

# South Asian Studies Institute



SOUTH ASIAN  
STUDIES INSTITUTE  
University of the Fraser Valley



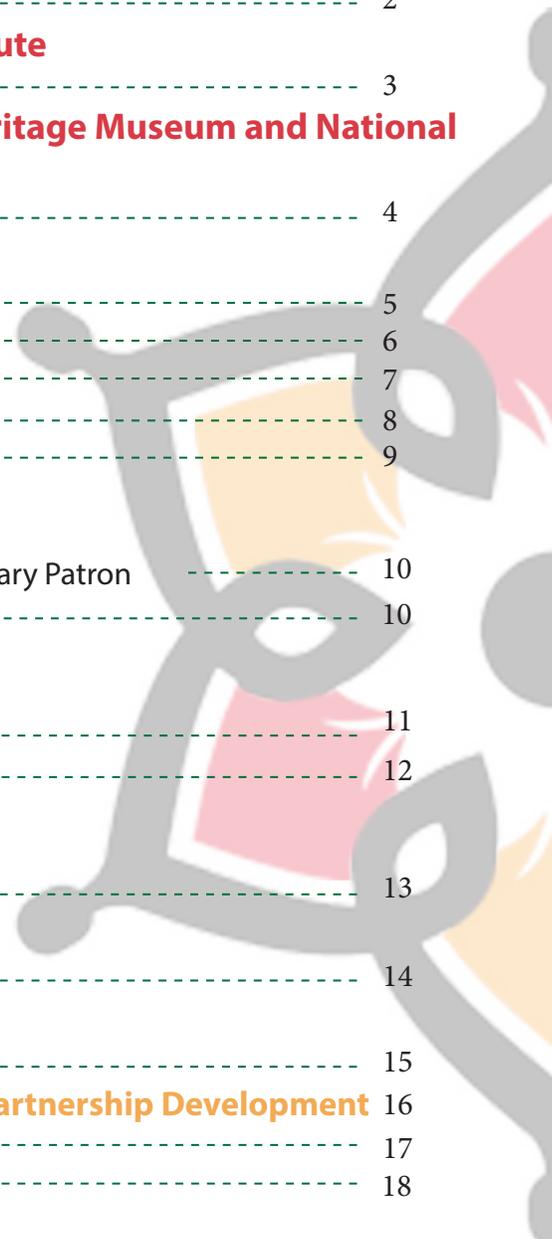
## Biennial Report

2016-2017 Biennial Report



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# Message from Director



**Satwinder Kaur Bains**

“ Our work is defined by our commitment to the ongoing discovery of our long and rich diasporic history in Canada and our desire to engage in contemporary issues. We are excited about new initiatives we are undertaking and we celebrate the accumulated effect of ten years of work to represent and record our collective histories. We always welcome your feedback and appreciate your support of our work all along these years.

The South Asian Studies Institute’s biennial report provides a glimpse into our diverse work and engagement with our stakeholders in the last two years. This report provides specific highlights to our past two years of work. For detailed updates of the work of the SASI, please read our newsletter page by visiting [www.blogs.ufv.ca/sasi](http://www.blogs.ufv.ca/sasi).



## Co-Director

**Kamal Arora**

The SASI is pleased to welcome Dr. Kamal Arora as the Co-Director of the South Asian Studies Institute who will be working alongside Director Satwinder Bains who was recently appointed as Principal of UFV India.

Dr. Arora completed her PhD in Anthropology at UBC, with an emphasis on South Asia. She holds an MA in Gender and Development from the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, and a BA in Communication from Simon Fraser University. Her areas of interest focus on the experiences of women, gender violence, religiosity, and Sikh identity.





# Mission & Vision

## Mission

The South Asian Studies Institute (The Institute/SASI) at the University of the Fraser Valley brings together scholars and students from UFV's India-Canada programs, members of the community, and international scholars from diverse disciplines to create a nexus point for programs and activities that support our vision.

## Vision

The SASI initiates, directs and implements the development, strengthening and maintenance of research, Canada-India Studies, and engagement linkages in collaboration with faculty, students and community. We build knowledge by undertaking research and engagement on historical and contemporary Canadian South Asian Diaspora. The SASI vision takes direction from UFV's strategic direction to be a leader of social, cultural, economic and environmentally responsible development in the Fraser Valley.

