

## FIA CHICAGO OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE



### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

#### Photo 1 - OATH:

*Newly elected members of the FIA Chicago Executive Committee taking the 'Oath of Office' at the Installation ceremony during FIA Chicago's India Republic Day Celebrations.*

#### Photo 2 – VIPs:

*FIA Chicago's Trustees and FIA Executive Committee members pose for a photo with Congressman Danny Davis, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Amit Kumar India's Consul General and other dignitaries and leaders.*

### **RAKESH MALHOTRA TAKES OVER AS FIA CHICAGO PRESIDENT**

*Congressman Brad Schneider: "FIA Chicago, a testament of vibrant Indian American Community."*

CHICAGO – Federation of India Associations Chicago (FIA Chicago), at a glittering ceremony celebrated India's 73<sup>rd</sup> Republic Day in Chicago; and, in presence of three US Congressmen, installed its new Executive team with Rakesh Malhotra as its President. Ranking Congressman

Danny Davis, Congressman Brad Schneider, and Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi were present. Also present was Amit Kumar, India's Midwest Consul General as Chief Guest.

The new Executive Committee comprises: Rakesh Malhotra, President; Rajesh (Raj) Patel, Ex Officio Past President; Hemant Patel, Executive Vice President; Jayesh Patel, Vice President; Amar Upadhaya, Vice President; Amitabh Mittal, Vice President; Jatinder Singh Bedi, Secretary; Chirag Chavda, Joint Secretary; Vijender Doma, Treasurer; and Nirmala Reddy, Joint Treasurer. Bhailal Patel and Kantibhai N Patel, Trustees FIA administered the 'Oath of Office' to the incoming Executive Committee.

Through this event, new Directors of the FIA Chicago have also been introduced. They include: Nirav Patel, Ashok Shah, Chirayu Parikh, Kaushik Joshi, Rohit Joshi, Shailesh Rajput, Satheesan Nair, Tribhuvan Gaur, and Ms Anica Dubey. The FIA also recognized New delegates; Nand Garg, Prasenjeet Majumdar, Sanjay Patel, Vandana Jhingan, Vinesh Virani, Mihir Acharya, Nitin Surti, Dipen (Joy) Shah, Viral Patel, Harendra Mangrola, Poonam Gupta, Raju Shah, Sanjay B Shah, Major Shatish Sharma, Manish Patel, Avatanas Kumar, Kiran Gajendra, and Abhinav Raina.

Several leading Chicago organizations and prominent personalities from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana attended. These included Ms Meghna Bansal, Trustee Wheatland Township; Amit Kumar, the Consul General of India; Sunny Ghabawala, Trustee FIA; Sher Rajput, Trustee FIA; Hina Trivedi, Trustee FIA; Kanti Patel, Trustee FIA; Bhailal Patel, Trustee FIA; Parminder Singh Goldi, Harjinder Khasria, Krishna Bansal, and Nimesh Jani.

In his Presidential address, FIA Chicago President Rakesh Malhotra acknowledged the contributions of Indian diaspora in the fields of science, arts, academics, the civil society, and business. Rakesh Malhotra said, "We must continue to contribute wholeheartedly towards building a society that stands firmly on the foundation of equality and social justice." He called upon all the community organizations to "step up [our] efforts and embark on a journey from success to significance."

Rakesh Malhotra called upon the NRI community to "reinforce [our] commitment of creating a system in which there is no place for discrimination. ...[and] to reflect on core values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. He assured of FIA Chicago's approach to be inclusive and innovative. "The goal is to strengthen India-US ties," he stressed.

FIA Chicago's outgoing President Rajesh (Raj) Patel extended his greetings to the community. He also acknowledged the efforts and contribution of India's freedom fighters in making India a Republic. While recalling FIA Chicago's stellar contributions during its 40-year history Rajesh Patel stated that FIA Chicago, during the last 40 years of its existence, has led the NRIs from the front. He said that FIA Chicago provided the NRIs with a participative leadership, and also taken up the community issues with the US Political leadership. "From time to time," Rajesh Patel said, "FIA Chicago has fought for the community rights be it social discrimination or the minority bias."

Rajesh Patel further stated that: "As we step into FIA Chicago's 41<sup>st</sup> year, I call upon you all to reject the prevailing noise and jealousies, and, walk in step with the FIA Chicago leadership to strengthen the community going forward." He also invited the community children to be a part of FIA Chicago.

Thanking FIA Chicago for inviting him, Congressman Brad Schneider described FIA Chicago as "a testament of vibrant Indian American Community." Entire Indian American community supports democracy all over the world, he added.

Congressman Brad Schneider stated that the Indian value-system exemplifies nonviolence. Indian American community plays a crucial role in America and is involved virtually in every walk of life. He cited Kamala Harris as an example. Congressman Schneider described India and USA as strong

economic allies and the two countries largest trading partners. He emphasized that India is the 10th largest supplier to United States.

Referring to their 1959 meeting Congressman Schneider drew a parallel between Martin Luther King and Mahatama Gandhi. He stated that while Gandhi brought India independence from the British, Martin Luther King brought voting right the women in United States.

Speaking at the occasion Congressman Danny Davis stated that, " we are fortunate that we live in the USA and in its state of Illinois..." Congressman Danny Davis complimented the Indian Community for economically strengthening the United States social fabric. "I thank you for what you mean, for what you do, and for what you care," he added. Congressman Davis made a special mention of FIA Trustee Sher Rajput for being friends with him for last 50 year. "Thank you Sher," he said.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi extended customary greetings to Indians on the occasion of Republic Day. He acknowledged NRIs' contributions in strengthening Indo-US ties. Referring to the increasing Indian American influence in the US polity, Congressman Krishnamoorthi stated that it reflects the common value system between the countries.

In his speech Amit Kumar, India's Midwest Consul General said that in India 1.6 million doses of Coved-19 vaccine have been administered. Through this 90 percent of adults have been inoculated; 70 percent have received two doses; 50 percent of the age group 15 to 18 years have received an inoculation. He thanked the NRIs for enabling the Indian art and culture accepted in the American socio-fabric.

Hemant Patel the Executive Vice President described the celebrations as a benchmark event that shall be a turning point in the Chicago's community circles. He applauded Ms Madhura Sane's Kathak performance on the legendary song *Aye Mere Watan Ke Logo...* "It filled my eyes," Hemant Patel states.

In his presentation, Hemant Patel said that "we are celebrating the 73rd anniversary of the Constitution of India." While highlighting the progress that India has made during 73 years of independence Hemant Patel stated, "India has reached to the Mars and Moon. India is now the fourth strongest army in the world." India is the 6th largest economy, he added.

Hemant Patel further spoke about the constitution of India and said, constitution is the most important document, and it must be respected to serve all the communities in securing social justice, liberty and fraternity for everyone fairly and equally.

It be mentioned that Madura Sane is a cine star and Director of Chicago's leading Kathak dance company named Nritya Natya Academy.

Expressing delight over the conduct of the FIA Chicago's India Republic Day celebrations, Chirag Chavda stated, "This very well-organized event reflects a good teamwork. ...we can lead this too far ahead towards the community progress and fruitful engagement."

Ms Nirmala Reddy and Ms Amy Mehta were the reception committee co-chairs. Jayesh Patel and Ms Prachi Jaitley were the emcees. Amar Upadhaya and Vijender Doma were the event coordinators. Vice President Jayesh Patel extended the vote of thanks. He describes the function as an outstanding networking opportunity that also had a strong message of community solidarity and camaraderie. "The dance performance by Ms Madhura Sane was par excellence," Jayesh Patel says.

ends/-