



**The Council of EU Chambers
of Commerce in India**

ACTIVITY REPORT 2020-21

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ABOUT THE COUNCIL OF EU CHAMBER'S OF COMMERCE IN INDIA

WHO WE ARE

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India (EU Chambers) was set up in 1992 under the aegis of European Union Ambassador and represented by Bi-Lateral Chambers and Bi-National Committees of European Countries to foster commercial & economic partnership between India and the European Union. It is an International Forum situated in the heart of Mumbai, the commercial capital of India.

The Chamber is an important link between European Union – Indian Businesses. The European Union today is India's largest trading partner; there is a considerable scope for further enhancing trade relations between the two regions. EU Chambers is a platform for EU Indian businesses to explore the possibilities of exports, joint ventures, partnerships, technology exchange, trade dialogue and networking. EU Chambers has Sectoral Committees consisted of European and Indian experts to brainstorm new ideas, discuss and share information of best practices.

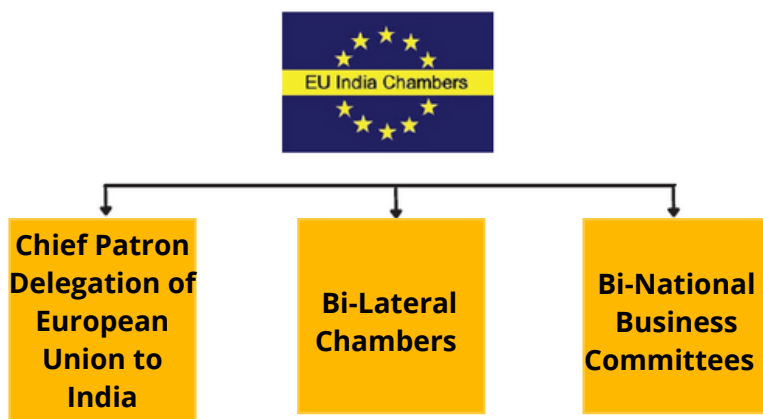
OUR MISSION

- Be India's key business forum for information about the European Union
- Be India's key forum for networking between European and Indian business people
- To act as a facilitator to strengthen India EU economic tie
- To Act as advisor to our members with the help of our expert committees

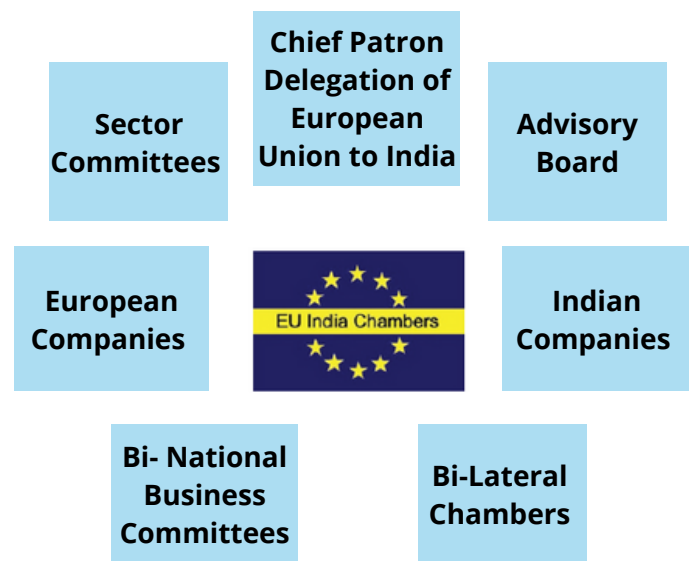
OUR VISION

To provide quality services to our members and society at large enabling them to grow qualitatively & quantitatively to strengthen EU India relations.

AT THE TIME OF FORMATION



CURRENT STRUCTURE



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Readers,

It is my honour to share with you this Annual Activity Report and highlight some of its important accomplishments of the financial year 2020 -2021.

Realising the significance of the strategic partnership that INDIA and EU share, especially in their economic region, The Council of EU Chamber of Commerce in India has over the years carved out an enviable role for itself to further the objective of EU Mission.

Given the much-coveted size as well as the vital composition of the trade between EU and India, EU Chambers imperatively lends utmost priority to resolve almost every possible issue that it believes to be an impediment in the path of generating greater momentum to our trade.