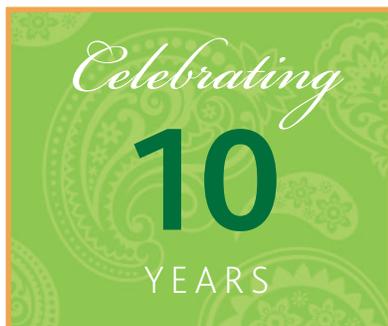




# Celebrating 10 Years and Becoming an Institute

**UFV's** Centre for Indo-Canadian studies began with an idea and a commitment from the community. On May 3, 2017, we celebrated 10 years of serving as a centre of activity, events, information, scholarship, and research related to the Indo-Canadian community, and we announced an extension to focus on other regions of South Asia. Centre Director Satwinder Bains announced the name change to the South Asian Studies Institute (SASI) at a celebration event marking the Centre's first decade on May 3. We thank Dr. Mark Evered who was instrumental in guiding the process from Centre to Institute.

The CICS has built strong community partnerships locally and across Canada with numerous Indian diaspora communities, held international conferences, invited visiting scholars from around the world, curated acclaimed exhibits, and developed business ties with India. It also serves as a repository of history for the Indo-Canadian community. It has partnered with the Gur Sikh Temple National Historic Site on several projects, and is currently working with the Royal British Columbia Museum to ensure that the Indo-Canadian story is reflected in museum exhibits chronicling the history of B.C.



“

**Our young university has done a remarkable job of building connections and partnerships across the world, and the Centre, which now deservedly will be an Institute, has played a major role in that success. ”**

UFV President and Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Mark Evered



# Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Visits Sikh Heritage Museum and National Historic Site

The Prime Minister's first official visit to Abbotsford was to the Gur Sikh Temple, National Historic Site and Sikh Heritage Museum on May 19, 2017. While touring the exhibit on the forty year struggle for the South Asian vote, the Prime Minister expressed dismay at the franchise being taken away from early immigrants of many stripes by the governments of the day.

“ He was dismayed that the governments of the time would ‘take away’ the vote — he thought it had never been offered, but to take it away he said was absolutely wrong. The Prime Minister also commented how surprised he was that the National Historic Site resembled many prairie homes because that would have been the expertise in architecture in 1908. He thought he would have been seeing an exotic looking building but seeing its prairie connection made it that much more precious as a Canadian iconic site. ”

-Satwinder Kaur Bains

Other UFV-related community members in attendance included CFO and VP Finance and Administration Jackie Hogan; Abbotsford councillor Kelly Chahal, one of UFV's Top 40 Alumni; SASI Faculty Associate Terah Sportel; members of the SASI advisory committee; past and future honorary doctorate recipients (Parm Bains and Andy Sidhu); UFV students; former UFV Board member and Federal MP Jati Sidhu; and Alumni Association Board Vice-Chair Nav Bains.





# Research Grants/Awards



The SASI received a number of grants in the 2016-2017 year, totalling \$160,000.00. This included a SSHRC Insight Research Grant, the Federal Canada 150 grant and the BC Canada 150 grant.

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## Sikh Heritage Museum Receives the Award of Merit



The Sikh Heritage Museum, located in the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple (the oldest still-standing Sikh Gurdwara in the Western Hemisphere) was honoured by the BC Museums Association. The Sikh Heritage Museum received the 'Award of Merit' for its exhibit *Canadian Sikhs in WWI: A Forgotten Story*.



# Research Projects



## Punjabi Canadian Legacy Project with the SASI and RBCM Completes First Phase

The South Asian Studies Institute in partnership with the Royal BC Museum and through collaboration with regional institutions completed its first and second phases of community consultations throughout the province to gather feedback from the Punjabi community. Each of the first and second phase of consultations were held in Abbotsford, Prince George, Surrey, Vancouver, Golden, Kelowna and Duncan.

These consultations were the first step in the creation of a provincial Punjabi legacy project that preserves and shares community history. The consultations invited attendees from a range of disciplines, institutions, and experiences to suggest what this legacy project might look like and include.

