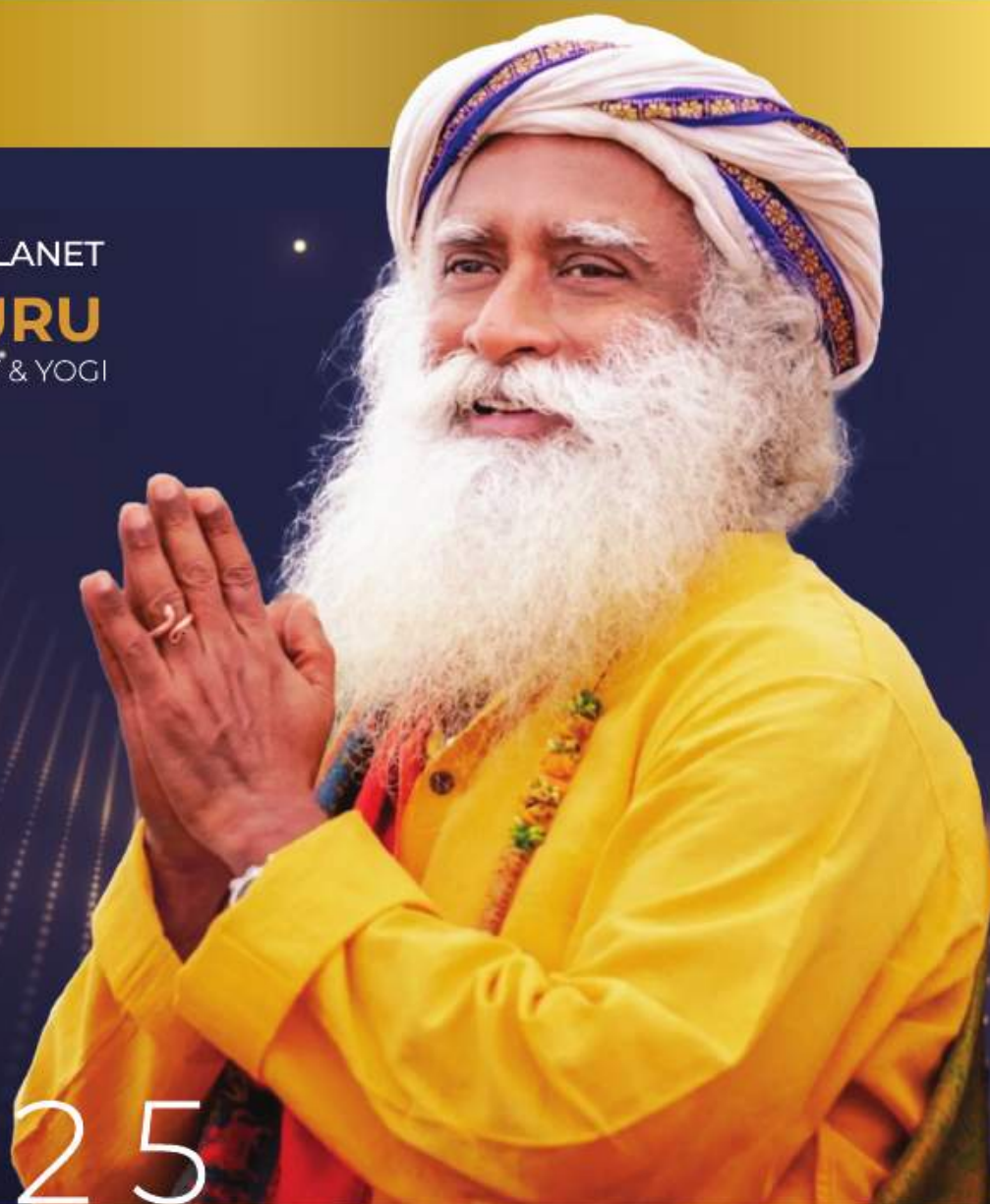


CREATING
A CONSCIOUS PLANET

SADHGURU

MYSTIC, VISIONARY & YOGI



2025 GLOBAL INDIAN OF THE YEAR



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FOUNDATION

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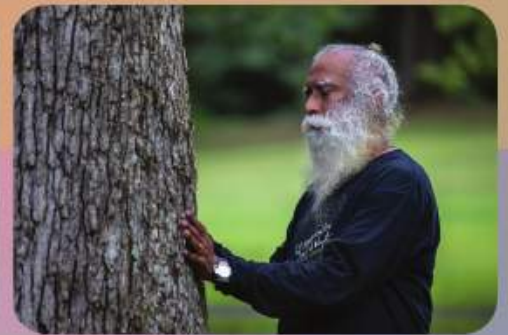
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A 'SADHGURU' OF WORDS & ACTION!



CIF GLOBAL INDIAN AWARD GALA 2025



CIF Award Gala 2025



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

Message from the Prime Minister of Canada

I proudly offer my sincere greetings for the CIF-Global Indian Award Gala 2025.

Indo Canadians continue to make significant contributions to Canada. They create more vibrancy in our diversity, enrich our cultural fabric, and make incredible contributions each and every day to our nation. These great Canadians are also our exceptional entrepreneurs, social change agents, and community leaders. Further, Canada also enjoys a relationship with India based on strong people-to-people, economic, and cultural ties.

Today's event is an opportunity to both appreciate the contribution of the Indian diaspora to Canadian society as well as highlight and honour the remarkable contributions of exceptional men and women of Indian origin globally. The presence of everyone here speaks to the solidarity and strength of the Indian community both in Canada and globally. The values and character of this community truly form an important part of Canada's national identity and they are deeply valued for it.

I offer my congratulations to this year's award recipient on this prestigious honour. I would also like to recognize the Canada India Foundation for the excellent job it does to host this event, advocate for the Indian community in Canada, and enhance the relationship between Canada and India.

Please accept my very best wishes for an enjoyable gala.

Ottawa
2025





Premier of Ontario - Premier ministre de l'Ontario

May 22, 2025

A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DOUG FORD

I want to extend warm greetings to everyone taking part in the CIF-Global Indian Award 2025.

Many thanks to Canada India Foundation (CIF) team for giving the global Indian community the opportunity to celebrate achievement, excellence and civic consciousness. Ontario is home to hundreds of thousands of people with roots in India. Their contributions have strengthened ties between India and Canada and helped make Ontario the success story that it is today.

Events such as this help reinforce the longstanding and mutually beneficial trade, cultural and people-to-people bonds we share and remind us of the common values we cherish.

Best wishes for a memorable gala.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Ford".

Doug Ford
Premier





MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, it is my pleasure to send greetings to the Canada India Foundation (CIF) Annual Global Indian Award Gala 2025, "Creating a Conscious Planet."

Each year, this award gala helps bring attention to influential leaders and changemakers in a variety of sectors. This year, the CIF will be recognizing someone whose work is perhaps less conventional, yet who seeks to address some of the biggest challenges we face. Congratulations to spiritual guide and environmental activist Revered Jaggi Vasudev (Sadhguru) as he receives the Global Indian Award for his efforts to raise human consciousness, empower people and inspire responsible action.

Alberta and India share a long history of collaboration bolstered by strong economic linkages and the thousands of Indo-Canadians living in our province who contribute to our vibrant communities. Alberta values this relationship, and we look forward to continuing to work with our partners in this province, across Canada and in India. I appreciate the CIF's commitment to fostering bilateral relations between Canada and India, and to recognize Indian achievers.

Best wishes as you celebrate together.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Danielle Smith".

Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta





**PREMIER
OF MANITOBA**

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8
CANADA

A MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Manitoba, I'm happy to provide a message of greeting to the Canada India Foundation's Annual Global Indian Award Gala.

This gala is an opportunity to celebrate the thriving Indian community in Canada, and the importance of our country's relationship with India. Here in Manitoba, the Indian Manitoban community is a deeply valued part of our social, economic, political and cultural fabric.

Manitoba also values the relationship between our two countries. Organizations like CIF do wonderful work strengthening bilateral relations and helping build a better future for everyone. This is reflected in the theme of this year's gala, "Creating a Conscious Planet." Whether this means protecting the environment, peacebuilding, or helping our fellow humans who are struggling, working together across borders is the best way to achieve a conscious planet.

I wish all the gala attendees a wonderful celebration.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Wab Kinew".

***The Honourable Wab Kinew
Premier of Manitoba***

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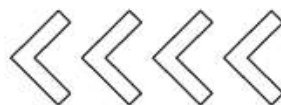
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**Shri Sadhguru on accepting the Canada
India Foundation Global Indian Award
2025! Your visionary contributions to
spirituality, environmental sustainability,
and humanity continue to inspire and
impact the world.**

The Future Can Be Brighter

Ritesh Malik

Chair, Canada India Foundation



This past year has been a particularly satisfying—if occasionally challenging—period in the life of Canada India Foundation. It marked my first year as Chair, and I have felt the weight and honour of this responsibility deeply. Like Galileo once said, I feel I am standing on the shoulders of giants. Since its founding in 2007, CIF has benefitted

from a remarkable continuity of visionary leadership. Each generation of leaders has upheld the core mission: to foster the strongest possible bilateral relationship between Canada and India while enhancing the image and contributions of the Indo-Canadian community.

This has never been an easy goal. Our journey has had its highs and lows. Yet CIF's members remain firmly committed to our founders' ideals. First and foremost, we are a non-partisan, not-for-profit community organization—guided by the principle that we are Canadians first. Our work is rooted in the belief that strengthening bilateral ties must ultimately enrich Canada and Canadians.

Reciprocity, of course, is essential to any successful two-way relationship. Unfortunately, Canada and India have yet to realize their full potential. There are many reasons for this, but one undeniable fact is that we've often overlooked low-hanging opportunities that could have greatly benefited both nations. The long-pending CEPA is a glaring example. We don't even have an Early Harvest Agreement—something that could have served as a stepping stone to a broader economic partnership. Such interim arrangements would have helped both sides better understand and resolve underlying challenges.

CIF remains optimistic. We believe decision-makers will return to the table to iron out differences—sooner rather than later. In geopolitics, time and momentum matter. Countries need long-term vision to leverage shifting alliances and strategic alignment. Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy makes clear that India will play a pivotal role in the region. And as the fastest-growing major economy

on the planet—on track to reach a \$10 trillion GDP in the coming years—it is clear that Canada stands to benefit immensely from a closer relationship with India.

We have goods and resources to meet India's rising demand. In return, we benefit from India's human capital and entrepreneurial energy—elements critical to Canada's long-term economic vitality.

Recent developments in Canada's political leadership signal a welcome and long-overdue shift in our approach toward India. Mark Carney's evolving position on strengthening ties with India, along with the appointments of Anita Anand as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Maninder Sidhu as Minister of International Trade, are not just symbolic—they represent a conscious recalibration in Canada's foreign policy priorities. This is a much-needed course correction that, if pursued with intent and vision, can unlock immense prosperity, collaboration, and goodwill between our two nations.

As a Canadian committed to long-term national interests, I can say this with conviction: this is exactly the kind of positive movement every Indo-Canadian has long hoped to see. We dream of witnessing the best of Canada and the best of India come together—through shared values, mutual respect, and strategic partnership. Such a partnership is not only in our bilateral interest, but also holds the promise of shaping a more resilient and equitable global future.

On the topic of immigration, recent developments show the need for better planning. Canada has long been one of the world's most welcoming nations. But the recent influx of newcomers has overwhelmed infrastructure and services in many cities, contributing to growing frustration and, in some quarters, anti-immigrant sentiment. It's not the fault of the young people who placed their futures on Canada, often by taking on massive debt to pursue education here. Many now face an uncertain future—and, in some cases, the real threat of deportation.

We at CIF urge decision-makers to find a balanced path forward—one that protects lives while still addressing Canada's labour and demographic needs. We will support short- and mid-term measures that stabilize employment

and housing, while preserving the integrity of our long-standing immigration model.

We must also be strategic. While it's clear that immigration is necessary—97% of Canada's population growth last year came from newcomers—we must ensure that our immigration system prioritizes long-term national benefit. Immigration should enrich our country economically, socially, and culturally. If we rush the process or apply broad, one-size-fits-all policies, we risk creating unintended consequences and long-term harm, especially for immigrant communities.

The Indo-Canadian community is now one of the most prominent and visible contributors to Canadian society. Over decades, we have earned a reputation for productivity, peacefulness, and integration. But we must not take that reputation for granted. A tiny minority acting in bad faith can endanger the goodwill of many. We must remain united, mindful, and deeply committed to building bridges—not divisions. Indo-Canadians will play an even greater role in shaping Canada's sociopolitical and economic future. Let's ensure that role is positive, responsible, and nation-building.

Canada India Foundation will remain steadfast in this vision. While we may be occasionally distracted by local issues, we never lose sight of our central purpose. The Canada-India relationship continues to drive everything we do, and we believe a united community can shape consensus, influence policy, and overcome challenges.

This year, we are privileged to honour **Sadhguru** with the **CIF Global Indian Award 2025**. A mystic, yogi, and visionary, Sadhguru has become one of the most influential voices of our time—not through political power or economic might, but through his relentless commitment to raising human consciousness. From global environmental campaigns like Save Soil to his tireless efforts to revive ancient wisdom through contemporary thought and scientific inquiry, Sadhguru has inspired millions to live with clarity, balance, and purpose.

His work transcends cultural and national boundaries, touching lives across continents with a simple yet profound message: that the well-being of the individual and the planet are inseparable. Through his initiatives with the **Isha Foundation**, he has awakened a global movement—rooted in inner transformation, ecological responsibility, and collective action.

In a world clouded by division, anxiety, and environmental degradation, his call to create a conscious planet is not just timely—it is necessary. We at CIF are honoured to

recognize and amplify his message, which aligns perfectly with our own commitment to community, responsibility, and global partnership.

"Creating a Conscious Planet," let's reflect on what this means. It may sound grand—but it is deeply relevant. Many leading thinkers now agree: the survival of our planet depends on how conscious we become, not just about our environment but about each other.

We live in deeply uncertain times. The global climate crisis, mental health struggles, and geopolitical conflict all point to a world out of balance. But rather than give in to despair, we must choose optimism. Choose life over destruction. Peace over perpetual strife.

When we speak of saving the planet, we must not forget that "planet" includes people. We, as the most dominant species, hold the power to either restore or ruin the delicate balance of nature.

This is where ancient Indian wisdom can guide us. The Vedas and Ayurveda speak of the interplay between matter and spirit—the Atman. A nourished inner spirit awakens compassion, clarity, and unity. It allows us to embrace the idea of "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**"—the world as one family.

Change won't come overnight. We cannot expect our political leaders to suddenly become sages. But we can begin within ourselves. Each of us—individuals, communities, organizations—can play a part. As drops make an ocean, our small actions can ripple outward.

Let us work together to build a more **conscious, compassionate, and co-existing** world. I'll end with the powerful words of Swami Vivekananda: "*If I love myself despite my infinite faults, how can I hate anyone for their few faults?*"



(Ritesh Malik)
Chair, CIF



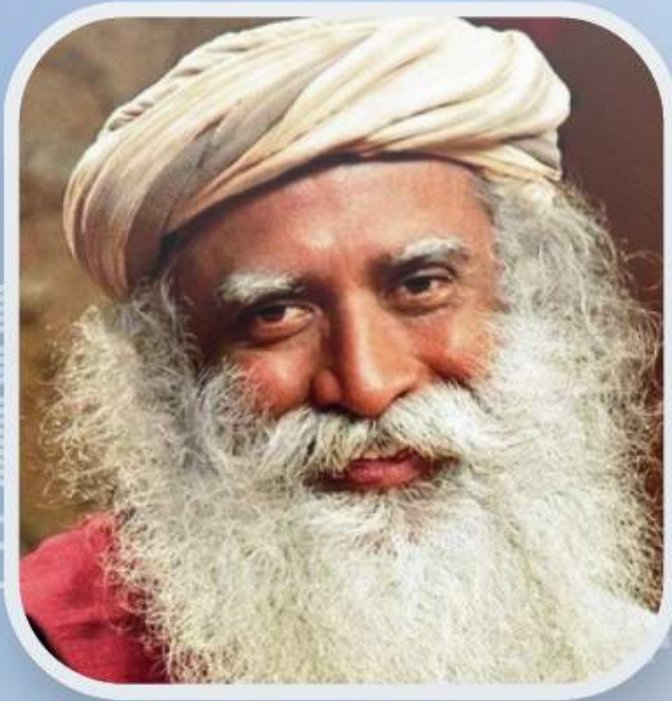
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SADHGURU

CIF GLOBAL INDIAN OF THE YEAR 2025



Ghar Sirf Ghar Nahin Hota!! Ghar Woh hai Jisme Aapako Chain Miley!! Ghar woh Hai Jisme Aapako Aaram Miley!! Ghar woh Hai Jo Team GHAR Aapako Dilwavaye!!

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Congratulations to the Global Indian Award Winner
Sadhguru

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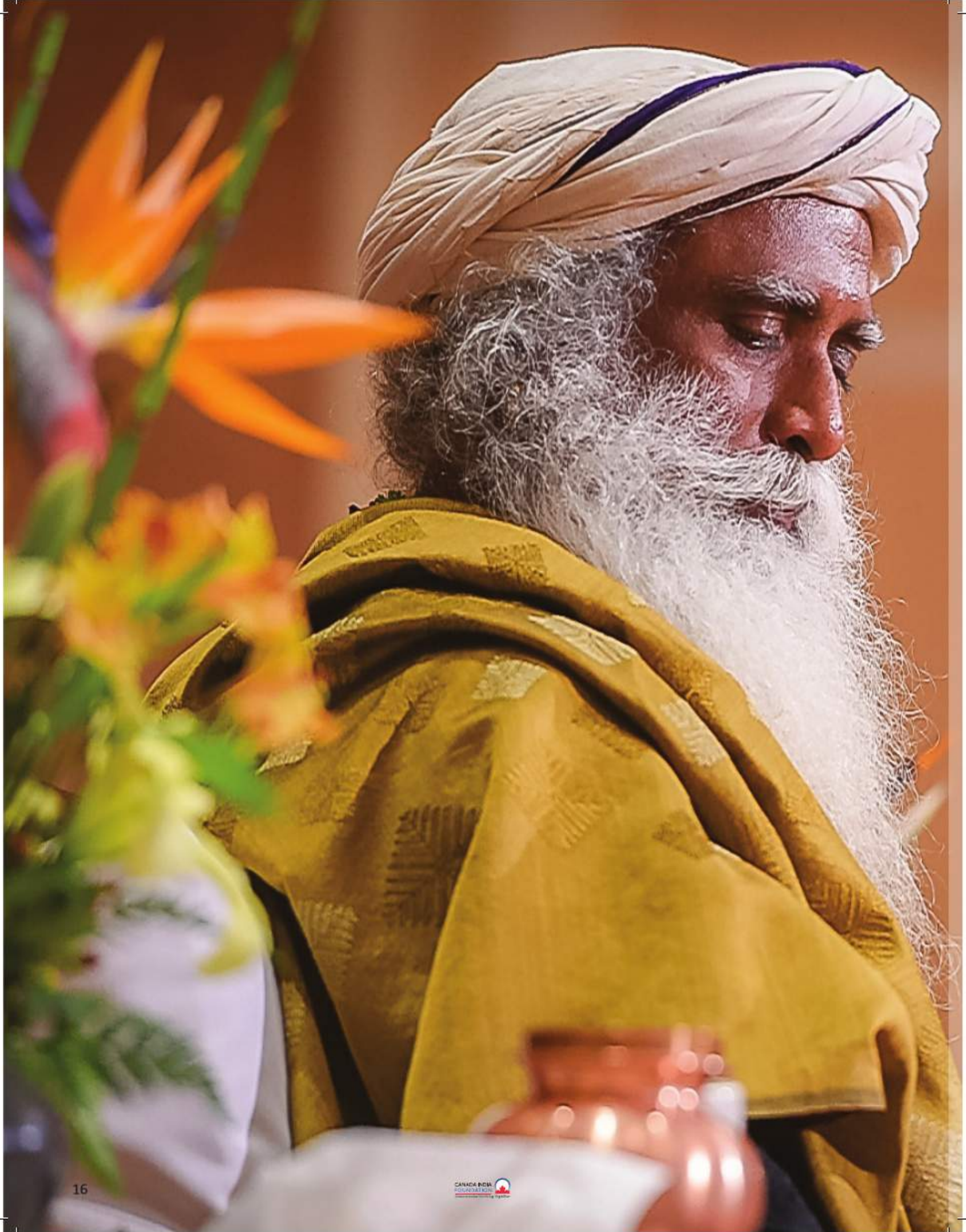
Canada

UAE

India

Uganda

Trinidad



The Canada India Foundation (CIF) is honoured to introduce Sadhguru as the recipient of the 2025 CIF Global Indian Award, recognizing his extraordinary contributions to humanity. Sadhguru becomes the 11th recipient of this prestigious award, joining an illustrious group of global Indian achievers.

Yogi, Mystic, and Visionary, Sadhguru is among the most influential voices of our times. Recipient of three Presidential honors, including India's highest annual civilian award, the Padma Vibhushan, he holds the rare distinction of being the only living Indian to have received accolades from three different Presidents.

