

PM marks inauguration of the Year of India in Canada 2011

March 4, 2011

Gatineau, Quebec

Prime Minister Stephen Harper today participated in the launch of the Year of India in Canada 2011, which aims to highlight India's culture, traditions and diversity, and celebrate the contributions of the Indian diaspora to Canadian society. The Prime Minister was joined by Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and host Shashishekhar M. Gavai, High Commissioner of India to Canada.

"Our country is home to a vibrant, nearly one-million strong, Indo-Canadian community that plays a vital role in Canada's economic and cultural landscape," said the Prime Minister. "This Year will provide an excellent opportunity to showcase India's colourful culture and traditions while strengthening connections between our two countries."

Organized by the High Commission of India in Ottawa, the Year of India will feature a number of cultural and artistic events across the country, including musical and theatrical performances as well as literary gatherings, book fairs, business meetings and children's events.

Canada and India enjoy excellent bilateral relations and both countries are working together to further strengthen ties. Since 2006, twenty Canadian ministers have visited India, including an official delegation led by Prime Minister Harper in November 2009. The prime ministerial visit was reciprocated by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in June 2010 – the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Canada since 1973.

"The Year of India in Canada represents a unique opportunity to explore Canada's rich cultural diversity and I encourage all Canadians to participate in festivities, which will be taking place across the country," added the Prime Minister.

For more information on the Year of Canada and related events, visit:
www.hciottawa.ca