The second phase of the project included a follow up consultation along with the hiring of a regional coordinator who stayed in the regional communities to gather the stories of experiences of Punjabi Canadians in the local area. The stories, videos and archives collected are all available on the SASI research portal:

**[www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca](http://www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca)**



# Research Workshop/Symposium



The South Asian Studies Institute held two workshops/symposiums during the 2016/2017 biennial year. The first was based on funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant on August 24th and 25th, 2017. The workshop brought together scholars, community historians, librarians, archivists, curators, digital humanities experts and students to develop a South Asian Canadian Digital Archive (SACDA) and a network of South Asian Canadian Studies.

The second was the inaugural SASI Biennial Symposium which was held on November 30th, 2017. The goal of this first symposium, titled *Sharing Our Understanding of South Asia* was to provide an opportunity for UFV faculty, staff and students interested in South Asia to present their research, projects, theories, critiques, papers, etc., in relation to their discipline and areas of interest.





# Research Exhibits



The National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple launched two successful exhibits in 2016 and 2017. The eighth official Museum exhibit *Evolving Interpretations: Sikhism and Women* explored the five kakkar's and other symbols of Sikhism through the angle of the Sikh woman. The exhibition was curated by the Centre for Indo Canadian Studies in partnership with the Visual Arts Department at UFV.

The second exhibit was based on a Canada 150 grant and titled: *(Dis) Enfranchisement 1907-1947: The Forty-Year Struggle for the Vote* and launched on Sunday, February 19th, 2017. The exhibit launch was attended by an estimated one hundred community members including dignitaries and South Asian settler descendants.

Two of the Sikh Heritage Museum exhibits travelled to institutions across BC. The CICS's curated exhibit on *Canadian Sikhs in WWI* (originally launched in 2015) traveled to The Penticton Museum and Archives while the 2015 curated exhibit, *(Mis)Interpretation: Sikh Feminisms in representations, texts and lived realities* travelled to the University of Victoria's Maltwood Gallery

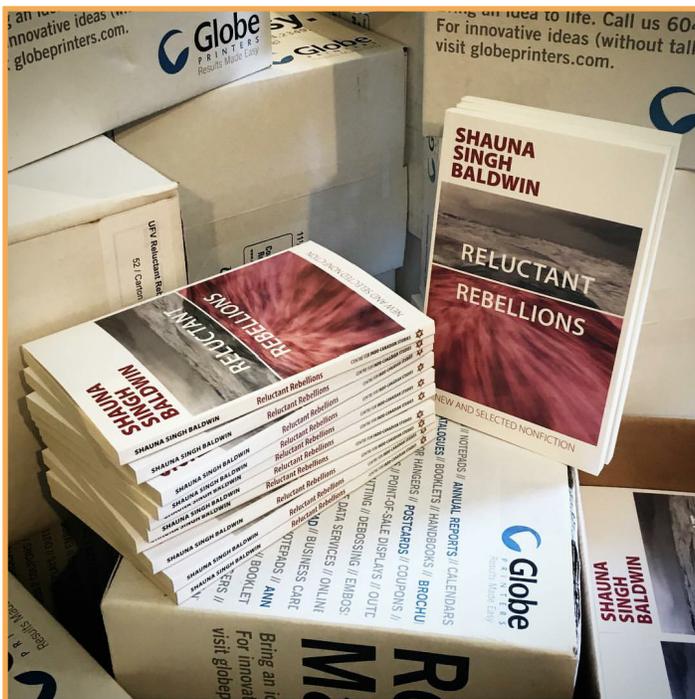




# Research Publications



The SASI published a collection of non-fiction short stories from renowned author Shauna Singh Baldwin titled *Reluctant Rebellions: New and Selected Non-fiction* in 2016. The collection, consisting of 15 speeches and essays written by Shauna between 2001 and 2015 brought new perspective and voice to Canadian public discourse.



Online publications were another undertaking by the SASI, which included making years' worth of research and resources accessible online. This can now be seen by visiting [www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca](http://www.southasiancanadianheritage.ca).



# Engagement

## SASI Honours Dr. Mark Evered as Honourary Patron

During the 10 year celebrations of the CICS, Dr. Mark Evered was named honorary patron of the newly named South Asian Studies Institute for his dedication and friendship.