A New York Times bestselling author, Sadhguru is an acclaimed speaker and thought leader who has addressed world forums, top educational institutions like MIT and Harvard, and major global organizations including the United Nations and the World Economic Forum. His insights bridge ancient wisdom with contemporary relevance, offering practical tools for living a profound and impactful life.

Beyond his contributions to human wellbeing, Sadhguru's life is a vibrant celebration of all dimensions of creativity — from architecture, design, poetry, and painting, to sports, music, aviation, and motorcycling.

Isha Foundation

Founded by Sadhguru three decades ago, Isha Foundation is a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization dedicated to human wellbeing. With over 17 million volunteers worldwide, Isha offers powerful Yoga programs designed by Sadhguru, enabling people from all walks of life to tap into their ultimate potential.

At the heart of Isha's mission is raising human consciousness — the key to solving the world's challenges. Rooted in classical yogic science, Isha programs are delivered with full depth and experiential authenticity, offering seekers a rare opportunity for true inner transformation.

Inner Engineering: In 7 Steps Transform Your life with Sadhguru

Inner Engineering is Sadhguru's flagship program — a comprehensive system for aligning the body, mind, emotions, and energies. It equips individuals with powerful tools derived from the ancient science of Yoga.

A core offering of the program is the transmission of Shambhavi Mahamudra Kriya — a 21-minute yogic process that harmonizes and revitalizes the system from within, leading to greater clarity, joy, and inner balance.

Inner Engineering is not just another self-help program — it is a profound exploration of life in its totality, offering a pathway to wellbeing and boundless possibilities. Through powerful processes woven with his trademark wit and pragmatism, Sadhguru effortlessly guides you beyond the bounds of logic, offering a glimpse into the true magic of life.

Canada India Foundation Global Indian Award Winner 2025

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Vision Plus Action to Create a Conscious Planet

Miracle of Mind

The new meditation app from Sadhguru, "Miracle of Mind," launched on Feb 26, 2025. Though a short and easy program, it is an incredibly empowering and accessible tool in a world where mental health challenges are increasingly common. The app is offered completely free.

It has gotten over one million downloads within the first 24 hours, surpassing TikTok and ChatGPT's early adoption! This is a huge feat, not just in the meditation/wellness space but also in the entertainment and social media industries.

Isha Centers

Isha has over 300 centers worldwide, and the most prominent among these are the Isha Yoga Center in Coimbatore and the Sadhguru Sannidhi in Bengaluru, India, as well as the Isha Institute of Inner-sciences in Tennessee and the Isha Yoga Center in Los Angeles, United States. Established by Sadhguru, these centers serve as large-scale infrastructure dedicated to raising human consciousness.

Each center offers energized spaces for inner transformation, where individuals can immerse themselves in classical Yoga, meditation, and rejuvenating processes designed to foster health, vitality, and inner freedom.

Consecrated Spaces

"If you transform mud into food, we call this agriculture. If you make food into flesh and bone, we call this digestion. If you make flesh into mud, we call this cremation. If you can make this flesh or even a stone or an empty space into a divine possibility, that is called Consecration." — Sadhguru

It is in India that the esoteric science of consecration was mastered by yogis of the past, who created many powerful devices for one to attain one's Ultimate nature. Continuing this sacred tradition, Sadhguru, a rare mystic of our times, has created many consecrated spaces for spiritual seekers to make use of.



The following centers offer Consecrated space for followers across the world:

Isha Institute of Inner-sciences

Adiyogi: The Abode of Yoga is a powerful energy source designed for anyone to enhance their wellbeing in all aspects of life. Simply sitting within the Abode allows one to reach an elevated state of consciousness and know yoga as an inner experience beyond mere knowledge, philosophy, or technique.

Mahima (meaning Grace) is a 39,000 sq ft free-spanning meditation hall – the largest of its kind in the western hemisphere. More than an impressive structure, Mahima is a potent sphere for self-transformation, the core of which is a powerful energy source.

Isha Yoga Center

Dhyanalina - The dream of many enlightened beings, Dhyanalina was consecrated by Sadhguru after three years of an intense energy process known as prana pratishtha. A doorway to enlightenment and spiritual liberation, Dhyanalina offers a spiritual seeker the opportunity to perform spiritual practices in utmost intimacy with a live Guru, an opportunity traditionally available only to a select few.

Linga Bhairavi - Consecrated by Sadhguru through prana pratishtha, Linga Bhairavi is the ultimate manifestation of the Divine Feminine – powerful and all-encompassing. Fierce and compassionate at once, Devi nurtures her devotees, supporting all aspects of their wellbeing – physical, material, and most importantly, spiritual.

Other consecrated spaces include the 112-foot Adiyogi statue & Yogeshwar Linga, Theerthakunds, Spanda Hall, and Adiyogi Alayam at the Isha Yoga Center in Coimbatore. The Sadhguru Sannidhi in Bengaluru is home to the consecrated Naga.

A Commitment to Transformation

Over the last three decades, Sadhguru has spearheaded transformative initiatives to address critical environmental and social challenges. Sadhguru's ecological efforts have been globally recognized for offering sustainable solutions that bridge economic growth and ecological preservation. His insights have been sought by global agencies including the United Nations (UNEP, UNCCD), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Environmental Initiatives

Save Soil: Three Years Since the Journey

Save Soil has implemented a holistic strategy for soil revitalization through scalable farmer-driven projects, policy advocacy, and citizen awareness campaigns.

On March 21, 2022, Sadhguru embarked on an arduous 100-day, 30,000 km long motorcycle journey across twenty-seven countries to raise awareness about the





global soil crisis. This journey brought global attention to the urgent need to restore and safeguard our planet's most fundamental resource: soil. Through digital, mass media, and community engagements, the Save Soil movement's awareness campaigns have reached over 4.1 billion people globally, creating a groundswell of support for soil-friendly policies and practices.

Rally for Rivers

Launched in 2017, Rally for Rivers aims to reverse the depletion of India's rivers through tree-based agriculture and large-scale public engagement. The campaign garnered overwhelming public support and contributed to new policy initiatives for river revitalization.

Cauvery Calling

Building on the momentum of Rally for Rivers, Cauvery Calling is the world's largest farmer-driven ecological movement. The initiative aims to support farmers in planting 2.42 billion trees to restore green cover and water retention in the Cauvery basin. To date, 88.5 million living trees have been planted, and 172,600 farmers have been supported in transitioning to sustainable tree-based agriculture.

Social Outreach Initiatives

Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR)

Action for Rural Rejuvenation addresses the health, livelihood, and social needs of India's rural populations. Initiated in 2003, ARR delivers holistic programs that uplift and transform entire communities, creating pathways to self-reliance and wellbeing.

Revitalizing Indian Agriculture

Isha's agricultural initiatives focus on transitioning farmers from debt and desperation to sustainability and prosperity. Recognizing its success, the Government of India has entrusted Isha with supporting twenty-four new Farmer Producer Organizations.

Isha Vidhya

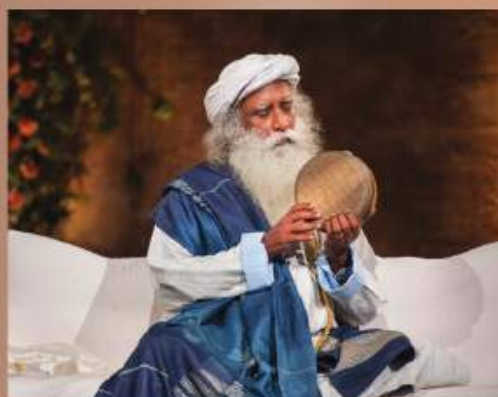
Isha Vidhya is committed to providing high-quality education to rural children, bridging the urban-rural divide. Currently, over 10,200 students are enrolled across Isha Vidhya schools, with 5,500 students on full scholarships — creating opportunities for future generations.

A Global Force for Human and Planetary Wellbeing

Whether through transforming individual lives with yogic sciences or leading massive environmental and social initiatives, Sadhguru stands as a beacon of possibility in a world searching for sustainable solutions.

Sadhguru is a true embodiment of the celebration of life, beyond all the above initiatives, with his active involvement in fields as diverse as architecture, visual design, poetry, painting, sports, music, aviation and motorcycling. Canada India Foundation is proud to recognize his enormous contributions to humanity by presenting him the 2025 CIF Global Indian Award.





SADHGURU

"Being together is the beginning. Working together in the middle. Dissolving together is the ultimate. My idea of "together" is seven billion people."

"It is a lack of human consciousness that has rendered Mother Earth, the very basis of our existence, into a commodity with an expiry date. Let our time on Earth be the best time; we must act now."

"Yoga is not just exercise system. Yoga is the Science of obliterating the boundaries of individuality to know the universality of one's existence."

"Every moment of your life, you perform an action – physically, mentally, emotionally, and energy-wise. Each action creates a certain memory. That is Karma."



SPEAKS...

"An intellectual understanding that is not backed by experiential knowledge can lead to mind games and deceptive states."

"Ecological sustenance and the Inclusive nature of spiritual process are inseparable."

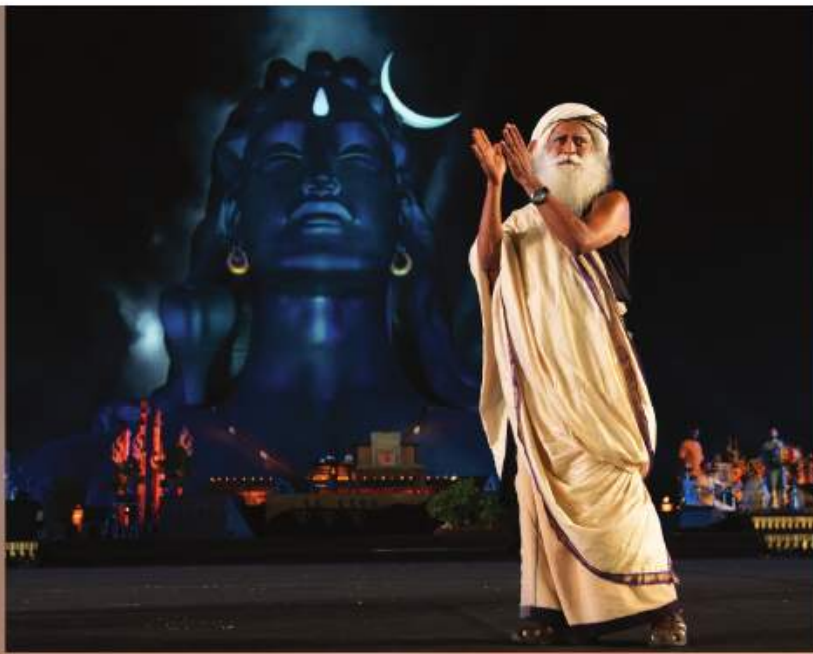
"A Human Being is like a seed. Either you can remain as you are, or you can grow yourself into a wonderful tree with flowers and fruits"

"If we do not work for individual transformation, if we do not look for ways of making the individual peaceful, talking about world peace is just one more entertainment in the world."



Vision Plus Action to
Create a Conscious Planet

SADHGURU



Sadhguru

MAN

A fearless child, a revolutionary teen, an irreverent youth, how did it all add up to make the man who has transformed millions of lives?

MYSTIC

Our two eyes can capture the physical world, that which can block light but are blind to all else. Only by opening the third eye can one perceive that which is seen and unseen. This is the realm of mysticism, of knowing life in its full depth and dimension. Sadhguru is a bridge into this mysterious arena of life. It is a homecoming, a settling back into yourself.



Sadhguru

MISSION

Sadhguru has often said that "society is overripe for a spiritual process." His fundamental vision is to offer the science of inner wellbeing to every human being – a science that helps a person realize the ultimate potential within. From this vision stem a multitude of projects, programs, and methods, all towards the same aim: to raise every human being to the peak of their potential, so that they are exuberant, all-inclusive, and in harmony within themselves and the world.



Vision Plus Action to
Create a Conscious Planet

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Previous Award Recipients



2008

Sam Pitroda

Chairman
National Knowledge Commission,
Government of India



2009

Tulsi Tanti

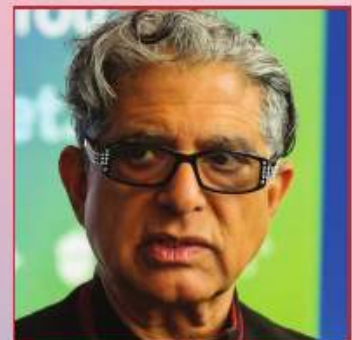
President & CEO
Suzlon Energy



2010

Ratan Tata

Chairman
Tata Group



2012

Deepak Chopra

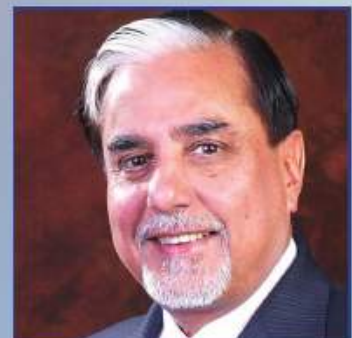
Author & World Renowned Expert
in Mind-Body Medicine



2014

N. R. Narayana Murthy

Executive Chairman
Infosys

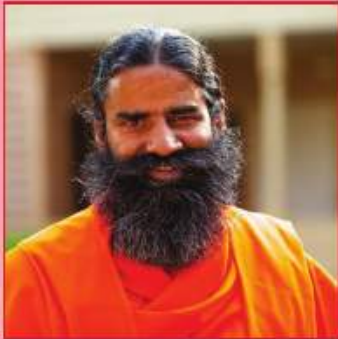


2016

Dr. Subash Chandra

Chairman
Essel Group

Previous Award Recipients



2017
Yogrishi Baba Ramdev
Yoga Guru



2018
Sparsh Shah
Motivational Speaker



2019
Hon. Stephen Harper
22nd Prime Minister of Canada



2022
Anil Agarwal
Chairman
Vedanta Resources Limited



2023
Sudha Murty
Founder & Chairperson
Murty Trust

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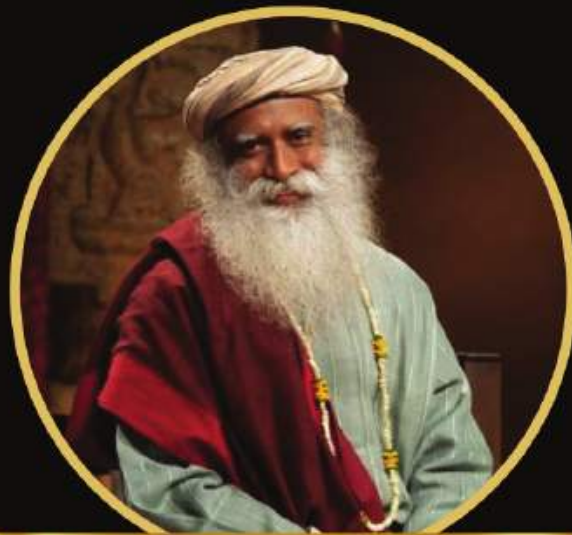
The AIM Canadian chapter has an **excellent reputation in terms of its zero administration cost.** AIM India has **Special Consultative Status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council**, a testimony to the fact that our team is credible, focused, and results-oriented.

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SADHGURU

RECIPIENT OF
CIF GLOBAL INDIAN
OF THE YEAR 2025

Heartfelt congratulations! Your unwavering devotion as a spiritual guide and champion for the environment continues to inspire and uplift countless lives across the globe. Your insight and steadfast service to both people and the planet make a truly profound impact.

GIRISH AND ROHINI KEKRE

Building Wealth While Being Culturally Sensitive

Amit Brahme, MBA



Like many people, I'm so glad that I embarked on my journey to call Canada home. I arrived here in 2005 with eyes wide open and unsure of what to expect in this unfamiliar land; in fact, Canada was the first country I had ever visited when I left India. Safe to say, moving to Canada was one of the most important events in my life, but it was also rather terrifying and filled with uncertainty.

Fortunately, I met with members of Canada India Foundation (CIF), who helped me acclimate to my new surroundings and build my professional network in Canada. Coming to a new country, it was reassuring to have a trusted network of caring professionals who guided me and offered practical advice.

One of the best things about CIF is its unwavering commitment to promoting a genuine understanding and appreciation of India as a compelling economic partner, within Canada and vice versa. Since its inception in 2007, CIF has been an active champion of strengthening the bilateral relations between Canada and India. It achieves this objective, in part, by helping Indo-Canadians in their professional and entrepreneurial journeys in Canada. Its members are Indo-Canadians with a global vision, demonstrated excellence in their professions, and possess high levels of leadership skills.

Canada is known for its multi-culturalism, represented by a wide range of ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. This diversity is integral to our social fabric, fostering an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect. During my Oath of Citizenship ceremony, individuals from more than ninety different countries were present.

From education to sports, from the workplace to home and beyond, we experience daily the diverse cultures that make up Canada. The cultural communities within our society preserve and celebrate unique traditions, languages and customs, plus we constitute a strong economic force as well. Our different backgrounds contribute to the

economy through various cultural industries, tourism and international trade. Festivals, cultural events and ethnic businesses add vibrancy and growth to our economy.

I have the distinct privilege of leading the Strategic Cultural Segments team for Scotia Wealth Management®. In my role, I see firsthand the economic impact of cultural diversity. I also see how we often share the same types of financial challenges – regardless of our ethnicity or profession – that can be effectively addressed with strong wealth planning.

Scotia Wealth Management's Total Wealth approach is one that is holistic and team-based. We methodically address the entire lifecycle of our clients and what is most important to them: their family, business, retirement, legacy, all of it. Our team of specialists work together to offer clients personalized advice on managing their wealth and how best to transfer it to future generations. We partner closely with our clients at every turn, bringing together their thinking with ours. We call this inspired collaboration Enriched Thinking®, and it truly differentiates our wealth offering within the Canadian financial services industry.

Since the world is constantly changing, so should your wealth strategy. Each of our clients, whether they are individuals or families, business owners or executives, is unique – and so are their financial objectives and





circumstances. In particular, women tend to have unique financial goals and challenges, and our Total Wealth approach empowers them to take control of their financial futures and achieve those goals. As our clients build wealth and face many complex financial decisions, they can benefit from the sound advice of a Scotia Wealth Management specialist. We help our clients explore and evaluate their options, live their life with purpose, and build a meaningful legacy.

Working with CIF, Scotia Wealth Management understands the importance of integrating and respecting culture as an essential aspect of client relationships. We aim to impart our deep wealth experience and robust thought leadership to benefit CIF members and the broader Indo-Canadian community.

For the coming year, we've planned a series of engaging thought leadership events that may help the Indo-Canadian

community with their wealth planning pursuits. As a CIF member and strategic cultural segments leader, I'm very excited to bring the best of Scotia Wealth Management's proven capabilities to this fantastic organization.

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What Needs to be Done to Realize Bilateral Trade Potential?

Prof. Sucha Singh Gill, Ph. D.



We are living in an era of interdependence of countries. The scale of dependence has converted the world into a global village. Communication technology has reduced distances and boosted the inter-country flow of goods and services. The international financial system has integrated

the world at a level never seen before. Trade between countries promotes the international division of labour in the production of goods and services. Trade is considered as a promoter of economic efficiency in a competitive world. Under ideal conditions it helps to locate production of a commodity at a place where the cost is the minimum.

Certain regional specialization takes place in the light of factor endowment of various countries. The labour abundant countries specialise in production of labour-intensive commodities while capital intensive goods are produced in capital abundant countries. The change of factor endowment leads to reorganization of specialization on a global scale. The formation of the World Trade Organization in 1995 formalized the framework of global economic integration. Since then, the scale of economic exchanges between countries has not only increased but it has also given a fillip to the emerging economies including India. India is seen to be one of the major beneficiaries of globalization and liberalization. Trade relations of India with other countries must be seen in the context of its rising aspirations.

Today India and Canada are both large economies actively seeking to increase markets for their goods and services. Both the economies are market oriented and are well integrated into the global exchange of goods, services and financial flows. In 2023, the total bilateral trade between Canada and India reached \$9.36 billion, with Indian exports to Canada at \$5.56 billion and Canadian exports to India at \$3.80 billion. When one looks at these figures in comparison to the size of their economies, there is tremendous scope for growth.

At an aggregate level, the trade between the two countries

should be equal to their average share of income in the global economy. This average works out to be 2.72% but actual trade is less than two percent when imports and exports are added. This means that there is an unrealized potential of trade between India and Canada to the extent of nearly fifty percent of the present level. India has additional advantages to expand trade with Canada. The presence of a large Indian diaspora in Canada can further help this economic relationship.

Census data pertaining to 2021 shows that migrants from India constitute 3.6% of Canada's population. If children born to Indian migrants in Canada are included, then population with Indian ancestry becomes 5.1% of the total. This population continues to follow Indian food habits with a large component of items imported from India or other South Asian countries. This includes rice (basmati), spices, clothes, jewelry etc. Indian diaspora also continues to maintain close contacts with people and places of their origin. This provides a solid base for goods purchased by diaspora but imported from India or her neighbours. This aspect raises further potential of increasing trade of Canada with India.