The year 2020-21 was an unusually challenging one, as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our lives and the activities of the society. Remarkably, we have learnt to deal with such hurdles and have also turned them into opportunities to develop new ways to enhance the value of the services that EU Chamber offers to its members. Distinctly, many of our members companies have come out with outstanding performance during this testing time.

To make up for the lost time, the Chamber has increased its activities far more than that used to be in normal times and has been successfully organising a lot of value webinars with the sole aim of knowledge sharing. Evaluating the a typical need and demand of the hour, EU Chamber successfully organized webinars on some specific topics such as GST, Artificial Intelligence, Payroll and many more.

Undoubtedly, the well-entrenched strong footing of our trade relations is testimony to the support extended to and the faith reposed on EU Chamber by EU Mission. The Chamber thanks The EU Mission for all its valuable support and assures the Mission of incessant commitment to serve the very cause that the Mission envisioned.

I hope you will continue to take advantage of the services and opportunities that the Chamber provides. Equally, I would like to thank and express my sincere appreciation to all the Board Members and other member companies for extending their support and cooperation during my president ship. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the good work done by our Secretariat led by Director Dr. Renu Shome. In the coming years, I am confident that the Chamber will scale even greater heights, thus cementing better trade relations with the EU member nations.

Thank You!

Sincerely,

Manish Bhatnagar

FROM THE DESK OF

DIRECTOR



Dear Readers,

Thankfully, at a community level, we are now fully geared up to handle the new challenges that besieged the overall economic activities for the last 18 months.

We continue to be hopeful as we look forward the bright future that lie ahead. Essentially, it is critical that we work together, hand in hand, to find better solutions and effect change.

Strength in numbers lends weight and credibility to our endeavours. With strong member base, we have developed an extensive network offering an abundance of business and marketing opportunities to ensure our members' continued prosperity. Acting as a communication hub, we are able to provide our members with leads from European Businesses and solve their queries. And, I believe that our wide range webinars, allows our members to continue to sharpen their professional skills and increase knowledge. There is no gainsay, we are an organization committed to building a strong, prosperous and thriving community.

We are fortunate to have a large and diverse membership rich in experience and expertise. We draw support from a large base of volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors, committees. The Chamber is truly indebted to them for their invaluable contributions that are vital to sustain a strong and dynamic organization.

Moreover, we have six sector committees to bring in greater focus into our activities as well as to render more effective services to our members through our team of Sectoral experts. We know that knowledge sharing is one of the key aspects for our member companies.

Our strength lies in our ability to work together. We invite your participation in our quest to build a stronger and more prosperous community. Invest in yourself, your business and your community by becoming an integral part of The Council of EU Chamber of Commerce India. We welcome your participation.

Thank You!

Sincerely,

Dr. Renu Shome

OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Governing Board Members 2021-2022

Bi-National Business Committees



President
Mr. Manish Bhatnagar
Managing Director
SKF India Ltd.
Indo-Swedish Business Committee



Vice-President
Mr. Peeyush Kaushik
Head - Healthcare Innovation Center
Philips India Ltd.



Mr. Anupam Johri
Chief Representative
Raiffeisen Bank International AG
Indo-Austrian Business Committee



Capt. Avinash Batra
Chairman
Seahorse Ship Agencies Pvt. Ltd.
Indo-Danish Business Committee



Mrs. Harshbeena Zaveri
Vice Chairman & Managing Director
NRB Bearings Limited
Indo-Swedish Business Committee



Mr. Joiel Akilan
Chief Representative
Bank BBVA
Indo-Greek Business Committee



Mr. Meghnad Mitra
CFO - Agri Sector
Mahindra & Mahindra
Indo-Finnish Business Committee



Mr. Shishir Joshipura
CEO & MD
Praj Industries Limited
Indo Irish Business Committee



Mr. Shalil Shroff
Managing Director
**Punjab Chemicals & Crop
Protections Ltd**
Indo-Portugal Business Committee



Mr. Zarir Langrana
Executive Director & President,
Global Chemicals Business
Tata Chemicals Ltd.
Indo-British Business Committee

Bi- Lateral Chambers



Mr. Niki Frank
Chief Executive Officer
DHL Global Forwarding South Asia
Indo-German Chamber of Commerce



Mr. Óscar Esteban
CEO
SIS Prosegur
President
Indo Spanish Chamber of Commerce



Mr. Sharad Kumar Saraf
Managing Director
Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd.
President
Indo Romanian Chamber of Comm. & Ind.