## Legacy of Pakistan book reading

Community members from a diverse mix of cultures, backgrounds, history and heritage were given a unique opportunity to partake in a poignant history of Sikh Heritage in Pakistan on May 31, 2016. Amardeep Singh, author of *Lost Heritage: The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan* addressed the audience by sharing his experience of visiting hundreds of sites in Pakistan related to Sikh history and heritage. The Consul General of Pakistan in Vancouver, Dr. Muhammad Tariq also shared some generous words on the significance of Amardeep's collection and work.





# Student Success

## Scholarship Recipients



Two students received the Undergraduate Research Excellence Award. Zaki Al-Dhamari received it in 2016 for his work with the SASI on the data collation based on the 'Post Cards from the Margin' research project. Yuvraj Singh received the award in 2017 for his work and research during phase I of the Punjabi Canadian Legacy Project and the initial consultations.



**Yuvraj Singh**



**Zaki Al-Dhamari**



# Student Success

## SASI Alumni



“

My experience at the SASI as a research assistant and beyond that after graduating from UFV has provided me a platform to apply the various skills I learned throughout my four years at UFV. The different projects I worked on have increased my breadth of knowledge and widened my perspective on a range of opportunities between Canada and India.

”



**Ishpreet Singh Anand**

Year of Graduation: 2016

Program: BBA



“

I began my UFV journey at the CICS and since then, the organization has given me so much experience and support throughout the years. This is where I began my journey and I feel so privileged to have worked with such an inspiring organization that continues to keep the importance of community work alive.

”

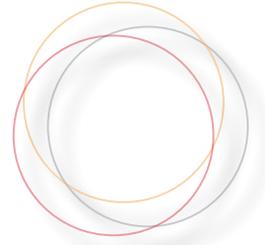
**Rajvinder Kaur Heer**

Year of Graduation: 2013

Program: BSW



# Internationalization



The SASI hosted three student interns from SD College, Chandigarh campus. Ankush Goyal looked at the role of entrepreneurship as an immigration category in the Summer, 2016. Dipesh Sharma did a comparative case study of two transit systems' sustainable practices, the British Columbia's TransLink and Vienna's Wiener Linien in the Summer, 2017. Sapan Gupta looked at the changing face of international business and digital marketing in the Summer, 2017. The projects and students were supervised by SASI Director Satwinder Kaur Bains.



I loved the [SASI] space, the aura and it was an absolute honour working under such great influence and guidance. I would like to thank the University of the Fraser Valley for inviting me to Abbotsford, British Columbia...it was a great experience and one of the best chances one could ask for, which certainly had a huge impact on me and definitely has changed and turned my life around. ”

Sapan Gupta

The SASI hosted Dr. Manpreet Singh, an instructor at Mata Sundri College, Department of English in Delhi University in May, 2016. Dr. Manpreet Singh is associated with Indo Canadian Study Centre, Mumbai University as a Fellow with the South Asia Diaspora Fund. The topic of her research is "Reconstructing Sikh Identity: Images and Representations in Indian and Indo Canadian Literature, Popular Culture and Social Media."





# Faculty Focus

Rajnish Dhawan



Rajnish Dhawan [PhD] is an Associate Professor with the Department of English at the University of the Fraser Valley, Abbotsford, BC, Canada. He teaches Creative Writing, Classical Literature, and South Asian Literature. He has been involved with SASI since the day he joined UFV in September 2009. Rajnish is also a playwright who has written and produced two full length plays and two one act plays since joining UFV. Before moving to Canada, Rajnish used to teach at the DAV College, Amritsar. As a freelance writer in Amritsar, he wrote consistently for television, stage, and newspapers.





# Advisory Focus

**Bharathi Sandhu**



Bharathi Sandhu has been part of the South Asian Community Advisory Committee for three years, and the Chair since 2017. In addition to running a full service financial advisory practice in the Fraser Valley, she is the current President of the Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association, and sits on the board of the Fraser River Community Crematorium Society. She sat on the board of Dasmesh Punjabi School for close to eight years. She's delighted to have been given the opportunity to bring together her various skill sets from different aspects of her work and serve the community through the South Asian Studies Institute. She enjoys being a community liaison for the SASI and sharing its work and research with others.



# BC Regional Innovation Chair in Canada-India Partnership Development



**Dr. Jon Thomas**

Dr. Jon Thomas was named the new BC Regional Innovation Chair in Canada-India Partnership Development at UFV on September, 2017. Working out of UFV's South Asian Studies Institute, Jon brings a wealth of international research experience to the position, which he plans on leveraging while fostering innovation and economic development throughout the Fraser Valley.

