

Report on Ongoing programmes in connection with Gandhi @150 celebrations

(1) “Mahatma Gandhi Walk” on 30th September, 2018

High Commission of India in partnership with Bharat Club organized a “Gandhi Walk” in Tasik Taman Jaya, Petaling Jaya, Kuala Lumpur on 30th September 2018 to start the yearlong celebrations to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Around 230 persons of different walks of life including women and children participated in the walk. For the occasion, custom made t-shirts were provided by the Indian High Commission. From High Commission of India, High Commissioner along with his spouse, Dy. High Commissioner, Counsellor (Community Affairs & Labour) and other officials participated in this historic Gandhi walk. The programme started after a small but energetic speech by High Commissioner.

(2) INAUGURAL COMMEMORATIVE FUNCTION ON 2ND OCTOBER, 2018

High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur in association with Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre (NSCBICC) organised the inaugural commemorative function to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at its multipurpose hall. Hon'ble Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, President, Parti Keadilan Rakyat, graced the event as the Chief Guest. Also present were Hon'ble Mr. M Kulasegaran, Minister of Human Resources, Hon'ble Dr. Xavier Jayakumar, Minister of Water, Land and Natural Resources; Toh Puan Uma Sambanthan (wife of Late Tun V.T Sambanthan); Mrs. Deva Kunjari (daughter of late Tun V.T Sambanthan). High Commissioners of South Africa, Bangladesh, Singapore and Nepal were also present along with other dignitaries and guest.

The event started with the floral tribute by the Chief Guest, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to Gandhiji's photo. A special four-minute video on Gandhiji was screened at the function and it continued with rendition of Gandhiji's favourite devotional songs, Ragupathi Raghava Raja Ram and Vaishnavo Jana, sung by Dr. Hardev Kaur and her group. In the same occasion, Mrs. Deva Kunjari, delivered a wonderful talk on the influence of Mahatma Gandhi on the life of her father, who epitomised Gandhian values in life. She said one of the reasons why her father joined politics was because Gandhiji brought ethics to politics. Speaking on the occasion, High Commissioner of India stressed that the Gandhi's legacy would never fade, and his philosophy will be always a guidance for many people globally. The High Commissioner also emphasised that Gandhiji's life is a message for peace, love, compassion, non-violence and Satyagraha. He said that the first time in United Nation's history 140 countries co-sponsored India's resolution to declare 2nd October as Non-Violence Day. High Commissioner also said that practice of peace, non-violence and adherence of truth was not something that Gandhi discovered out of sudden, he gave it a new dimension and it would remain a tool against conflict.

This was followed by the keynote address of the Chief Guest of the event, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who expressed his delight for being part of the celebration. He shared how Gandhi's concept of forgiveness could overcome the legacies of injustice and oppression among human. He stressed that everyone should follow Gandhi's philosophy to ensure the peace of the world community. Datuk Seri Anwar said that he has a close relationship with Mahatma Gandhi's family and that he could emulate Gandhiji's values such as readiness to forgive. He also mentioned Mahatma Gandhi's approach towards Ahimsa (non-violence) had become inspiration to great world leaders like Nelson Mandela. He said Gandhi's Ahimsa policy has become a "culture" to tackle hatred, creed and violence. Only with these great policies, Mahatma Gandhi managed to give India freedom, Datuk Seri Anwar quoted.

After the speech, the Chief Guest accompanied by the High Commissioner, officially released the Commemorative Stamp of Mahatma Gandhi. The evening was continued with two stage play depicting Gandhiji's life and philosophy, by students of Global Indian International School (GIIS) and VIKAS International School. Both plays received an overwhelming response from the guests. The students who took part in the play and to the artistes who recited the Bhajans, were then felicitated by the Honorable Dr.Xavier Jayakumar, Minister of Water, Land and Natural Resources. The event concluded with the felicitation of the Dignitaries present on the occasion by High Commissioner and his espouse.

(3)Talk on Gandhi held at NSCBICC on 3th October, 2018

In series of talks on organised on Mahatma Gandhi by High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, a talk on "Leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the context of Globalization" was rendered by Smt.Shobana Radhakrishna, the Chief Functionary of the 'Gandhian Forum for Good Corporate Governance' on 3rd October, 2018.The High Commissioner graced the talk as Chief Guest. The programme was attended by Toh Puan Uma Sambanthan and more than 60 people attended the talk with majority of teachers and students from local Indian International Schools.

