

British envoy leaving Canada for Nigeria

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possible in New York," he told *Chatter House* on Nov. 5.

But while the storm might have stopped him from participating in the New York City marathon, it didn't stop Mr. Brown from running that day. Instead, he participated in the Road2Hope Marathon in Hamilton.

"So at least I was able to get the marathon in," he said.

Mr. Brown, who ran his first marathon in China with former trade and public safety minister **Stockwell Day**, said it was a fun event.

"If anything I would've dressed a little bit warmer," said Mr. Brown, who aims to do at least one marathon each year in a foreign locale.

Mr. Brown has raised more than \$5,000 for his cause, but hopes that number will increase.

It's a bird, it's a plane—it's Deepak



A South Asian community leader lights a candle with Deepak Obhrai, parliamentary secretary to the foreign minister, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Last week's Diwali celebration in the capital drew in a steady flow of politicians. Prime Minister **Stephen Harper**, Trade Minister **Ed Fast**, Foreign Minister **John Baird** and his parliamentary secretary **Deepak Obhrai**, and NDP member of Parliament **Jinny Sims** all showed up, just to name a few.

And then there was "Jason Bhai."

For those readers who might be a little confused, bhai is a Hindi word that means brother.

"I must make special mention to my bhai...Jason Bhai," said **Budhendranauth Doobay**, a spiritual leader from a Hindu temple in Richmond Hill. He was referring to no other than Immigration Minister **Jason Kenney**.

"For us he is Jason Bhai," said Mr. Doobay as the main hall in the Government Conference Centre filled with laughter.

Members of Canada's South Asian community streamed in Nov. 1 for the 12th annual celebration of the Indian holiday, which actually falls on Nov. 13.

Diwali, commonly known as the festival of lights, is a day marked by the lighting of small oil lamps, Indian sweets, fireworks, and getting together with family and friends.

And it seems like this year's festivities endowed Mr. Kenney with a new nickname.

Even his colleagues, including Mr. Harper, didn't pass up the chance to throw in a "Jason Bhai" reference, much to the amusement of the crowd.

But the real star of the show was Mr. Obhrai, a Conservative MP who has been credited with championing the Diwali celebrations on Parliament Hill.

If the attendees didn't know they had arrived for a Diwali celebration, they might've mistaken the evening for an Obhrai lovefest—and an all-party one at that.

Ms. Sims, speaking in Punjabi, thanked

Mr. Obhrai for putting together the event.

And keeping with tradition, Mr. Baird started his speech with a humorous anecdote, this one about being appointed as foreign minister.

"Someone asked me, 'What is the best part of your job? Is it that you get to promote Canadian values around the world, or is it that you get to meet extraordinary people?...' I said, 'No, I get to work with Deepak.'"

Mr. Harper too joined in on the praise.

"Over the years, nobody has worked harder than Deepak to bring together Parliamentarians and Indo-Canadian leaders to mark the age-old celebration of Diwali, right here in the nation's capital," he said.

"So, we all thank and we congratulate Deepak for making this a great new Canadian tradition."

Mr. Obhrai turned out to be one of the lucky ones—most MPs don't have their own cheering squad.

Mingling with the sources

It was an odd yet amicable sort of camaraderie on Nov. 3 as journalists, politicians, and diplomats wined and dined under one roof at the annual Press Gallery dinner.

Known for its humor and good-natured yet piercing jabs at politicians, this year's event at the Canadian Museum of Civilization didn't fail to deliver.

An ongoing reference throughout the night to the much-talked-about novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* led to Liberal Leader Bob Rae receiving a pair of handcuffs as an award.

His speech displayed a sense of confusion as to what to do with them, yet openness to experimentation.

The event brought in some diplomats as well. Members of the press gallery are encouraged to bring a guest with them. Mr. Baird and United States Ambassador **David Jacobson** were seated at the same table and were spotted chatting away to each other throughout the night.

South African High Commissioner **Membathisi Mdladlana**, Zambian High Commissioner **Bobby Mbunji Samakai**, and Guatemalan Ambassador **Georges de La Roche** joined the *Embassy* team. Also spotted in the crowd was Mr. Pocock.

The evening wasn't all just fun and games. *Global and Mail* reporter **Daniel Leblanc** received the Charles Lynch award for coverage of national issues.

For most it was a night to just let loose. Of course the evening was not complete without a little grooving to the beat.

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