Here, it is useful to mention some factors which are barriers to trade expansion. In a competitive world, both countries must compete with their rival suppliers to access their respective markets. This requires that the producers from both the economies should improve production efficiency to successfully compete with their rivals. At the same time the commodities supplied mutually must be better in quality. Above all, the countries must have enough marketable surplus to meet each other's requirements. Along with economic factors, the non-economic barriers must be identified and solutions worked out without any delay.

The supply of agricultural goods such as long grain rice or coarse grains, vegetables, fruits or dairy products must be free from pesticide residues and preferably produced by organic farming. The infrastructure to transport perishable items by refrigerated or cold supply chain is critical. This would require a lot of investment to improve production, storage and transport technology to access the Canadian market. Given the present level of dynamism of development, India can achieve this in the near future. This can help Canada to break the monopoly of California in the supply of fruits and vegetables.



Another area in which India has the capacity, advantage in price and quality is the service sector. In software technology India has established itself in the world, but though many IT majors are present in Canada, the field is still wide open for newer participants. Indian exports of pharmaceutical products to Canada, is limited. But trade volume can be increased by promoting telemedicine or test related services. Also, a part of the tremendous pressure on Canadian healthcare system can be eased if policies exist that encourage medical tourism.

Present list of exports from India consist of consumer goods such as jewelry, cut diamonds, long grain rice etc. The other goods are chemicals, plastic, rubber, metallic and non-metallic minerals. The scale of existing exports from India can be raised and many goods and services can be added to the existing list. This can be done on the basis of exploring new commodities which India can supply and are in demand in Canada.

Similarly Canadian list of exports to India can be enlarged. Present list of exports from Canada to India include metallic and non- metallic minerals, farm products and seafood, energy products, among others. Nearly one half of total Indian imports of lentils come from Canada. Unique synergies of cost advantage are possible in this relationship. For example, increased exports of vegetables and fruits from India to Canada will require large orders of packing material, mainly wood that can be provided by Canada. Canadian companies can also invest in India for manufacturing of goods and services for export to Canada. There is further scope to increase daily flights to and from several Indian cities to different destinations in Canada.

To expand international trade between India and Canada complementarity will have to be worked out. This can be done through joint studies involving experts from both countries. The diplomatic hurdles which have crept into the Canada India bilateral relationship need to be addressed and solved on an urgent basis. Once these issues are resolved the two countries can take economic relations to new heights. Once the relationship is fully restored, diplomats can play a positive role in this matter. India and Canada must resume negotiations to discuss and finalize Comprehensive Economic Partnerships Agreement (CEPA) to expand and achieve the full potential of trade and investment. The two countries have differences in factor endowment with abundance of young and skilled population in India and Canada blessed with an abundance of resources. Both countries fall into different climatic zones, which creates a lot of complementarities between them. As they are geographically apart there are no perennial conflicts among them.

The signing of CEPA can create a path of economic expansion for them. The resolution of frictions and building of confidence is possible through a process of earnest dialogue. Respecting each other's concerns, and reasonable accommodation can go a long way in entering a new era of relationship. The role of the Indian diaspora will be important in building the next phase of quality relationship between India and Canada. The commitment to market economy and robust democratic systems in both societies will eventually help ease tensions and create a path towards achieving the maximum potential in the India Canada economic corridor.

Prof. Sucha Singh Gill is a former Director General of Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh.

From Human Dignity to Mother Earth Divinity

Chetan Handa



It is time to accept that our planet is facing grave dangers from climate change, water scarcity, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. All of them can be attributed to human activity. Our lifestyle, driven by industrialization, consumerism, and the overexploitation of resources, is threatening

the very balance that keeps life safe and thriving. Our soils are degraded, glaciers are melting, species are vanishing, and extreme weather is becoming the new normal.

Thousands of scientific papers have been written on these problems. Millions of children are learning about climate change in schools. Nations organize global summits, and NGOs run campaigns to spread awareness. Yet, our collective behavior remains largely unchanged.

Let us begin with a couple of simple yet serious questions: Why, despite all this awareness, do we still fail to act responsibly?

Why are we destroying our only home?

Because the problem lies deeper—in our mindset.

Identity and Superiority Complex

From ancient times, humans have formed groups based on religion, race, caste, or nationality. These groupings provide identity and security but also breed a dangerous us vs. them mentality. History is full of the negative consequences of such a mindset — wars, genocides, slavery, the Holocaust, colonization, caste discrimination, and mass killings.

Following the tragic events of World War Two, the international community came together to promote and protect the idea of Universal Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) declares: “All human beings are equal in dignity and rights.”

This was a remarkable step forward. It introduced a new vision—seeing all of humanity as one group, one family, beyond borders, religion, or race. It helped us begin treating every human with equal respect and value.

However, to truly protect human dignity, we must go one step further. The future of Humanity is not the only concern - the Earth’s ecosystem is in jeopardy. If we fail to protect the planet, the human rights movement itself will become irrelevant. After all, what value does human dignity hold if the planet that sustains us is destroyed?

We continue to cut forests, poison rivers, pollute the air, and kill animals. Our core mistake is believing the Earth exists solely for human use. This mindset—“humans above all”—has turned us against nature itself.

Not Just Human Dignity, but Earth Divinity

During my childhood, we didn’t have much money. Yet every day, when my mother began cooking, the first thing she did was set aside five rotis: one for a cow, one for a dog, one for a beggar, one for a monk, and one for the birds. She still follows this tradition.

She places water on the rooftop for thirsty birds. She stops by rivers to offer coins and prayers. She waters and prays to the Tulsi plant, the Peepal, and the Banyan tree.

As a child, I didn’t understand. One day, I asked her, “Why do you do all this?”

She smiled and said:

The ancient wisdom of the verse:

“अयं नजिः परो वेत्तुगिणना लघुचेतसाम् | उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ||” (Maha Upanishad)

translates to:

This is mine, that is yours, is the calculation of narrow-minded people. For the magnanimous, the whole Earth is one family.

Everything we receive - food, water, resources - comes from these divine forces. Taking without giving back is akin to theft.

These acts are not outdated rituals. They are deep ecological wisdom in practice. They teach us:

- Gratitude towards nature
- Compassion for all living beings
- Living in harmony with Earth

Our ancestors weren’t just spiritual—they were scientists of the soul. In today’s world full of machines, screens, and artificial intelligence, my mother’s simple habits offer a powerful way to live—with respect, balance, and awareness.



Just as we learned to value every human life, it's now time to value every form of life.

A New Idea: Earth Divinity

Just as we created the term "humanity" to represent all human beings, we now need a new term to represent all life, both living and non-living, that supports our existence. I propose the idea of Earth Divinity.

What is Earth Divinity?

What is common among all living and non-living systems? The answer: life energy—the same divine forces that permeates in you, in me, in every part of this planet.

Earth Divinity means:

- The divinity of all living beings—humans, animals, plants, insects.
- The divinity of all non-living beings—soil, rivers, mountains, air, and fire.

This concept recognizes the divine life energy that flows through everything - humans, animals, plants, rivers, oceans, and even the soil beneath our feet. This energy connects us all, making us part of a single, sacred system. Just as we emphasize human dignity, we must honour the sanctity of the Earth.



Modern science says only “living things” have value or consciousness. But look deeper— all living beings came from so-called “non-living” elements. Pause and reflect: how can something non-conscious give birth to something conscious?

This suggests the entire ecosystem flows with the same consciousness and life energy. The rivers, the wind, the soil - they are all part of the divine ecosystem that nurtures all life. We should show respect and care for every component of this divine ecosystem. By nurturing nature, we nurture ourselves, for the health of the ecosystem is directly tied to the survival of humanity.

Every stone, every breeze, every drop of water plays a role in sustaining life. We are all interconnected, interdependent, and incomplete without each other. Just as we treat temples, churches, and mosques with reverence, we must extend that same reverence to the Earth.

Changing Attitudes for a Sustainable Future

When people begin to see one another as divine, love and respect grow naturally. Just as we created “human rights,” we can now begin to recognize “Earth rights”—for rivers, forests, animals, and ecosystems. This change in mindset can transform our world.

The same human beings who harmed the Earth can now help heal it. By embracing Earth Divinity, we can restore the balance.

We Are Only Guests Here

We are here for a limited time.

Just like when we visit a friend’s home.

We stay, receive their care, and before leaving we say “thank you” out of gratitude.

Mother Earth is the kindest host offering air, water, food, beauty, healing, and shelter without ever asking for anything in return.

Shouldn’t we be full of gratitude?

Shouldn’t we thank every part of this planet - every animal, every species, tree, cloud, and breeze that made our lives possible?

The Real Question: How Will You Say Thank You?

So ask yourself:

- Will I leave this Earth better or worse than I found it?
- Will I be remembered as a caretaker—or just a consumer?
- Will I offer gratitude—or just take and forget?

This is your chance to choose.

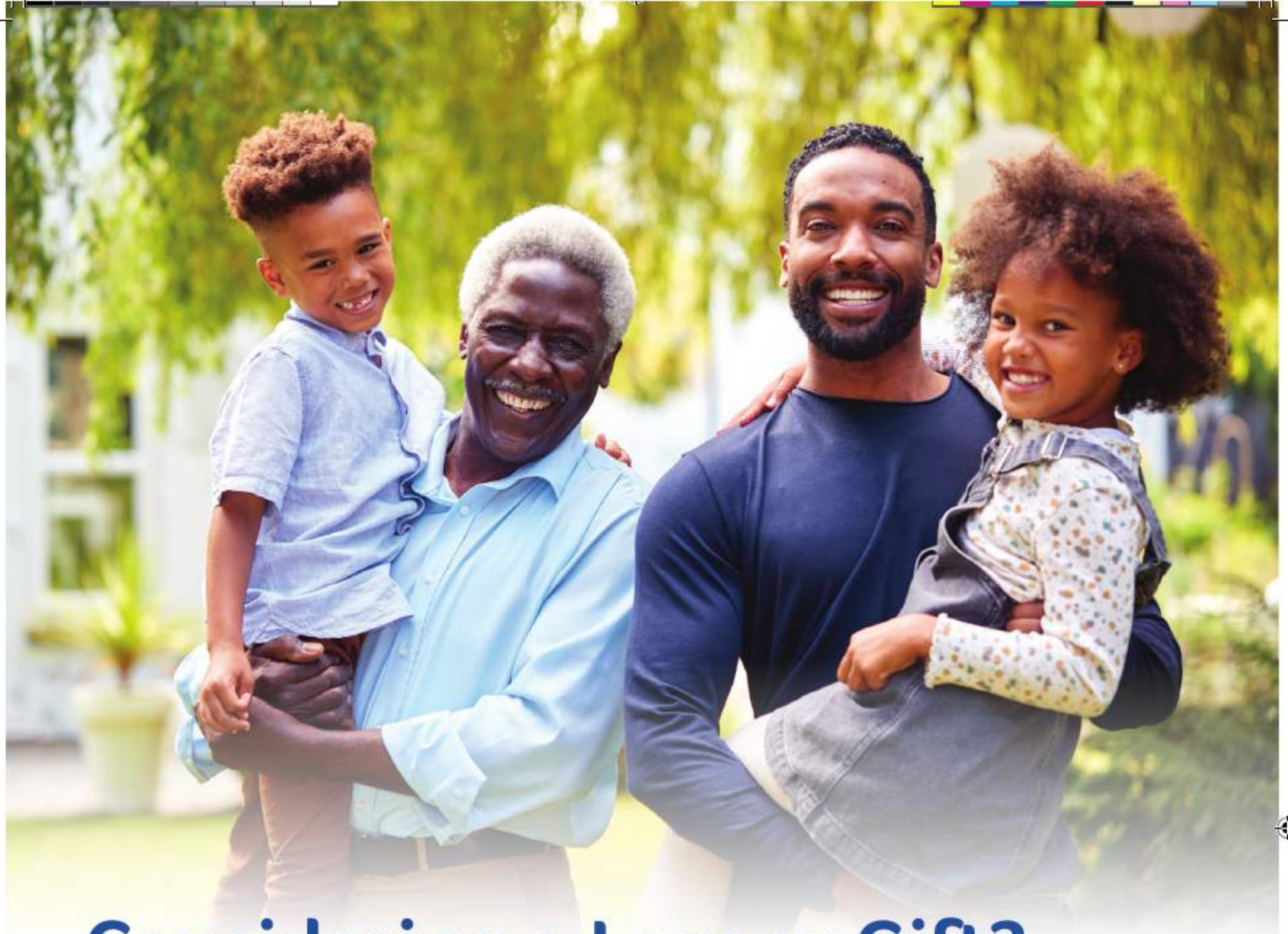
This is our chance to honor Earth Divinity—not just in words, but through action.

Conclusion: From Human Dignity to Earth Divinity

It’s time to widen our understanding of dignity and respect. Protecting only human rights is no longer enough. We must now embrace the sacredness of all life. When we do, we can create a world where both humanity and nature flourish together.

Final Thought: Earth Divinity is Not Religion — It is Respect.

Chetan Handa is the National Co-convenor of Canada India Foundation.



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Tech for Good: India and Canada Collaborating to Create a Conscious Planet

Sanjay Tugnait



The convergence of technology and social responsibility offers unprecedented opportunities to drive meaningful change. “Tech for Good” refers to the use of technology to address societal and environmental issues, such as poverty, healthcare, and climate change. In this context,

collaboration between India and Canada could pave the way for innovative solutions that prioritize both human well-being and environmental sustainability. Together, these two nations can harness the power of technology to contribute to a conscious planet, where long-term prosperity is prioritized over short-term gains.

The Rise of “Tech for Good”

“Tech for Good” involves deploying technology—digital tools, software, and hardware—to address issues like climate change, healthcare, and social inequality. As the world faces many crises ranging from rising global temperatures to resource shortages, technology is playing a crucial role in developing sustainable solutions. According to the United Nations, global CO₂ emissions must fall by 45% by 2030 to prevent catastrophic climate change, and tech innovation will be vital in achieving this goal. We can see the devastating impact of climate change like Canada’s annual average temperature over land warmed by 1.7 degrees Celsius between 1948 and 2016 and the impact of these changes resulting in the largest wildfire recorded in Jasper National Park in the last 100 years; the wildfire coincided with the hottest day ever recorded. A new study by IPE Global and Esri India has revealed that over 84% of Indian districts are susceptible to extreme heat waves, with 70% of these districts also experiencing increased frequency and intensity of extreme rainfall events.

India and Canada, with their robust technological sectors and shared commitment to sustainable development, are well-positioned to collaborate on tech-driven social impact initiatives. With India being home to 5.8 million software developers (the second-largest pool globally) and Canada recognized for its advanced AI and tech research ecosystem, this partnership has the potential to lead the

way in creating a more conscious, sustainable planet. Canadian and Indian companies have an opportunity to lead in Consumer AI, Enterprise AI, and AI Infrastructure.

Why India and Canada Are Ideal Partners?

India and Canada complement each other that make them ideal partners for “tech for good” initiatives.

Key Areas for Collaboration

1. AI and Digital technologies

India, with its rapidly growing population—set to reach 1.47 billion by 2027—has emerged as a global tech hub, producing some of the brightest software engineers, AI experts, and data scientists. The country’s government has also invested heavily in technology-driven growth, with initiatives such as Digital India, which aims to provide digital infrastructure to its 1.4 billion citizens.

Canada ranks as one of the world’s top countries for AI research and development, most clearly embodied by Geoffrey Hinton, a professor at the University of Toronto, widely considered the godfather of AI who was awarded the 2024 Nobel prize in Physics for his work in advancing AI. Canada has also made significant strides in environmental stewardship and sustainable growth; it ranks 14th globally in the Global Innovation Index and continues to be a leader in clean energy and advanced research to complement India’s technological prowess and growing innovation landscape.

Collaboration between India and Canada in the digital payment space offers significant mutual benefits. India, with its rapid adoption of digital payments through platforms like UPI, has created a robust ecosystem for real-time, secure, and low-cost transactions. Canada’s digital payment landscape, though advanced, can benefit from India’s large-scale deployment experience, innovation, and cost-effective models. On the other hand, Canada’s regulatory frameworks and focus on cybersecurity can provide valuable insights for India to further enhance the safety and governance of its digital payment systems. By leveraging each country’s strengths, such collaboration can drive financial inclusion, foster innovation, and create more efficient cross-border payment systems, boosting trade and economic cooperation.

2. Climate Tech and Renewable Energy

Climate change is a critical issue for both nations, and



technology plays a pivotal role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting renewable energy. India has set an ambitious goal to generate 50% of its total electricity from renewable sources by 2030, primarily through solar and wind power. International Solar Alliance, which aims to increase the global adoption of solar energy, is a testament to India's commitment to a green energy future. In 2022, India had an installed renewable energy capacity of 151.4 GW, with a target to reach 450 GW by 2030.

Canada, which derives 67.5% of its electricity from renewable sources, is known for its innovation in clean energy technologies. Collaborating with Canada could help India accelerate its renewable energy transition by sharing advancements in smart grids, battery storage, and carbon capture technologies. Canada's investment of CAD \$8 billion into green energy projects in 2023 highlights the commitment to reducing emissions, and this expertise could complement India's scale in renewables.

3. Agriculture and Food Security

Agriculture is a critical sector for both countries, and tech innovations can improve food security while reducing environmental degradation. 58% of India's workforce are in agriculture, contributing 17% to its GDP, but challenges like water scarcity and soil degradation are significant.

Technology, such as AI-driven precision farming and data analytics, can help increase crop yields while minimizing resource use.

Canada, a leader in agricultural innovation, could offer expertise in sustainable farming practices. For example, Canada's agricultural tech sector, valued at CAD \$5.4 billion, is pioneering innovations in precision farming, IoT-based crop monitoring, and advanced water management. Partnering with India, Canada could help scale these solutions to improve productivity across India's 140 million hectares of farmland. Drones, AI-driven pest management, and blockchain for supply chain transparency are key areas where this collaboration could deliver tangible results.

4. Healthcare and Telemedicine

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of digital healthcare, and both India and Canada are leveraging telemedicine to expand healthcare access. India, with its 1.4 billion population, faces significant healthcare challenges, particularly in rural areas. The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) aims to digitize healthcare records for 1.3 billion people by 2025, transforming how healthcare is delivered across the country.

Canada, known for its high-quality healthcare system, is



at the forefront of AI-driven diagnostics and telemedicine platforms. With a CAD \$240 million investment into virtual healthcare in 2021, Canada’s expertise in mobile health apps and remote diagnostics can complement India’s efforts to improve healthcare access for underserved communities. By collaborating, India and Canada could develop scalable telemedicine solutions that address the healthcare needs of rural populations, reducing the urban-rural healthcare divide.

5. Smart Cities and Urban Development

Urbanization is accelerating in both nations, and the demand for smart cities is growing. India’s Smart Cities Mission seeks to develop 100 smart cities, enhancing urban living through technology-driven solutions. From smart traffic management to waste recycling, technology is being integrated into every aspect of city life.

Canada’s urban planning expertise, combined with its advanced IoT and AI-driven smart city technologies, could significantly benefit India’s smart city initiatives. Canada has successfully implemented smart lighting, water management systems, and energy-efficient buildings across its major cities. By 2030, India’s urban population is expected to rise to 600 million, and smart city collaborations between the two nations could focus on sustainable transportation, energy-efficient infrastructure, and green urban planning.

Promoting an Inclusive and Sustainable Technological Future

As India and Canada collaborate on “tech for good” initiatives, it is essential to ensure that these innovations are inclusive and equitable. Technology should not widen social inequalities but instead provide opportunities for

marginalized communities. In India, where 66% of the population lives in rural areas, bridging the digital divide will be critical.

Programs that focus on building digital literacy and promoting access to technology for underrepresented groups—such as women, indigenous communities, and low-income populations—should be prioritized. Canada’s focus on diversity and inclusion, particularly in the tech sector, can guide India in fostering a more inclusive workforce, ensuring that technological progress benefits all.

A Shared Vision for a Conscious Planet

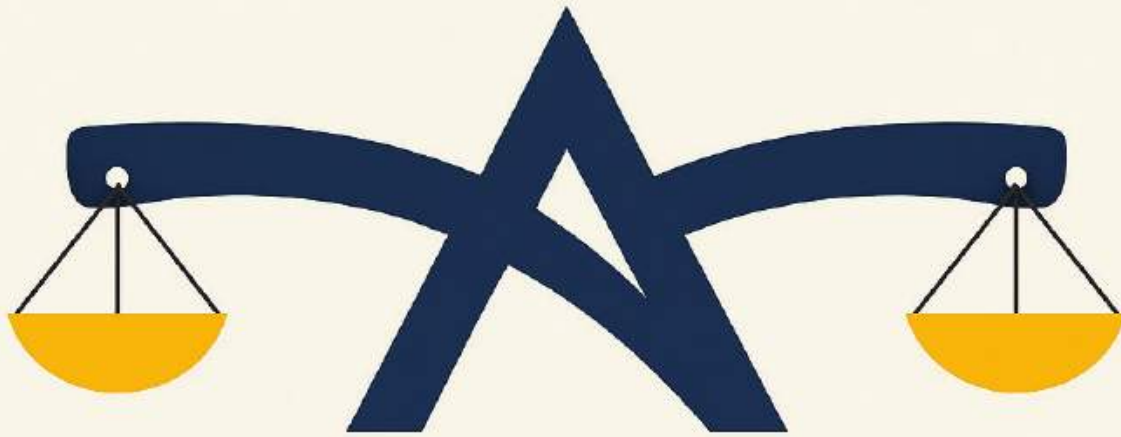
A “conscious planet” envisions a future where economic success is measured not just by GDP but by social equity and environmental sustainability.

