

Global Indian diaspora meets in S'pore to share knowledge platform



CEO & Executive Director of Bellis USA, Mr. Ashish Kumar, addressing the Global Indian Business Network



Mr. Neal Chandaria of the Comcraft group from Africa, shares his views at the meeting of the Diaspora Summit.

Indian, Chinese and Asian businessmen from the US, Europe, Africa and Asia met at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore, on November 11, 2009, for the Global Diaspora Business Summit organised by the Global Indian Business Network. The event was held in conjunction with the Global Entrepolis @Singapore presented by the Singapore Economic Development Board and the Singapore Business Federation.

Living up to its aspiration of going global this year, The Global Diaspora Business Summit witnessed a diverse gathering of speakers and about 206 attendees from Singapore, China, Malaysia, Thailand, USA, Portugal and India, amongst others.



Chairman of Global Indian Business Network, Mr. George Abraham at the centre, flanked by Executive Director of Belliss group, Mr. Ashish Kumar, and Founder of Martinhal Beach Resort & Hotel, Ms. Chitra Stern, on his right. On his left are Managing Director of Bigcorp Malaysia, Dato' M.A. Vijey and Managing Partner, Dacheng Central Chambers LLP, Mr. Aloysius Wee.

In his opening remarks, George Abraham, Chairman of the Global Indian Business Network Pte Ltd welcomed the speakers and delegates to this inaugural Business Summit of the Global Diaspora. He pointed out that successful diaspora Indian and Chinese entrepreneurs have grown large businesses that are little known outside their region. This summit has grown out of the success of the Global Indian Summit launched at the Global Entrepolis @ Singapore 2006.

Representing the Diaspora Community, Graham Hayward (a British subject now resident in Singapore), Professional Director, Advisor/Consultant to Fosters Wine Group of Australia, and Executive Search Specialist for Garner International; chaired the morning session and delivered a crisp introduction to get the ball rolling for the Global

Diaspora Business Summit Speakers.

In his keynote address, Dato' Ghazali – Board Member of Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) and Chairman of Nusantara Technologies - accredited the Global Diaspora Business Summit as a 'Historical Landmark' which will see continuous series of births of various opportunities within ASEAN and across the globe and the contributions that the Diaspora community can make by reuniting at such platforms. He highlighted his own varied ethnic background and growth of his business and the opportunities that existed in the region.

The other renowned diaspora speakers were Mr. Michael Ma – Group CEO, IndoChine Group, Robert Yap - Chairman & CEO of YCH Group, Ashish Kumar –CEO and Executive Director of Bellis Group, Chitra Stern, Owner, Martinhal Beach Resort & Hotel, and Aloysius Wee, Managing Partner of Dacheng Central Chambers LLP, to name a few.

Michael explained IndoChine's holistic expansion from a single outlet in Singapore to 27 internationally renowned pubs, bars, restaurants and resorts in places like Jakarta, Malaysia, Hamburg, Thailand, India and Dubai. While highlighting opportunities for the Diaspora in his arena, Michael also brought to fore important issues facing entrepreneurs in his industry such as the existence of Mafias, having to deal with the police and difficulty in securing the various licenses required to operate Bars and Restaurants, etc.

Ashish Kumar, a serial entrepreneur, urged businesses to break the conventional pattern of starting small and then going global. He endorsed the idea of "Thinking Big and Starting Global." He provided important insights into how the diaspora can successfully invest globally, while outlining the opportunities that exist, particularly in the United States. He spoke about opportunities in sectors such as Renewable Energy, Manufacturing, Information Technology and Telecom and Finance.

Neal Chandaria of the Comcraft group tracked Comcraft's progress, from a small trading and distribution company to an industrial operator in processing, steel, plastics, aluminum, etc. He highlighted the opportunities in Africa and Middle East in industries such as Oil and Gas, Minerals, metals, Agricultural and Agro Processing, Infrastructure, Education and Telecom to name a few.

Overall, the day-long Summit served as a knowledge sharing platform where speakers from across the world affirmed the role of the diaspora, shared their experiences of how they built and grew their businesses, and highlighted the opportunities that exist in their countries of business that the entrepreneurs can tap on.