Dr. Thomas holds a PhD in technology management and strategy from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and has done post-doctoral research in Canada at Simon Fraser University. In addition to his role as the chair, he also joins the faculty at UFV's School of Business. His research interests are in science and technology commercialization and innovation policy in the biotechnology, healthcare, and clean tech sectors.



## Chair Highlights

The Chair was part of the team which met with MPs Ed Fast and Jati Sidhu at UFV to highlight research and community engagement at UFV. The Chair highlighted the growth in the Indian aviation sector and how it could lead to opportunities for UFV and Abbotsford to further strengthen Canada-India partnerships.

The Chair presented his research on science-based entrepreneurship to the Abbotsford Mayor Henry Braun and members of the City Council in an event to highlight ongoing research projects at UFV.

The Chair also met with Cathy Press (Chinook Helicopters, Abbotsford) and Parm Sidhu (GM, Abbotsford International Airport) to better understand Abbotsford's aerospace cluster and discussed ways develop closer ties with India in the aviation sector.





# 2016-2017 SASI



## [Andy Sidhu Named new Chancellor of UFV](#) **December, 2017**

Andy Sidhu will be the University of the Fraser Valley's third Chancellor. A long-time proponent of community engagement and integration, Sidhu will take over from Dr. Gwen Point, who served as UFV's second Chancellor from 2015 to the present, following two terms by Brian Minter. "I'm extremely honoured and proud to join the University of ...



## [UFV Wrestling Team Visits India](#) **December, 2017**

Members of the University of the Fraser Valley wrestling program have embarked on the trip of a lifetime as they travelled to India in November and early December. Head coach ...



## [UFV Alumni Association Torch Passed to Nav Bains](#) **December, 2017**

UFV's Alumni Association will continue to be served by a dedicated leader, as Nav Bains takes the torch from Nik Venema as association chair. Bains (BBA '13), a marketing specialist for G&F Financial Group, ascends to the chair after serving as vice-chair. "Under the leadership of Nik for the past two ...



## [UFV president Jackie Hogan visits Chandigarh for annual awards ceremony](#) **December, 2017**

UFV president Jackie Hogan visited the Chandigarh campus recently, taking in the annual awards ceremony along with opportunities to meet with current and prospective UFV India students. Hogan was accompanied by former UFV president Mark Evered; Peter Geller, vice-provost and associate VP academic; and Alumni Association chair Nav Bains. The ...



# 2016-2017 SASI



## [SASI Hosts Open House](#) September, 2017

The South Asian Studies Institute began the new fall 2017 year with good dance, food and conversations by welcoming UFV admin, faculty, staff and students. The Open House allowed the entire UFV community to meet and greet with SASI staff and students and to learn about the new South Asia focus. The Open House also ...



## [SASI Director Takes on Role as UFV India Principal](#) August, 2017

Satwinder Bains appointed Principal of UFV India by Anne Russell on August 28, 2017 Satwinder Bains has been appointed to the position of Principal, UFV India, effective September 1, 2017. Bains will provide oversight of UFV India academic operations and leadership for the faculty and academic staff team at the UFV campus in Chandigarh. She will work collaboratively ...



## [Call for Artists–Desis in the Diaspora](#) August, 2017

The South Asian Studies Institute is looking for youth artists for the next exhibit at the Sikh Heritage Museum and National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple. The exhibit, titled Desis in the Diaspora Canadian contemporary artists to submit photographic work which reflects upon Canadians of South Asian heritage – now and in the past. Each submitted project ...

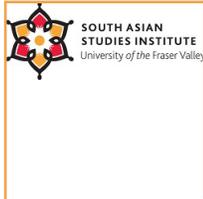


## [Visit by Shastri Indo Canadian Institute and Lecture on Punjab Politics](#) June, 2017

On June 21st, 2017, the SASI hosted guests from the Shastri Indo Canadian Institute. Prachi Kaul discussed the opportunities available to collaborate and associate with Indian academics and Institutions through various programs governing grants/awards/fellowships by the Shastri Institute's India Office. The presentation was attended by UFV Admin, Faculty and SASI Faculty Associates. During this session, visiting ...



