



## ***Cultivating a 360-degree relationship***



By **Satish Thakkar**

Over the last eleven years, Canada India Foundation has operated as an organisation that is focused on fostering bilateral relations and creating a more conducive environment for Canadians of Indian origin to be absorbed based on their talent, merit, qualifications and experience into the Canadian mainstream.

The rapidly increasing population of Indo-Canadians in the last two decades has brought about a qualitative change in the demographics. According to a brilliant presentation made by Anil Arora last month at CIF's Speaker Series, 8.9% of Canada's total immigrant population was born in India, making immigrants from India the largest immigrant group by birth in Canada. Pertinently, one-half of the Indian-born immigrants aged 25 to 64 have a university degree, compared to one-quarter of the comparable Canadian population, and of Indian-born immigrants who have a degree, about one in five obtained their highest degree in Canada or the United States.

What does a 360-degree approach mean? It means having an all-encompassing approach in Canada – India bilateral relations that includes political, economic, social and cultural aspects, and simultaneously taking into account all matters concerning Canadians of Indian origin. That means empowering them, too, in all spheres of life.

CIF will nurture an environment where all talented, skilled and qualified Indo-Canadians can become a part of the organisational dynamics that enable them to be involved in the decision-making process.

CIF will vigorously advocate for an expansion of horizons in public policy and specially focus on creating an environment that is conducive for the Indo-Canadians to flourish in all spheres of endeavour, and not merely on bettering their economic conditions and finding a political voice.

CIF will work towards a transformation so that it is conducive for the well-being of the Indo-Canadian community, its easier settlement and integration into the Canadian society. This will require creating institutions that support the flourishing of art and artists in all spheres of creativity.

We will work to channelize and integrate the efforts of Indo-Canadians in every aspect of human endeavour and enable their integration into the Canadian mainstream to better reflect and inspire the next generation. We will work with youth to utilize its intellect and combine it with the ethics of their parents' generation of dedication, hard work, family values, and giving back to the society.

As a stakeholder of our Foundation, I invite you to contribute your ideas and share your thoughts to make this an immersive process. As a stakeholder of our Foundation, I invite you to contribute your ideas and share your thoughts to make this an immersive process. Write to us at [info@canadaindiafoundation.com](mailto:info@canadaindiafoundation.com)

- *Satish is National Convener, Canada India Foundation & President, Excelsior Financial Group*

## Upcoming Events

### Meeting with Patrick Brown, Mayor-Elect, Brampton



Date: Monday, 12 November 2018

This meeting is exclusively for CIF members

### Roundtable with Minister Mary Ng



**Hon. Mary Ng**  
**Minister for Small Business**  
**and Export Promotion**

On behalf of the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion, and your Brampton Members of Parliament – Raj Grewal (Brampton East), Kamal Khiera (Brampton West), Ruby Sahota (Brampton North), Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre), and Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South), you and four members of your organization are invited to a Roundtable Discussion with the Canada-India Export Business Community.

Date: Monday, 12 November 2018

This meeting is exclusively for CIF members

## Planning for the road ahead, while on the road



### *CIF members discuss strategies to make it more meaningful*

What do you get when you have a group of enthusiastic Canada India Foundation (CIF) members together for several hours in a busy from Toronto to Ottawa? An engaging discussion on the past, present and the future of CIF.

On a recent trip to Ottawa from Toronto in a luxury bus to participate in the annual Diwali celebrations organised by Deepak Obhrai, MP, the Foundation's members both veterans and newbies decided that a good way to spend time together would be to formulate a strategy on the road ahead for CIF. The participants in the discussion included Dr. VI Lakshmanan, Satish Thakkar, Rupesh Kapadia, Vijay Sastry, Anil Bhasin, Vinod Vyas, and Ashwin Kotamarti.

A theme that ran through the discussion was the unique positioning of the Foundation in the public policy advocacy group. While there are many good bilateral organisations working in the Canada – India corridor, none of them are working in the public policy advocacy space. The members felt that for the Foundation to remain relevant in the future, it would have to begin to involve itself with the Indian diaspora, which is growing exponentially. By some of the more recent estimates, Toronto has the largest percentage of population of Indian origin of any city in North America. Indians have emerged as the largest immigrant population in Canada, numbering over 1.6 million. "We must look after our own people and not just focus on Canada and India; we must focus on Canadian values," said Dr. VI Lakshmanan.

