

Gas will be here later this month. Later this year, we are anticipating visits by the Minister of Food Processing, the Minister of Telecommunications, and the Finance Minister, India's leading architect of economic reforms.

Several seminars and presentations, conducted in co-operation with Canadian associations, will take place across Canada. For instance, the Conference Board of Canada is organizing cross-Canada round tables on India's power sector, starting next week, and a seminar series on India will be hosted by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada this autumn.

We have also strengthened our presence in India by adding additional trade officers in both New Delhi and Bombay and by appointing additional honorary consuls in Madras and Bangalore, enabling us to increase the level of support to Canadian businesses active in India and to promote Canada as a reliable source of quality goods, services and technology.

Through these efforts and those of the several organizations hosting today's event, we hope to transform the mystique surrounding India into a more informed and even more exciting appreciation of the society and economy. *Focus India* is part of that learning process.

Canada no longer approaches India as a developed country proffering aid and concessional financing. We now go to India as a business partner, with an eye to mutual advantage: a "win-win" scenario. The Canada-India relationship has the potential to grow beyond the idealism of the '50s and '60s, which sometimes gave way to disillusionment. Canada and India have to face the 21st century in the light of our mutual interests.

The transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-driven economy has extensive implications for India as a nation and for the sustainability of India's economic development. While Canada recognizes that even positive change can be difficult and that the benefits are not always immediately evident throughout Indian society, Canada welcomes these developments and will continue to encourage India to stay the course and press for further economic reforms.

Canada, like the new India, has a commitment to open, rules-based trade. There are enormous opportunities ahead for Canada-India business co-operation; not just in joint ventures or technology transfer agreements, but in strategic partnerships which will spell growth both for our business communities and our national economies. *Focus India* is the catalyst that will help us all to capitalize on the unrivalled potential offered by the Indian market.

Thank you.