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South Asian Lawyers Honoured

TORONTO—Two Department of Justice lawyers were recently honoured by the South Asian Lawyers' Association, as part of South Asian Heritage Month. **Christopher Amerasinghe, Q.C.**, and **Mark M. Persaud** were feted at a gala dinner as «South Asian Men of the Bar.»

Last December, the Ontario legislature passed a private member's bill proclaiming May as South Asian Heritage Month to recognize the contributions that South Asians have made to the many aspects of culture, commerce and public service in Ontario. The dinner recognized a group of South Asian lawyers for their «spirit of determination, integrity, passion and loyalty to the South Asian community and to the pursuit of justice.»



Christopher Amerasinghe

Christopher Amerasinghe was born in Sri Lanka and obtained his LL.B. from the University of Ceylon in 1963. He was called to the Bar of Sri Lanka in 1964 and practised there for 10 years before his emigration to Canada in 1974. He was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1976 and was Counsel to the Ontario Securities Commission until he joined the Department of Justice Ontario Regional Office in 1977. He has appeared as counsel for the Attorney General of Canada in several high-profile criminal and war crimes cases, and was one of the lawyers who helped establish the Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Section. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1986 and since 1989 has been Senior General Counsel and currently specializes in class action litigation, criminal law and international criminal law.

Mark M. Persaud was born in Guyana and, since his call to the Bar in 1993, has held a broad range of positions with the Department of Justice as a prosecutor, counsel to the RCMP (Integrated Proceeds of Crime Unit), and civil litigation counsel. He has contributed to community development work, within Ontario as well as internationally, and has worked extensively with groups committed to addressing issues of equity and discrimination. In the early 1980s, he founded the first comprehensive organization for assisting refugee claimants in Toronto, the Toronto United Church Emergency Refugee Relief. He is also the founder and chairman of the Canadian International Peace Project, an initiative based on a novel and holistic approach to international peace and development that has brought together people of various faiths to promote greater racial, ethnic and inter-faith understanding in Canada. He has an LL.M. from Osgoode Hall Law School and attended Harvard University to study urban community development. He is also the Secretary of the South Asian Lawyers' Association and Co-Secretary of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers.



Mark M. Persaud

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The Canadian International Peace Project (CIPP) is a novel and unique non-partisan organisation that has brought together diverse groups and individuals to work on issues and projects relating to local, national and international peace, security and development . Through partnership on events and projects, the CIPP fosters mutual respect and sustainable relationships among diverse groups including those in conflict with each other.

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