

Hindus to build memorial to fallen Canadian soldiers

The Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization (CMOHC) will build a memorial to Canadian soldiers who have lost their lives in the eight-year-old mission in Afghanistan.

Canada has lost more than 130 soldiers since it joined the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan in 2002. Most of the more than 2,500 Canadian troops are deployed in volatile Kandahar province.

The Toronto-based Hindu organization becomes the first such body in Canada to express its gratitude to the fallen Canadian soldiers.

'The internationally designed stone monument will be unveiled at the museum premises in Richmond Hill on April 10 next year,' Shylee Someshwar, chairperson of the CMOHC, said in a statement here.

She said, 'We have undertaken several initiatives to promote peace and we thought it was befitting to embark on one that would serve as a permanent remembrance for our brave soldiers.'

'Future generations need to know about the ultimate sacrifice they have made on our behalf, so that we may enjoy peace and prosperity.'

The families of the fallen soldiers, members of the Canadian armed forces and government officials will attend the event.

'We have invited like-minded organizations and individuals to join us in making this initiative a grand success,' Guyanese-born Hindu scholar and surgeon Budhendranauth Doobay said.

'The families of the fallen soldiers should have some comfort that prayers will be said daily for the souls of their loved ones and they can join us for a special prayer of their own faith as well,' he added.

The Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization, which opened here five years ago, has undertaken several innovative projects to give a glimpse of India's rich heritage to Canadians.

Its first project called 'Temples of Time' takes visitors on a journey through India to give them a peak into Hindu philosophy, monumental feats of engineering and the cultural significance of this civilization.

The second project called 'Meeting God' depicts the experiences of a Hindu devotee through photographs and interactive wooden shrines. Build over 17,000 sq.ft, the museum was completed in 2004 at an initial cost of \$5,000,000. It is part of the famous Vishnu Mandir of Toronto.

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