

Indian Business Chamber

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Upcoming Events

AGM 2021*

*The dates are still undecided due to COVID-19 and we will follow the government's guidelines before planning any of the above events.



Dear Members,

Firstly, I wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year. The year 2020 was one of the strangest years for all of us but I wish the new year brings back the normal life. The Dutch government has started vaccination in Netherlands and by the end of the month the vaccination is going at high speed. The government is also working on an exit strategy from lockdown with some closed events coming in the upcoming weeks, Hopefully, the positive results will be visible and our life and business will come back to normal soon.

This year we are going to reach out to our members soon for upcoming AGM, events, and conferences. We have a number of events in line for 2021, stay tuned and informed from our newsletter and communication from the IBC secretary.

In this edition of the newsletter, we welcome H.E Pradeep Kumar Rawat, the ambassador of India to the Netherlands and feature another one of our founders who has made a mark for himself through sheer hard work and resilience.

To improve our engagement with all our IBC members, we would request them to send in their feedback on the newsletter or suggestions on new topics to secretary@indianbusinesschamber.nl for subsequent newsletters. You are more than welcome to send your own creative article which we will feature in the upcoming newsletters.

Wish you all best of health. Stay safe!

Warm Regards,

Manu Katyal
(Chairman IBC)

IBC Board Members

Manu Katyal
(Chairman)

Shivan Bhoendie
(Vice Chairman & Treasurer)

Sid Gupta
(Secretary)

Board Members:

- Vinod Sehdev
- Sumit Anand
- Hemant Mishra
- Gagan Vermani

Chairmen emeritus

- Badri Madan
- Harry Bahl
- Pramod Sharma
- Ram Sand

Welcome to the new Ambassador



"I had the distinct pleasure of meeting his excellency Pradeep Kumar Rawat, the ambassador of India to the Netherlands. On behalf of all members of Indian Business Chamber NL, I would like to send you a hearty welcome to the Netherlands. Thanks for your encouraging words during the meeting and extending your full support towards IBC. We are looking forward to working together closely with the embassy and to continue to build synergies through prompt engagement at various levels. We wish you all the success during your tenure in the Netherlands." – Manu Katyal, chairman IBC

Featured Member – Mr Rajiv Mehra

From the month of June last year we started a series of interviewing our members, featuring their profiles and experiences in the newsletter. In this newsletter we bring you, Mr Rajiv Mehra, one of the founding members of Indian Business Chamber, NL.

[How has your journey been so far in the Netherlands and what brought you to the land of windmills?](#)

It's been the most fascinating journey so far and I have to thank the US immigration service for that. After completing my bachelors degree in India I wanted to study in the USA but in '76 India was considered as a Soviet block country and they were not issuing student visa for management studies. Working and gaining experience in Europe was a good alternative to USA.

Many student do take time off before going for higher studies. This came as a huge surprise and disappointment. On hindsight it was a magical moment of extreme clarity, one which gave me clarity of my life and to plan differently. In actuality, lives shift constantly, and one needs to regroup and reconsider your journey as you go along.

So instead of being surprised and disappointed I had to make new decisions, anticipate them, and dare I say it, be excited for them. After 3 years working in Netherlands I got my US visa but I wasn't interested any more to go to the USA. Netherlands and Europe with its diversity were a great place to work and grow one's ambitions.

[Tell us a bit more about yourself before you came to the Netherlands?](#)

I was born in Bombay. As my father was in the Ministry of Finance I grew up in Delhi, started my schooling in Srinagar, after 4 years in Srinagar then moved Chandigarh and Dehradun. Completed my schooling and college in Delhi, moved to Amsterdam when I turned 20.

[Which industries are you primarily engaged with professionally?](#)

Hotel Management and Real Estate Investment.

[What would you consider as some of your key contributions towards the Horeca?](#)

When I started my hotel business in Amsterdam in 1985 there were no Indians in hotel business in Amsterdam, in fact no persons of colour who owned or operated a hotel in Amsterdam. I had to overcome discrimination, not just from the general public but from hotel guests as well the local officials and bureaucrats. It was an uphill battle on all fronts but we did succeed, having to own and operate 4 hotels in Amsterdam. So I would say I did manage to change their mindset.

And who is Rajiv as a person, how would you describe yourself?

I'm a people-person. I love meeting new people and learning about their lives and their backgrounds. I can almost always find common ground with strangers, and I like making people feel comfortable in my presence. I'm organized and like multitasking and enjoy working with a wide variety of people.

As one of the founding members of Indian business chamber, how has your experience been and what are the strengths of IBC which keep you engaged with this organization?

Badri Madan, Shard Rao and I, wrote the constitution of IBC and were chosen by the other initiators to lead the IBC. Badri Madan as Chairman, Shard Rao as Vice Chairman and I was the secretary. Along with 6 others we formed the first board. Was later elected as the Vice President of IBC.

