

SPECIAL ÉMIGRÉ:

INDIAN CG PRASHANT AGRAWAL HEADED HOME AFTER TWO SHORT YEARS

ANDREW WORK

Last Wednesday night, Prashant Agrawal announced his departure from Hong Kong in just a few short days. He arrived here a little over two years ago, bringing a breath of fresh air to invigorate the Indian presence in the Fragrant Harbour. The face of modern India, he brought a young family, stylish Mrs. Agrawal and a raft of business hungry countrymen and countrywomen to Hong Kong. Hong Kong was more than happy to reciprocate.

"It has been a real privilege to serve in Hong Kong," he enthused.

He will be promoted to Joint Secretary and his specific duties announced only once re-installed in New Delhi. There are only 42 Joint Secretaries in the Ministry of External Affairs with one vacancy listed, soon to be filled. The full org chart showing who is currently where at the top levels of the Ministry will soon have a new name: Prashant Agrawal.

Mr Agrawal had two achievements he was particularly proud of both involving engagement.

Hong Kong: Make in India!

At a high level, he played host to a number of high level delegations from India aimed at promoting business exchange. The Make in India campaign, promoting the nation's rise as a manufacturing centre, was the banner under which national and state level delegations (covered in *HT* here) came to Hong Kong. The visit of the Indian Minister of Finance in November was a highlight as Hong Kong and India deepen financial ties.

Mr Agrawal took Hong Kong to India as well, with the first delegation to India led by a Chief Executive with 70 delegate members in tow to visit the capital New

Delhi to meet Prime Minister Modi. They also met state leaders of Maharashtra in Mumbai. India's legendary IIT and the Bombay Stock Exchange were part of the visits.

India for the people

The second level of engagement was with the broader community, including a visit from the Indian Coast Guard Ship Sarang and the national day events. At this year's Independence Day, a hipper India strutted

it stuff with a modern fashion show that saw a blaze of camera flashes as celebrants were surprised with a show from two hot new fashion talents.

India by the Bay saw a partnership with the Asia Society into its second year. The festival celebrates the best in Indian arts and has seen producer Sanjoy Roy, a legend in his own right, bring stars like Sharmila Tagore (film), writer Shobhaa De, and celeb chef Karen Anand to Hong Kong to perform over a week long period. It was at the India by the Bay launch party that Mr Agrawal announced his imminent

departure.

Over 2,000 Hong Kongers took part in the first International Yoga Day in Sun Yat Sen Park, followed up by a Consulate supported Guinness World Record breaking yoga

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event in Hong Kong.

Many took note when he launched the social media presence of the Consulate in

Hong Kong; over 13,000 have joined their Facebook page, setting a benchmark for other Consulates in Hong Kong.

Mr Agrawal set a frantic pace for activity in Hong Kong with strong support from New Delhi, suggesting Hong Kong has a high priority in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. Hong Kong will look forward to Mr Agrawal's replacement with curiosity to see what rising star takes up residence at Black's Link this year.



Managing director and producer of India by the Bay Mr Sanjoy Roy and Ms Lakshmi Mahey Laroia presenting gifts to Mrs Agrawal.



Mr Sanjoy Roy with CEO of CLP Mr Richard Lancaster.



Farewell Mr & Mrs Agrawal!