In her speech, Smt. Radhakrishna' highlighted on how Gandhian philosophy has become gradually more relevant in the present day socio-political milieu, even more so than it was one hundred years ago. The value-based leadership espoused by him in public life constitutes a perfect module to be emulated in all spheres of human's activities.Mrs. Shobana also shared Gandhi's views that leadership should start with children because they are the leaders of tomorrow. She also shared her father's experience when he was with Gandhiji and how he treated everyone equally, irrespective of cast and creed. During the talk, rare images of Gandhi, ashrams and audio were shown on the screen to the audience.

In concluding remark, High Commissioner wrapped up the talk by congratulating Smt. Radhakrishna for her wonderful talk. High Commissioner shared his own

experience as a Gandhian during his official visit to South Africa as the Chief Protocol Officer, for the Indian PM. He got the opportunity to visit the Phoenix settlement where Gandhi spent most of his time in South Africa. He talked about his visit to the home where Gandhi lived in a very moderate life in South Africa despite getting handsome salary as he contributed his salary for the people. He could visualize the struggle that Gandhi had faced and this made him humble and emotional. High Commissioner summarized that Gandhi's legacy is still living and will continue to live in every corner of the world.

Meanwhile, in continuation of celebrations for Babu@150, the Mission had organized essay writing, debate, painting and quiz competitions based on Gandhi theme for students of Global Indian International School and Vikas International School in September, 2018. This Gandhian Talk program concluded by the felicitation of the winners of these competitions by the High Commissioner and Smt. Shobana Radhakrishna.

(4) Dussera programme of Telangana Expatriate Association 13th October, 2018

In partnership with the High Commission of India, Malaysian Telangana Associations (MyTAS) paid respect to Mahatma Gandhi during their Dussera/Batukamma festival celebrations organized at Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur which was attended by about 700-800 Indian expatriates and their families belonging to Telangana state. They organised a Gandhi theme-based skit by school children extolling the virtues of cleanliness and its importance in backdrop of ongoing "Swachh Mission" in India. The skit managed to draw attention of the youngsters and they took keen interest in the programme. Certificates and books were also distributed among the winners of the various categories of competition organised for the children like painting, drawing, essay etc. which was held prior to the event. It was followed by an audio-video presentation on the life of Mahatma Gandhi encompassing his childhood, student life, his struggle in South Africa and his journey in India in different stages of Indian Freedom Struggle till very his very end. The same was well appreciated by the participants. The organisers managed to send a good message about the immense contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to India and Indian society.

(5) An Open Forum "The Relevance of Gandhi in Modern Times" held at NSCBICC on 13th October, 2018

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with India Malaysia Heritage Group organised an open forum on "Relevance on Gandhi in Modern Times" at the NSCBICC Multipurpose Hall. The High Commissioner of India to Malaysia, H.E. Shri Mridul Kumar graced the forum as the Chief Guest. More than 80 people including academicians, historians and general public attended the forum. The speakers who attended the forum were Dr Vasant Nadkarni a retired medical practitioner and a Member of the I-M Heritage Group; Mr. Philip Koh, renowned lawyer with special expertise in Constitutional Law and Mr. Matthias Chang, a Gandhian, a lawyer and an activist. The moderator for the forum was Mrs. Shila Dorai Raj

Dr. Nadkarni started the forum with an interesting topic "The Half Naked Fakir". A title which was given by Sir Winston Churchill who could not accept Gandhiji's visit to London in his journey to obtain freedom for India. According to Dr. Nadkarni, Gandhiji did not bother the humiliation heaped on him by Churchill and stay focused on his sole mission, freedom for India. Gandhiji's approach of non-violence was the best philosophy that a person could use to break all the obstacles, he said. The second speaker, Mr. Philip Khoo, shared on Gandhi's influence and vision in making constitutional ethics. He stressed that Gandhiji has created a civic nationalism by instilling ethics in every Indian. According to Philip Khoo, Gandhiji himself was a philosophy and it was the essence of India's constitutional creation.

Meanwhile, Mr. Matthias Chang, the third speaker shared on the Gandhiji's self-discovery experiment in his journey to obtain freedom for India. He stressed it was not easy to reach the peak of success. He said: "Even Gandhi had dumped into the "dirt" before could climb another height and that absolutely not easy. Matthias explained that for Gandhiji, every human is equal and same. Gandhiji understood the depth of each religions and never sought popularity. He travelled every corner of India to understand the grassroot problems of every Indian. Gandhiji has left us a great legacy of non-violence. A person should experiment it before he or she could experience it. Non-violence requires a very calm mind, focused compassion and the route to make it relevant is not easy

After all the three speakers concluded their speeches, a Q & A session was held with audience asking a few questions pertaining to Gandhi and his aspects. Soon after the Q & A concluded, Shri Mridul Kumar shared his views on Gandhiji, which was applauded by the guests who attended the forum. High Commissioner stressed that Gandhiji himself is a phenomenon and to judge it, a person should experience it. High Commissioner told that Gandhiji was a great man and had a great impact on everyone's life. Gandhiji's non-violence was a greatest tool to defeat the other side without shedding blood. He stressed that Gandhiji has made everyone to realize that the God has created everyone equally without any status quo and a solid proof for a person's freedom justification. Gandhiji had sacrificed a better lifestyle to experience personally the pain and sorrow of other Indians. He guided humans in realizing the actual meaning of absolute truth. Gandhiji able to address all religions without double standard because he strongly believed that every religions taught one common thing that is the "truth".

