

Peace Ambassador MA Najeeb welcomed

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CHICAGO: Golden Telangana Welfare Association of Chicago (GTWA) hosted a dinner reception for Telangana's first International Peace Ambassador to UN, MA Njaeeb in Chicago at Nan O Devon new Restaurant on Devon Ave this week

The event was attended by many prominent Hyderabad community members including GTWA members and activists. Well known community leader Iftekhar Shareef was the chief guest for the event. Mohammed Mukkaram emceed the event and introduced visiting dignitary, MA Najeeb to Hyderabad community. He also

briefed on the activities of GTWA and its members in Chicago.

On behalf of GTWA, a shawl and flower bouquet was presented to Peace Ambassador MA Najeeb. Iftekhar Shareef spoke about his acquaintance with him and his achievements. M.A. Najeeb is Telangana State's 1st International Ambassador for Peace, and he is associated with UPF International which has embassy relations office at United Nations Plaza in New York.

M.A. Najeeb has been appointed International Director for Asia & Africa for the International Conference on Peace & Development held recently at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. "It is an honor to have

Najeeb among us in Chicago," Shareef said and added at a time when Muslims are linked with

terrorism, Najeeb emerges harbinger of peace and love. He got the status of peace Ambassador for all

his previous efforts and working for humanity welfare projects. Iftekhar Shareef also requested IPA Najeeb to share his thoughts with Hyderabad community members.

MA Najeeb thanked GTWA members and Iftekhar Shareef for the honor extended to him and said it was real pleasure meeting old friends from Hyderabad in Chicago. He said he indulged in social activities since childhood and had a long span of twenty years working in social and humanity projects. Before coming to this status, he was working for a UN peace project in South Africa. Najeeb said he felt it a great responsibility to be a peace Ambassador and working on peace projects.



MA Najeeb meets Hyderabad community in Chicago

Festival of Lights lights up City of Lights

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Jassi held the event together with his wit, interactive sessions with the audience, and sheer joie de vivre.

The event kicked off with lighting of the traditional lamp while Prasad Garkhedkar recited the

High School) and the Indian national anthem rendered by Ajai Kumar, as the respective flags were projected on the screen.

Half-way through the performances, all elected officials and dignitaries were invited on stage by Gautam Bhatia & Sharon Garcia and honored with shawls (scarfs)

gesture of gratitude for the mayor's service to the city's growth. Gautam Bhatia, Chairman of IACOAB, said that the board owed a debt of gratitude to Mayor Weisner, Rick Guzman and Ald. Rick Mervine for their support in the formation and growth of the board. Others dignitaries were

Anjanappa (Cultural Committee Chair) welcomed the guests with a brief history of the board and its agenda. Gautam thanked all volunteers and the Board members for making the event a resounding success. Roopa said that the board had incorporated improvements in the celebrations as a result of feedback received from past events.

Kunal Majmunder (Treasurer), Deepak Mehta (Secretary) and Girish Kapoor (Media and Public Relations), thanked the sponsors & media partners without whose support the event would not have been possible on such a large scale. Shabbir Shikora (Vice Chairman) and Anupama Setty (Cultural Committee) introduced "Varkatunda" which is an invocation to Lord Ganesha performed by Odissi dance center.

Other performances including those from the groups Bolly Mix and Bollywood Medley and a vigorous 'Bhangra' got an enthusiastic response from the packed hall. At Jassi's invitation, all the dignitaries including Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner, his assistant Rick Guzman and Alderman Rick Mervine did an impromptu

Bhangra on the stage to the delighted cheers of the audience.

The presence of several stalls of Indian cuisine, apparel, craft and jewelry ensured that the visitors had ample opportunity to engage in the festive mood of eating and shopping.

The evening concluded with a colorful display of fireworks which brought a tinge of nostalgia to Indian Americans who recalled the robust Diwali celebrations they enjoyed growing up in India.

The IACOAB is a volunteer group of the City of Aurora which acts as a liaison between the city and the community. Past events have included public awareness and civic education featuring the Aurora police chief and civic and library officials to make the public aware of the working of the city, police and library.

The IACOAB members are Gautam Bhatia (Chairman), Shabbir Shikora (Vice Chairman), Deepak Mehta (Secretary), Kunal Majmunder (Treasurer), Anupama Setty, Ashok Easwaran, Girish Kapoor, Niveditta Ahuja, Prasad Garkhedkar, Roopa Anjanappa, Sanjeev Pandey and Sharon Garcia.



IACOAB members honoring Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner.

Gayatri Mantra from the Rig Veda. This was followed by the American national anthem sung by Avni Limdi (student at Neuqua Valley

as a traditional Indian mark of respect by IACOAB board members. Aurora Mayor Tom Weisner and his wife were given gifts as a

honored with a memento and a shawl.

Gautam Bhatia and Roopa



Dance group



Indian American Community Outreach Advisory Board