

Panorama India Day Festival & Parade On August 17

Indian Consulate-General In Major Outreach To Community; Holds Inter-Active Session



By Bala Menon

TORONTO: The 2018 Panorama India Day Festival & Grand Parade will be held on Sunday August 19 at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto, Indian Consul-General Dinesh Bhatia announced on Tuesday.

The Panorama festival, which began in 1999 at Yonge and Dundas to commemorate India's Independence Day has been gaining in size and pageantry over the years, with last year's attendance crossing 60,000, according to Toronto police figures. Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty acted as Parade Marshal.

More than 20 floats are expected to be part of the parade this year. Bhatia appealed to the various associations to participate actively in the festival.

The festival announcement was made at the first major and ambitious outreach by the Consulate General to connect with the Indo-Canadian community - at the Elite Banquet Hall and Convention Centre at Albion Road.

"I have been receiving sug-



gestions for such a meeting for some time now about the need for a direct connection with various Indo-Canadian organizations outside of the consulate premises and we thought we will hold one away from the Toronto core."

About 300 people attended the interactive session with several people taking to the microphone to talk about their grievances and to give suggestions to the Indian

diplomats present.

Bhatia pointed out that there were 102 Indo-Canadian organizations in Canada looking after various cultural, business and social needs of the 1.6 million persons of Indian origin settled in Canada.

"This is a very impressive number and hence this outreach program that has been started by the consulate," Bhatia said. "We are also now hold-

ing consular camps to address and resolve various consular and other issues in various places for the diaspora. We have held many successful camps across Canada, most recently in Waterloo, Mississauga and in Winnipeg."

In 2017, the consulate provided 170,000 services of various kinds and released more than 3000 life certificates so that Indian seniors can get their eligible pensions.

The consulate also hosts an Open House every Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the consulate where anyone can walk in and speak with officers without any prior appointment. "Our officers are also available on the phone and by email at all times and I assure you that every query will be answered. If you don't get a satisfactory resolution, you can directly approach me," Bhatia said.

Consular officials have also been liaising with colleges and universities in the GTA to connect with the large number of students from India who are now enrolled here. "In a few years, these student will get their work permits and become permanent residents and Canada and we are ensuring that their stay here is without major problems."

The board members of Panorama India are: Anu Srivastava, Raja Borate, Semeeta Kohl, Mansha Chowder, Ramnik Singh Khurana, Sanjay Agarwal, Jasveen Rattan and Summit Abuja. Panorama India is a not-for-profit organization, with the Consul Generals as Honorary Patron.

Yoga Day At CN Tower Complex



The Consulate general of India, Toronto, held its first Yoga session in the morning of June 17 at to celebrate the International Day of Yoga 2018 at the iconic CN Tower Complex. International Day of Yoga, or commonly and unofficially referred to as Yoga The Day, is celebrated annually on 21 June since its inception in 2015. An international day for yoga was declared unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly. The idea of International Day of Yoga was first proposed by the current Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi during his speech at the UNGA, on 27 September 2014.



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Man Charged In Sex Assault Investigation

REGION OF PEEL – Investigators from the Special Victim's Unit have charged a 24 year-old male, Anirudha Nayagam, in a sexual assault investigation.

On Friday June 1, 2018, at approximately 7:45 p.m. a 23 year-old female victim was approached by the suspect at a convenience store in the Kings Cross Road and Knightsbridge Road area in Brampton. The victim left on foot and was followed by the suspect in a silver vehicle.

The suspect again approached the victim and sexually assaulted her. He then fled the area in the silver vehicle but was identified on CCTV.

On June 19, 2018, Nayagam of Brampton surrendered to police and was charged with sexual Assault and criminal harassment.