Mr. Sumeet Anand
Founder & CEO
Insight Growth Partners Advisors Pvt. Ltd.
President
Indo French Chamber of Comm. & Ind

Elected from Membership



Mr. Aymar de Liedekerke Beaufort
Head of Territory & Head of CIB
BNP Paribas India Branch



Mr. K. V. Bala
Founder
Indus Captial Pvt. Ltd.



Mr. Vinayak Hajare
Director
InterGest South Asia Pvt. Ltd.

Special Invitees

- Chief Patron - Delegation of European Union to India
- The Embassies and Consulates of EU countries
- Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India
- Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- Such other Chambers or Associations as may be invited by the Governing Board from time to time

Thanking President and Vice-President



Mr. Manish Bhatnagar
President



Mr. Peeyush Kaushik
Vice-President

Grateful for their Support

Past Presidents



Mr. Ashok Barat
Managing Partner
Merx Business Advisors LLP
(2019-2020)



Mr. Nicolas Simon
Deputy CEO
SBI Funds Management Pvt. Ltd.
(2018-2019)



Mr. Ameet Nivsarkar
VP Corporate Affairs
Tata Consultancy Services
(2017-2018)



Mr. Chandramowli Srinivasan
Finance Director
SKF India Ltd.
(2015-2017)



Capt. Avinash Batra
Chairman
Seahorse Ship Agencies Pvt. Ltd.
(2013-2015)



Mr. Anupam Johri
Chief Representative
Raiffiesen Bank International AG
(2012-2013)



Mr. Sharad Kumar Saraf
Managing Director
Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd.
(2011-2012)



Mr. R. Mukundan
Managing Director
Tata Chemicals Limited
(2010-2011)

Advisory Board



Dr. Ajit Ranade
Chief Economist
Aditya Birla Group



Mr. Ramesh NG
CEO and MD
Stock Holding Corporation of India

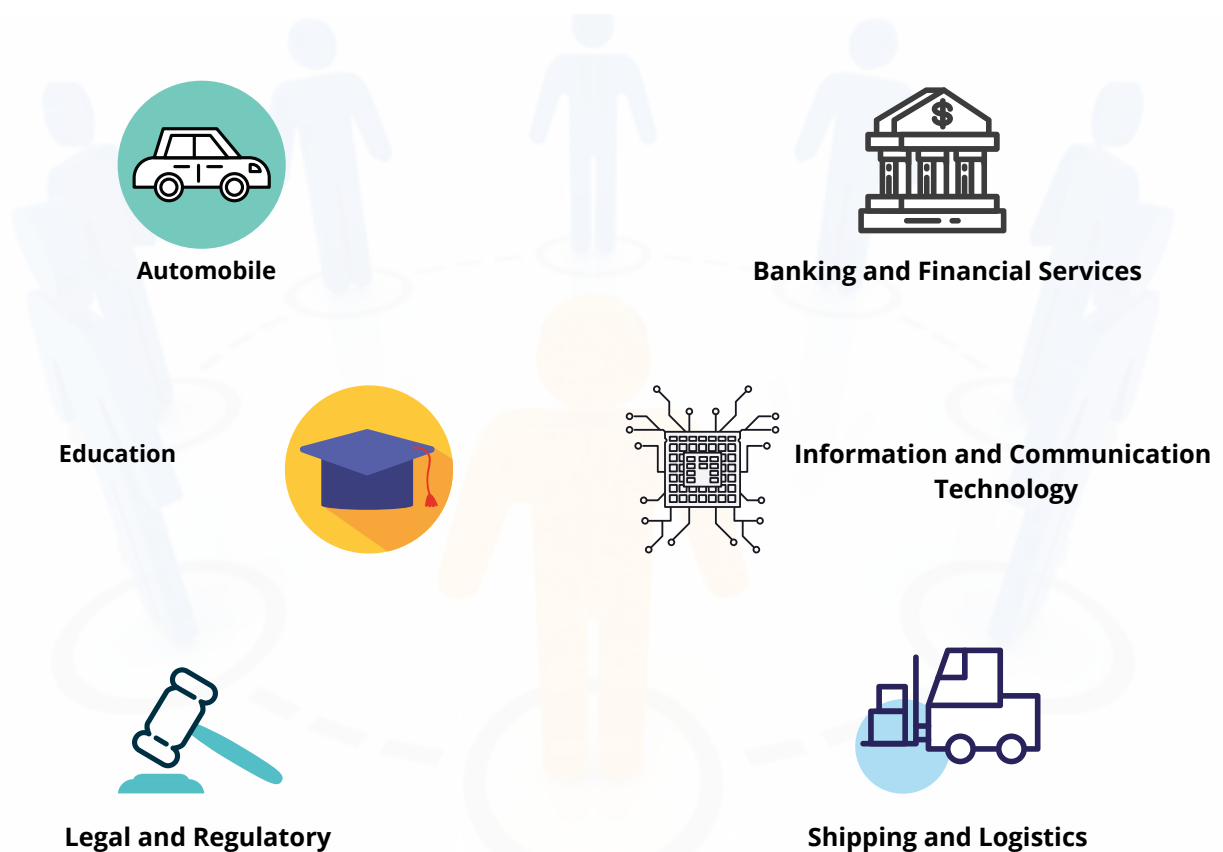
An Advisory Board is constituted with an objective to provides insights and make recommendations to provide key information and materials to the Board of Directors.