(6) Programme at SJKT Mahatma Gandhi Kalasalai, Sg Siput, Perak on 17th October, 2018

The High Commissioner Shri Mridul Kumar along with his spouse Mrs. Sumita Goyal made an official visit to the SJKT Mahatma Gandhi Kalasalai, Sg Siput, Perak on 17th October, 2018. Other who attended the function were Mr. K. Ayyanar, Director Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Toh Puan Uma

Sambanthan (wife of late Tun V.T.Sambanthan) and Mrs.Deva Kunjari (daughter of Late Tun V.T.Sambanthan).

Upon arrival, the High Commissioner and Mr.K.Ayyanar were received by the school's Principal, Smt. SanthakumariSinggaramand ushered to the Gandhi Hall located in the school. Mrs.Sumita Goyal and Mrs.Deva Kunjari light the ceremonial lamp before Shri Mridul Kumar placed a garland to the Gandhiji's statue kept at the hall. They visited the school's kindergarden section and interacted with the children and teachers. Later, the delegation were led to the main stage of school and national anthems of Malaysia and India were played. Students of the school gave some cultural performance including impersonation of leaders like Gandhiji, Nehru, MahakaviBharathiyaar etc. Shri Mridul Kumar, Mrs.Sumita Goyal and Mr.K.Ayyanar were felicitated by the school's Trustees Shri AMSP Vivekanandan and Mrs. Deva Kunjari.High Commissioner delivered his speech before he launched "Mahatma Gandhi Challenge Trophy' donated by AMS Periasamy Pillai. Soon after that, High Commissioner accompanied by Mr.K.Ayyanar, donated various books to the school's library. At the same occasion, High Commissioner has also officially opened the Mahatma Gandhi Study Corner at the school.

(7) Batukamma festival of Telugu Association of Malaysia 19th October, 2018

Telugu Association of Malaysia (TEAM) with active support from the High Commission of India, successfully managed to incorporate programmes on 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi during their Dussehra/ Batukamma festival celebrations organized at Bukit Jalil stadium, Kuala Lumpur. They organized a fancy-dress competition on Gandhi theme which was followed by an open quiz competition on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. The high point of the event was rendition of song "Raghupathi Raghav Rajaram" with everybody carrying a placard written Gandhi @150 with the official logo, giving standing ovation to the father of nation. The programme was enthusiastically attended by around 750 Indian expatriates and their families belonging mostly from Andhra Pradesh. The event managed to involve the community in Gandhi @150 programme in an innovative manner and it was well received by the participants.

(8) Open forum on "The Relevance of Gandhi in Modern Times" on 27th October 2018 at NSCBICC

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with India Malaysia Heritage Group has organised the second forum on "Relevance on Gandhi in Modern Times" at the Multipurpose Hall on Saturday, 27th October, 2018. Counsellor for Community Affairs and Labour, Shri Nishit Kumar Ujjwal graced the event as the Chief Guest. More than 80 people including academicians, historians and general public attended the forum. The speakers who took part in the forum were Professor Datuk Denison Jayasooria, Fellow at National University of Malaysia; Retired Ambassador Dato Santhanaban and Datuk Sulaiman Abdullah. Meanwhile the moderator for the forum is Datuk Halimah Mohd Said.

A rare documentary on Gandhiji was screened before the forum and a brief welcome speech by Chief Guest. The first speaker, Prof Jayasooria talked about "Multiculturalism and Religious Harmony". In his speech, Jayasooria stressed on how Gandhiji played a huge role in bringing all religion together and treat them as one. One of the greatest thought of Gandhi was to worship God is to serve the poor and equality of all people irrespective of caste and creed, he said and adding that for Mahatma Gandhi there was no religion higher than truth itself. Second speaker, Dato Santhanaban shared the topic "Gandhi and Governance Today". He shared the influence of Gandhiji in creating good governance. Santhanaban said Gandhiji's ideology on non-corruption, non-violence and equality has become great guidance to some world leaders in order to bring harmony and peace in their administration. He also said that a good government could be formed if they follow Gandhism. Third speaker, Datuk Sulaiman Abdullah who spoke about "Gandhi's Relevance in Legal Profession". He said that being a lawyer by profession, Gandhi had guided many lawyers to be success. "Gandhi has thought about dignity, courage, sincerity and truthfulness among lawyers and that has become "bible" of the lawyers".

