

New father, new husband, new home: Ayub's first two years in Huron County

Ayub is living a proverb: the rolling stone gathers no moss.

In the past year, he's gone from being a single newcomer navigating how to live in small town Canada to today, being a new father, husband and community leader.

"I got married in October 2025 in India. My wife moved to Canada, and then our child was born here in Goderich," Ayub says.

Already based in Ontario prior to getting married, Ayub moved to Canada in 2022 to study at a post-secondary institution and lived in Toronto. In 2024, after completing his studies, he decided he wanted to stay in the country to put the knowledge he learned in classrooms into practice and gain Canadian work experience.

He interviewed to become an employment counsellor with a local agency.

"When I was living in downtown Toronto, I was surrounded by a lot of busy people. The jobs were hard to find and there was just too much competition. Plus, it was a big concrete jungle," Ayub remembers.

Ayub admits that when he applied to be an employment counsellor in Goderich, he didn't exactly know where the community was located.

"When I did a quick Google search, I think the first thing that came up was it's 'the prettiest town in Canada'. I was like, that's the place I want to be. That's how I decided to come to Huron County," he says.

Arriving in Goderich in January, in the middle of a snowstorm, wasn't quite what Ayub expected from Canada's prettiest town.

"Pretty much everybody was saying 'this is the worst winter we've ever had'. And I was like, great. The winter showed up when I decided to move here. And well, that was challenging," he reflects.

Not only was Goderich a huge contrast from his life in Toronto, Ayub is originally from Mumbai, a diverse city of 20 million people that's both the financial capital of India, and the hub of Bollywood, the country's Hindi-language film industry.

"It was a busy life. Growing up, it was fun. I made a lot of lifelong friends. I used to play soccer. There's a lot of memories that come back, it's been such a drastic change," he says.

Ayub grew up with his parents, two brothers and a sister. After completing high school, he found work in a call centre.

"I started off as a customer service advisor. Now, people usually compliment me on my English, saying that I do not have an accent and I can speak fluently," Ayub says. "Part of the reason is because I took that job and I was interacting with people in the UK and people in the States. I would say that job polished my English."

Within a year, Ayub was promoted to the role of a quality analyst, leading him to interact with clients and provide feedback to existing customer service agents. The role also enabled him to work internationally, on a six-month work placement in the Philippines.

At the same time, Ayub worked through a bachelor's degree in business administration at a local university.

After completing his studies, Ayub looked to go beyond his country to broaden his opportunities.

"The option of getting an education internationally was always something I planned for," he says.

Arriving in Toronto wearing flipflops and a hoodie, Ayub realized he wasn't fully informed about what life would be like in Canada.

"Now if anybody else is coming to Canada, I can guide them in a better direction," he says smiling.

Fast forward to his arrival in Goderich, Ayub quickly got to work in the employment agency, helping clients improve their resumes and LinkedIn profiles, assisting people as they prepared for interviews, and connecting people to training. As well, he built a network with local employers who were hiring and contributed to broader community efforts to strengthen employment support for newcomers to Canada.

Ayub's commitment to supporting clients earned him nominations for the *I Am Huron* awards, a campaign that recognizes the contributions immigrants and newcomers to Canada make to strengthen our local communities.

"During that challenging time, Ayub provided not only professional guidance but also genuine emotional support that helped me regain confidence and move forward. He took the time to connect me with the right professional advice and assisted me with important research and resources related to my situation. What stands out most about Ayub is his willingness to help others without hesitation. He is a highly experienced professional who consistently goes above and beyond to support people in need," wrote a former client, who nominated Ayub for the award.

Ayub also found comfort and a network of support through a community of faith after his arrival in Goderich.

"As someone who follows Islam, I reached out to a few people on Facebook who were already in Huron County. just wanted to see if there were any facilities for gathering," he says.

Ayub found a small group who meet in Goderich every Friday to pray together.

"They were really helpful in terms of making me feel welcome in the community," Ayub says. "I've moved from being an outsider of the group to someone who is leading the group. It's pretty amazing."

After surviving the intensity of the winter months, Ayub is adjusting to rhythms of life in Goderich and a greater connection to the natural environment. He mentions summer and eating ice cream from a local shop as a new favourite habit.

"The beach is definitely awesome to visit, but the sunsets also surprised me because I had no idea there were two sunsets in Goderich," he says. "Another thing that surprised me was the winters because everybody knows why."

Asked whether or not he would move to Canada again, and live in a small town, Ayub offers a hearty yes.

"I'm grateful for the opportunities that Canada and Huron County have provided me with and the support system that my family is receiving. Just by the people, just by accessing the smallest of services in town, it's just so awesome," he concludes.

So for now, at least, this rolling stone has found a place to stay still, Goderich, it turns out, is a place for Ayub and family to pause and begin growing roots.

The I Am Huron awards celebrate the contributions immigrants and newcomers to Canada make in Huron County's communities. Nominations are received from the community, reviewed by a committee with lived experience of immigration, and awarded at a ceremony.

The project is funded with support from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

For more about this campaign, visit: <https://www.huroncounty.ca/i-am-huron/>