An India-Canada partnership in “tech for good” has the potential to lead the global movement toward building a conscious planet. By leveraging their complementary strengths in technology, innovation, and sustainable development, the two nations can address critical global challenges and drive transformative change. From clean energy solutions to healthcare access, this collaboration can help shape a future where technology not only drives economic growth but also ensures the well-being of people and the planet.

Through joint efforts, India and Canada can move closer to realizing the vision of a conscious planet—one where humanity coexists harmoniously with nature, and technology is a force for social and environmental good. With the right investments and collaborations, I believe this vision is truly within our reach.

Sanjay Tugnait is the President & CEO of Fairfax Digital Services (A Fairfax Company) and was the Co-Chair of Sustainability Task Force @ India G20 Startup 20

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Disease Prevention and Good Health Through Yoga

Satish Thakkar, FCPA, FCGA



The Canadian health sector faces numerous challenges, including rising healthcare costs and a system overwhelmed by chronic illnesses. Despite advancements in medical science, contemporary society continues to grapple with epidemics and pandemics of both non-communicable

chronic diseases and communicable infectious diseases, compounded by an alarming increase in mental health issues. In Canada, chronic diseases alone account for 89% of all deaths and more than \$80 billion in annual healthcare costs. These public health crises are partly related to personal lifestyle and behavior, but also to global conflicts, social upheaval, and even technology. Additionally, adverse side effects of prescription medications, particularly among the aging population, contribute to the problem.

Despite significant expenditure, the country struggles to cope with the healthcare challenges it is facing today. This may be attributed to the fact that most of the efforts and expenditure directed at healthcare are in the areas of diagnostics, treatment, cure and recovery. In this context, disease prevention and holistic health promotion are crucial. Yoga, an age-old practice with ancient Indian roots, offers a viable solution that can be integrated into Canadian health systems for better outcomes in physical and mental health.

This article explores how yoga can serve as a preventive healthcare measure and proposes policies to integrate it into the Canadian healthcare framework.

Health Sector in Canada and Its Policies

Canada's healthcare system is highly regarded for its accessibility but is under significant strain due to an aging population and an increasing prevalence of chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, asthma, heart disease and mental health issues. Existing policies largely focus on treatment rather than prevention, leading to escalating healthcare costs without a corresponding improvement in overall population health. In recent years, it has become evident that focusing on prevention is critical.

By redirecting some healthcare efforts toward preventing diseases & overall health promotion along with disease management, Canada can create a healthier population, reduce costs, and relieve pressure on healthcare facilities. Importance of Yoga in Health Promotion

Yoga is an ancient practice that incorporates physical exercises (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation, offering a holistic approach to health. It has been shown to improve flexibility, strength, and mental health while reducing stress and managing chronic conditions like hypertension, depression, stress, and dementia. Recognizing its potential, the United Nations General Assembly declared June 21st as the International Day of Yoga, with over 172 countries, including Canada, supporting this initiative. Yoga is more than a fitness regimen; it is a lifestyle tool that promotes overall health and well-being. Unlike many healthcare interventions that are reactive, yoga is proactive. It helps build physical and mental resilience, enhancing the body's ability to cope with stress and resist diseases.

Rising Healthcare Costs

The continuous rise in healthcare costs is evident in Canada as the current infrastructure struggles to meet the growing demand for services. Canada's healthcare system appears unsustainable due to high costs associated with managing chronic diseases within a multicultural population. Reactive treatment is more expensive and sometimes less effective in promoting overall health compared to preventive health promotion measures. Despite significant spending, projected to reach \$372 billion, or \$9,054 per Canadian, representing 12.4% of Canada's GDP, health outcomes remain suboptimal. Nearly 20% of this expenditure is attributable to mental health and addiction services. Lingering effects of the pandemic have contributed to growth in hospital and physician expenditures. One of the important aspects of the current, conventional approach to healthcare is that it is highly dependent on physical infrastructure, consequently inflating the overall cost of healthcare. A preventive approach to healthcare which also reduces the dependence on physical infrastructure is therefore highly desirable.

Focusing on Prevention

To reduce the burden on the healthcare system, policies must shift toward prevention along with treatment. Yoga, as a low-cost and universally accepted practice, has the



potential to play a vital role in this transition. Incorporating yoga into health policies aligns with promoting a preventive healthcare model. Encouraging yoga practice can promote a healthy lifestyle that benefits individuals both physically and mentally.

Research Initiatives to Strengthen Yoga's Role in Health

To further strengthen the case for yoga as a preventive health measure, Canada must invest in research initiatives to determine its specific health benefits in a local context. The Canada India Foundation launched an initiative in collaboration with the University Health Network to promote yoga & Ayurveda research in 2023. While international research has demonstrated positive outcomes elsewhere, Canadian-focused research could provide policymakers with data on how yoga specifically helps different demographics within the country. This evidence-based approach would also encourage wider adoption among the public and support from healthcare professionals.

Yoga in Schools

Introducing yoga as part of the school curriculum under the banner of sports and physical education can help promote both physical and mental well-being among children and adolescents. Early exposure to yoga can instill healthy habits, reduce stress, and improve concentration—preparing students to lead healthier lives. Including yoga in schools would not only benefit students but also reduce the future burden on the healthcare system by creating healthier adults.

Community Workshops for Older Canadians

Canada is facing significant challenges due to its aging population resulting in higher healthcare budgets. Yoga can play a significant role in supporting the health of

older Canadians. Yoga can improve flexibility, balance, and strength in older adults, helping them maintain independence for longer and potentially reducing the need for long-term care services.

Yoga's stress-reduction and mindfulness aspects can support mental health in seniors, which is crucial as the population ages. Yoga classes can provide social connections for seniors, helping to combat isolation and improve overall well-being. Civil society workshops through community and recreation centers could introduce yoga to seniors, helping improve flexibility, balance, and overall well-being.

Institutionalizing Yoga at All Government Levels

To fully harness yoga's potential, it needs institutionalization across all levels of government. This would include promoting yoga at grassroots levels, ensuring access in public spaces, and incorporating it into public health initiatives. Governments can partner with community organizations, non-profits, recreation centers, and schools to make yoga classes accessible to everyone regardless of age or socio-economic status. Furthermore, incorporating yoga under OHIP (Ontario Health Insurance Plan) and other insurance plans could make it more affordable for Canadians. By encouraging preventive healthcare measures like yoga, the government could reduce overall healthcare expenditure as healthier citizens would lead to fewer claims and less frequent visits to hospitals.

Economic and Social Benefits of Yoga

Including yoga as a preventive health strategy could have far-reaching economic and social benefits. By reducing chronic disease burdens, healthcare costs could be significantly curtailed, benefiting insurance industries through lower costs and stabilizing premiums due to fewer



claims. Additionally, a healthy population is productive, a key driver of economic prosperity. People practising yoga regularly report better moods—less stress and more vitality translating into better work productivity and stronger community bonds.

Caveats

While the benefits of yoga as performed in the time tested and holistic manner, as done for centuries in India, are evident, one must be careful not to reduce it simply to a set of physical exercise routines. The mental and spiritual components of Yoga are equally important. The benefits of Yoga are also fully realized when combined with proper lifestyle and dietary habits.

Conclusion

Integrating yoga into health policies is not only about improving physical health but also about fostering a culture of well-being, resilience and mindfulness. A happy and healthy population is more productive, harmonious and able to contribute positively to society. By shifting focus toward preventive measures like yoga, Canada can take significant steps toward a more sustainable healthcare system and healthier population.

The time is ripe for policymakers to recognize yoga's potential and incorporate it into the healthcare and education frameworks for a more prosperous and healthier Canada.

Satish Thakkar is President, Excelsior Group; Immediate Past Chair of Canada-India Foundation; Past President of Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce; and Current President, Vedic Spiritual Heritage Foundation & International Yoga Day Canada.

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The Seventh Generation Principle

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo, B. A., LL.B., Psy.D., KC, CACCF, OSJ



We live on a remarkable Indigenous people have inhabited this world for millennia, long before modern societies as we know them today. Throughout their time, Indigenous communities have lived according to a simple, yet profound precept that has guided a deeply rooted relationship with the land, Mother

Earth. This connection extends beyond the community and down to future generations in the sharing of traditional knowledge, languages, and cultural practices. One of the most powerful teachings passed down through generations of Indigenous people is the Seventh Generation Principle. This concept is rooted in the idea that no decision should be made that could potentially harm the land or resources for seven generations to come. It is a call to action for individuals to take responsibility for ensuring that their impacts are sustainable and do not jeopardize the health, survival or prosperity of generations to come.

The original law passed down through ancestors, in the form of oral tradition, crystallizes the sacred responsibility of Indigenous people as caretakers of all that is on Mother Earth. This law is not only a matter of tradition, but a holistic way of life that embodies the very essence of sustainability, environmental stewardship, and respect for the natural world. According to this teaching, each generation is entrusted with the land's safekeeping, ensuring that the earth's resources are preserved and nurtured for future generations. This is not just a suggestion but an obligation—one that emphasizes that we do not own the land but are instead temporary stewards tasked with protecting it. It also promotes a personal sense of belonging to the land through storytelling, as each individual action reflects that of the past, present and future.

At its core, this principle teaches that humans are deeply interconnected with nature. By understanding and respecting this relationship, Indigenous peoples have lived sustainably on the land for thousands of years in harmony with Mother Earth. Their knowledge and practices serve as a powerful reminder in today's world where environmental degradation, climate change, and loss of biodiversity have

become increasingly urgent issues.

Consciousness is a complex concept that can be defined in various ways. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, consciousness is "...the state of being aware of and responsive to one's surroundings...", "[a] person's awareness or perception of something...", and "...the fact of awareness by the mind of itself and the world." Consciousness, in this sense, is not just an abstract concept, but instead a fundamental aspect of how we interact with the world around us. It shapes our understanding of our environment and the role we play.

I firmly believe that consciousness is the foundation for our health, both mental and physical. To truly understand our world and our environment, we must become fully "aware" of our surroundings and the implications of our actions. This awareness is not just about being in touch with the physical world but also about recognizing how our thoughts, behaviours, and emotions influence our health. The connection between mental health and our environment is undeniable. We are impacted by what surrounds us, and in turn, our actions have a profound effect on the world.

This leads to a crucial question: How do we remain mindful of our surroundings and the consequences of our actions? By cultivating greater awareness, we can become more attuned to the balance that exists in nature. Sir Isaac Newton's Third Law of Motion states that "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." This is a powerful reminder of balance. While Newton was referring to the physical world, this law of motion applies equally well to our interactions with nature, society, and even within our own lives. When we act without thinking, we can inadvertently set off a chain reaction of consequences that we may not fully understand until it is too late. Similarly, when we act with intention and mindfulness, we can contribute positively to the world around us, fostering harmony and well-being.

In recent years, scientific research has increasingly shown that our mental wellness and physical health are tied closely to our relationship with nature. Studies have demonstrated that spending time in natural environments can lower stress levels, improve mood, and even enhance cognitive function. Nature provides us with more than just physical resources; it plays a critical role in maintaining our



mental and emotional well-being.

Traditional medical systems, such as naturopathic medicine and Ayurveda, have long recognized the importance of the natural world in health and healing. These practices emphasize the body's inherent ability to heal itself and promote prevention as the best form of medicine. Naturopathic doctors, for instance, advocate for a holistic approach to health, one that considers the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and environment. The origins of Ayurveda have been traced to around 6,000 BCE when they also originated as an oral tradition. There are many similarities between Indigenous teachings, naturopathy and Ayurveda.

Naturopathy and Ayurveda include elements like yoga, meditation, and the use of natural remedies, all of which aim to strengthen the body's resilience and capacity to fight infections and diseases. These medical systems argue that the key to staying healthy lies within us, and that it is our lack of understanding or disconnection from the natural world that weakens our bodies' natural defenses. The belief is that by aligning ourselves with the rhythms of nature—by eating whole, unprocessed foods, exercising regularly, and taking time for rest and reflection—we can unlock the body's full potential to heal itself. Prevention, rather than treatment, is at the heart of these practices. By focusing on maintaining balance and harmony within

us and our environment, we can prevent illness before it takes root.

Unfortunately, modern society has largely drifted away from these ancient principles. The fast pace of life, the prevalence of processed foods, and the increasing disconnection from nature have all contributed to a decline in both mental and physical health. People are more stressed than ever before, and as a result, diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and depression are on the rise.

The wisdom of Indigenous teachings and traditional medical systems offers us a roadmap for reconnecting with nature and improving our overall well-being. By adopting a more mindful approach to how we live, eat, and interact with the world, we can restore a natural balance to our lives and support our long-term health.

It's not just about preventing illness—it's about living in a way that honours the natural world and the generations that will follow us. In today's world, where environmental challenges are intensifying, this message has never been more critical. Developing our consciousness has never been more important for our survival.

As a former minister responsible for mental health and addictions in the Province of Ontario, I have had both

the honour and privilege to visit and learn from many Indigenous Elders in Ontario. I have also had the opportunity to study alongside practitioners of Ayurveda, meditation, and yoga in India, where I examined the benefits of these holistic modalities of treatment. Through the lessons I have learned and the studies I have reviewed, I believe that we must adopt culturally appropriate treatment protocols and services for our diverse populations. Yet perhaps most importantly, we must build a system of care that is client-centered, holistic and aims to be preventative and informative regarding our health. This system must be adaptable to our general population so that all can benefit from these ancient teachings and traditions.

A true health care system should honour and incorporate these ancient teachings and traditions. Failure to do so results in a sick care system that focuses on reactionary medicine. A reactionary system overlooks the importance of education and prevention in a holistic context. Harnessing the internal strengths of our minds, bodies, and spirits to promote good health will not only keep us healthier, promote the principle of the Seventh Generation but will also make us more conscious beings.

Seeing, touching, smelling, hearing and tasting are all senses that together give us experiential knowledge that can be pleasurable or painful. Understanding their interrelationship and the interrelationship with our environment gives us our consciousness. Meditation, spending time outside in therapeutic landscapes, practicing gratitude, activating

our senses, doing nothing, living in the moment and practicing conscious thinking all provide us with healing and the building of our resiliency. Health is derived from conscious living.

As we move forward, it's essential to embrace the wisdom of ancient traditions that remind us of our responsibilities, not just to ourselves, but to the planet and future generations. By raising our consciousness and becoming more mindful of our actions, we can cultivate a deeper sense of awareness that contributes to both personal health and global well-being. The balance that exists in nature—illustrated by Newton's Third Law—extends far beyond the physical realm. It touches all aspects of life; from the way we treat our bodies to how we care for the planet.

By reconnecting with nature and adopting holistic

approaches to health, we not only improve our mental and physical well-being but also contribute to the survival and prosperity of future generations. As stewards of the Earth, it is our responsibility to safeguard the natural world, ensuring that it remains vibrant and abundant for generations to come. The importance of consciousness reminds us that every action has a ripple effect, and it is up to us to decide whether those ripples will create harmony or disruption in our world.



Michael Tibollo is a former minister responsible for mental health and addictions and currently Associate Attorney General, Government of Ontario.



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Embracing the Idea of a Conscious Planet

Rahul Shastri



We live on a remarkable planet, teeming with life, diversity, and beauty. Yet, our relationship with the Earth has been largely exploitative, driven by consumption, greed, and neglect. The consequences are stark and threaten the very foundation of our existence. The paradox of balancing economic

growth with environmental and social sustainability poses significant challenges. Humanity must realize that our planet is not just a resource, but a living, sentient being.

Our Award Winner, Sadhguru, defines Conscious Planet as:

“...an effort to raise human consciousness and bring a sense of inclusiveness such that multifarious activities of our societies move into a conscious mode. An effort to align human activity to be supportive of nature and all life on our planet.”

Sadhguru's efforts, particularly the initiatives to educate the world's population about the planet's deteriorating soil and the impact of that deterioration on humanity, have resulted in several countries and global organizations signing on to the campaign. He warns that the ramifications of the continued loss of fertile soil will inevitably lead to: (i) Food crises; (ii) Water shortages; (iii) Loss of biodiversity; (iv) Climate change; (v) Loss of livelihood; and (vi) Conflict and migration.

Why is soil deterioration and the impact of the same a problem we here in Canada should be concerned about when Canada is routinely rated as providing its inhabitants one of the best standards of living in the World? Soil is one of Canada's and the world's most valuable resources. Agricultural soil is a non-renewable resource. Soil-deterioration and the loss of agricultural soil impacts everyone; when we lose nutrient-rich soil we also lose productive ecosystems.

To start, we are all stewards of this planet. Local food production and economic resiliency depend on the protection and stewardship of our natural resources.

Planetary stewardship requires that decision makers and stakeholders be well-informed about how global change is likely to affect households, resources, livelihoods, and quality of life.

Obstacles for true global adoption of the Conscious Planet philosophy, include:

- **Global Governance:** Who would oversee and coordinate planetary decisions? Would nations cede authority to a global entity? We need only look at our current international bodies such as the United Nations, World Health Organization and the International Criminal Court to understand the problems with “global governance.” Do our leaders have the gumption to negotiate and implement a planetary charter?

- **Economic Interests:** How would a Conscious Planet approach resource extraction and distribution?

We can continue to deny the impact climate change and ecological damage are wreaking on the World. However, we do so at our peril. Late last year, the southern USA was decimated by hurricanes Helene and Milton. In Canada, we now routinely experience the so-called “thirty-year flood” on an almost yearly basis, while our forests continue to be ravaged by apocalyptic fires. The economic cost of this destruction is well into the hundreds of billions of dollars. The human cost associated with these events is incalculable.

If we are to embrace the concept of the Conscious Planet, it is critical we embrace the following tenets:

- **Interconnectedness:** Recognize the oneness of all living systems.
- **Reciprocity:** Honour the Earth's gifts with gratitude and stewardship.
- **Respect:** Protect and preserve the natural world.
- **Responsibility:** Acknowledge our impact on the planet and future generations.

It is our responsibility to impart this philosophy to the next stewards of our planet – our children and grandchildren. Environmental education and appreciation should begin early, fostering a deep respect for nature's wonders. This knowledge will hopefully instill in these future generations the ability and fortitude to make eco-conscious choices, protecting the planet for the future.

Hand in hand with the lessons and teachings on the environment and its stewardship, there is the necessity



for the younger and future inhabitants of this blue planet to understand their role within the greater global community. In short, breaking down barriers which currently lead to distrust among different peoples and instead, fostering a culture which allows them to embrace and respect their differences.

To assist in overcoming these divisions, increased availability and/or use can be made of:

- Cultural exchange programs and diversity awareness.
- Human rights and social justice education.
- Community service and volunteerism; and

- Critical thinking and media literacy.

This broader perspective will encourage future generations to become active contributors to a more harmonious, equitable world and finally discard generational baggage to which so many of us remain tethered.

In summary, we can choose to chart a path to, and embrace, a Conscious Planet philosophy; but to do so, we need to make difficult choices, some of which will not fit squarely within our own short term personal or financial interests. Are we prepared to make those tough decisions? The optimist in me says that we are ready to do so.

Rahul Shastri is a Member of the Canada India Foundation's Board of Governors and a former National Convener.

Yoga Can Lead Us to A Happier, Healthier Future

Dr. H.R. Nagendra



In the 21st century, Yoga has emerged as more than just a physical practice; it is a holistic system that integrates science and spirituality to address the complex challenges of modern life. The unprecedented technological advancements and economic growth of the 20th and 21st centuries

have been a mixed blessing for humanity. The prosperity and comfortable lifestyle achieved as a result, ironically, have led to rising stress levels, an epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), disintegration of the family structure and values. A widespread acceptance and practice of yoga offers a way out to create balance, promote happiness and individual well-being, and to achieve higher levels of human consciousness.

The Industrial Revolution and Its Impact on Humanity

The Industrial Revolution transformed economies and societies, but the fast-paced, technology-driven lifestyle it introduced disconnected people from nature, strained familial bonds, and led to the rise of lifestyle-related diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. Stress became a global epidemic, contributing to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and burnout. While technological advancements brought material prosperity, they left a spiritual void that science alone could not fill. This is where Yoga, rooted in ancient wisdom and scientific principles, offers a transformative solution.

Understanding the Physical World: From Atoms to Energy

Modern science has revealed that all matter is made up of atoms, electrons, protons, and subatomic particles, ultimately forms of energy. Albert Einstein's famous equation, $E=mc^2$, underscores that matter and energy are interconnected. Classical mechanics, introduced by Newton, explained many physical phenomena, but at subatomic levels, quantum mechanics shows us that particles behave based on probabilities rather than certainties. These scientific breakthroughs have led to remarkable advancements, such as space exploration and medical innovations. Yet, as author and physicist, Dr. Fritjof Capra, pointed out in *The Turning Point*,

science has reached a stage where it needs to embrace a multidimensional understanding of life—something Yoga has offered for millennia.