The Advisory Board is able to focus specifically on identified programs, issues, initiatives etc. and give nuanced and bespoke advice and support to the organization.

The way Forward

SECTOR COMMITTEES

The objectives of the Committees are to make representations to relevant authorities on various issues. These Committees also address the issues faced by member companies and organizes activities for knowledge sharing.



Automobile Committee

Chairman



Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon
Head
Audi India

Co-Chairman



Mr. Saket Hardikar
Head- Business Development (Automation and Robotics)
AIUT TECHNOLOGIES LLP



Mr. Jeevan Mirajkar
OEM - Key Account Manager
Rockwell Automation



Mr. Sabu Johnny
Managing Director
EVM Motors And
Vehicles India Pvt. Ltd.



Mr. Sujan Roy
Head – SAARC
International Operations
Ashok Leyland Ltd.



Mr. Sunil Thorat
Director
Sales & Engineering
Global Engineering Services



Mr. Narasimha Hegde
Vice President
Ashok Leyland Ltd.

Banking and Financial Services Committee

Chairman



Mr. Narayanan Sadanandan
Former MD & CEO
SBI Pension Funds Pvt. Ltd.

Co-Chairman



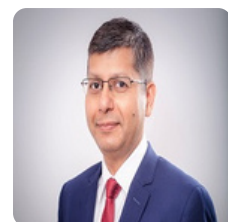
Mr. Jyoti Sharan
CEO
Chartered Finance Management Ltd.



Ms. Dilkhush Cooper
Director, Head of MNC Coverage, West
BNP Paribas, India



Mr. Mayank Mittal
Director, Head of Representative Office
KfW IPEX-Bank GmbH Representative
Office Mumbai



Mr. Amit Roy
Chief Representative
Intesa Sanpaolo SPA.

Education Committee

Chairman



Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe
Group Director
Welingkar Institute of Management Development
and Research & Eisenhower Fellow, USA

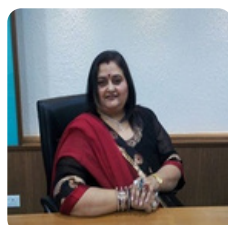
Co-Chairman



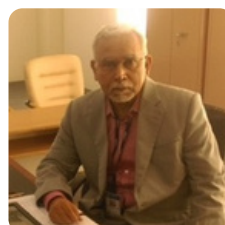
Prof. T. M Sathyanarayanan
Director
Overseas Education Consultancy Services



Dr. David Easow
Deputy Director - International Affairs
Hindustan Group of Institutions



Mrs. Vanita Rakesh Vyas
CMD
Swift Edutech Solution Pvt. Ltd.



Dr. Vijay Khole
Former Vice-Chancellor
Mumbai University



Dr. Vinay Agarwal
Chancellor
ISBM University

Information and Communication Technology Committee

Chairman



Mr. Ashank Desai
Head & Non-Executive Director, Founder
& Former Chairman
Mastek Ltd.

