



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

AUSTRALIA INDIA INSTITUTE EARLY CAREERS MORNING TEA

Tuesday 26 June, 2018

Professor Craig Jeffrey, Director and CEO Australia India Institute

Supporters

Participants

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their elders past and present and to any elders here with us this morning.

Tony and I are delighted that you are all joining us here at Government House. Forgive me if I direct my brief comments specifically to the young people in room.

You are a group very dear to Victoria. You are young. You are bright. You have cross-cultural skills. You are true global citizens, and so very important to the relationship between Victoria and India.

We know from your studies, your scholarships, and your early careers, that you are – across the board – a clever group.

You were clever from your earliest days. First, because you were clever enough to be born at just the right time in history!

But you (and no doubt, in very many regards, your parents and families) have also been clever since, making decisions to capitalise on that serendipitous timing of birth.

This is a very auspicious moment in which to be embarking on a career that traverses the relationship between India and Victoria.

The relationship is the strongest it has ever been, and is going from strength to strength.

There are many reasons for that.

India is the top nation of origin for migrants to Australia, according to the latest information published by the Department of Home Affairs.

Of Victoria's population of more than 6 million, almost 170,000 of us were born in India, and more than 230,000 are of Indian ancestry. This population has tripled since 2006, and Victoria can proudly claim the highest population of Indian born people of any State in Australia.

As well, Victoria hosts the largest number of Indian students of any Australian State, with 44% of Indian students choosing and contributing to our world class Universities and Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutes.

More than 200,000 Indian students have been educated in Victoria in the past decade. That is 200,000 students who have left their mark on Victoria, sharing their culture and perspectives, educating their fellow students (whether local or international) about India, and making our community more rounded and diverse.

We were privileged to travel to India late last year on an official visit. In fact, we have another official visit planned in just a month or so.

We have seen the impressive economic achievements of this huge nation, the brilliance of the tech hubs and life sciences, and our shared interests in entrepreneurship, higher education and urban design. There are so many burgeoning trade and investment links between us.

The Victorian State Government launched *Victoria's India Strategy: Our Shared Future*. It marked the culmination of hundreds of hours of consultation, with more than 200 partners, academic groups and community leaders.

And the Australia India Institute played no small role in shaping and informing its direction.

The strategy is clear in its ambition to increase two-way student mobility, and to extend research collaborations between the leading minds and world class universities in our respective nations.

It's an ambitious blueprint that puts people, education and collaboration at the heart of the relationship.

You are important ambassadors for this relationship. You are able to move between Victoria and India. You understand the differences and the commonalities. (Perhaps you have even adopted an Aussie Rules team, while you've been here?)

You are the ones who can encourage and nurture the next generation of leaders, on both sides of the ocean.

You are the ones who will be at the vanguard of our mutual prosperity.

There could be no greater role model for you than Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, the Victorian Business Ambassador. She graduated from Ballarat College (now known as Federation University) in 1975, with a Masters degree in malting and brewing. Back home in India, she used that expertise to build Biocon, India's largest biopharmaceutical enterprise.

Of course, a special thank you too to the Australia India Institute for delivering the Victoria India Internship Program, and for providing opportunities for students and recent graduates to receive workplace experience in both India and Victoria.

In closing, let me say this to our young ambassadors. For all the uncertainties and change in the world, your lives are filled with opportunity. Your transnational skills and global outlook put you ahead of the curve.

We wish you all the best, and feel sure there will be much pleasure in watching your promising careers go from strength to strength.

I look forward to meeting many of you shortly. But now, may I introduce Professor Craig Jeffrey, CEO and Director of the Australia Institute.