The Multi-Layered Universe According to Yoga

Yoga introduces a multi-layered view of the universe, extending beyond the physical realm. According to Yogic philosophy, reality comprises five interconnected layers:

1. Electromagnetic Field (Physical Universe): Governed by classical physics, this layer pertains to the physical interactions of matter and energy.
2. Bio-Plasmic Field: This refers to the life force, or Prana, which is crucial for biological functions.
3. Astral or Mental Field: The realm of thoughts, emotions, and mental energies.
4. Intellectual or Informational Field: Involving knowledge and intellectual processes.
5. Bliss Field: The most subtle layer, where ultimate happiness and harmony reside.

Beyond these layers lies the ultimate reality—pure knowledge and divine power, which Yoga teaches is our true self. Swami Vivekananda articulated the goal of Yoga as realizing and manifesting this inner divinity.

Yoga: A Science of Holistic Living

Yoga, often misunderstood as merely physical exercise, is a science of holistic living that integrates body, mind, and spirit. It addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of life through four key paths:

1. Karma Yoga (The Path of Selfless Action): By performing duties without attachment to the outcomes, practitioners rise above ego-driven desires and achieve self-realization through selfless service.
2. Jnana Yoga (The Path of Knowledge): This path involves intellectual inquiry, leading to the realization of the oneness of all existence.
3. Bhakti Yoga (The Path of Devotion): By cultivating pure, unconditional love for a higher power, individuals dissolve their ego and merge with universal consciousness.
4. Raja Yoga (The Path of Mind Mastery): Through meditation, asanas, and Pranayama, practitioners gain control over the mind and body, progressing toward higher states of consciousness and ultimately Samadhi, the state of divine union.

These paths provide a multidimensional approach to human growth and spiritual evolution. Yoga helps individuals transcend their limitations and embody divine qualities such as compassion, love, and wisdom. This shift in consciousness not only enhances personal well-being but also contributes to societal harmony.

Yoga: A Revolution in the Making

As the Industrial Revolution reshaped technology and industry, Yoga is poised to revolutionize the human mind and spirit. In today's post-industrial world, where mental well-being and emotional balance are increasingly prioritized, Yoga offers a solution to cope with rising stress levels, NCDs, and societal conflicts. Scientific studies show that Yoga can significantly reduce stress, lower blood pressure, improve heart health, and enhance mental clarity. Practices like Pranayama and meditation activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation and reducing stress hormones. This leads to mental resilience, emotional stability, and spiritual growth.

The Role of Yoga in Raising Consciousness

Human consciousness is often limited by ego and material desires. Yoga helps individuals break free from these limitations, elevating awareness to a higher plane characterized by inner peace and self-realization. By purifying the body through physical postures and cleansing the mind through meditation, practitioners can transcend ordinary experiences and awaken to higher consciousness. This awakening contributes not only to personal transformation but also to the collective consciousness of society, fostering peace and harmony on a broader scale.

India's Leadership in Promoting Yoga Globally

India has long been the custodian of Yoga's ancient wisdom. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has made significant strides in promoting Yoga worldwide, notably through the International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrated on June 21st each year. The creation of the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) underscores India's commitment to integrating traditional healthcare systems, including Yoga, into modern society. Yoga is now practised in schools, colleges, and militaries, ensuring its benefits reach every section of society.

S-VYASA's Global Expansion: An effort to raise consciousness

S-VYASA (Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana



Samsthana) is a leading institution dedicated to the scientific research, education, and promotion of Yoga. With nearly 300 affiliated centres across India and a presence in 120 countries, S-VYASA has been instrumental in addressing global health challenges like NCD and stress through innovative programs and international collaborations.

Yoga—A Path to Higher Consciousness

Yoga is a way of life that addresses the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of modern society. As the world grapples with the negative impacts of the Industrial/Internet Revolution, Yoga offers a path to holistic well-being and higher consciousness. By integrating science and spirituality, Yoga helps individuals transcend their limitations and awaken the divine qualities within them, contributing to personal growth and societal harmony. With global recognition and leadership from India, Yoga is set to revolutionize the way we live, think, and interact, offering hope for a brighter, more conscious future.

CIF's Contribution to the Expansion of Yoga

I am happy to acknowledge the enthusiastic support of the community in Canada, particularly CIF which has come forward to usher Yoga into various sectors, including the mental health and education fields. Your commitment to expanding the holistic vision of Yoga is truly commendable. I congratulate efforts in organizing such a significant event that brings together dignitaries and key stakeholders, promoting the awareness of Yoga in Canada. This initiative reflects your deep understanding of Yoga's transformative power, and we extend our best wishes for their continued success in spreading the benefits of Yoga across Canada.

Padmashri. Dr. H R Nagendra, is globally recognized as a Yoga Guru, holds the esteemed positions of President at Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samathana (VYASA) and Chancellor at Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana University (S-VYASA University).

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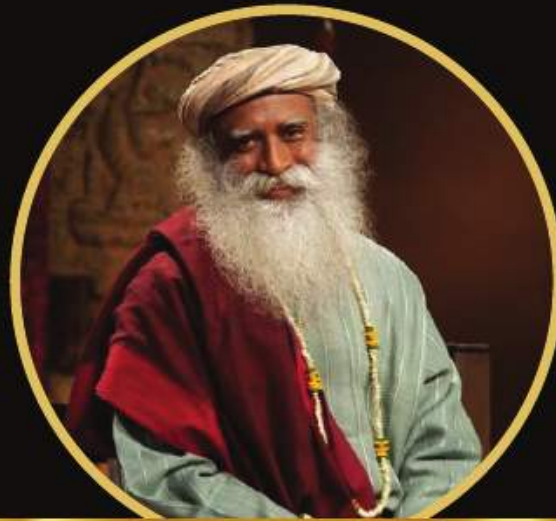
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The Path to Creating Soul Consciousness

Juan Vazquez



We are all conscious beings, and we are conscious of different things. Each day, we navigate various layers of awareness—our relationships, responsibilities, and the myriad stimuli that shape our lives. However, there is a deeper, more profound journey unfolding within us, one

that moves from unconscious to conscious and ultimately to a soul conscious transformation. This journey is about becoming aware of the different realities that exist beyond the material world, recognizing our spiritual and divine nature, and integrating that awareness into every facet of life.

The Path of Conscious Transformation

Human beings possess the innate capacity for profound transformation. This process begins with becoming conscious—becoming aware of our thoughts, emotions, and actions. Yet, this is only the first step. As we cultivate a deeper awareness, we move toward supraconsciousness—a soul consciousness state in which we not only recognize the interconnectedness of all life but also realize our own role as creators within the cosmos. In this journey, we experience the awakening of a flourishing world inside of us, which is the harmonization of human existence with the natural world, the greater universe, and the subtle spiritual realities. We begin to align our thoughts, attitudes, actions, and vision with the very forces that sustain life, creating a flow that supports the perpetuation of life, rather than what depletes it.

Consciousness of our Spiritual Identity

Central to this transformation is becoming conscious of our spiritual identity—our divine essence that transcends the physical world. It is this awareness that connects us to a greater purpose and vision for the future. A future in which the values of peace, compassion, simplicity, love, respect for others are not merely ideals but become the foundation of our actions and interactions. To bring about this transformation, regular spiritual practice is essential. Whether through meditation, reflection, or acts of service, these practices help us cultivate inner peace and

resilience, while healing the fragmentation within us and within society. The Brahma Kumaris, with their emphasis on spiritual regeneration and self-transformation, offer valuable guidance on this path. They remind us that a more beautiful world is not only possible but is the natural outcome of aligning with our divine nature.

Creating a More Beautiful World

As we shift our awareness towards soul consciousness, we begin to see the world with new eyes—an entrancing vision of the future, where humanity lives in harmony with nature, each other, and the cosmos. This vision is one of resilience and healing, where the wounds of the past are transformed through peace, compassion, and the power of creation is used to uplift and sustain life. To create is the primal movement of the universe. The perpetuation of life itself depends on the power of creation, and when we consciously direct our sacred energies—our awareness, thoughts, attitudes, words, actions, and vision—in a spiritual trajectory, we align ourselves with the divine forces of the universe. This alignment is the key to creating a more beautiful world, one where the values of peace, compassion, and simplicity guide every step.

The Ecozoic Era: A New Beginning

We are standing at the dawn of a new era—a confluence of ages between the Anthropocene, an era of degradation and fragmentation and what some call the Ecozoic era, a flourishing time in which humanity must reconnect with the earth, the divine and the cosmos. This new geological era is defined by a shift in consciousness, an era of reciprocity where humans recognize their role not as dominators of the earth but as stewards and co-creators of life. In this era, we create inner circles of family and friends who support one another's growth, while also respecting the land and the wisdom of the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the world who have been its guardians for millennia - this is fundamental to the healing of the Planet Earth.

Sacred Economics and the Triple Threat

To sustain this new era, we must also rethink our relationship with economics. Sacred economics, which values the interconnectedness of all life, offers a model in which wealth is not measured by material accumulation but by the health and well-being of our communities and the planet. This economic shift is crucial in addressing the triple threat that we face today: climate change,



biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution. These challenges are not separate but are interconnected, and they demand a holistic, conscious approach to resolve.

A Conscious Planet Begins Within

Creating a conscious planet begins within each of us. It starts with the awareness of the spiritual trajectory that aligns soul consciousness with attitudes, words, actions, vision, and their impact on the world. It involves a deep understanding of our spiritual identity and a commitment

to live in alignment with spiritual values that honour our divine nature. Through regular spiritual practice, resilience, and healing, we can transform not only ourselves but the world around us. As we embrace this journey, we are reminded that the most powerful force in the universe is the power of creation. When we harness this energy with conscious intention, pure feelings, and good wishes we can create a world that reflects the beauty, harmony, and divine essence of our spiritual nature. A more beautiful world is not only possible—it is well within our reach.

Juan Vazquez is an NGO Representative of Brahma Kumaris Organization to the United Nations, Homeopath-Naturopath, Zero-Waste & Circular Economy Advisor.

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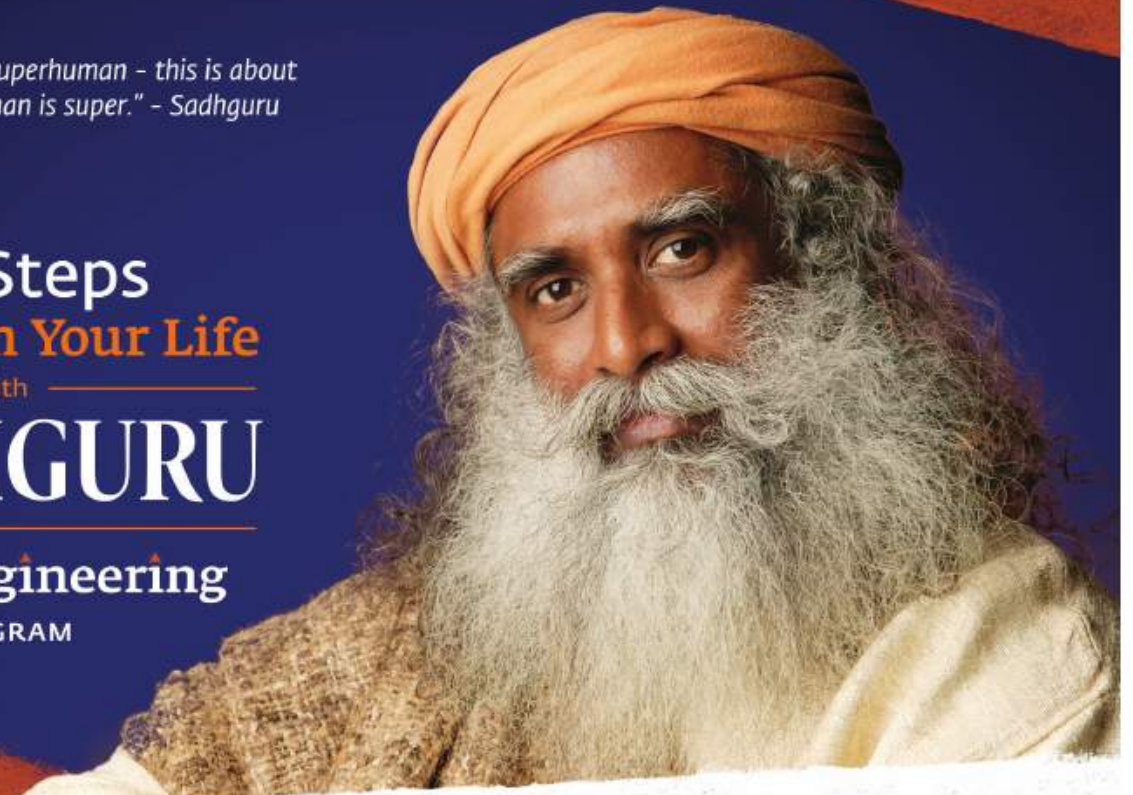
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Amar Bhatia, President and CEO of Illuminex Technologies, founded in 2009, and International Data Systems. He is a committed philanthropist who has been involved with grassroots movements in India to educate girls. He is actively engaged in mentoring and financing young entrepreneurs. He was an active member of Million Dollar Pledge that Indo-Canadian Friends of Osler made to donate \$1million to the William Osler Foundation.



Amit Brahme serves as the Managing Director of Strategic Cultural Segments at Scotia Wealth Management. As an immigrant with over 25 years of experience spanning banking, technology, manufacturing, and education, he brings a wealth of professional insight. In his current role, Amit spearheads the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy aimed at addressing the wealth management needs of newcomers and diverse cultural segments.



Andy (Arjun) Jasuja Founder and Chairman of the Sigma Group, a global conglomerate of companies with presence in Technology, Real Estate Development, Hospitality, Finance and Healthcare. As a serial entrepreneur, Andy has founded, acquired and successfully exited numerous companies with investments from world's leading Venture Capital and Private Equity firms including Kleiner Perkins, Morgan Stanley, Cisco, and Birch Hill Equity Partners.



Anil Bhasin is a realtor for the last three decades. His 'Ghar' brand is extremely popular amongst Canadians of Indian origin. He is a yoga enthusiast who was instrumental in getting Baba Ramdev to Canada in 2007 and was actively involved with the International Yoga Day Canada. A committed philanthropist, he was actively involved with the Million Dollar Pledge that the Indo-Canadian Friends of Osler made to donate \$1million to the William Osler Foundation and the Sunnybrook Hospital.



Anil Shah, CEO of Ni-met Inc. a large stainless raw materials trading and supply house with multiple associated offices globally with headquarters in Canada, and a scrap processing facility in UAE. Anil served on the board of The Trillium Hospital group (a consortium of several large hospitals in Ontario) and has chaired the Trillium Diwali Gala twice, raising large amount of funds for the benefit of the hospital. He has organized for past 9 years CIF Golf tournament raising monies for the Families of fallen soldiers and now front line workers, He currently also serving on board of Charities aid Foundation, Canada



Dr. Anoop Sayal graduated from the University of Toronto Faculty of Dentistry with honours in 1992. He was elected to Omicron Kappa Upsilon Honours Dental Society. Dr. Sayal has served the GTA community both in his professional capacity as well as a volunteer. He served as a Peel Regional Police Auxiliary constable from 1993-1996. He was the Secretary of the Faculty of Dentistry Alumni Association 1992-1993. He demonstrated his passionate commitment to the needy by volunteering his time at various organizations like Mississauga Food Bank, Eden Food for Change.

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Anshul Ruhil, a self-made successful entrepreneur, well-known for his extreme perceptiveness, his constantly dreaming and crafting a vision to shape a younger generation of professionals to take charge and adopt entrepreneurial strategies by offering coaching for the past 22 years. His expertise in technology, farming and prominent leadership qualities, creativity and futuristic views have helped so many young aspirants to start their investment careers and take it to the next level.



Arjun Chhabra is the President of Titan Global Consulting, operating in Canada and Japan. TGC is a premier business consulting firm specializing in real estate, insurance, IT consulting, and international trade. A dynamic leader and investor, Arjun is known for his expertise in business consulting and real estate. With an MBA in Marketing and Finance, he blends strategic insight with extensive experience in land development.



Arun Goel is the President & CEO of Stone Arch Canada Inc, a leading importer and wholesaler of premium natural stones, with a strong reputation in the Canadian landscaping and building materials industry. He led a successful architectural practice in New Delhi from 1987 until 2001 before immigrating to Canada. In 2001, Arun founded Stone Arch Canada Inc. (www.stonearch.ca), sources products from different countries including India, ensuring a diverse and high-caliber selection of materials and serves markets across Canada, Michigan, and New York.



Bhupinder Singh Khalsa is the Founder & CEO of Rane Impex. A Geo-technical engineer, he came to Canada in 1986 and is a pioneer in introducing Indian Marble and Granites to North America and Europe. Bhupinder also supported a Grand Memorial for Canada's fallen soldiers. Exquisitely carved in black granite and shaped as a Maple Leaf, this 15-tonne memorial is dedicated to Canadian Armed forces and placed at the premises of Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization in Richmond Hill, Ontario.



Chetan Handa, a highly successful entrepreneur, first arrived in Canada in April 2014. He has diverse business interests spanning several sectors like FMCG, Real Estate, Jewellery, IT and manufacturing units spread across India and Canada. Recently he was chosen as the Entrepreneur of the Year by the prestigious Dubai-based Asia One magazine, which held its award function in Bangkok in February 2020.



Chinmay Thakkar of Thakkar Group runs a chain of Tim Hortons Restaurants - a network thriving today with the support of the whole family. Following in the footsteps of his late father Ambrish Thakkar, Chinmay has been actively involved in helping new immigrants, especially students, settle in Canada and helping them to build long term careers in management within Group's network of restaurants.

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Dinesh Jain immigrated to Canada in 1973, joined the consulting firm R.J. Black and Associates. In 1989, he bought the firm. In 1994, the name of the firm was changed to Jain and Associates, and he expanded the firm internationally with offices in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai. The firm's global expansion continued with offices in New Delhi, Dubai, Hong Kong and Amman. Jain Consultants currently operates ten offices worldwide employing approximately 300 people.



Girish Kekre is the Vice President of Ni-Met Metals and Minerals Inc. as well as Ni-Met Resources Inc. Girish is a Chemical Engineer and brings in senior management experience and a very valuable expertise in non-ferrous metals and scrap metals. He also worked as a process superintendent for Agro-Chemicals and Food Company Limited, Kenya – a \$ 100 million joint venture between VEW of Austria, Nanji Kalidas Mehta of Kenya and the Kenyan Government.



Haresh Mehta is CEO of Eximcan Canada. He holds a bachelor's in marketing from St. Joseph University, Philadelphia, USA. His entrepreneurial journey started in the early 1970s, and since then, he has launched several successful businesses. His community development work in Canada and India is an adroit mix of public service and philanthropy.



Hariharan Gautam is the CEO of Grintex Technologies Inc. Canada (a subsidiary of Grintex India Ltd). He has been instrumental in introducing cutting edge technologies to India in the domain of Jelly filled & Optic Fiber telecommunications, Geo Augmented GPS aided navigation system for a satellite-based navigation system, Radar and the state-of-the-art Air Traffic Control systems for Aviation, strategic defense technologies etc.



Vaidya Harish Verma is the Founder-President of Canadian College of Ayurveda & Yoga Inc. in Ontario, and President of Best Ayurveda Limited, Canada. He was a Member of Governing Body of National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur and Member, Board of Ayurvedic and Unani Systems of Medicine, Punjab. He served as faculty of Honors program in Ayurveda at Thames Valley University, London. He is the author of two books on Ayurveda - A Comprehensive Book of Ayurvedic Medicine and Secrets of Ayurveda.



Hema Bhatt is Vice-President, Natu'Oil Services & Co-Founder, Bhatt Group of Companies. Hema immigrated to Canada in 2003 and in the following year started Natu'oil Services in partnership with her husband. Following the initial success of Natu'Oil, they setup Global Agri-Trade Corporation in the US in 2006. Natu'oil Services specializes in international trade of palm oil-based ingredients for animal feed and food manufacturing industries.

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Himadar Maddipatla is the President & CEO of ICICI Bank Canada. He has around 29 years of experience in India with expertise in retail banking, small and medium enterprise banking, corporate banking, trade finance, private banking, financial institution relationships at senior leadership positions. Most recently, Himadar was the ICICI Group State Head of Tamil Nadu responsible for developing and executing business strategies and providing holistic banking services. He holds a master's degree in business administration from India.



Dr. Indira Khurana is the President and CEO of Laser Cosmetics and Pain Treatment Clinics specializing in Pain, Addiction and Dermatological conditions. She earned her doctorate degree in Physics from IIT, Roorkee, and was an assistant professor in EEE Department at BITS, Pilani. She served as adjunct Professor of Physics at Florida A&M University, and Research Associate at Clarkson University in Potsdam, NY. Her outstanding contributions in integrative medicine have earned her several awards, including the "Doctor of Humanitarian Service" and "Bhartiya Nari Ratna Award".



Keval Shah is Broker of Record at the iDream Reality Inc. He is an expert real estate broker with over 14 years of experience dedicated to given clients "First Class" professional service and honest advice, enabling them to make sound financial decision in the sale and purchase of real estate. He is an experienced entrepreneur, excellent communicator, negotiations expert and also building custom /luxury homes since 2011.