Co-Chairman



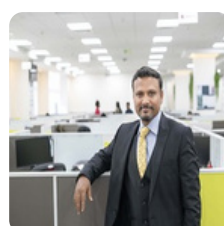
Dr. Joseph Shields
Senior Consulting Partner – CUSP Service
Growth Strategist – **SunDesh Solar Strategy**



Mr. Durjoy Patranabish
VP & Head of Global Business
Tiger Analytics India LLP



Mr. Nandan Mehta
Corporate Affairs – EMEA
Tata Consultancy Services



Mr. Rajendra C. Mruthyunjayappa
Managing Director - APAC Europe
Talisma Corporation Pvt. Ltd.



Mr. Sudheer Padiyar
Senior Vice-President and Head – Sales and EM,
Europe Middle East and Africa
Sun Tec Business Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

Legal & Regulatory Committee

Chairman



Mr. Suhail Nathani
Managing Partner
Economic Law Practice

Co-Chairman



Mr. Rajarshi Chakrabarti
Senior Resident Partner and Head of Mumbai office
Kochhar & Co.

Shipping and Logistics Committee

Chairman



Mr. Abhijeet Nair
CEO
FEI Cargo Ltd.

Co-Chairman



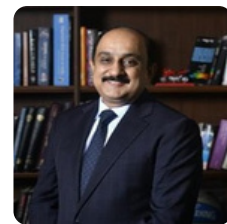
Mr. Bhavik Mota
Regional Director Ocean Management
West and Central Asia
Maersk India Pvt. Ltd



Mr. Sachit Dedhia
Managing Director
Velocity Global Logistics Pvt. Ltd.



Mr. Shabbir Rangwala
Chairman
Atlantic Global Shipping Pvt. Ltd.



Mr. Vaibhav Mittal
Business Head
Mahindra World City & ORIGINS by
Mahindra World City, Chennai

