



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF INDO-CANADIANS

(A Registered Not-for-Profit Organization)

Honorable Minister Mary Ng
16 Esnapark Drive,
Markham
Ontario

October 17, 2018

Subject: Our Meeting on Indo-Canadian matters on October 9, 2018

Dear Hon. Mary Ng,

On behalf of Indo-Canadians who met you on Tuesday October 9, I would like to offer our sincere appreciation for meeting with us. We were also accorded the very friendly welcome by your Office staff. (At the same time, it did not escape our notice that your Office staff reflected the essential characteristic of our Nation, i.e. the unique mosaic that is Canada!).

In that context, as we pointed out during our presentation, India is also a mosaic (but larger by more than an order of magnitude than Canada by population), as it is truly a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-faith and plural nation, and hence our affinity as Indo-Canadians, to Canada. Unfortunately, that is not the impression that most Indo-Canadian-citizens here have, because of very selective reporting of events by our Canadian media that influences follow-up actions by both our Federal and Provincial Governments.

In this follow-up note, we can only echo what Dr. Azad Kaushik in his introductory note to you has already elaborated. It is not sufficient to just open our doors to all-comers from around the world and welcome them as family members. To sustain our welcoming nature and build a nation of plurality, we must also become knowledgeable about other people's unique culture and history (China, India, Europe, and so on) to be able to accept them whole heartedly. Only then, we will be able to appreciate traits that enrich us, and discard those that do not.

Unfortunately, that has not happened yet, as one frequently witnesses minor or fringe groups or movements taking centre stage and their so called 'grievances' making to national stage (e.g. the Uighurs in China, Sikhs in India, Tamils in SriLanka; or closer to home, the dozens of Indigenous groups vying for autonomy or veto over major national policies, and so on). Such movements have encouraged the rise of fringe groups with their own specific baggage and agenda, with divisiveness in the society as the net outcome. Ultimately this has led, in some instances, to 'vote bank' politics and appeasement of sections of society and their specific values in the name of multi-culturalism that conflict with the Canadian Values, which we all hope to nourish.

One way of guarding against skewed policies is to institute a system of 'Community Advisory Committee', whose members may be called upon to provide feedback, a sounding board before



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embarking on any firm policies by municipal, provincial and federal governments. There may already be such committee (e.g. committee to advise on issues involving our Indigenous peoples), but we as Indo-Canadians have no opportunity available from such a practice despite our significant numbers. But, more importantly, our considerable and continuing contributions to our Canadian society in diverse fields such as culture, commerce, health, education, science and technology remain unrecognized.

We would be happy to assist you (or other members of your Party) further, should you need a sounding board for dealing with issues as outlined above.

Kind regards.

Sincerely,

Prof. Bibhu Mohanty
Mr. Mike Haresh Mehta
Members, NAIC Executive Council

Copy: Azad K. Kaushik, Surinder Sharma and Vinod Munshi