

Your Eminence,
Respected members of the dais,
Dear students, teachers, distinguished guests

I have always believed that one man can make a difference, and one outstanding man can make history. Khachik Pogos Astwachatoor, undoubtedly, was such an outstanding personality.

Admittedly, I am not the best speaker to talk about Sir Paul Chater, as he is mostly known, since I learned about him only during my first visit to Kolkata after my appointment as Ambassador to India. I was so impressed with his fascinating life and versatile and lasting accomplishments, that I began sharing his story with friends and acquaintances in Armenia and beyond, immediately after my return to Delhi.

Like the prominent Armenian businessmen such as Alexander Mantashev and Galoust Gulbenkyan, developing industries in Europe and the Middle East, Sir Paul Chater, almost at the same time, was contributing to the formation and development of Hong Kong. In his recognition and as a token of gratitude, some well-known landmarks of that vibrant multinational city are named in his honor. Regrettably, it's said that Sir Paul Chater's big fortune in Hong Kong was mostly dispersed and largely destroyed during the Japanese occupation.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In my opinion, the crown of this great man's legacy is this very school, which has been functional for 181 years now and has already outlived him by a century. He was driven to donate to the school not only as a grateful graduate, but also as a visionary who acknowledged the value of education as one of India's persistent needs. In today's competitive world as the knowledge became the most valuable economic resource and asset, the role of knowledge in addressing the challenges of globalization has acquired paramount importance. Therefore, without any hesitation, I call upon the students of Le Martiniere College to commit to knowledge. Such

a commitment will be the best way to enhance Sir Paul Chater's legacy, and bring special meaning to the prayer offered up daily by the pupils of the school to glorify his noble name.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is recognized that Le Martiniere College successfully fulfills its mission of providing a high quality education to Indians and other nationalities. I'm very pleased to know that many young Armenians from different corners of the world have benefitted from this educational institution, and for that I'd like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the management and faculty of the college. I would like to use this opportunity, to offer Le Martiniere to establish a partnership with one of the leading schools in Armenia. Apart from the regular benefits of this kind of cooperation, such a relationship would help to raise awareness about Sir Paul Chater in Armenia, his historical homeland, which he probably never managed to visit.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This monument celebrates the incredibly special friendship between Armenian community in Kolkata and the Le Martiniere College, and I trust that by taking up residence in this leading institution, Sir Paul Chater will become a boundless source of inspiration for many more generations of Le Martiniere students.

In conclusion, it remains for me to acknowledge my gratitude to everyone who has made this memorable day possible. My special thanks to India-Armenian Friendship NGO and Mrs Sonia Jone for her generosity.