Kuldeep Sharma, President & CEO of Crown Group of Hotels, migrated to Canada in 2002. He acquired his first hotel in Canada, Quality Hotel Burlington, in January 2013 and the second, Courtyard by Marriott Brampton, in 2014. Crown Group of Hotels today employs over 300 associates and has in its portfolio internationally recognized flagged hotels like Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn, and Wyndham Hotels. Crown Group has in 2023 forayed into three Golf Courses across Ontario and Nova Scotia.



Manish Mishra is President & CEO of SBI Canada Bank, a subsidiary of State Bank of India (SBI), the largest bank in India. He is a successful banking leader who, through strategic & innovative thinking, has led teams across corporate & commercial banking, international banking, retail banking. Prior to joining SBI Canada bank, he was heading a large Industrial Finance branch of SBI under Commercial Client Group of SBI. He has also worked at SBI New York looking after the compliance / BSA-AML function



Nirav Bhatt is the co-founder of Aastha Lawyers. Prior to starting his own practice, Nirav worked with small to mid-sized firms as well as a large Bay Street law firm in Toronto. Nirav was also featured in University of Toronto's 2011 edition of Nexus Magazine as part of immigrant lawyer success story. Nirav's skill and experience ensure that he delivers nuanced advice and creative solutions to help meet with his client's requirements and expectations.

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Nitin Jain is the President & CEO of Sienna Senior Living where he is guided by his conviction that it is a tremendous privilege and responsibility to serve seniors. With over 90 high quality assets and presence in Ontario, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, Sienna is one of Canada's leading operators in the seniors' living sector. With a focus on supporting 12,000 team members, the Sienna Ownership and Rewards (SOAR) program, a first in the sector, was created, granting members shares in the company and promoting an ownership culture.



Norton Kothari is Chairman of The Kothari Group. It has been successfully developing and managing Canadian real estate since its entry into Canada in 1996. He has established the Kothari Family Innovation Trust through a \$1 million gift to Trillium Health Partners. Apart from real estate developments & hotels, the Group has vast interest in real estate mortgage lending in Canadian & U.S. markets. The Group holds mortgage portfolio of over \$200 million.



Pankaj Dave is Founder and CEO, Manas International Inc., trading in Steel and Metal products internationally. Strongly rooted in Indian cultural traditions, he is also equally appreciative of the opportunities and values of Canada. While remaining a proud Canadian, he strongly believes in the idea of 'Vasudaiv Kutumbkam' (World is One) that allows him to easily adapt and improve his international trading business and personal life in Canada.



Pradyuman Jhala, Founder & CEO, SPS Canada Group, which includes SPS Canada Immigration, SPS Canada ImEX, Student Placement Services Inc., SPS Canada Capital, SPS Canada Asset Corp, Sodashi Botanical Inc., AltruCanna Inc., NatCure Inc., Yuvlife Inc., and SPS Canada ImEX. He serves as a beacon of inspiration in the fields of immigration and entrepreneurship for two decades. His expertise is complemented by his recognition as a Senior Immigration Practitioner and Commission of Oaths by the Ministry of the Attorney General, Ontario. He continually creates opportunities and inspires dreams.



Pranav Patel is a prominent Indo Canadian Barrister, Solicitor and Notary Public. He successfully introduced a motion to recognize ancient Indian Sanskrit Language in Ontario with the Toronto District School Board, and Sanskrit language is officially recognized. Barrister Patel represented vulnerable daughter's rights at City Councils, and 7th November is duly proclaimed as "Daughter's Day" by City of Brampton & City of Markham. "Humanity Is The Soul Of A True Indo-Canadians & We Provide The Ray Of Hope" - Barrister Pranav Patel



Prashant Srivastava, Director Business Development at Seneca Polytechnic, leads student recruitment, partnerships & business development activities from South Asia, Middle East and North Africa. Seneca is one of the largest post secondary institutions in Canada, with over 15,000 students from 150 countries, 45,000 full time and 60,000 part time registrants. He began his career in International Education in 2006, by opening the first overseas office for Vancouver Island University in New Delhi. Prashant has also worked at the University of California and New York Institute of Technology.

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Rahul Shastri is a Senior Partner at law firm KAGAN SHASTRI, based in Toronto, Canada and heads the firm's litigation department. Rahul currently serves as counsel, or in an executive position, on several not-for-profit and charitable institutions. Rahul is a past National Convener of the Canada India Foundation.



Ramesh Chotai is the President of Bromed Pharmaceuticals with operations in several parts of the world. Educated in the UK and Switzerland as a pharmacist, his first job was with ICI Pharmaceuticals in Kampala, Uganda. He came to Canada in 1972 following the tumultuous events in Uganda during the reign of Idi Amin. Bromed Pharmaceuticals, has become one of the leading pharmaceutical companies, offering employment to several hundred and becoming the leader in formulation technology.



Ramnik Khurana, a successful entrepreneur is passionate about building an organization that leaves a legacy through the pursuit of its purpose, values, vision, and mission. Ramnik, Director MST Global Inc., and Sakshem Exim Pvt. Ltd., is an expert in providing management consultancy and is a great transformation leader. He graduated in commerce from Delhi University, India and carries an extensive experience of 20 years of providing Consultancy to various businesses in India and Canada.



Rattan 'Ray' Gupta, is the Founder, Chairman & CEO of Sunray Group, that has 70+ hotels across Canada and is associated with all the major hotel brands. Sunray Group was awarded Pinnacle's National Company of the Year Award 2023. It is also the first Canadian company to be awarded, Marriott Hotels' award, The Partnership Circle. The group has diversified its operations into retirement homes, industrial, gas stations, and residential divisions. Ray is also known for supporting various charitable organizations. As a Board member of PPES Canada, he helps underprivileged girls in rural India get a quality education.



Ritesh Malik is a dynamic entrepreneur, impact investor, and business leader with diverse experience in international logistics, trade, and fintech. As Chair of Canada India Foundation, he champions stronger Canada-India relations and community welfare. Passionate about wellness and sustainability, he promotes ethical agriculture through Fruitsy, a venture focused on grower well-being. His work centers on ventures that deliver inclusive growth and lasting impact at scale.



Rupesh Kapadia is the Managing Partner of Kapadia LLP. He has over 24 years of public accounting experience dealing with multinational companies and owner-managed companies. This has provided him with vast knowledge of financial and accounting systems. Rupesh also has a law degree from India. It enables him to understand the legal aspects of the business keeping the numbers in mind. His working experience in India and Canada brings the global flavor to any assignment.

CIF Board of Governors



Sandeep Goel has over 25 years' experience across financial services industry and is currently Managing Director for Cross Cultural Segments within Global Family Office Group at Scotiabank. He is responsible for relationship development with South Asian ultrahigh net worth and family office clients globally. Previously, he was President & CEO at ICICI Bank Canada, a schedule 2 Canadian bank and a wholly owned subsidiary of ICICI Bank. In that role, he was responsible for leading a team of over 300 professionals to bring best in class banking services focused on South Asian segments.



Sandeep Gupta is the founder and President of Aarti group of companies, a diversified business group with its presence across different industries such as Real Estate development & construction, textiles trading & manufacturing, mortgage financing, and steel tube manufacturing and Galvanizing. He holds an engineering degree and a master's degree in business administration. Additionally, Sandeep and his family are deeply dedicated to philanthropy, actively supporting their communities in both Canada and India.



Sanjay Jain is a Director at Latham, the Pool company, responsible for the Canadian market. Latham is the largest designer, manufacturer, and marketer of in-ground residential swimming pools in North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Sanjay has been named top 10 Indian Leaders in Canada by CEO insight magazine. He is a dynamic business executive with over 3 decades of international leadership experience managing P&L and strategic business growth in three different countries and cultures.



Sanjay Makkar is the Founder and President of InSureU! Insurance & Investments Solutions Inc. and InSureU! Brokers Inc. in Mississauga, that offer premier professional financial services, providing consultation and solutions in Risk Strategies, Personal/Group Health Insurance, Estate and Succession planning, and Property & Casualty Insurance as part of Broker Distribution Channel. With over 20 years spent in insurance industry, Sanjay today leads a large team of professionals and staff members.



Satish Thakkar, CPA, FCGA, is President, Excelsior Group engaged in Real Estate Development & Management. He is a Canadian entrepreneur, a renowned professional, a committed community leader and a passionate philanthropist, with a number of accomplishments to his credit in a short span of time. He is a Past President, ICCG, Founding Chair of International Yoga Day Canada. He is a pioneer in popularizing Yoga, Ayurveda & mindful living in Canada.



Shivani Gupta, is a Director of Crown Group of Hotels, based in Mississauga, ON. She is also the Director at Prudent Law, based in Mississauga, specializing in Real Estate, Civil Litigation and Immigration. She graduated from the University of Toronto with an Honors Degree in Business Administration and a master's Diploma degree in Human Resource Management from Sheridan College. Shivani's educational pursuits have been grounded in her core belief that the employees of a company are the key to its success, no matter what industry.

CIF Board of Governors



Sidharth Jaiswal, President of 369 Holding Inc. is a fourth-generation business owner with over 35 years of experience. He has a proven track record of sustaining and expanding a family-owned business through innovation, strategic planning, and effective leadership. Currently, Sidharth oversees diverse interests including real estate development, international trade, and mortgage financing across India, UAE, and Canada. Beyond business, Sidharth is actively engaged in charitable and social initiatives through organizations such as Rotary and other NGOs.



Sunita Vyas is a serial entrepreneur with a drive for growth and a passion to build great companies. Over the last two decades she has forayed successfully into the Education, Entertainment and Marketing Sector. Currently, she is the CEO of Academy of Learning College, Mississauga and serves as a Board member of National Association of Career Colleges (the apex body in Canada that strives to promote the interest of Private Career Colleges at the Federal Level).



Dr. Terry Papneja presents a model combination of professional excellence entrepreneurial success and philanthropic zeal. After graduating in Dentistry from Indore, he moved to Canada in 1981. He acquired his degree in Dentistry from University of Toronto and opened his dental office, Axis Dental Group in Brampton in 1986. Starting initially as a lone dentist, he applied his business and professional skills to grow Axis as one of the largest dental offices in Canada. Axis joined a partnership with 123Dentist, which has been awarded one of Canada's Best Managed companies.



Dr. V. I. Lakshmanan, OC is an internationally renowned teacher, scientist & innovator in the area of sustainable development. He was one of the Founders of Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation Canada, and is the Chairman of this spiritual centre. Dr. Lakshmanan was honoured as the Officer of Order of Canada in 2022 for his philanthropy and for his expertise in hydrometallurgy and business. In 2023, he received the prestigious Pravasiya Bharata Samman award – the highest award conferred upon overseas Indians. He is one of the founding members of Canada India Foundation and a past Chair.



Vijay Sastry Kotamarti is a seasoned Certified General Accountant with over 25 years of experience practicing in Canada. He holds designations as an Accountant from India, Kenya, and Canada, reflecting his international expertise in finance and accounting. His commitment to community extends to various social, cultural, and charitable organizations where he has held board positions. With a passion for music, Vijay produced a radio show for 10 years on FM 101.3 and a television program on Rogers 10 in Canada. He has also contributed significantly to health forums organized by the CIF.



Vijay Thomas, is Founder & CEO at Tangentia, a leading digital transformation company with operations in Canada, USA and India. Tangentia is recognised as a leader in the digital transformation space and counts prestigious global companies as clients including Suncor, Jaguar Land Rover, Reliance Retail, RBC, Canopy Growth, LCBO, and Whirlpool. He also founded Tangentia Ventures which has investments in a diverse range of companies, including Clean Planet, manufacturers of Made in Canada apparels, Pumpkin Kart, an ethnic food delivery app, Dogpot.in, India's leading dog food company.

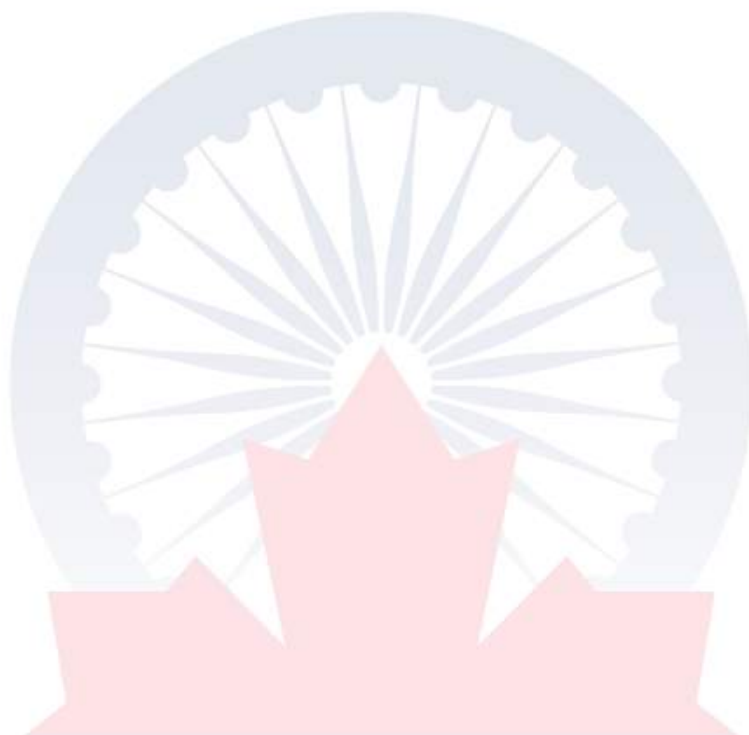
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Vikram Dhatta graduated in Electrical Engineering and Electronics from Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, India and later earned an MBA from Ivey Business School of University of Western, London, Ontario. He has strong domain expertise in various industries like Telecom, Transport, Logistics, Hospitality and Healthcare. He founded Zenith System Solutions in 1997. As President and CEO, Vikram has overseen the growth of Zenith in Canada, USA, India, and Africa.



Vinod Vyas is the Founder of Partho Technologies Inc. Prior to Partho Technologies, he was the co-founder of 5Pillars Corp, a market leader in providing ERP solutions on the Microsoft DAX platform. Vinod recently forayed into the entertainment industry producing commercially successful movies. He has a strong passion for academia and research, having once taught as an Assistant Professor. Vinod has an engineering degree and an MBA from Imperial College, UK.



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Satish Thakkar



Ritesh Malik

CIF Advisory Board

Stewart Beck

Canada-Asia Foreign Affairs and Trade Policy Expert



As a diplomat, a trade commissioner, and a policy expert, Stewart Beck has spent the last 40 years as one of the foremost advocates of Canada's interests in Asia. From 2014 to 2021, he was the President and CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada's leading research institution on Asia. Before joining APF Canada, he had a distinguished 30+ year career with Canada's diplomatic corps. His diplomatic assignments have taken him to important centres in U.S. and Asia, culminating with an assignment as Canada's High Commissioner to India. Today he is recognized as one of Canada's top experts on Asia at a time Asia is becoming increasingly critical to Canada's own future. Applying his understanding and navigating the challenging geopolitical, economic, and trade environment is the value he brings to strategic conversations on the region.

Anil Arora

Chief Statistician, StatCan



Anil Arora is the Chief Statistician of Canada since September 2016. He has led significant transformational initiatives throughout his career, with experience and partnerships spanning all three levels of government, the private sector, and international organizations, including the UN and the OECD. He has led projects on high-profile policy issues, legislative and regulatory reform, and overseen large national programs. He was the Assistant Deputy Minister of Minerals and Metals Sector in 2010, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Science and Policy Integration in 2013, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Products and Food Branch in 2014. Mr. Arora has led several business missions to India and recently provided expert advice on the modernization of India's statistical system.

Gary Comerford

Board Member at Novelis



International management and financial specialist, Gary Comerford, is the Chair of Brock University's Board of Trustees. Currently the CEO of Comerford Management Consultants, his career has included appointments as Vice-President of Marketing for Canada Permanent Trust, and Senior Vice-President (International) for Sun Life of Canada. He served as Sun Life's general manager for India and is a past president of the Canada India Business Council. He is also a past chair of the Shaw Festival Board.

Ajit Bapat

Consultant



Ajit Bapat is actively involved in consulting through his company Power Solutions. He is well known in the electrical distribution field and is considered a world authority on ground fault protection. He holds a master's degrees in Business Administration and Electrical Engineering, specializing in power systems and power system protection. He is also recognized for this expertise on digital metering systems; microprocessor based integrated systems for protection; and the metering, monitoring, and control of power distribution systems. A member of Professional Engineers Ontario, he is also a senior life member of the IEEE.

CIF Advisory Board

Arvind Gupta Ph.D

Professor, University of Toronto, and University of British Columbia

Arvind Gupta is a Professor at the University of Toronto's Department of Computer Science. He was appointed as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the UofT for a two-year term in 2015. He was the President of the University of British Columbia prior to his return to Toronto. Professor Gupta is an alumnus of the Computer Science department, having earned his master's and doctoral degrees at U of T in 1985 and 1991. Before serving as UBC's president, he was CEO and scientific director of Mitacs Canada, a national non-profit that develops collaborative research projects, between universities and industry, led by graduate students.



Arun Chockalingam MS, PhD, FACC, FAHA

Professor of Medicine and Global Health, University of Toronto; Professor and advisor to the Dean on Global Health, Faculty of Health, York University, Toronto, Canada

Dr. Chockalingam's experience encompasses a unique combination of global health research, policy, training, and administration in addition to international leadership within the global health community. He is extensively involved in promoting public health education and awareness on COVID-19 in the community. He is a mentor to senior cardiovascular scientists worldwide. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Noncommunicable Diseases (www.ijncd.org). He is a recipient of many national and international recognitions. He has published over two hundred articles in scientific/medical journals.



V. Kumar Murty Ph.D.

Professor of Mathematics, University of Toronto, and Director of the Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences.

Dr. Kumar Murty's contributions to the fields of number theory, algebraic geometry and their applications to Information Technology are well recognized by the scientific community. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and has held visiting positions at the Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton), the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (Mumbai) and Concordia University (Montreal) before moving to Toronto. He has published over 120 scholarly articles and authored and edited seven books. His research has earned him several honours including election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, a Foreign Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences (India), and as a Fellow of the Canadian Mathematical Society. He was also awarded the prestigious E. W. R. Steacie Fellowship by NSERC and the Coxeter-James Prize by the CMS. Recently, he has embarked on a study of "smart villages" to mathematically understand the dynamics of communities and to derive the economic and social implications of various models of growth.



AJIT SOMESHWAR

(1955-2025)

A TRIBUTE



It is with deep respect and heavy hearts that we honor the life and legacy of Ajit Holla Someshwar—a visionary entrepreneur, dedicated philanthropist, influential policy advocate, and devoted family man—who passed away peacefully in India on January 13, 2025. His passing marks a profound loss for his family, friends, and an expansive community of admirers across Canada, India, and around the world.

Architect of Business and Visionary Leadership

In the 1990s, Ajit's entrepreneurial spirit took flight with the founding of the CSI Group of Companies. As President and CEO, he led CSI with vision, integrity, and a deep commitment to excellence, earning him a reputation as a trusted and inspiring leader.

Ajit's business success was matched by his contribution to national policy. He was appointed to the Board of Directors of Export Development Canada and, during the global financial crisis of 2008–2009, was named by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Prime Minister Stephen Harper to Canada's prestigious 11-member Economic Advisory Panel. As the sole person of colour on this panel, Ajit stood alongside Canadian business titans, Mike Lazaridis, Paul Desmarais, James D Irving,

James A Patterson and Geoff Beattie, offering his insights to help steer the country through economic turbulence.

Champion of Community and Canada–India Relations

His most enduring legacy lies in his role as founding architect and first National Convenor of the Canada India Foundation (CIF). Established in 2007, CIF under Ajit's leadership became a respected voice in both Canadian policymaking and Indo-Canadian community engagement. He played a pivotal role in championing the Canada–India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement and fostered robust bilateral ties between the two nations.

Ajit was instrumental in establishing the Canada India Foundation (CIF) and founded the CIF Global Indian Award, which recognizes individuals of Indian origin who have demonstrated global leadership and excellence.

Ajit's passion extended far beyond the boardroom. As President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) from 1991 to 1993, he reshaped the organization into a dynamic platform for Indo-Canadian entrepreneurs. He secured the Chamber's first major corporate sponsorship, launched the now-iconic Annual Awards and Gala Night, and laid the groundwork for a stronger Canada–India business partnership.

Humanitarian and Patriot

Ajit was also known for his deep commitment to philanthropy and public service. He supported numerous causes, ranging from hospitals, charitable foundations, education and arts and cultural programs that promoted the Indo-Canadian identity.



Ajit Someshwar at CIF Office with CIF members



In 2010, Ajit conceptualized and co-sponsored the first private Maple Leaf-shaped monument dedicated to the Canadian Armed Forces, recognizing their global peacekeeping efforts. This act of patriotism and gratitude stands today as a symbol of the Indo-Canadian community's appreciation for Canada's values and service. The monument has now been adopted by the 32nd battalion of the Canadian Armed Forces

Ajit was equally courageous in defending the integrity of Indo-Canadian relations. He spoke out against divisive elements seeking to import separatist ideologies, calling for shared values and collective progress instead.