# 2016-2017 SASI



## [Highlighting 2017 Summer Scholars, Staff and Students at the SASI](#) **August, 2017**

This summer has been busy at the South Asian Studies Institute with a number of scholars, staff and students working on different projects. Read below about some of these people and their projects: Ishpreet Singh Anand  
Ishpreet Singh Anand is a business graduate from the UFV Chandigarh campus ...



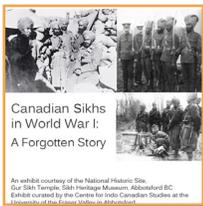
## [New Language Scholarship Announcement-Halq'eméylem and Punjabi](#) **August, 2017**

UFV marked Aboriginal Awareness Day by celebrating a new language scholarship donation by Dr. Malwinder Dhami and the long service of Elder Theresa Neel. Dr. Dhami was the first to donate during the fundraising campaign for the Centre for Indo Canadian Studies in 2004 and his family have been generously supporting UFV students in meaningful ...



## [UFV President and Vice-President Visit Khalsa College](#) **May, 2017**

Dr. Mark Evered, UFV Vice Chancellor and President; Dr. Eric Davis, UFV Provost and Vice-President, Academic and CICS Director Satwinder Bains visited Khalsa College in Amritsar to meet with Principal Dr. Mehal Singh and faculty from Social Sciences. The goal of the meeting was to look for ways to build faculty collaborations on research and ...



## [Sikh Heritage Museum Exhibit Travels to the Penticton Museum and Archives](#) **May, 2017**

The CICS's curated exhibit on Canadian Sikhs in WWI (originally launched in 2015) at the Sikh Heritage Museum traveled to The Penticton Museum and Archives. The Penticton Museum exhibit, called British Columbia's War, 1914–1918, aims to educate British Columbians about the contributions of their forebears in the First World War, and will be available for viewing from ...



# 2016-2017 SASI



## [Profiling the Work of Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies Staff](#) **December, 2016**

The CICS was pleased to work with current UFV students and UFV alumni this semester over a range of projects. Please see below a small profile on our great staff: Riely Moore: Riely has been working with the CICS team on the Canada 150 project in the role as French Translator for the exhibit, ...



## [CICS Sister-Centre in Mumbai Hosts Conference](#) **November, 2016**

The CoHaB Indian Diaspora Centre at the Indo Canadian Centre Studies (ICSC) in the University of Mumbai and the Centre for Advances Studies in India (CASII) conducted a Joint International Conference at the University of Mumbai, entitled 'The Past, Present and Post 'Diaspora': New Directions in Diaspora Studies' in November, 2016. The Conference was inaugurated ...



## [President's Office Celebrates 10 Years in Chandigarh](#) **June, 2016**

On June 3, 2016 Dr. Mark Evered, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Fraser Valley hosted a special occasion in Canada to celebrate and mark 10 years of the UFV Campus in Chandigarh India. The UFV Alumni Association's Chair Nik Venema and Vice Chair Nav Bains chose to honour the top ten alumni ...



## [Instructional Skills Workshop Co-Facilitated by UFV Chandigarh Instructor](#) **June, 2016**

Monica Sachdeva, Assistant Professor in the Department of Commerce & Management at UFV's Chandigarh campus co-facilitated the Instructional Skills Workshop held at UFV's Abbotsford campus in May, 2016. Dr. Sachdeva was joined by David Tickner, Faculty Development Consultant and Trainer. The success of this FDW was a direct result of the teachers' engagement, commitment to ...



# 2016-2017 SASI



## **BC Legislature Honours South Asian Heritage** **June, 2016**

May 17, 2016 was a historic day in the BC Legislature and for South Asians in particular. MLA and Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services, Mr. Amrik Virk welcomed government officials, community members and professionals to a new and permanent installation highlighting the contribution of Indian soldiers who served in the war effort of ...



## **Vancouver Consul General of India Visits the CICS** **May, 2016**

Consul General of India, Vancouver Mr. Rajiv Chander and Consul for Commerce Mr. N. Lingi Chetty visited the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies on April 1st, 2016. UFV Vice-Chancellor and President Dr. Mark Evered welcomed the guests by giving them a brief introduction about UFV's engagements with India. The diverse, deep and multi-faceted engagements provide UFV ...



# SASI Team



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