

## **RECEPTION FOR CONSUL GENERAL AND FAREWELL TO CONSUL HALDER IN FREMONT HELD BY INDIAN COMMUNITY**

India West, Sept.4, 2001

Fremont: INDO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY FEDERATION held a dinner reception for new Consul General of India on August 31, 2001.

Nearly 175 prominent people from all over Northern California gathered at the house of Usha and Jeevan Zutshi to meet and greet the Consul General Mr. H. H. S. Viswanathan and bid farewell to Consul Abhjit Halder.

In attendance were Mayor of Fremont Gus Morrison, Fremont City Manager Jan Perkins, Congressman Pete Stark District Director Jo Cazanave, Fremont Council member Bob Wasserman, Assembly member John Dutra District Director Gloria Ritchie, Board of Equalization member Johan Klehs Deputy Chief Anne Taylor, Democratic Central Committee Chair Yvette Brittain, Ex. Director of Ohlone college Foundation George Retamoza and Councilwoman Judy Zlatnik, Past chairman of Fremont Chamber of Commerce Timothy Reilly.

Mayor of the City of Fremont welcomed the new Consul General and said, I have welcomed three Consul General so far in this very place and feel very honored to be the Mayor of a City which is so diverse and culturally rich. He praised the nearly 21,000 Indo-Americans in Fremont for bringing a lot of culture to the City.

Dr. Deepak Sachdev, Vice-President of the Indo-American Community Federation presented a Commendation Plaque to outgoing Consul Halder from the Mayor of Milpitas Henry Manayan which said Consul Halder has been instrumental in giving a new edge to young Indian Americans through guidance and support to Indian Students' Associations in various American Universities and encouraging them to make their presence felt in main stream American political life. He has strived to enhance cooperation between India and the silicon valley through organizing intensive visits by IT delegations from India.

Jeevan Zutshi, the President of the six year old Fremont based Federation, introduced each and every community member to the new Consul General including members of AAPIO, TiE, N.F.I.A, Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, Vishwa Gujrati Samaj, Gujrat Sister City and Kashmir Forum. Jo Cazanave, the District Director of Congressman Petestark presented the new Consul General a welcome letter from the Congressman and a departing note was presented to Consul Halder. Zutshi congratulated Congressman Pete Stark and his wife Debra for becoming proud parents of a beautiful twin, a girl and a boy last month.

George Retamoza, the Director of Ohlone college Foundation asked every one to support the \$140 million Bond for Ohlone Newark center and upgrading Fremont facility. Zutshi, who was recently elected to the Ohlone College Foundation urged everyone to support their Schools and Community colleges for the betterment of our future generation.

Indo-American Chamber of Commerce President Kumar Batra welcomed the new Consul General and also reminded the gathering of their annual awards banquet on October 14, 2001. National Federation of Indo-American Associations was represented by Chairman Haresh Panchal and President elect Niraj Baxi. Zutshi, who is the Regional Vice-President of N.F.I.A talked about NFIA upcoming three day Conference and Whitehouse briefing on October 4-6 in Washington, D.C. He urged everyone to participate.

F.I.A of Northern California founding President Dr.Rameshwar Singh welcomed the new

Consul General and praised the consulate staff. Dr. Singh was introduced as a pioneer who has been selflessly serving the community. Dr. Subroto Kundu, the past president of AAPIO shared his feelings and praised Consul Halder for steadfastness and a vision. Dr. Sarbjit Hundal, a well know ophthalmologist, Dr. Bhopinder Bhandari and Dr. Sunil Dhawan were also in attendance including Dr. Alka Sharma and the past President of AAPIO Dr. Sarala Rao.

Silicon valley was represented by entrepreneurs Naren Bakshi, Anil Godhwani, Dr. Devendra Verma, Dr. Praveen Gupta, Arun Mehta, Subash Garg, Naresh Sharma, Surender Zutshi and Ashok Saraf. Manjula Gupta talked about the American India Foundation (AIF) created in response to the Gujarat Earthquake by former President Clinton and prominent Indian-American leaders to be a foundation with a long-term commitment to providing financial, technological, and managerial resources towards helping the people of India realize their potential and strengthening the bonds between the US and India. Lata Krishnan, the President of this organization couldn't attend due to a prior commitment but sent her good wishes.

Zutshi, who is also the national Director of eleven year old Indo-American Kashmir Forum talked about the whole day international Symposium on Kashmir on June 9th this year in Fremont Hilton which was also sponsored by Indo-American Community federation. He thanked everyone present for having supported the conference and cultural night with a prominent Kashmiri singer from India. Indo-American Kashmir Forum had organized the conference. Dr. Nilima Sabharwal of Home of Hope gave details about the Charity event on September 14 for the benefit of orphanages in India.

Zutshi encouraged everyone to get involved and stay politically active. In the past few years there has been an unusually great excitement and commitment on the part of Indo-Americans who participated in the American political process by supporting their choice candidates both on State and National level. This is indeed a positive step in the right direction. Indo-Americans, have achieved the status of being a very affluent minority group in the U.S through hard work, education and strong family values. Getting involved in the mainstream issues and working towards the betterment of our community is what is extremely important. We have to be a part of solution and work with our elected officials and mainstream organizations. Also working toward the betterment and enhancement of the Indo-U.S relations is extremely important for all of us. In that regard, I wish to congratulate our former Consul General of India Mr. Abhyankar and outgoing deputy consul General Mr. Abhjit Halder for spearheading an effort to bring the community together and help create a very desirable environment to achieve that objective. We are very sure that honorable consul General Mr. H.H.S. Vishwanath will be a very valuable asset in that direction, Zutshi said in his concluding remarks.

The evening concluded with a musical entertainment by Dr. Deepak Sachdev.