A Life of Love and Legacy

Above all, Ajit was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, whose family remained the center of his world. Despite his many responsibilities, he was known for his warmth, hospitality, and unwavering support for his loved ones. He placed his loved ones above all else, offering them the same warmth and steadfast support that he shared with his broader community.

His passing is a great loss to the Canada India Foundation, the broader Indo-Canadian diaspora, and all those who had the honor of working with him. He will be remembered for his kinetic energy, strategic mind, generous spirit, and lifelong dedication to building bridges—between nations, communities, and people

Ajit's life was a testament to what one person, driven by purpose and compassion, can achieve. He will be deeply missed—but never forgotten.



CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION



Democracies Working Together

Objectives

Canada India Foundation (CIF) is a national, not-for-profit, nonpartisan, non-governmental organization established with the following objectives:

- Foster bilateral relations between Canada and India
- Create opportunities for qualified Indo-Canadians in the public sphere
- Create a better understanding of the new India among Canadians & protect Canada's interests in India
 - Annually recognize & honour a prominent global Indian achiever. CIF Global Indian Award is presented to an outstanding person who has demonstrated global leadership, vision, and personal excellence
- Organize sectoral forums that enable a better understanding of the expanding economic relations between Canada and India
- Position the need for a strategic partnership between Canada and India as critical to Canada's future.

Public policy

Since its inception in 2007, Canada India Foundation has taken a leadership role in fostering stronger bilateral relations between Canada and India through active participation in the public policy debate and engagement with Parliamentarians, CIF plays a pivotal role in transforming Canada's relations with India by emphasizing India's criticality to Canada's future

CIF works towards raising the profile of Indo-Canadian

community by facilitating:

- Participation by qualified Canadians of Indian origin in the policymaking and the legislative process and within crown agencies, government boards and judicial and quasi-judicial tribunals
- Engagement with federal and provincial elected representatives on crucial bilateral issues such as trade enhancement, national security, simplifying immigration procedures, professional accreditation

CIF takes an active role in increasing the awareness among Canadians about the changing face of India, and the promotion of Canada's interest in India. CIF members are among Canada's top industrialists, entrepreneurs, corporate executives, and top-tier professionals. Together, CIF members provide employment to a few thousand Canadians, and they are key influencers of Canadian public policy enjoying tremendous self and prestige in Canada.

CIF proactively assists in shaping a definitive pro-India policy framework in Canada by working with decision makers in the federal and provincial Canadian governments. Policy analysts following the amazing progress of Canada – India relations concur that substantial improvements have occurred in the last ten years – coinciding with the formation and growth of CIF.

Philanthropy

CIF members are dedicated philanthropists who continually donate for a cause globally and especially in Canada and in India.

CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION



5160 Explorer Drive, Unit #1,
Mississauga, ON L4W 4T7



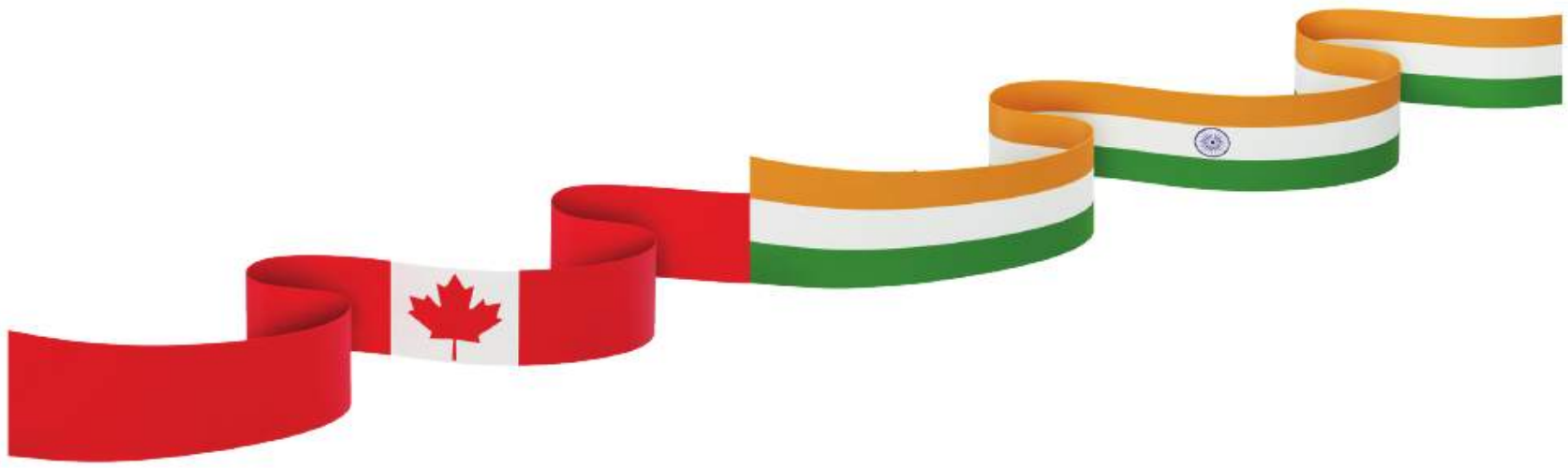
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www.canadaindiafoundation.com



OFFICE INAUGURATION
APRIL 13, 2025

Canada India Foundation Has a New Home

📍 5160 Explorer Drive, Unit #1, Mississauga, ON, L4W 4T7

Canada India Foundation announced the opening of an exclusive workspace recently to meet the growing needs of the organization and the community. The office inauguration was held on April 13, 2025, in the presence of a large number of members, supporters, and dignitaries. Many expressed their admiration for the décor and facilities offered in the new environment.

Speaking at the occasion, Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, noted: "This has been a dream for CIF members for many years. I am thrilled and humbled that it is happening now. The fact that it finally is a reality gives us all a lot more energy to keep pushing even harder to reach our goals early. We also must recognize that we have been able to do this thanks to the consistent and generous support and resources dedicated to CIF by our members beginning 2007."

The office was officially thrown open after the ribbon was cut by Dr. Lucky Lakshmanan, OC, and Mr. Norton Kothari,

veteran CIF members, following a puja conducted by the Pundit Ji from Sringeri temple in Toronto as per the Vedic rituals.

Sunita Vyas, National Convener, CIF, said: "This is a historic moment, certainly in the life of Canada India Foundation, and clear evidence of the growth and acceptance that we have been able to get from the Indo Canadian community of Canada. We hope to be able to serve the needs of the community and help initiate even more interactions aimed at creating a positive image of the community to the rest of Canada."

Saying that he was thrilled to be a part of the journey by CIF, its current National Co-convenor, Chetan Handa, noted: "Those of us who are often on the road, due to our business demands, to arrive home in Canada is always a huge pleasure. But now we have another home. CIF is ideally suited to work through the current difficulties in





the Canada India bilateral, and now we have a nerve-centre that can help project our concerns and solutions directly to key policy makers."

Satish Thakkar, immediate past Chair, CIF noted that this is a moment of great significance for the organization. "This brings focus to our efforts like never before. When all our actions that today cover across Canada and outreach to organizations and people in India, the new CIF offices will function as the fountainhead of ideas to help advance the Canada India file."

Malik added, "We want everyone to know that this space belongs to them, and they are welcome to share and donate their time and resources to make it a friendly and inclusive haven. Ontario's entrepreneurial community will have one more avenue they can feel totally at home."

The new premises of Canada India Foundation is located at 5160 Explorer Drive, Unit #1, Mississauga, ON, L4W 4T7. You can reach us via telephone: 289-291-0277 or email: info@canadaindiafoundation.com







CIF GLOBAL INDIAN AWARD GALA 2023



Canada India Foundation hosted Global Indian Award Gala in the presence of a thousand-plus audience consisting of the finest from the Indo Canadian community as well as avid supporters of Canada India friendship from the mainstream at the Universal EventSpace, Vaughan on September 29, 2023.

What made the evening even more of a celebration was the presence of the awardee who combined rock star like persona with that of a kind and compassionate grandmother – Ms. Sudha Murty, one of India's most admired women. An engineer, technologist, entrepreneur, author, educator, social activist, and for the past quarter of a century a philanthropist extraordinaire Ms. Murty helped transform the lives of millions of the poorest of poor in India.

Satish Thakkar, the then Chair, CIF in his address touched upon some of the impactful work that has been done in the past three years under his leadership. He outlined the three thrust areas that CIF would continue to be engaged in the Canada India bilateral; Women empowerment and participation; and broader engagement with the larger Canadian society to build stronger bonds with each other. "Our ties depend on a mutual understanding of each other's national security concerns, and a willingness to address areas of discord through sustained diplomacy unencumbered by the local political compulsions. CIF exhorts both governments to quickly resolve the differences and reenergize the trade talks and other bilateral engagements," said Thakkar.



CIF GLOBAL INDIAN AWARD GALA 2023



H.E. Sanjay Kumar Verma, High Commissioner of India in Canada, while congratulating CIF on a most successful gala, complimented the Indo Canadian community, who are the originators of Canada India relationship and are the people best equipped to sustain that relationship.

During a fireside chat conducted by entrepreneur & writer Reetu Gupta, Murty shared several interesting anecdotes from her remarkable life including the story of how hard it was for her and her husband, a co-founder and past CIF Global Indian Award recipient, Narayana Murthy, to get a small loan to support their fledgling company that would grow to become an IT services giant later. "Courage means life," she said.

"Education is the magic wand that will lead to women's

empowerment. When women become economically independent, they get empowered," she said.

Sudha Murty donated the cash prize of \$50,000 that came with the CIF Global Indian Award to The Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences, Toronto.

In his concluding remarks, Ritesh Malik, then National Convener, CIF, made a strong plea to help uphold the values we hold dear and to maintain intercommunity peace and harmony. He said, "There is no doubt what is on the top of minds today within our community. We have been a peaceful and productive segment of the Canadian population, playing a key role in its economic, political, and cultural space."



CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

6 March 2025

CIF Marks IWD 2025 with Calls to Accelerate Action for Gender Equality



Canada India Foundation continued its initiative to bring women's equality to the forefront of the community, celebrating and marking the International Women's Day held at the Holiday Inn Toronto on March 6, 2025. In its fifth year, the CIF celebration attracted a number of high achievers from the Indo Canadian community who participated in the panel discussions based around the theme Accelerate Action for Gender Equality. Welcoming the guests, Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, noted, "This gathering of so many accomplished and committed women here today is a clear sign of how serious the issue is for the community. For us it is truly encouraging to see this event grow in strength. The presence of so many committed and accomplished women here is a testament to how important this cause is for the community."

Melissa Lantsman, MP & Co-Deputy Leader Conservative Party of Canada, during her Keynote address thanked the CIF organization for its commitment to gender equality. Lantsman made a strong pitch to discard slogans and platitudes and focus on real action. "All those words sound nice but deep down, there is much more to do. In many of our classrooms, boardrooms and even in Canada's

parliament, women are sometimes reduced to tokens, their talents being minimized to fill some arbitrary quota. It shouldn't be the way forward."

Melissa Hodgins, a renowned life coach and consultant, spoke on the challenges faced by women, especially young professionals and offered tips on how overcome doubts, build self-confidence and succeed. "There is a gap between what we do and how it is perceived." In her presentation, titled, Accelerating Leadership: The Business Value Advantage, she pointed out that "This gap is just not about recognition, it is what holds us back from leadership roles, promotions and even from new opportunities. We assume that our hard work speaks for itself, but it doesn't. So how do you bridge that gap. To put it simply, know your value, own your value and communicate your value."

Tariq Anwar, Regional Corporate Manager of Turkish Airlines, and co-sponsor of the evening, said, "Today is not only about celebrating the achievements of women, but also recognizing the work ahead to ensure equality and opportunity to all women. Let us continue to support and empower each other, not just today, but every day. Together we can create a future where every woman has a chance to succeed."

The panel discussion featured four stellar women from immigrant backgrounds who rose to the top of their professional lives with a combination of talent, commitment and the right value systems. The panelists were: Seema Sharma, President, Wealth & Estate Financial Canada Inc, Nimira Dhalwani, CTO, The Hospital for Sick Children, Shilpa Arora, General Manager, Doordash and Shilpa Mishra, Partner & Managing Director, M&A and Capital Markets, BDO Canada (who also moderated the session.) Key points discussed included barriers faced by women in their professional as well as personal situations, need for educating the young on financial literacy, mentorship and collaborating with male allies. Mishra stressed on the urgent need to keep the DEI initiatives alive especially in today's changed political atmosphere. The panelists shared many important lessons including revealing very personal anecdotes that highlighted the special challenges women faced in their journey to succeed.



CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

24 February 2025

Yoga for Heart: Wear Red Canada Event



Canada India Foundation (CIF), in partnership with the University Health Network (UHN), celebrated the Wear Red Canada campaign that focuses on women's heart health on February 24, 2025, at the Rumsey Cardiac Centre. Included in the program was a relaxing and rejuvenating yoga session focusing on heart health. The session was led by Yoga Guru Acharya Prem Narayan.

Speaking at the event, CIF Chair Ritesh Malik highlighted the role of yoga in alternative healthcare. He mentioned that the ongoing collaboration with UHN for joint research and study of traditional Indian healthcare systems has begun to yield positive results. Yoga practice is particularly beneficial for recuperating cardiac patients. Dr. Paul Oh, GoodLife Fitness Chair in Cardiovascular Rehabilitation and Prevention, Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation Program at Toronto Rehab, Dr. Tracy Colella, Scientist & Clinician from the Cardiovascular Prevention & Rehabilitation Program at KITE Research, and Satish Thakkar, Immediate Past Chair of CIF, were also present at the event.

8 Nov. 2024

How Will Trump's Policies Affect Canada?

The second installment of the CIF Thought Leadership series was held in Toronto, featuring Jean-Francois Perrault, Sr. VP and Chief Economist at Scotiabank at the Royal Woodbine Gold Club, Etobicoke on Nov. 8, 2024. Coming as it was just days away from the US elections, the theme was appropriately chosen as 'US Elections – What lies ahead for Canada.' Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF,



while introducing the Guest Speaker, touched on the uncertainty experienced in many sectors, especially in the trade and immigration fronts, arising out of the change in Washington, and hoped that Canada will navigate the changes successfully in the coming months and years.

Todd Barnes, Managing Director and Head, Scotia McLeod gave a detailed background on Scotia McLeod that was first established in 1921 with the initial aim of creating fixed income for investors of the time. Since then, the company grew rapidly over the century that followed and branched out to several finance and investment areas.

2 October 2024

CIF Meets with Ras-Al-Khaimah Business Development Team



The leadership team at the Ras-al-Khaimah Business Development zone (RAKEZ), led by its CEO, Ramy Jallad, presented to the CIF members the business opportunities in the fast-growing emirate of Ras-Al-Khaimah. The event was hosted jointly by Canada India Foundation and the ICICI Bank Canada in Toronto on Oct 2, 2024. In a detailed presentation, John Cunliffe, Business Development Director, RAKEZ, pointed out that out of the 40,000 plus companies registered, almost seven hundred of them have Canadian shareholders. He explained the numerous advantages and the proactive nature of support by the government and administration to entrepreneurs seeking to set up business in Ras-Al-Khaimah.

CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

1 August 2024

CIF Launches Thought Leadership Series; Scotiabank Chief Economist on Opportunities



Canada India Foundation launched its Thought Leadership Series 2024 by a comprehensive presentation on the state of the Canadian economy by Jean-François Perrault - Senior Vice-President & Chief Economist, Scotiabank. Speaking on the initiative, Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, said: "Through this initiative, we hope to welcome some of the most important thinkers and policy makers to the CIF platform. They may come from different disciplines, economic, political, community, academic. But one thing is for sure. These expert commentators will bring us insights and wisdom and help us to learn and plan our individual life goals."

Perrault tackled the theme of Opportunities in Canada: Current Landscape with a detailed presentation that covered the Canadian as well as the developments South of the Border. He was upbeat on the Canadian economy, observing that many factors are contributing to choose optimism over pessimism. Inflation is coming down and interest rates are gradually being cut. Noting the dramatic increase in immigrant arrivals in the past few years, he sees it as a net benefit while it does offer its own challenges. "This increased population is key to the resilience we see in the Canadian economy."

Perrault also predicted a healthy housing market as "Because the population has exploded, our volumes are going up. There is not going to be any meaningful drop in the house prices." While he discounted any major departure arising from political changes in Canada, he cautioned against uncertainty due to the upcoming elections in the US.

16 August 2024

CIF, ICICI Bank Canada Celebrate India's Independence Day

Canada India Foundation in partnership with ICICI Bank



Canada held a reception to mark and celebrate India's 78th Independence Day in Toronto on August 16, 2024. The event was held at the brand-new offices of ICICI Bank located in the heart of prestigious Bay Street. Vikash Sharma, President and CEO of ICICI Bank Canada welcomed the guests. Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF noted that it is an encouraging sign to see the head office of a major Indian bank situated in Toronto's financial district. "Congratulations to Vikash Sharma and the entire ICICI Canada Bank team," he said.



Complimenting CIF for its work in the bilateral space, India's Consul General in Toronto, Siddhartha Nath, said, "CIF has continuously punched above its weight when it comes to building the India Canada relationship. Your efforts exemplify the potential of this corridor, and you have been helping advance India in Canada and Canada in India. The energy and enthusiasm we see in this corridor is tremendous. My congratulations to the Indo Canadian community for the great work you are doing in continuing to build bridges between our people."

23 July 2024

Reception Held in Honour of Order of Canada recipient Dr. Budhendranauth Doobay

Canada India Foundation felicitated Dr. Budhendranauth Doobay, the most recent inductee into the Order of Canada rolls, at a well-attended event in Toronto. A visionary community leader and a Cardiac surgeon, Dr. Doobay has

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been a pillar of the Hindu community of Toronto for over four decades. In his welcome address, Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, observed: "Dr. Doobay is far from finished with his life mission. He remains a strong and inspiring presence for all of us. In the coming months and years, we will continue to look up to him for encouragement, guidance and wisdom to lead us into further growth and success in our mission." Dr. Doobay during a one-on-one conversation with Malik took the audience through the days of struggles back in his home country of Guyana and then in Canada when he arrived here as a qualified doctor. Talking about his youth spent in Guyana, he noted that there were times the community could not celebrate its historic festivals till their white overseers had gone to sleep. There was tremendous pressure on the community who hailed mostly from UP in India. But the family of purohits (priests) kept the faith and young Doobay became not only a cardiac surgeon, but a well-known interpreter of Vedic scriptures and traditions.

24 June 2024

CIF Ayurveda Speaker Series Season 3 Launched



The CIF Ayurveda Series, after having completed two full seasons launched its third edition on June 23, 2024, focusing on the theme of Prevention of Coronary Artery Disease. Fifty of the world's finest practitioners and scientists in Ayurveda have already participated in Season 1 and 2, educating the world on Ayurveda's approach to holistic wellness. The new season is expected to feature a similar group of Ayurveda experts in the coming

months. The launch was graced by eminent scientists and supporters of Ayurveda.

Opening the session, Satish Thakkar, past chair of CIF and an avid proponent of Ayurveda said, "As you know ayurveda which is a science of life primarily focuses on individualized approach because every human body is unique in itself, and the treatment options should also be unique to individuals." He mentioned the MoU signed between CIF and the UHN network to support integrative research into chronic diseases combining the findings from ancient Indian medicine systems with the latest discoveries in modern medicine. He welcomed the two chief proponents leading this initiative on to the platform - Dr. Tanuja Nesari, Director of All India Institute of Ayurveda, and Dr. Paul Oh, Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation Program at Toronto Rehab and a Senior Scientist at KITE.

21 June 2024

UHN's Cardiac Prevention and Rehab Facility Marks International Yoga Day



The continued efforts by Canada India Foundation to promote the ancient Indian health systems like Ayurveda

CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

and yoga of late have received increasing levels of acceptance. International Yoga Day (June 21) got a major boost from the health professionals when UHN's Cardiac Rehabilitation Centre in East York decided to celebrate the day officially on June 21 in the presence of patients, doctors, yoga enthusiasts and staff.

Dr. Paul Oh, Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation Program at Toronto Rehab and a Senior Scientist at KITE and the man charged with developing new ideas in prevention and rehabilitation, noted: "We are grateful for this opportunity to collaborate with CIF for many years. They have been instrumental in supporting research within the hospital." India's Consul General in Toronto, Siddhartha Nath, expressed his appreciation for the efforts to spread yoga. He noted that yoga today enjoys worldwide popularity especially after the UN declaration.

20 June 2024

City of Peterborough Issues Proclamation on International Yoga Day



In an official ceremony held at the City Hall in Peterborough on June 20, 2024, Mayor Jeff Leal proclaimed June 21 to be celebrated by the city as International Yoga Day every year. Speaking to a select group of people that attended the ceremony, Mayor Leal, thanked Canada India Foundation and said: "This day, recognized by the United Nations and across the world, is a reminder of the profound impact that yoga has on many of our lives. Yoga is inclusive; it is for everyone, regardless of age, gender, or physical ability. Whether you are a seasoned practitioner or a beginner, yoga offers benefits that can improve your health and life. In a time where stress and anxiety are becoming increasingly common, yoga offers a path to resilience and inner peace. It helps relieve and manage our stress, find balance in our lives, and achieve a state of mental clarity and physical health. I would like to take a moment

to express my gratitude to all the yoga instructors and practitioners in our community for their commitment to the practice of yoga."

