

Indo Canadian Sun

India-Innovation and Inclusive Growth

▼ Anupam Sharma

On October 31st 2014, Dr. Anil Gupta gave a talk on **"India's Perspectives on Innovation and Inclusive Growth: Linking Grassroots Innovations with Global Entrepreneurs and Institutions"**.

The luncheon-presentation was attended by 80 people representing diverse streams of our city- the Indo-Canadian community, Aboriginal, Academic, Business, Education and Government. The talk took place at the Charisma Restaurant, 83 Sherbrook Street.

At the outset, the presentation by Dr. Anil Gupta was highly uplifting in providing with a major takeaway- regardless one's social and economic status, the desire for better living and quality of life and, to be contributing citizen is one that shared by all. This self-evident idea and doing something to achieve this requires an empathetic approach and the perspective that this non-zero sum game results in an overall benefit for all. Additionally, it can make for a good business proposition. With respect to Canada, where Aboriginal people (especially the First Nations) and socio-economically disadvantaged are concerned, these ideas could be a point of departure towards

meaningful approaches and solutions.

Dr. Anil Gupta is a senior professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India. He is founder of the Society for Research and Initiatives on Sustainable Technologies and Institutions, an internationally known NGO working for farmers' innovation and creativity. He is presently co-teaching a course with Dr. A. J. P. Kalam, the former President of India. Among his international interventions are keynote addresses at the TED Talks. In India, his work has resulted in the creation of the National Innovation Foundation.

Dr. Gupta's talk at the Charisma Restaurant was organized along five main pillars. The first, a need for shift of mindset from entitlement to grassroots-innovations based enterprise. The idea here is entitlement resulting in dulling of ambition and motivation. Secondly, shift from emphasis on micro-finance to micro-innovation to help open and support the creative possibilities that lie within us. The third pillar provides for the empathetic approach- **Samvedana** (which translates to sharing pains of people at the grassroots). In essence it is about "Innovation Walks" in socially-economically disadvantaged

regions. The fourth pillar speaks to **Samskar** (the use of hands/ manual labour in education/learning). Finally, at the grass-roots it is about privileging the idea that "small is beautiful" and that traditional foods, indigenous innovations and knowledge still has much to offer by way of issues and problems faced by our contemporary and modern society.

This initiative convened by the India Centre at the University of Winnipeg, it was supported by the Menno Simons College and the Canadian Mennonite University. The India Centre, established on 5th November 2013 is an outcome of the partnership between the University and the India Association of Manitoba Inc and, it focuses on "Academic, Business and Community Excellence". Located in the Faculty of Business and Economics,

it provides a "forum" for members and organizations in Manitoba (and elsewhere in Canada) to carry-out initiatives in a coordinated and systematic manner and, promote and facilitate the bi-lateral relationship and understanding between India and Canada.

Website: <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/india-centre>



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