

Education mission to boost 'Brand Canada' in India

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IN TORONTO

A six-member delegation from Canada's education corridor will leave for India for a two-week visit.

Hussain F Neemuchwala, founder-director, International Center for Education Inc, who is leading the delegation co-sponsored by the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce, said the objective of taking yet another education delegation to India is to foster the right connections and give the delegates a thorough overview of the education sector in India.

"Besides meeting over a dozen local high schools, we also have visits planned to the Canadian high commission, Indian Merchants Chamber, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of Indian Industry and meetings with valuable stake holders," he told *India Abroad* January 13.

Mary Sasso, State University of New York in Fredonia; Anuraj Bajwa, Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning; Catherine Cameron, Pickering College; Maria Charlotte Bond, Quest University; and Dr Musabbir Chowdhury, Assiniboine Community College, are part of the delegation.

The delegation will visit New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune and Dubai. "We will bring North American institutions in contact with their Indian counterparts for recruitment, to create partnership opportunities, develop linkages, explore joint ventures and further establish their brand within this

burgeoning education corridor," Neemuchwala said.

But the institutions that are part of the delegation are not so well known. "So what?" responded Kam Rathee, special adviser (India) with Blake, Cassels & Graydon, "The idea was to take mid-sized schools who have not yet tested in India."

Rathee, who will attend a conference organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry January 22 to 25, will join the education delegation in the second leg.

"We are," said Pankaj Mehra, director, Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce, "pleased to sponsor/support Canada's initiatives to encourage international students to take advantage of our excellent education and research facilities."

"I understand international students to Canada contributed \$6.5 billion to our economy in 2008. India has recently stated its intentions to allow world-class educational institutions to rapidly fill the growing education needs of young Indians. We see the Canadian education industry as a



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potentially major growth area. By bringing focus on this sector, we wish to encourage other partners to promote this activity in the India-Canada corridor."

Neemuchwala explained that unlike organizing normal information sessions where students are expected to show up in a five-star hotel setting, the delegation will go to schools to talk to students who are interested in pursuing post-secondary education in North America.

While a country like Australia attracts 100,000 Indian students a year, Canada hardly gets 5,000. With the recent series of assaults on Indian students in Australia, more young people may progressively start looking to Canada for their post-secondary education.

"So far the absence of Brand Canada in India has been a disadvantage. And since education is a provincial subject and there's no federal education ministry. So it comes down to individual institutions to promote their names outside the country," Neemuchwala said.