

**Remarks
for the
Honourable Harinder Takhar
Minister of Small Business and
Entrepreneurship**

**India Media Tour
Reception Remarks**

Monday, November 20, 2006

Check against delivery

Good evening everyone.

I'm honoured to speak to you tonight.

As Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I lead a ministry that serves the needs of Ontario's small businesses community.

There are approximately 340,000 small and medium-sized enterprises province-wide that make up 99 per cent of the business in this province.

My Ministry provides Ontario's small businesses and entrepreneurs with information, advice, programs and services –

And works to make it easier
for businesses to grow and
succeed in this great
province.

Ontario is a place of
tremendous potential and
opportunity.

It's where prosperity happens.

Many East Indians call Ontario home and have experienced the prosperity I'm talking about.

They're the third largest ethnic group in Toronto and account for almost 15 per cent of the city's population.

I'm a first-generation Indian-Canadian and I'm extremely proud of my heritage.

I've lived in Mississauga for over thirty years and many of my personal accomplishments wouldn't have been possible if I lived anywhere else.

It's because Ontario's world-class education and healthcare systems, and innovative business sector nurture a better quality of life for all Ontarians –

And stimulate growth and prosperity across the province.

The education opportunities in Ontario are second to none.

We've nurtured \$6.2 billion of historical investments in post-secondary education to ensure our students will be able to lead our businesses to prosperity for years to come.

A lot of these investments are geared towards giving Ontario's students the opportunity to master their trade of choice through hands-on apprenticeship programs.

The healthcare system of our province is world-class, and reduces employer costs by up to 30 per cent compared to the United States.

The strength of our business sector lies in Ontario's hardworking, diverse workforce.

We are the first Ontario government to introduce legislation to help internationally trained professionals work in their field.

This is a great advantage,
which allows Ontario's small
and medium-sized businesses
to get the best workers from
around the world –

And compete at a higher-level
in the global economy
because of it.

It's also a great advantage for the skilled workers of India, who have the opportunity to set up shop, or work with local businesses in Ontario, and embrace the quality of life that our province has to offer.

It's because of these aspects that Ontario 's small and medium-sized businesses thrive in the global marketplace.

Our Business Mission to India and Pakistan gives Ontario the chance to showcase why it's one of the best places in the world to do business.

India's business leaders will see firsthand our dedicated workforce and many innovative companies.

They will have the opportunity to forge partnerships and become more competitive, leading edge and successful in the global arena.

It's our goal to boost trade and bring new investments to Ontario that will create economic spin-offs for communities throughout the province.

We know that teaming with India's talented workforce can make this happen.

By investing in Ontario, your businesses have the opportunity to penetrate a thriving market, where prosperity is around every corner.

I'm excited about the economic potential of this mission.

The market confidence between our jurisdictions is at its highest level.

In the last five years the two-way goods trade between Ontario and India has nearly doubled.

The landscape for growth and investment is ideal.

Our mission to India will make our relationship even stronger, and has the potential to solidify our regions as global powerhouses for years to come.

Thank you.

Word Count = 574

**REMARKS FOR THE HONOURABLE HARINDER TAKHAR
DINNER WITH THE CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
OCTOBER 26, 2006**

- Good evening Consul General and distinguished guests.
- It's wonderful to get together this evening to talk about how we can create more opportunities for business in Ontario and India.
- In the global marketplace those that lead the pack build strong relationships at home and abroad.
- That's why we've organized a Business Mission to India.
- In January, Ontario's official delegation will visit New Dehli, Bangalore, Mumbai and Punjab to boost trade and investment in both of our regions.
- We'll focus on the infrastructure, research and innovation, financial services, education and cultural industries sectors to identify how our businesses can work together to succeed.
- Almost 200 business leaders from Ontario have already pre-registered, expressing their interest in joining our delegation with the hopes of forging partnerships with India's top businesses.
- I'm excited about the great economic potential that this mission has to offer.
- In the last five years the two-way goods trade between Ontario and India has nearly doubled.
- Our market confidence is at its highest level and the landscape for growth and investment is ideal.
- Our mission to India will make our relationship even stronger and has the potential to solidify Ontario and India as global powerhouses for years to come. Thank you.