



**Hon. Deepak Obhrai, Member of the Queen's Privy Council
Member of Parliament for Calgary Forest Lawn**

The Honourable Deepak Obhrai was born in Tanzania and spent his early years growing up at the base of the spectacular Mount Kilimanjaro (in the town of Arusha). He attended primary and secondary school there. Then in 1966, he went to India and completed his high school degree at the prestigious Daly College, in Indore. He then undertook courses to become an Air Traffic Controller in London, UK. Subsequently he returned to Tanzania and joined the Department of Civil Aviation East Africa as an Air Traffic Controller at the Nairobi, Kilimanjaro & Dar Es Salaam International Airports.

In 1977, he immigrated with his wife and daughter to Canada, and settled in Calgary, Alberta. Here, Deepak gradually got involved in community affairs, and became President of the India – Canada Association, Monterey Community Association and the Hindu Society of Calgary. His involvement in community affairs led him to be involved in political life as well.

Deepak was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Calgary East in 1997. He was then re-elected in 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011; successively receiving a larger percentage of the popular vote. Deepak was re-elected in the last general recent election held in October 2015, from the newly-formed Riding of Calgary Forest Lawn.

Deepak is the longest-serving Conservative MP in Canada's 42nd Parliament. He is the present Dean of the Conservative Caucus. In 2017, Deepak ran for the Leadership of the Conservative Party, becoming the first visible minority Canadian to run for the leadership of a federal political party in Canada.

In the previous Conservative government, Deepak has served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights and also as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation. He was the longest serving Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Canadian history.

In September 2013, Deepak was appointed to Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada, in recognition of his many years of public service as a Member of Parliament and for his services in representing Canada on the world stage.

As the founder-chair of the Canada-India Parliamentary Friendship Group, Deepak initiated many activities leading to further strengthening of Canada's relations with India. Since 1998, Deepak has organized and hosted the National Diwali Celebration on Parliament Hill, making Canada the first western democracy to celebrate Diwali in Parliament. Africa is Deepak's other great passion. Born and raised in Tanzania, he has travelled widely across Africa and continues to work hard to build bridges of understanding between Canada and countries of Africa.

In 2009, the Government of India recognized Deepak for his contribution in strengthening Canada-India relations by awarding him the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award, which is the highest honour given to overseas Indians. In 2008, *India Abroad* newspaper named Deepak as one of 35 most influential Indo-Canadians in Canada. In April 2014, *Hill Times* newspaper named Deepak as one of the most influential persons among the Top 100 influencers of Canada's global future. A June 2014 survey by the Embassy newspaper named Deepak as one of the Hardest Working Parliamentarian on Foreign Policy and one of the Most Well-connected Parliamentarian to the diplomatic scene.

In 2014, the Indo-American Friends Group of Washington DC presented Deepak with the Pride of India Award, for his work at empowering the Indian diaspora. Also in 2014, Sri Chinmoy Peace Foundation awarded Deepak Obhrai the Peace Dreamer award for a life of service to Canada. In 2015 Vision World organization of Ahmedabad, India, conferred the Global Visionary Award to Deepak Obhrai for his contributions to parliamentary democracy and strengthening of Indo-Canadian bilateral relations. Also in 2015, the Vietnamese Canadian Federation presented Deepak with the VCF Award 2015, in recognition of his dedication to the Vietnamese Canadian Community. In 2019, the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) awarded Deepak its prestigious 2019 President's Award of the Year.

Deepak Obhrai and his wife, Neena, have two daughters: Priti and Kaajal, a son: Aman, son-in-law: Robin Martin, grandson: Davin Jacob and granddaughter Evasha. **(Ends).**