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Memorial honours Air India victims

Her name 'will be here forever'

By [JACK BOLAND](#), SUN MEDIA

Twenty-two years after Rattan Kalsi's daughter was killed in the Air India Flight 182 bombing, he is finally at peace.

With a picture of his daughter Indira affixed to his jacket lapel with a Maple Leaf flag pin, Kalsi joined hundreds of family and friends yesterday at the unveiling of the Air India Memorial at Humber Bay Park East.

"This memorial brings me peace now," said Kalsi, 77, who gently waved his fingers over his daughter's name inscribed on the polished granite wall that contains the names of the 329 killed in the 1985 air bombing and two baggage handlers at Narita, Japan.

"Her name will be here forever, even when I am gone. How come I'm still here and she is gone?" said Kalsi, shaking his head.

Indira, 21, was a Guelph University student on route to Delhi to set up a free drug dispensary for the poor.

Kalsi's two son's Raj, 48, and Pradeep, 46, said they were impressed with the memorial and happy that Canada has finally come to acknowledge the loss.

But Kalsi's sorrow turned to anger as he talked about those who orchestrated the terror attack and the investigators who watched Sikh militant Talwinder Singh Parmar, Inderjit Singh Reyat, who pleaded guilty to manslaughter in 2003, and another man walk into the woods near Duncan, B.C., to test explosives 10 days before the terror attack off the coast of Ireland.

"The RCMP and CSIS were present," said Kalsi. "They should have stopped them. They could have saved so many lives."

Jayashree Thampi lost her husband and daughter Prithi, 7, who "would have been 29 now, tall, beautiful, a young professional -- maybe a classical dancer because she loved dancing, and married," Thampi said.

"This was no fairy tale. There was no living happily ever after for any of the passengers," said Thampi, of the Air India Victims' Families Association.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Premier Dalton McGuinty and Mayor David Miller were in attendance.

"Canada is not immune to extremism or its evil twin terrorism," Harper said. "On that dark day, we got a shocking glimpse of (what) lurks at the core of some of our fellow human beings.

"It was the worst act of terrorism in Canadian history, planned and executed in a cause that had nothing to do with Canada. And nothing to do with the people who were killed."



Jyoti Rana runs her fingers across her aunt's name - Shyla "Juju" Aurora - on the polished granite memorial wall. (Jack Boland/Sun Media)