2020-2021 IN NUMBERS

606 +



Total Nos. of Members

76



New Membership

108



Total Nos. of
European Companies

430



Renewed Members

498



Total Nos. of Indian
Companies

100



Life Membership

10,000+



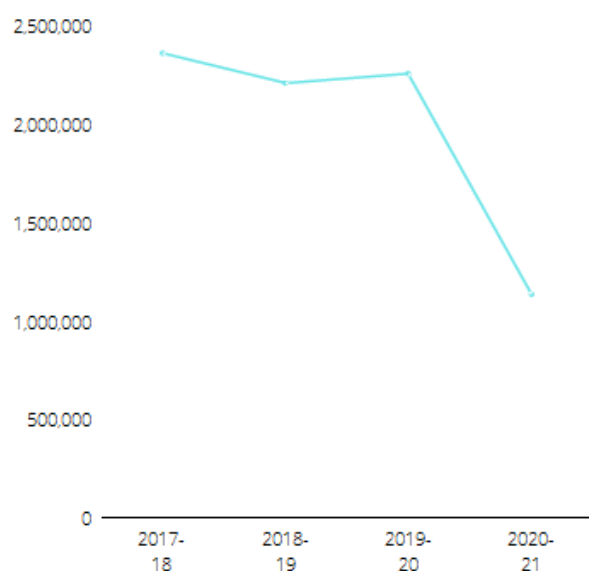
Contacts

An Era of Growth

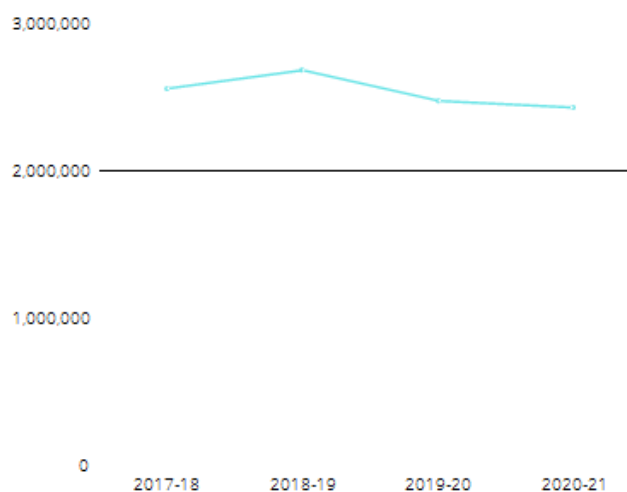
Membership

Growth over the years

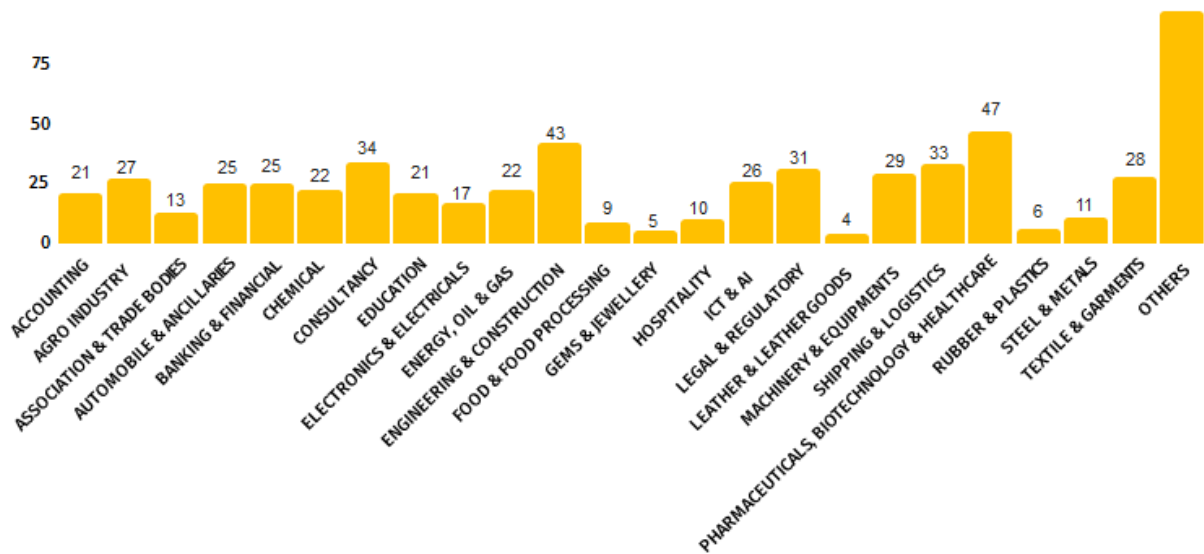
Sponsorship



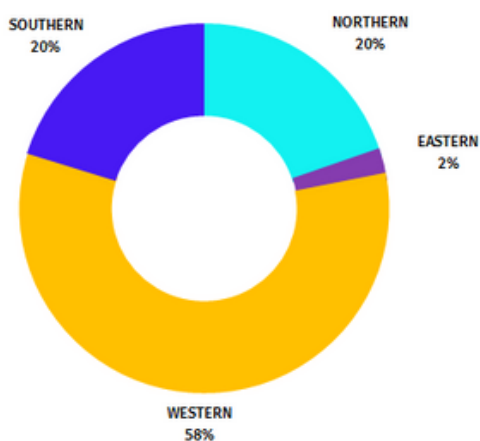
Membersip



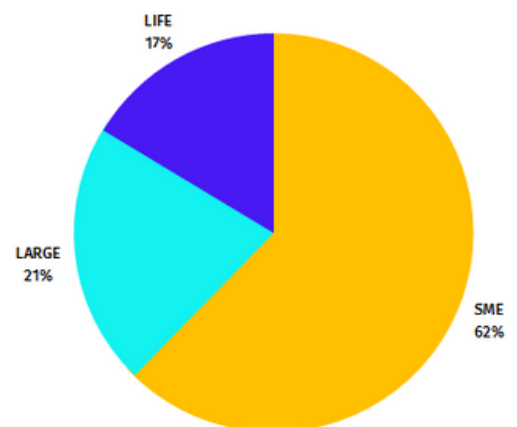
Sector-wise



Region-Wise



Category-Wise



What Members Say

TESTIMONIALS



"Our firm, HSCo., has been associated with the Chambers for many years now and we are extremely satisfied dealing with it. The Council, especially Dr. Renu Shome and Ms. Anvita Ail, is quite professional and helpful in its approach. We, being an accounting and tax consultancy service provider to many Indian subsidiaries of foreign parents, received great opportunities from the Chamber to share our knowledge with other members on topics like GST, Payroll, etc. Indeed, this is an excellent platform for those who wish to set up their business and grow across India. The HSCo. team wishes the EU Chambers all good luck and we look forward to a continuing partnership with them".

