



**HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA  
CANBERRA  
Press Release**

The Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas and Vishwa Hindi Diwas was celebrated on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at the Chancery precincts with over 70 eminent members of the Indian diaspora.

2.1 On the occasion, the High Commissioner (HC) elaborated on the contribution of India to the world and emphasized the role of Pravasi Bharatiyas (overseas Indians) in raising the stature of India overseas. HC urged the Indian diaspora, that in addition to voluntary contribution to several individual and collective works and programmes, their efforts to achieve excellence in their chosen areas of interests and careers would be their contribution to India.

2.2 HC also read out the message of Honourable Prime Minister of India on Vishwa Hindi Diwas and emphasised the contribution of Hindi in the daily lives of an average Indian. Addressing the gathering in Hindi, he urged Indian diaspora community to continue its contribution in spread of the language. He emphasized the richness of the language in comparison to other languages in its cultural heritage and social aspects.

3. Distinguished members of the local Indian community, Professor Ramesh Thakur, Emeritus Professor from the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University, and Dr. Vikram Sharma, founding director and CEO of QuintessenceLabs Inc, also shared their experience and views. Ms. Nikita Singh, a participant of the 26<sup>th</sup> Know India Program who has been brought up in Australia, shared her experiences about her Aus-Indian identity.

3.1 Professor Thakur mentioned that Indians were always welcomed in new countries, since they had the capacity to gel with communities in any country. In fact, the overseas citizens, by their amicability, act as promoters in their country of residence, showcasing the Indian culture.

3.2 Dr Vikram Sharma recollected his experiences in his early days as a student in the University in Canberra, and how Canberra had moulded him, both professionally and personally. His constant engagement with India at various junctures of his professional life was an example of how India continues to be high on the agenda for business ventures set up by OCIs. He also pointed out that over the past 30 years, the true potential of the modern India has manifested itself, and the challenges and excitement continue.

3.3 Ms. Nikita, spoke on how most children of migrant Indians were always enthusiastic about knowing more about what their parents and grand-parents reminisced about. She spoke partially in Hindi to the applause of the audience.

4. Ms. Avneet Bakshi, winner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz from amongst 40000 registrants from about 210 countries, was felicitated and was handed over the bronze medal by the HC.

5. Mission also marked the event as, celebration of Lohri, Sankranti, Magh bihu and Pongal .

6. The event was well received by the senior members of community associations, as well as by the NRI students in the Australian Capital Territory, who attended.

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