Every organisation has it's periods of highs and lows, however a lot of it depends on the leadership as well as the governance structures that have been setup. IBC has also had it's rough patches in relation to governance issues, however the biggest strength I see with IBC is to take corrective actions timely and bring in fresh energy. I'm happy to see it heading in the right direction.

During this time period, while you have been engaged with various business activities, are there other organisations that you were associated with as well?

I was a key initiator and founder Board Member and presently the Executive Vice

President of The Netherlands India Chamber of Commerce and Trade (NICCT), founder board member of International Business Foundation Amsterdam (IBFA) and the



founder Chairman of the Diwali Festival, the largest Indian festival in mainland Europe.

What has been your observation about the next generation of Indian entrepreneurs who are establishing themselves in the Netherlands?

We can deny it all we want, but the vast majority of entrepreneurs get into the game, at least partially, because of the potential to make quick money and not for scalable startups or social entrepreneurship. Sustainable investing is not in their horizon.

Based on your professional experience in the Netherlands, what advice would you give to other professionals out there to become successful?

The next generation of entrepreneurs have a huge opportunity to make a difference for innovation in products, services, processes, and business models. Their scope of business should have a long term horizon rather than keeping a short term gains. People, Planet, and Profit capital to work as a force for

positive change, combining financial with ecological and social returns.

If you had to share one life lesson to our readers, what would that be?

Always find ways to give back to your roots, community and society. Volunteering gave me a sense of purpose. The fulfilling feeling of giving back and contributing to society,



whether in India with the children's school in Bangalore or in Netherlands working with

various organization such as Rotary, is unparalleled.

Giving back is also a great way to get to know your community. Volunteering my time to support a cause I am passionate about is something I will never regret. It enriches my life, familiarize me with the community, and has connected me to people and ideas that has had a positive impact in my life. This certainly has broadened my perceptions of the world.

How have your efforts in giving back to the society and building a community been recognized by the Dutch?

I have been very fortunate to receive many awards in my life but the most distinguished



and valuable of them all was when I was Knighted in 2014. The same year when the King and Queen visited Amstelveen on King's Day and was given the opportunity by the Mayor of Amstelveen to

meet the King and Queen as well as Princess Beatrix in a private setting.

Upcoming Events

None.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, all upcoming IBC events are carefully considered based on the guidelines of [Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport](#) and want to ensure the safety of our members and their families as top priority.

Important News – Netherlands

Oxford vaccine delays mean Dutch need to rethink vaccine strategy

Problems at a production plant in Belgium where the AstraZeneca vaccine is made mean the Dutch coronavirus vaccination strategy needs to be thought out again, and further delays could be on the cards. On Friday night AstraZeneca said that it would only be able to deliver 60% of Europe's orders in the first quarter of 2020 because of production issues. This means that the Netherlands will get 920,000 doses rather than the planned 2.3 million.

[Read More](#)

Amsterdam vies for IPO spotlight as Brexit dents London's allure

The decision by Polish ecommerce group InPost to pick Amsterdam for its stock listing offers the latest sign that London risks losing its grip as a trading hub after Brexit.

UK chancellor Rishi Sunak has referred to the hard break from the EU in financial services that kicked in on January 1 as "Big Bang 2.0", a trigger for the City of London to flourish.

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Janssen vaccine produced in the Netherlands shows 66 percent efficacy

The vaccine produced by Belgian company Janssen shows a single-dose efficacy of 66 percent. This is lower than the other vaccines that have thus far been approved, however, this may not matter too much.

[Read More](#)

Important News – India

17 most-important Indian origin tech executives in the world

Google parent Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella are poster boys of technology world as they lead two of the biggest companies in the world. However, other than the duo, there are several tech executives of Indian origin that hold key positions at some of the biggest tech companies in the world. The year 2020 saw Arvind Krishna take over as CEO and chairman of IT giant IBM. There are many other such names. Here we look at 17 most important tech executives in the world that are of Indian origin.

[Read More](#)

India mulls new law to ban cryptocurrencies, create official digital currency

MUMBAI: India plans to introduce a law to ban private cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin and put in place a framework for an official digital currency to be issued by the central bank, according to a legislative agenda listed by the government.

The law will "create a facilitative framework for creation of the official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)," said the agenda, published on the lower house website on Friday.

[Read More](#)

Union Budget 2021: From GST reforms to tax breaks, here's what real estate sector is hoping for

The real estate sector has high hopes from Union Budget 2021. From reforms in GST to tax breaks, we speak to some industry experts on what they are hoping for from the Centre.

For 38-year-old Pradyuman Singh, the year 2020 could not have come at a worse time. The Noida-based entrepreneur who had launched a cafe in Sector 46 in 2019, had to shut down his business after the nation went into lockdown.

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