

India's ambassador visits Hills

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

Democracy and secularism are two of India's greatest resources, the Indian ambassador to the United States declared a visit to Farmington Hills Saturday.

Addressing members and guests of the 35-family Dawoodi Bohra mosque, Al-Masjidul Burhani, 20595 Orchard Lake Road, during a dinner meeting, ambassador P.K. Kaul said: "We are an example of democracy."

"We have demonstrated to the world that more than the number of people who live in the United States have voted in any (national) election in India. We have demonstrated our commitment to live in a democratic government."

India, which legislated a democratic constitution in 1949 after gaining independence from Great Britain two years before the world's most populous democracy.

Stressing India's religious freedom, Kaul said: "We firmly believe in this doctrine, this strength. We have demonstrated to the world that secularism can bind 800 million people together and can take the country forward."

Kaul's appearance coincided with the celebration of the 77th birthday of Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin, spiritual leader of 1 million Ismaili Muslims of the Dawoodi Bohra sect, and the 1st anniversary of the Republic Day of India (Jan. 26).

"It's a matter of great satisfaction to be here," said Kaul, who came from Washington, D.C., in the company of U.S. Secret Service agents.

cultural collage

A page of Farmington-area ethnic news

Life are based on the teachings of the Fatimis 555 years ago; a Fatimi Imam founded Cairo, Egypt, in 692 A.D.

His Holiness was raised and taught in the Fatimi philosophy of literature, art and economics. He followed his father as leader of the sect and the religion's 52nd Imam in the Fatimi tradition.

His sect prides itself on allegiance to discipline, education, tolerance, gender equality, moral values, piety, and law and order.

It also makes interest-free loans to followers for homes, businesses, and cars because it doesn't believe in "the evils of interest."

clarification

A Farmington focus item Monday said the closest retail center to the planned new Halsted Village at 12 Mile and Halsted is on Orchard Lake Road. The Kendallwood Plaza is a mile closer, at 12 Mile and Farmington Road.

The Oakland Parks Foundation-sponsored Winter Family Fun Day, scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 15, at Glen Oaks County Park in Farmington Hills has been cancelled because of the weather.



Tamer Rasheed praised state Rep. Jan Dolan at the dinner meeting.

BOB SKLAR/staff photographer

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