17 June 2024

Former HC Bisaria's Book on India Pakistan Relationship Is a Thriller



It was during the pandemic days and nights that Ajay Bisaria, then High Commissioner of India to Canada, that the first vague notions of a book on the India Pakistan relationship began to crystallize in his mind. And the much-reduced public assignments that in normal course, a top diplomat is required to attend, also must've helped. This was revealed by now author, citizen Ajay Bisaria, during a recent interaction with members of the Canada India Foundation and guests. Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF, led the charge to extract maximum details from Bisaria on his best-selling book – Anger Management: The troubled relationship between India and Pakistan. Bisaria was the last-serving High Commissioner posted to Islamabad who in 2019 was hurriedly summoned back to New Delhi a day before India bombed what was described as a terror training camp in Balakot inside Pakistan.

4 June 2024

CIF Marks 10th International Yoga Day at Queen's Park

The worldwide celebrations of the tenth International Yoga Day got an early start at Queen's Park on June 4, 2024. The Toronto edition of the International Day of Yoga was hosted by Canada India Foundation in partnership with a number of allied community organizations.

Ritesh Malik, Chair of the Canada India Foundation (CIF), welcomed guests and community partners, emphasizing the importance of broader adoption of yoga and similar

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preventive lifestyle practices for achieving optimal healthcare outcomes and reducing ever increasing pressures on health infrastructure.

13 May 2024

Meeting with Fiji Trade Commissioner to explore opportunities



CIF Chair Ritesh Malik and Board of Governor Member Anil Bhasin met Alike Cooper - Fiji Trade Commissioner to North America on the sidelines of Fiji North America Business Forum held in Toronto. Fiji is exploring opportunities in cross-border investment opportunities in Fiji's Tourism, Agriculture, BPO and Manufacturing sector.

13 May 2024

Fiji Deputy Prime Minister Reaches Out to Indo Canadian Community

CIF Chair Ritesh Malik, accompanied by CIF Board Members, Anil Bhasin and Harish Verma, met with Honorable Manoa Kamikamica, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises, and Communications in Toronto. Fiji maintains excellent relations with India, which serves as a committed development partner to Fiji. The Deputy Prime Minister expressed keen interest in fostering engagement



with the Indo-Canadian business community to strengthen business relations between Canada and Fiji.

13 May 2024

Fiji - Ontario Business Partnership Potential Discussed



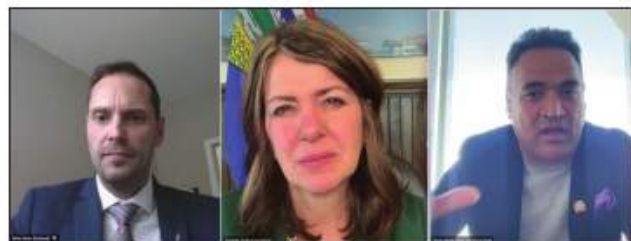
CIF Chair Ritesh Malik met with Honorable Manoa Kamikamica, Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister, and Hon. Vic Fedeli, Ontario's Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation, and Trade, in Toronto. The discussions delved into enhancing trade and commerce ties between the two nations. Exploring opportunities for collaboration, they envisioned a robust business partnership poised to redefine the relationship between Ontario and Fiji. Their dialogue aimed at fostering mutual economic growth and prosperity.

19 April 2024

Premier of Alberta Danielle Smith on Engagement with India

Canada India Foundation hosted a virtual meeting with the Honorable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta. Also in attendance was the Honorable Minister Matt Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy, and Trade. Representing CIF were CIF Chair Ritesh Malik and Sunita Vyas, National Convener. Canadian provinces are keen on enhancing and

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strengthening economic engagement with India, one of the fastest-growing economies globally. Alberta's steps to improve and grow the trade and investment partnership with India was appreciated by the participants. Alberta, it was suggested, could become a pivotal engine in the Canada-India engagement.

19 April 2024

Educational Cooperation: CIF met George Brown Community College



Canada India Foundation met with George Brown Community College, Toronto, which is home to a large number of Indian students from Canada as well as India and is a symbol of cooperation between the two countries in education. CIF together with George Brown College plans to launch several new initiatives related to international students' well-being, mental health support systems, and the promotion of holistic health through their world-class culinary programs.

18 April 2024

India and Canada: A Relationship at a Crossroads

India and Canada: A Relationship in the Crossroads was the topic put to a group of eminent experts during a seminar organized by the India Innovation Centre at the Rotman School of Business. Against the background of the current strains in the bilateral relationship between



Canada and India, the issue is one that has troubled many people in the Indo Canadian diaspora. The fact that the seminar was organized by the Rotman students of Indian origin, under the able guidance of Prof. Mohanram Partha, demonstrated that both the young and the old in the community are equally concerned and eager to find ways to set the relationship right.

13 April 2024

CIF attends 32 Service Battalion Annual Dinner



CIF attended the 32 Service Battalion's annual dinner at the Royal Canadian Military Institute in Toronto. The CIF's Annual Charity Golf Tournament supports the families of fallen Canadian soldiers through 32 Service Battalion. The special guest for the event was Eric Lindros, a Hockey Hall of Famer and counted among NHL's 100 Greatest Players.

2 March 2024

CIF Celebrates International Women's Day 2024

Canada India Foundation marked the International Women's Day 2024 in the presence of a large number of guests, among them some of the most accomplished women from GTA on March 2nd, 2024. The CIF event, since its launch four years ago, has continued to grow in stature and participation with each passing year. In his welcome address, the CIF Chair Ritesh Malik, expressed delight at the evolution and impact of the celebration

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over the years.

A highlight of the celebration was the engaging panel discussion centered around the theme of “Inspire – Engage – Empower,” moderated by Manjula Selvarajah, a CBC Columnist. The panel featured accomplished professionals from diverse sectors:

- Neha Kovach, Vice President, Canada Goose (Tech-enabled experiences)
- Supreet Warna, Chief Operating Officer, HSBC
- Shreya Gupta, Technology and Privacy Lawyer, Norton Rose Fulbright
- Dr. Pearl Behl, Service Medical Director, Trillium Health Partners
- Anu George, CEO, International Justice Mission Canada

23 February 2024

Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper Keen on Improved Bilateral Relationship



CIF Chair Ritesh Malik engaged in a consequential meeting with Former Prime Minister of Canada, Hon. Stephen Harper. Ajay Bisaria, Former Indian High Commissioner of Canada, and Victor Thomas, CEO of Canada India Business Council, too participated in the deliberations on the evolving dynamics of Canada’s relationship with India, particularly emphasizing a desire for deeper engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. This exchange signaled a mutual aspiration for strengthened ties, reflecting a commitment to fostering cooperation and collaboration between the two nations on regional and global platforms.

23 February 2024

Meeting with Dhruva Jaishankar of Observer Research Foundation

On the sidelines of the Raisina Hill Dialogue, CIF Chair, Ritesh Malik, met Dhruva Jaishankar, Executive Director of the Observer Research Foundation America (ORF America). They explored the possibilities of working together in future.



22 February 2024

Meeting with Former High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria

Ritesh Malik, CIF Chair, met former High Commissioner of India in Canada, Ajay Bisaria, in Delhi on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue. Bisaria presented the copy of his book to Malik.



22 February 2024

Hon. Meenakshi Lekhi Stresses on Sustained Dialogues

CIF Chair Ritesh Malik called on Hon. Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India to deliberate on Canada-India bilateral relations. Acknowledging the current challenges, they emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts. Both expressed confidence that with the earnest commitment of political leaders from both nations, these challenges could be amicably resolved.



They explored avenues for enhancing cooperation across various sectors to foster mutual understanding and prosperity. The meeting underscored the significance of sustained dialogue and diplomatic engagement in navigating complexities and strengthening the enduring ties between Canada and India.

21 February 2024

CIF Chair attended Raisina Dialogue at New Delhi

CIF Chair, Ritesh Malik attended the Raisina Dialogue held

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in New Delhi. This is an initiative launched under the aegis of the Government of India, held every year by the Observer Research Foundation. Since its inception, Raisina Dialogue has grown in strength and prestige among the global community tasked with finding solutions to the world's problems, especially conflicts. Experts and stakeholders from across the world gather in India's capital annually for an open and in-depth exchange of views on issues that matter to the welfare of humanity. As in the past, RD 2024 saw participation by over a hundred speakers including the Prime Minister of India, Hon. Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Greece, Hon. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who was the Chief Guest.



15 February 2024

Hon. James Moses Invites Indian Businesses to Invest in Manitoba



The Canada India Foundation Executive Team members met with Hon. Jamie Moses, Minister of Economic Development, Investment, Trade, and Natural Resources, Manitoba to discuss collaborative ties between Manitoba and India in trade and commerce. Agreement was reached to exchange information on business opportunities in Manitoba, and on facilitating partnerships with Indian small and medium enterprises.

12 February 2024

Meeting with Ken Hardie, MP from British Columbia

CIF members met with Ken Hardie, Liberal Member of Parliament from Fleetwood – Port Kells, British Columbia. CIF Chair, Ritesh Malik, briefed him about the foundation



and sought guidance on strengthening the Canada India relations.

26 January 2024

Indian Republic Day Celebrations at Albany Club



Canada India Foundation together with the prestigious Albany Club in Toronto marked the 75th Republic Day of India in the presence of the Consul General of India, Siddharth Nath, Nina Tangri, Associate Ontario Minister of Small Business, Deepak Anand MPP. The event was sponsored by the ICICI Bank Canada.

8 January 2024

Meeting with Kyle Seeback, MP from Orangeville

CIF Chair, Ritesh Malik, and Director Girish Kekre met with Conservative MP Kyle Seeback at his office in Orangeville. They discussed



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how Canada and India can together help contribute positively to local development with special role played by the Indian diaspora community.

20 January 2024

Ram Mandir consecration Food Drive by CIF Charitable Foundation



In celebration of the consecration of Ram Mandir, Ayodhya, India, the CIF Charitable Foundation initiated a three-day food drive. From January 20th to 22nd, the foundation distributed over three thousand meals across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), reaching devotees, the homeless, residents of old age homes, and other individuals in need. This compassionate endeavor not only marked the auspicious occasion but also exemplified the spirit of service and solidarity within the Indo Canadian community.

11 January 2024

Indiaspora Developing Community Platform across North America



Leadership team of Indiaspora, a San Francisco based diaspora organization and CIF members discussed plans

to create a platform to collaborate and build community engagement and catalyze social change across North America.

8 January 2024

Farewell to Shuban Krishen, Consul Commercial



Canada India Foundation hosted a small farewell in appreciation of Shuban Krishen, Consul (Commerce, Political) and CSO, Consulate General of India, Toronto. He worked very closely with CIF and extended his strong support to the Indo Canadian Community & Canada-India Commercial ties during his stint.

19 December 2023

Meeting with Ambassador Apoorva Srivastava in Delhi

Ritesh Malik met Ambassador to Slovak Republic, A p o o r v a Srivastava in New Delhi to discuss the bilateral relationship between Canada and India. She had earlier served as the Consul General of India in Toronto and worked very closely with Canada India Foundation.



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19 December 2023

Discussions with Sikh Leaders in Delhi to Strengthen Harmony



CIF Chair Ritesh Malik had very frank and honest discussions with a few eminent Sikh leaders in New Delhi to foster understanding and find ways to strengthen harmony among different segments of the overseas Indian population.

18 December 2023

CIF Welcomes Brampton's Effort to Improve International Student Experience



Canada India Foundation endorsed the document outlining the guiding principles to improve the International Student Experience at an event attended by Satish Thakkar, Immediate Past Chair, CIF, Janet Morrison, President, Sheridan College and the Mayor of Brampton, Patrick Brown. The signing ceremony was held at Sheridan College on December 18, 2023, attended by several community leaders.

18 December 2023

India-based Charity, AVANI, Interacts with CIF

Ms. Anuradha Bhosale, President, AVANI, a nonprofit based in India, interacted with the CIF executive team during a recent visit. Sunita Vyas, National Convener, CIF, briefed her about CIF's philanthropic activities. Girish Kekre, Director, CIF introduced the guest to the audience.



AVANI has been serving destitute and marginalized communities in India since 1994. It runs various projects, including homes for girls and children, mobile classes, online education, and a library on wheels for children from families of waste-pickers.

17 December 2023

CIF & FICCI to Explore Joint Initiatives

Ritesh Malik, Chair, CIF met with the executive team of the



Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to explore ways and means on how the two organizations can work together to advance the economic agenda between Canada and India. Strengthening business and commercial ties cannot only promote economic growth in both countries, but also enhance people to people exchange and help build better understanding.

17 December 2023

Meeting with Cameron MacKay, Canadian High Commissioner

CIF Chair, Ritesh Malik, met with H.E. Cameron Mackay,



Canada's High Commissioner in India, in New Delhi to

CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

exchange views on current and future prospects facing the Canada India engagement. The importance of the relationship was stressed by both against the background of the Indo-Pacific region's significance and how Canada and India can together help contribute to build a peaceful region.

24 Nov 2023

CIF Charitable Foundation Food Drive Donation



The CIF Charitable Foundation collaborated with I & A Professional Corporation to host a food drive aimed at aiding the needy and homeless individuals in the community. Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Education, participated in the food drive. Through this partnership, essential resources are being gathered to provide sustenance to those facing food insecurity. This collaborative effort highlights the power of collective action in addressing social challenges.

16 Nov 2023

CIF Presents \$50,000 Cheque to the Fields Institute, Toronto



Following the announcement made during the CIF Global

Indian Award 2023, Canada India Foundation presented a cheque of \$50,000 (fifty thousand) to The Fields Institute for Research in Mathematical Sciences. Fields Institute is an independent non-profit with ties to twenty Ontario universities including the University of Toronto where it is located.

Ritesh Malik, Chair of CIF, presented the cheque to Dr. V. Kumar Murty in the presence of noted academicians and Award Sponsors. Malik said, "This is a unique honour for us to be associated with one of the world's foremost research institutes. We thank Sudha Murty for making this happen. Her choice of Fields Institute fits so perfectly with her long-standing campaign to strengthen girls' education and empowerment."

08 November 2023

CIF attends Diwali Celebrations at Parliament Hill



Canada India Foundation partnered with Overseas Friends of India Canada for the Diwali Celebrations at the Parliament Hill on 8 November 2023. Then Chair of CIF, Satish Thakkar, noted that "CIF has been supporting this event since it was started by Late Hon. Deepak Obhrai, Member of Parliament, Calgary." Many MPs and officials participated in the celebrations. Chief Guest, Hon. Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Official opposition, appreciated the Hindu Community as hard working, productive and peaceful.

08 November 2023

Marie – France Lalonde, MP, on India's Role in Canada's Indo Pacific Strategy



A CIF Delegation met with Marie – France Lalonde, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National

CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

Defense, Government of Canada. She said that India can play a key role in Canada's Indo Pacific Strategy. She also added that Canada will continue its efforts to build trade and commerce relations with India.

08 November 2023

Meeting with Dr. Stephen Ellis, MP from Nova Scotia



CIF Delegation held a meeting with Dr. Stephen Ellis, Vice Chair of Standing Committee on Health in the Parliament of Canada. CIF briefed him of its efforts for the promotion of the traditional Indian health System Ayurveda and research to integrate into modern medicine. He expressed his desire to know more about the traditional medicine systems of India. CIF also gave him a concept note on benefits of Ayurveda.

08 November 2023

Meeting with Senator Hon. Leo Housakos, Hon. Michael MacDonald & MP Anna Roberts



CIF members had a productive meeting with Hon. Leo Housakos, Senator from Quebec, Hon. Michael L. MacDonald, Senator from Nova Scotia and Anna Roberts, MP, Vaughan in Ottawa. Senator Housakos appreciated the CIF work during a particularly challenging phase of Canada India relations. He said that both democracies with such strong people to people ties will eventually find solutions to issues soon.

08 November 2023

CIF team meets Indian High Commissioner H.E. Sanjay Verma



CIF briefed H.E. Sanjay Verma, High Commissioner of India in Canada about the various initiatives taken by the foundation for re-building the relations between Canada and India. High commissioner Verma was also positive about the latest developments between the two countries and hoped that trade and business will continue between the two countries. He was also very hopeful of the stalled trade negotiation getting restarted sooner than later.

05 November 2023

CIF joins Chandra Arya's Diwali on the Hill



Canada India Foundation members joined in the Diwali celebrations hosted by Chandra Arya, Member of Parliament in Ottawa. On the occasion, he raised the flag carrying the Hindu sacred symbol, Om, on the parliament grounds. The event was supported by 67 Hindu and Indo-Canadian organizations across Canada. Then CIF Chair Satish Thakkar and National Convener Ritesh Malik were special invitees to the event.

CIF YEARS IN REVIEW

28 Oct 2023

CIF Meeting with Senator Leo Housakos



CIF had an opportunity to appraise Senator Leo Housakos from Markham on initiatives of the past decade for the promotion of Canada India bilateral relations.

The Senator appreciated the contributions of Indo-Canadians and applauded CIF for its efforts to strengthen Canada's commercial and political ties with India.

22 Oct 2023

Interactive session with High Commissioner Vikas Swarup



Vikas Swarup, former High Commissioner of India to Canada guided a 6-week long program as Global Thought Leader at the University of Guelph. At the conclusion of the program, he shared with CIF members the key findings and the response from the students to his lectures. The Global Thought Leader in Residence was a joint initiative of CIF and UofG, with the objective to create a better understanding of a new India, help various stakeholders in both countries to forge alliances, build partnerships, share ideas with each other for mutual advantage and greater understanding.

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CIF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



Democracies Working Together

CIF Charitable Foundation is a national non-partisan charitable organization serving the growing population of Canadians of Indian origin and the broader community by organising events, programs and campaigns aimed at ensuring their comprehensive and long-lasting integration into the Canadian mainstream.

Some of the major initiatives of CIF Charitable Foundation are:

- ▶ Co-organizing the CIF Global Indian Award with Canada India Foundation, with prize amount of the Award going to a charity of the Award recipient's choice
- ▶ Organizing the CIF Annual Charity Golf Tournament, with proceeds from the event going to worthy causes, such as supporting the families of the Fallen Soldiers of Canada and India.
- ▶ Organizing meals to be delivered to senior citizens in their homes
- ▶ Helping the students coming to Canada from India to adjust to their new environment
- ▶ In the coming years, CIF Charitable Foundation will be identifying other worthy causes to support, included support of the Indigenous People of Canada and their organizations.
- ▶ The Foundation's 8th Charity Golf Tournament is described in detail in subsequent pages.

CIF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



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CIF 9th CHARITY GOLF 2024 SETS RECORD FUNDRAISING



The 9th Annual CIF Charity Golf tournament held at the Lionhead Golf Club and Convention Centre on August 7, 2024, was a testament to the community's commitment to the brave men and women of the armed forces of Canada and India. This year, the sold-out event set yet another record in contributions, making it possible for the CIF Charity Foundation to donate generously to the designated organizations. The funds raised on the day are exclusively earmarked to support the families of fallen soldiers and frontline workers.

Speaking at the event, Anil Shah, the Chief Inspiration Officer & main driver behind the event for the past nine years, profusely thanked the participants and sponsors for opening their hearts and purses to aid the cause. "You will be happy to know, this year, we have set a new record in fundraising by becoming the most successful tournament since we began. I am really excited for the future. With your help, we will be able to reach out to even more areas where we can make a difference."

Ritesh Malik, Chair, Canada India Foundation, noted: "It is great honour for us to meet the old as well as welcome the new friends and supporters today. You know this cause is very dear to the hearts of all CIF members. And your active participation means a lot to us. Together, we can continue to grow this initiative."

A \$20,000 cheque was presented to the Canadian Armed Forces Association (Toronto RCASC) on the occasion. Indian armed forces too were awarded a similar amount towards aiding families of the fallen soldiers.

Sidharth Nath, Consul General of India in Toronto, lauded the efforts of Canada India Foundation in helping the community and bridging the people of India and Canada.

Several great prizes were presented to the winners of the tournament. For the first time in the tournament's history, a helicopter ball drop was introduced to the great delight of the players. 500 balls were dropped onto the green from a helicopter that hovered above the guests.

Winners of the 9th CIF Charity Golf tournament:

Winners (Masters): Gary Saggi, Ron Sidhu, Tarique Anwar, Harjeet Gatora

Runners up (Masters): Kash Gelda, Andrew Candido, Arjun Gelda, Manvir

Winners (Legends): Harkiran Boparai, Anoop Joshi, Naunihal Gill, Kash Dharni

Runners up (Legends): Harmeet Walia, Paul Singh, Piyush Pradip Das, Mohinder Mahindru





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Kothari Group extends a warm welcome and heartfelt congratulations to Padma Vibhushan Revered Sadhguru, founder of Isha Foundation, on receiving the CIF Global Indian Award 2025.

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