After the three speakers concluded their speeches, a Q&A session was held with audience on the topic of the forum and asked relevant questions to the panel of the speaker. The programme concluded with felicitation of the speakers and moderator by Shri. Nishit Kumar Ujjwal and vote of thanks.

(9) Special Movie Screening of "The Making of the Mahatma" on 10th November, 2018

High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur with the support of The Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) has organised a special movie screening of National Award winning movie "The Making of the Mahatma" at the Golden Screen Cinemas (GSC) Pavillion, Bukit Bintang on Saturday, 10th November, 2018. The screening was part of the commemorative events of 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. More than 90 people of all walks of life attended the movie screening, including High Commissioner of India, Shri Mridul Kumar and Ambassador of Uruguay H.E. Madam NuryBauzán. The movie which was directed by Shyam Benegal and starred RajitKapur and Pallavi Joshi in leading roles depicting the early life of Mahatma Gandhiji during his 21 years in South Africa. The movie received an overwhelming response from all the audience.

(10) Open forum on "The Relevance of Gandhi in 21st Century" on 17th November, at NSCBICC

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Indian Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with India Malaysia Heritage Group has organised the third forum on "Relevance on Gandhi in Modern Times" at the Multipurpose Hall on Saturday, 17th November, 2018. Counsellor for Community Affairs and Labour, Shri

Nishit Kumar Ujjwal graced the event as the Chief Guest, representing the High Commissioner. Around 70 people including academicians, historians and general public attended the forum. Moderator for the evening was Philip Mathews and the speakers who took part in the third forum were Mr. K J John, Dr NarimahAwin and Dr Chandra Muzaffar. A documentary on Gandhiji was screened before the forum. The programme started with a welcome speech of the High Commissioner, Shri Mridul Kumar. In the speech he stressed that Gandhiji is still relevant in this 21st century as his principals become guidance to many leaders and Gandhi's philosophy towards non-violence played major role in many countries to use diplomacy as a tool to stop war.

The first speaker Mr.K.J.John, who is also a researcher and policy advisor, spoke about "Gandhi and Dignity – A Malaysia Perspective". Gandhi was an economist of the masses. His approach was rooted in human dignity. His economic philosophy is a result of innumerable experiments which he conducted in the course of his life. His pragmatic approach gave a new direction to the existing socio-economic problems in the process of protecting human dignity, he said. Meanwhile Dr. NariwahAwin, consultant at the WHO and UNICEF, talked about "Serving the Vulnerable: Inspired by the Mahatma". She said Mahatma Gandhi was a true social worker fighting against the evils of society. Gandhi always said, if you want to do serve the vulnerable, you start it yourself as a true social worker. He was very worried about poverty of India, especially among the vulnerable or the out-casted people. He treat every people equal and for some he is like a "doctor". The third speaker, Dr.Chandra Muzaffar, a well-known social activist, spoke about "Gandhi in the 21st Century". He said Gandhi is a name which will be remembered for his services to the nation are recalled at political, social and community meetings. In a customary fashion which has become ritualistic over the years, the Mahatma will be eulogised for what he had done for the country and its people through his unique concepts of non-violence, satyagraha, non-cooperation, religious tolerance, simple living and rural empowerment. "Even in Malaysia we can see some changes especially in a fair and equal political administration," he said.

After the three speakers concluded their topics, a Q & A session was conducted with audience who shared their comments and clarified doubts with the speakers. Mr. Nishit Kumar Ujjwal felicitated the speakers and the moderator at end of the programme.

10) Mahatma Gandhi exhibition at the Diwali Mela

High Commission of India along with GOPIO international Malaysia organized an exhibition on Mahatma Gandhiji at the Diwali Mela held in Kuala Lumpur from 26th October 2018 – 5th November 2018. The exhibition depicted the life of Gandhiji in the form of various write ups, paintings, photos etc. The exhibiton was attended by many Indians and also Malaysian appreciating the detailed representation of Gandhiji and his life history. Pamphlets were handed over to all who visited the exhibition.

Thus, to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhiji, High Commission of India along with the various Indian organisations / NGOs / clubs in Malaysia has organized various events including Gandhi walk, Forum meets, talks on Gandhiji, Movie screening etc.