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AAHOA Statement on the Tragic Murder of Oklahoma City Hotel Owner and Member Hemant Mistry

ATLANTA, Ga., June 26 – AAHOA issued the following statement in response to the tragic murder of **Hemant Mistry** (59), a respected AAHOA Member and veteran hotel owner/operator from Oklahoma City, OK.

According to police reports, a 41-year-old suspect was arrested and is now in custody following an altercation on Saturday, June 22, during which he punched Mistry, who died Sunday from the impact. [Local sources indicate](#) that Mistry had asked the suspect to leave the property. This incident bears a heartbreaking resemblance to the [murder of Pravin R. Patel](#), owner of the Hillcrest Motel in Sheffield, AL, who was killed under similar circumstances in February.

"Our hearts go out to Hemant's family, including his wife and children," said **AAHOA Chairman Miraj S. Patel**. "For many AAHOA Members, hotels are not just businesses; they are homes and places of refuge. It is unimaginable to our community that such a senseless act of violence could occur. As someone who grew up in my family's hotel in Texas, I understand the fear and dread that comes with such violent situations."

AAHOA urges hoteliers to [prioritize safety protocols](#) and consider the risks of handling confrontational situations independently. Hotel staff should engage law enforcement when faced with potentially volatile encounters to mitigate risks to personal safety. This recommendation is further underscored by the [Surgeon General's recent report](#) on the escalating public health crisis of gun violence, emphasizing the need for heightened vigilance and professional intervention to prevent the unnecessary loss of innocent lives.

"Our hearts are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of one of our beloved members," said **AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake**. "Incidents like these are profoundly distressing for all involved. Our prayers are with Hemant's family and loved ones during this incredibly challenging period. AAHOA is committed to honoring Hemant's life by raising awareness to prevent future violence."

Miraj S. Patel noted that he has been inundated with calls and texts from the hotelier community, seeking ways to combat such violence on their properties. In response, AAHOA is expediting the development of educational resources to help hotel owners minimize conflict and prevent violent incidents by understanding how to de-escalate unstable situations.

"We will strive to honor Hemant's life by promoting the importance of hotel safety and security and advocating for laws and policies that protect business owners and their communities," said **Miraj S. Patel**. "If our collective efforts can prevent this from happening to even one family in the future, we know our work will not be in vain and that Hemant's legacy will live on in the AAHOA Community and beyond."

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About AAHOA

AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world, with Member-owned properties representing a significant part of the U.S. economy. AAHOA's 20,000 members own 60% of the hotels in the United States and are responsible for 1.7% of the nation's GDP. More than one million employees work at AAHOA Member-owned hotels, earning \$47 billion annually, and member-owned hotels support 4.2 million U.S. jobs across all sectors of the hospitality industry. AAHOA's mission is to advance and protect the business interests of hotel owners through advocacy, industry leadership, professional development, member benefits, and community engagement.