



**Consulate General of India
Perth

MEDIA RELEASE

10 December 2018

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018 celebration

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2018 was celebrated at the Consulate on 9 January 2018 with participation of more than 50 prominent members from the Indian community in Perth, including representatives from community associations, business, academia and media. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated every year on 9 January to mark the contribution of the Indian Diaspora and to help them connect with their roots in India. The 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was held in Bengaluru in January 2017 with participation of 7200 delegates from 70 countries.

2. The PBD 2018 event at the Consulate commenced with the screening of recording of speech of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the 1st Pravasi Saansad Sammelan (PIO Parliamentarian Conference) in New Delhi on 09 January 2018 and the address by External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj at the ASEAN-India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Singapore. Consul General Amit Kumar Mishra welcomed the attendees and explained the importance of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas as an event to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of the 30-million strong overseas Indian community across the world and its increasing contribution to growth and development of India. Consul General spoke about the change in format of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations in 2015 to make it more substantive and productive. He mentioned that PBD 2018 celebrations included 1st ever PIO Parliamentarian Conference being held in New Delhi, being attended by over 120 Parliamentarians

from 20 countries, and ASEAN-India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Singapore on 6-7 January 2018.

3. Consul General made a presentation on various flagship programs undertaken by GOI to engage Diaspora, including Overseas Citizen of India, Know India Programme, Bharat Ko Janiye Online Quiz, Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty Scheme, Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children. The focus of the presentation was on creating greater awareness about the platforms available for the diaspora to make monetary contribution to development of India. Consul General explained about the India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI), which provides multiple options to donors to support projects in terms of sector and states in India. He called upon the community associations to take lead in motivating the members of Indian diaspora in Western Australia to contribute to the social and economic development of India through IDF-OI. Consul General separately listed the achievement of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in last three years, with five states and about 2000 cities being declared Open Defecation Free, and invited the community to contribute to Swachh Bharat Abhiyan by making contributions to Swachh Bharat Kosh. A special video explaining India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians was played and flyers on IDF-OI/Swachh Bharat Kosh were distributed to the attendees.

4. The event also featured experience sharing by Indian community members who have been residing in Western Australia for long duration. The gathering was addressed by Mr. Atul Garg (Former President of Indian Society of Western Australia & Manager, Energy Division, Fortescue Metals Group), Mr. Satinder Samra (Punjabi community leader and President of Micro Business Party), Mr Amit Mehta (Gujarati community leader and editor of Gujarati magazine *Sandesh*) and Mr. Prashant Singh (Project Manager, Main Roads WA). The speakers spoke about the transformational changes in the working style of the Indian Government, and its engagement with the diaspora. They highlighted the three-fold increase in strength of the Indian community in Perth and the need to have a common platform of all community associations to meet the challenges and aspiration of growing community. They also agreed to work with the Consulate to help generate contributions to IDF-OI and Swachh Bharat Kosh.

