



**Consulate General of India
Vancouver**

Press Release

High Commissioner of India to Canada H.E. Ajay Bisaria Concludes Successful Visit to Vancouver (July 19-25 July, 2021)

Vancouver, BC - H.E. Ajay Bisaria, High Commissioner of India to Canada, recently concluded a successful visit to Vancouver aimed primarily at encouraging and promoting bilateral trade and investment opportunities between India and Canada.

“India Canada relations are multifaceted and growing stronger by the day. As large democracies and major G-20 countries we have much to collaborate on, particularly as the world grapples with the pandemic,” said High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria. “India and Canada are consulting not only on the health and medical aspects of dealing with the pandemic but also on the subsequent economic recovery and in building a post-COVID mechanism that safeguards us against such future shocks.”

During the visit High Commissioner Bisaria met and interacted with a cross-section of people from the Greater Vancouver area, including, political leaders, Canadian business leaders, Indo-Canadian business leaders, heads of educational institutions and diaspora members.

Highlights of the visit include:

- High Commissioner Bisaria participated in a business roundtable highlighting opportunities and incentives for Canadian companies when partnering with India’s manufacturing sector. The roundtable was organised by KPMG Canada with CEOs and senior representatives of select Vancouver based companies namely Whitewater West; ZE Power Group Inc.; Timber Investments Ltd.; Lululemon; Acuva; Terramera and Forestry Innovation Investments Ltd.

High Commissioner Bisaria also joined another business roundtable organised by the Consulate General of India as part of its trade promotion and market expansion activities. He engaged with a large group of CEOs, bankers and other stakeholders belonging to the Indo-Canadian community. High Commissioner gave a detailed overview of the bilateral trade and investment between India and Canada, the new Project Linked Investment Scheme (PLI) the long-term growth opportunities in sectors like infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, digital technology and the direction that the India Canada trade relationship is taking. The High Commissioner and Consul General also engaged on a range of other issues and important events including India’s 75th Independence Day in partnership with the Consulate.

- High Commissioner Bisaria met with Ms. Tamara Vrooman, President & CEO, YVR airport authority to discuss the resumption of direct flights between India and Canada and commencement of regular direct flights between Vancouver and Delhi by Air India, who have announced daily flights on this direct route when the flight restrictions are lifted.
- In discussions with educational leaders, High Commissioner Bisaria discussed, inter alia issues related to opportunities for cooperation in education sector and skills training, problems related to mobility and travel of international students from India in the backdrop of restrictions on travel imposed by Canada due to the pandemic. He separately met with Mr. Ajay Patel, President, Vancouver Community College; Mr. Lane Trotter, President, Langara College and Ms. Joy Johnson, President of Simon Fraser University.

The opportunity for economic and education sector collaboration continue to expand between Canada and India, as a result of proactive engagement by both sides. Key indicators of this success include:

- India Canada bilateral trade has now grown to more than \$10 Billion USD.
- Canadian funds have invested more than \$60 Billion USD in a wide range of sectors in India.
- Canada is an important source of primary produce to India, including uranium, potash and bituminous coal.
- India's exports of pharmaceuticals, steel and IT services to Canada are growing.
- Major Indian companies like TATA, Mahindra, Birla, and Infosys have a strong and growing presence in Canada.
- High Commissioner Bisaria in his interaction noted that, "Education is a key area of mutual interest. Recently India became the top source of foreign students with 230,000 Indian students studying in Canada.
- With nearly 300 MoUs signed between institutions of higher education in India and Canada. We have in place about 300 MoUs between institutions of higher learning in India and Canada. Under the MoU on Higher Education, meetings have been held between the two countries continue to expand opportunities for the collaboration in the areas of student and faculty mobility."

"Our people-to-people relations are unique with 1.6 million Canadians of Indian heritage and almost 700,000 Indian passport holders living in Canada," said Bisaria. "The Indian community in Canada has contributed to the diversity and resilience of Canada. It is well integrated into Canadian life and is playing strong leadership roles in all sectors from public life to science to arts. This gives a very strong base for growth of India Canada relations. We have in place the entire spectrum of collaborative mechanisms on areas ranging from counter terrorism to promotion of science and technology to arctic research to cultural exchanges."

During his time in Vancouver, High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria met with both federal and provincial political leaders including Hon. Raj Chouhan Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Burnaby-Edmonds; Hon. Harry Bains Minister of Labour, Surrey-Newton; Hon. Jinny Sims, MLA, Surrey-Panorama, Mr. Moe Sihota, Former MLA & BC NDP President, Hon. Sukh Dhaliwal, MP, Surrey-Newton and Hon. Randeep Sarai, MP, Surrey-Centre.

Business engagements also included meetings with business leaders like Mr. Peter Dhillon, President & CEO, Richberry Group; Mr. Jim Pattison, CEO and Chairman, The Jim Pattison Group; Mr. Kevin Pankratz, Sr VP Sales and Marketing, Canfor Corp.; Mr. Sabi Bining, CEO, ON2 Solutions and Dr. Ajay Potluri, President, Vaccigen Ltd.

This was the High Commissioner's first visit to British Columbia since he took on the role of High Commissioner to Canada in March, 2020.

Vancouver
July 30, 2021