

Article by Dr. Harish Chandra  
It's God's Plan: We are Mere Instruments – Devinder Mahajan

These were the humble words of Devinder Mahajan in his acceptance speech last Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015. He and his wife Dr Sushma were honored at the Tapestry Gala 2015 at Hilton Americas by the Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston for their lifelong contributions through various charities in Greater Houston and Interfaith tradition.

The colorful evening started with a kaleidoscopic dance by the little kids of DAV Montessori School – a project close to the hearts of the Mahajans – that mesmerized the 750 guests. Kids performed brilliantly in presenting the entire spectrum of varied cultures that the humanity is weaved into. The evening became a harmony of varied presentations under the skillful and enthralling voice of Meena Datt, the Mistress of Ceremonies. She invited Rev William Lawson and Father Demetrio Tagarlopulos for Invocation that was followed by timely tribute to Elliott Gershenson. Dinner included several vegetarian delicacies and was accompanied with visual and audio delights through entertaining presentations by Joel Engel, Dinicu Gabriel Maffuz-Anker, and Kenneth Gayle & Unity Ensemble, in its first part.

The second part of entertainment included pieces from Kenneth Gayle & Unity Ensemble, Achron Gabriel Maffuz-Anker and Infused Performing Arts, which were preceded by the star presentation of the evening, Meals on Wheels – the principal beneficiary of the fundraising evening. Its presentation touched the compassionate cord of every guest in the selfless manner its hosts of volunteers and staff work to keep hunger at bay for the elderly people of all colors and shades in Greater Houston area.

A video presentation gave a glimpse of the honorees' profile – the pictures and words said it loud and clear that Sushma and Dev Mahajans' achievements and contributions were well deserved. It was attested by the Guest of Honor, Honorable P. Harish, Consul General of India. It was a proud moment for all, particularly for those from India to hear a diplomat speak from his heart on the spiritual journey that a well lived human being can lead as one traverse the four significant divisions – student for self-development, householder for family, retirement phase for community and monkhood for the entire humanity. It was a timely description as the event was reaching its climax to honor a couple having successfully translated these lofty Vedic ideals into their life by giving back to the community and humanity.

As Mahajans walked onto the stage, a specially made cake literally became the icing on the cake representing their 50<sup>th</sup> year of happily married life, joyously buoyed by their two beautiful daughters. Their daughter Neera Shetty shared her intimate moments under the shadow of love and affection from the Mahajans. A sparkling memento was presented to them. The humility and harmony was writ large on the couple's faces as they took turns to acknowledge and reciprocate their own feelings and those of the guests. Their association with a galaxy of charity organizations was recalled, including Arya Samaj Greater Houston and Vedic Cultural Center, DAV Montessori School, DAV Sanskriti

School, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (Congress of Arya Samajes) America, Jeevan Prabhat (an orphanage in India), Mahatma Gandhi Library, Hindus of Greater Houston, Indo American Charity Foundation, Pratham, to name some of them. He recalled the circumstances when he took the lead in establishing the second branch of Jeevan Prabhat orphanage in Pondicherry (India) for the unfortunate children, an outcome of the Tsunami 26 December 2004. Dev Mahajan, in his characteristic humility, surrendered all his noble efforts to the Supreme Being in the tradition of *Nishkaam Karm* (selfless action), saying: It's all God's plans; we are mere instruments. May such noble couple inspire one and all!