The growing number of Indians in Canada represents a political clout that political parties will find difficult to ignore. This clout must be channelized constructively and used to gain public policy advantages for the Indo-Canadian community. Also, new immigrants are skilled people as compared to the earlier generation of immigrants.

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A pertinent observation made in this context was that the Indian diaspora is not a monolith and the characteristics of different categories would differ based on the different time of their arrival in Canada. “We need to cater to the needs of Indo-Canadians from different spheres, different ages and different eras,” said Dr. Lakshmanan.

One of the most significant factors in the bilateral relations sphere that has emerged in recent times is the growing number of students from India, which has registered a continuous rise to reach a staggering 130,000. However, the paucity of opportunities results in these students ending up doing blue-collar work on subsistence wages. What the CIF can do in this sphere is two-fold – first is to become some sort of a venture capital fund that can provide seed capital to young graduates to launch their start-ups.

**“CIF should work towards the creation of a fund to help promote the spirit of entrepreneurship at the youth level”**



“We must encourage commercialisation and entrepreneurialism,” said Satish Thakkar, and added, “We should work with the governments to create a trust that will help us nurture the spirit of enterprise.” He also pointed out that there is a lack of capital to promote startups to encourage the spirit of entrepreneurship and suggested that CIF should work towards the creation of a fund to help promote the spirit of entrepreneurship at the youth level.



Mr. Thakkar also said that the Indo-Canadian community would be better served if its tremendous philanthropic activity is channelized in a proper manner and that CIF could work towards this channelization process. The community would gain substantially in terms of recognition if the philanthropic work was institutionalized.

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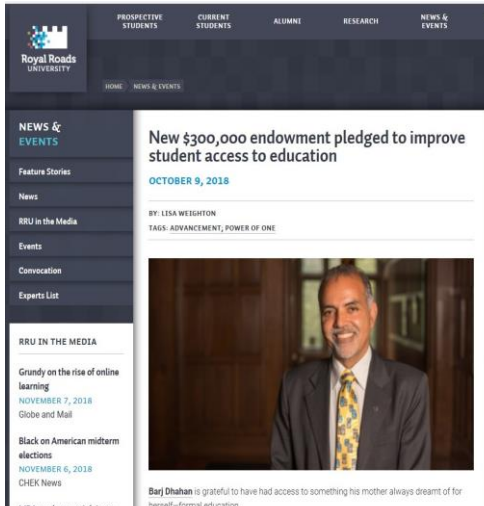
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## Barj Dhahan pledges endowment to Royal Roads University

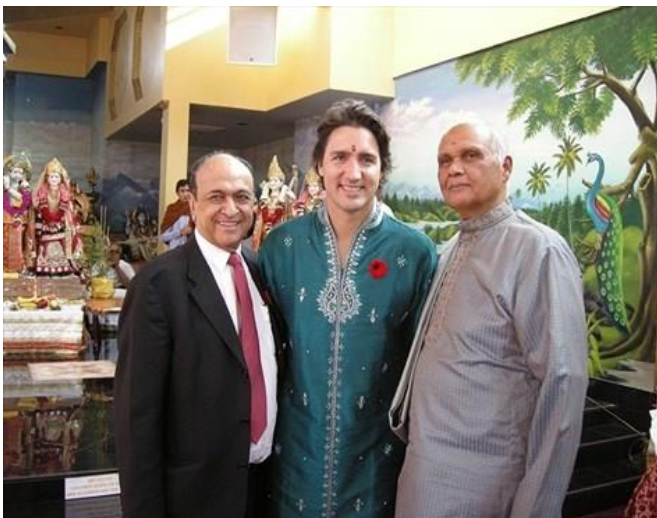
In the honour of his parents, Barj Dhahan and his wife Rita have committed a \$150,000 donation to Royal Roads University to create the Budh Singh and Kashmir Kaur Dhahan Award.

Mr. Dhahan, a member of Canada India Foundation, is a renowned philanthropist, Royal Roads University Fellow, and founder & chief executive officer of the Sandhurst Group of Companies.

