

FIA Receives Prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award for its Untiring Service to the Community

The Federation of Indian Associations of New York, New Jersey & Connecticut (FIA-Tristate), was conferred with the prestigious recognition of the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman on the 16th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) held on Jan.9th 2021.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honor conferred on a non-resident Indian, Person of Indian Origin; or an organization or institution established and run by non-resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, who have made significant contribution in better understanding of India abroad, support India's causes and concerns in a tangible way, community work abroad, welfare of local Indian community, philanthropic and charitable work, etc. During the PBD convention, select eminent Indian diaspora members are awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards in the presence of Hon'ble President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind.

The 16th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Jan. 9 in New Delhi. The theme of the convention, aimed at encouraging Indian diaspora to be part of socio-economic development in India, was “Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat.”

We are very proud, humbled and thankful to be the recipient of the Pravasi Bhartiya Samman,” President Anil Bansal said. “It is the recognition of hard and selfless work of so many people in the FIA family. This award is for the exceptional and meritorious contribution to India, the Indians for social and humanitarian causes. We at FIA have been totally dedicated to serving the interest of India and Indian diaspora in the USA. I have no doubt that under the new leadership of Ankur Vaidya, we will expand our footprint and activities immensely in future. This award certainly gives us the encouragement and incentive to reach for the stars. Thanks India, our motherland and Jai Hind.”

”It is truly a moment of pride for FIA and for me to witness this prestigious recognition bestowed upon FIA,” Chairman Ankur Vaidya said. “I take this opportunity to thank the founders and patriarchs, some of them are on our board who dedicated a lifetime in serving the community through the organization and when told of the news had tears of joy. The timing has a cryptic hint in it having lost Ramesh Patel to COVID when we had already rolled our sleeves to prepare for the golden jubilee grandeur celebration, we still continued and faced the worst times in history, we managed with the motivated team and Ramesh Patel's spirit and soul to show us light and inspiration, the magic worked. I know he would be ecstatic. A big thank you to Rohit Korat, Srujal Parikh, and Alok Kumar for their contribution to make this FIA dream a reality. Anil Bansal's presidency has created history and full credit to him, his executive team and a big thank you and salute to the diplomatic community who took the message of our work back to the motherland. This is only the beginning and bigger and better things are coming, stay tuned... God bless the USA and Bharat Mata ki Jai!”

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut is one of the largest esteemed umbrella organizations in the Indian community. It

represents over one million strong and vibrant Asian-Indians who provide significant grass root support and assistance. Established in the year 1970, the FIA has blossomed into a commendable organization that has become an effective mouthpiece and mobilizer for the community.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, over 11 events, including Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu's reception, events surrounding FIA's flagship India Day Parade, women empowerment celebration, Long Island Diwali Gala, visa assistance camps, among other events had to be called off.

While facing the dire impact of the pandemic, including on its fundraising activities, FIA has continued with the challenges faced, to serve and uplift the community in these unprecedented times. Among the unique initiatives introduced during the challenging year were assistance to first responders which included serving meals in local hospitals and to NYPD, including front line heroes, hot meals in the International Diwali Soup Kitchen Drive in the U.S. and India, Bi-Weekly Diaspora newsletter which will complete one year in January 2021; historic flag hoisting ceremony at Times Square on India's Independence Day, accommodation assistance in partnership with the Consulate General of India in New York to find accommodations for the students from India who were stranded in the U.S. due to COVID-19 travel ban; OCI & visa Town Hall; and several other events on the hybrid as well as exclusively virtual platforms. For its work during the pandemic, the FIA, along with its core members, was recognized as COVID Heroes by Brooklyn Borough President, Hon. Eric Adams.