Case No.: 26-11
	*	

DECISION AND ORDER

The Board of License Commissioners for Howard County, Maryland (the “Liquor Board”), pursuant to Rule 1.02(A) of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations, has delegated the authority to hear and decide cases to the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board for Howard County, Maryland (the “Hearing Board”).

On May 12, 2026, the Hearing Board heard the application of Venkata Krishna Kukatla, Jay Parimal Gandhi and Mukesh Bhikhubhai Panchal (the “Applicants”), on behalf of Bandh Darwaza, LLC t/a Bandh Darwaza (“Bandh Darwaza”), for a new Class D Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on-sale License for a 1,463 sq. ft. tavern located at 6000 Merriweather Drive, Suite B-135, Columbia, MD 21044.

The hearing was properly advertised, and the property posted pursuant to the Alcoholic Beverages Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Mr. Martin Johnson was hired as a consultant for the Applicants and there were no protestants who appeared in opposition to the application.

All the documents on file were incorporated into the record by reference.

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

Martin Johnson, consultant for the Applicants, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Johnson testified as to the location and pictures of the restaurant. Mr. Johnson stated that Mr. Panchal is an applicant in order to fulfill the requirement that a United States citizen be a licenseholder.

Jay Parimal Gandhi, 50% interest holder and proposed licensee, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Gandhi testified that he lives in Maryland, that he is not yet a United States citizen, and that he has his Employment Authorization Document. Mr. Gandhi stated that he is a co-founder of the business and that the restaurant concept is an Indian speakeasy offering unique cocktail ingredients with health benefits. Mr. Gandhi stated that he plans to have 15 tables with seating for 48 customers, a bar with 8 seats, and that there will be no outdoor seating. Mr. Gandhi stated that a host will seat customers, that the food will complement the drinks, and that more than half of the company's income will be from the sale of alcohol. Mr. Gandhi stated that he has never held a liquor license before, and that he will work 40 hours a week at the restaurant. Mr. Gandhi stated that the hours of operation will be Sunday through Thursday from 4:30 p.m. until 11 p.m. and on Friday and Saturday from 4:30 p.m. until midnight. Mr. Gandhi stated that he will share responsibilities with the other licensees and that alcohol will be stored in the bar area and in the kitchen. Mr. Gandhi stated that he and his business partners are all Alcohol Awareness Certified and that he is familiar with the Howard County Liquor Board Rules and Regulations. Mr. Gandhi stated that patrons will be carded when checking in with the host and that they will card anyone appearing under the age of 30. Mr. Gandhi stated that vertical driver's licenses will not be accepted

and that there will be an ID checking guide at the business. Mr. Gandhi stated that he will not serve anyone appearing intoxicated. Mr. Gandhi stated that they will have 13 employees, that 6 will be involved in alcohol service and that everyone will be Alcohol Awareness Certified. Mr. Gandhi stated that all food will be dine-in only, that no construction permits have been issued, and that he plans to open in August. Mr. Gandhi stated that all licensees will work full-time at the restaurant and that they plan to support the community. Mr. Gandhi stated that they also plan to serve brunch and that the hours of operation will eventually change to accommodate daytime service.

Venkata Krishna Kukatla, 50% interest holder and proposed resident agent, was sworn in and testified before the Hearing Board.

Mr. Kukatla stated that they monitor the quantity of alcohol in liquor bottles so that they are able to correlate the inventory correctly with their invoices.

Pursuant to Rule 6.13 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations, the Applicants waived their right to request the Liquor Board to hear the case.

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Hearing Board finds that Venkata Krishna Kukatla, Jay Parimal Gandhi and Mukesh Bhikhubhai Panchal (the “Applicants”), on behalf of Bandh Darwaza, LLC t/a Bandh Darwaza (“Bandh Darwaza”), have applied for a new Class D Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on-sale License for a 1,463 sq. ft. tavern located at 6000 Merriweather Drive, Suite B-135, Columbia, MD 21044.

2. The Hearing Board finds that the Applicants are fit and proper persons to hold an alcoholic beverage license.

3. The Hearing Board finds that Venkata Krishna Kukatla, the resident agent applicant, meets the requirements of Rules 1.10(S), 1.10(T), and 2.06 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations concerning resident agent qualifications.

4. The Hearing Board finds that the granting of the application is necessary for the accommodation of the public.

5. The Hearing Board finds that the granting of the application will not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the residents of the neighborhood.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Hearing Board concludes that Venkata Krishna Kukatla, Jay Parimal Gandhi and Mukesh Bhikhubhai Panchal (the “Applicants”), on behalf of Bandh Darwaza, LLC t/a Bandh Darwaza (“Bandh Darwaza”), have applied for a new Class D Beer, Wine, and Liquor, 7-Day on-sale License for a 1,463 sq. ft. tavern located at 6000 Merriweather Drive, Suite B-135, Columbia, MD 21044.

2. The Hearing Board concludes that the Applicants are fit and proper persons to hold an alcoholic beverage license.

3. The Hearing Board concludes that Venkata Krishna Kukatla, the resident agent applicant, meets the requirements of Rules 1.10(S), 1.10(T), and 2.06 of the Liquor Board Rules and Regulations concerning resident agent qualifications.

4. The Hearing Board concludes that the granting of the application is necessary for the accommodation of the public.

5. The Hearing Board concludes that the granting of the application will not unduly disturb the peace and safety of the residents of the neighborhood.

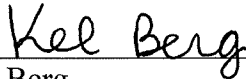
ORDER

For the foregoing reasons, it is this 14th day of October, 2026, by the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board of Howard County **ORDERED** that the application of Venkata Krishna Kukatla, Jay Parimal Gandhi and Mukesh Bhikhubhai Panchal (the “Applicants”), on behalf of Bandh Darwaza, LLC t/a Bandh Darwaza (“Bandh Darwaza”), for a new Class D Beer, Wine, and Liquor 7-Day, on-sale License for a 1,463 sq. ft. tavern located at 6000 Merriweather Drive, Suite B-135, Columbia, MD 21044, be and the same is hereby **GRANTED**, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) That the Applicants comply with all State and County laws and regulations;
- (b) That the Applicants satisfy any requirements necessary to obtain the license by November 12, 2026 unless that deadline is extended by the Hearing Board upon good cause shown; and
- (c) Failure to comply with these conditions shall render this Proposed Decision and Order null and void.

ATTEST:

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE HEARING
BOARD OF HOWARD COUNTY,
MARYLAND**



Kel Berg
Board Administrator

_____/S/_____
Steven Chen, Chairperson

_____/ABSENT_____
Steve Hunt, Vice-Chairperson

**REVIEWED BY HOWARD COUNTY
OFFICE OF LAW
GARY W. KUC
COUNTY SOLICITOR**

_____/S/_____
Ed Coleman, Member



Hyunjae Shin, Esquire
Senior Assistant County Solicitor

_____/S/_____
Beth Johnson, Member

_____/S/_____
Claire Kim, Member