The bi-annual student award will provide financial assistance to underrepresented students, such as single mothers, international or Indigenous students. The university will match his donation, bringing the total endowment to \$300,000. To read the report, click here: [Dhahan-Royal Roads](#)

## Milestones & Achievements

### Honour for Ramesh Chotai



*Ramesh Chotai with Justin Trudeau & Dr. Doobay*

As the continuation of Diwali and Hindu Heritage month, the Prime Minister Rt Hon Justin Trudeau visited the Vishnu Mandir at the Invitation of the Hindu Community. The Mandir was packed beyond the capacity. On the occasion, the Prime Minister presented Ramesh Chotai, Past Chair, CIF, with an award.

“To my utter surprise, the Prime Minister presented me with the award and stated "for philanthropy and outstanding contributions to the Canadian and the Hindu Community," Mr. Chotai said, and added, “To my fellow CIF members, and our community, I am profoundly grateful and thankful to all of you for allowing me to serve and receive such accolades with humility.”

### Marathon Man: Rupesh Kapadia



Rupesh Kapadia, CIF's Treasurer, is an avid marathoner. He has participated in the full marathon in Berlin and a half marathon in Toronto (Scotiabank). He began training for the marathon in April 2017 and participated in his first marathon in June 2017. He plans to participate in the half marathon in Las Vegas in November.





At the 2018 Annual General Meeting of Canada India Foundation, held in August 2018, members unanimously agreed to form an Advisory Board that would guide the Foundation to explore more effective ways to achieve its mandate. Ajit Someshwar, the Immediate Past Chair, and one of the founding members of Canada India Foundation was the unanimous choice to be the Chair of the new board. Canada India Foundation is delighted to announce the Advisory Board comprising the following members: Anita Anand, David Agnew, Deepak Obhrai, Anil Arora, Gary Comerford, Ajit Bapat, Arvind Gupta.

To read more, click here: [CIF's Advisory Board](#)

## Diwali in Ottawa, Meetings with Minister Ng & Members of Parliament



*L to R: Mayur Dave, Vijay Sastry, Rupesh Kapadia, HE Vikas Swarup, Satish Thakkar, Hon. Deepak Obhrai, Vinod Vyas and Anil Bhasin*

### CIF supports Deepak Obhrai's Canadian Diwali Celebrations

*Delegation meets Minister Ng and Members of Parliament to discuss objectives, activities and achievements*

Ottawa: Canada India Foundation was one the main supporters of the 18th edition of Hon. Deepak Obhrai's National Diwali Celebrations on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. A delegation of the Foundation's members participated in the program that saw unprecedented participants of over 500 Indo-Canadians from different parts of Canada, including Calgary, Montreal, Toronto, and, of course, Ottawa.



*Minister Mary Ng with CIF members & Ramesh Sangha*

Prior to the Diwali celebrations, the CIF delegation met with Hon. Mary Ng, Canada's Minister of Small Business and Exports; and Members of Parliament Hon. Ruby Sahota, Hon. Sonia Sidhu, Hon. Kamal Khara, Hon. Jati Sidhu, Hon. Chandra Arya. Hon. Ramesh Sangha, MP, organised these meetings.

To read the full report, click here: [Diwali in Ottawa](#)

## Past Events: Speaker Series

**Anil Arora, StatsCan**



*CIF Members with Anil Arora*

*To read the report, click here:*

['Innovation is the key to the future'](#)

## Past Events: Networking Reception

**Indiaspora**



*CIF's Satish Thakkar (r) and Anil Shah (2nd l) with  
Indiaspora's MR Rangaswami & Deepak Obhrai (l)*

*To read the report, click here:*

[CIF-Indiaspora collaboration](#)

## Past Events: Speaker Series

**Andrew Scheer**



*Andrew Scheer with Anil Shah, Satish Thakkar  
& Ajit Someshwar*

*To read the report, click here:*

['India is important'](#)

## Past Events: Speaker Series

**Dr. Subramanian Swamy**



*Dr. Subramanian Swamy with CIF leaders*

*To read the report, click here:*

['India will be an economic superpower  
by the next decade'](#)