

## Indian American actor is lead player in US comedy

Indian American actor Kal Penn plays the lead role in MGM Studios' new comedy 'National Lampoon's Van Wilder: The Rise of Taj', opening in theatres across North America on Dec 1.

Penn reprises his role of Taj from the original film, 2002's cult hit 'National Lampoon's Van Wilder', who in this new adventure heads out on his own to a prestigious university in England to further his studies. Along the way, he adopts a group of misfits and shows the uptight student body how to party.

He follows up his recent roles in 'Superman Returns', 'A Lot Like Love', and 'Harold and Kumar Go To White Castle' by taking the lead role in this new Van Wilder comedy.

Next year, he will be seen in Fox Searchlight's Mira Nair-directed film 'The Namesake' and on Fox Television's Emmy Award-winning action series 24.

Born Kalpen Modi in Montclair, New Jersey, of Gujarati Indian ancestry on April 23, 1977, Kal Penn is a graduate of Howell High School and The Fine and Performing Arts Specialized Learning Center. He also double majored in Film and Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

While at California, Kal was a founding member of the underground intellectual society, '6 South.' Due to creative differences the group disbanded but are currently considering a reunion.

Penn's feature film debut came in 1998 in 'Express: Aisle to Glory'. He was also featured in the The Lonely Island's rejected Awesometown MTV pilot music video, along with his friend Brandon Routh (who played Superman in 'Superman Returns'). Penn also played one of Lex Luthor's Henchmen in 'Superman Returns'.

*Arun Kumar* ( © IANS / India eNews)