**- Bhavesh Shah |
Senior Partner
HSCo.**



"I am extremely thankful to The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce for being so polite and helpful in all the aspects. This is a good forum for all the businesses who want to expand across India. The Chamber has always been Open and Transparent in their dealings. We have been associated with them for quite some time and we had good experience working with them. I wish EU Chambers all the success and we look forward to a long association with them".

**- Narendra Goel
Managing Director -Shri
Bajrang Power & Ispat Ltd.
Director – Shri Bajrang
Alliance Ltd.**



"Rama Group of Companies - INDIA is a diversified conglomerate. Our plants are equipped with State-of-Art Technology Design and Equipment to support needs of Valued Customers . We manufacture High Quality Products :- Phosphatic Fertilizers / Chemicals / DOC / SOYA OIL / Animal Feed / Gelatin / Ossein / DCP. Our brands are trusted and command a premium in the market.EU chambers has been a good support and platform in promoting our Group Companies".

**- Haresh Ramsinghani
CMD
Rama Group of Companies
INDIA**



"As a new member of the EU Chamber, we have experienced proactive support from Dr. Renu in introducing us to the EU market. Looking forward to the continued support in helping us expand into new markets".

**- Sujith Shetty, MD
Tespa Group**



"It's been a pleasure to connect with you and The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India. Every time we work with you it becomes a great pleasure for us and also there are many things that we learn from each other. Since we have started working on the project together from the last couple of months in establishing our company's presence in the European community, we would like to mention that all the efforts taken by you and the European Council have shown signs of positivity. Working hand in glove with the EU chamber of commerce in India gives us great satisfaction and support. We would like to thank the EU Chamber of Commerce India, Mrs. Shome and Anvita for the endless support and ensuring we get the required comfort level in a third nation. We look forward to a great association with you in the future".

**- Hemant Managing Director
AVP Business Development
and Strategy
Yeshshree Group of
Companies**



"We have a fruitful association with EU chambers over the last 2 years . They have helped us to showcase our organisations services, link with similar minds and establish more business. The services provided by them is commendable especially while considering the current situation. We recommend all organisations who are planning to do or doing business in European Union to be member".

**- M.R. Rajeshkumar
Gatewaysglobal Human
Capital Solutions LLP**



"The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce is very helpful and I am thankful for their services.

This is a good forum for businesses who want to expand across India. I wish them all the success for the future".

- Mr. Vivek Kanoi
Business Advisor
Shaaz-Exports



"I am very grateful to The Council of EU Chambers Of Commerce for their cooperation & help for our business propagation. The Chamber has always been very helpful, forthright & transparent in their dealings .

We have always had good experience while working with them. Dr Renu Shome , Director has always been very helpful, giving excellent insights I wish EU Chambers of Commerce the very best and we look forward to long association with them".

- Dr. Paula Mukherjee Goel
MD,DCH,PGDAP
PGP Diabetology (John
Hopkins School Of Medicine)



"I am extremely thankful to The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce for being so polite and helpful in all the aspects. I feel, this is a good forum for all the businesses who want to expand their reach in European market.

The Chamber has always been Open and Transparent along with helping nature in their dealings. We have been associated with them for quite some time and we had good experience working with them.

We wish EU Chambers all the success and we look forward to a long association with them".

- Mr. B. K. Mane
Proprietor
Acme Tools

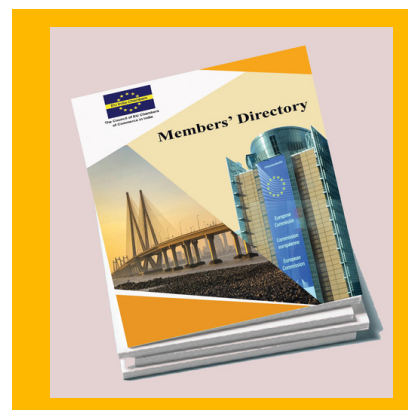
Connecting to our Members

Publications



Bi-monthly magazine covers latest developments on EU & India and various activities.

Details about the Members, Embassies and Consulate in India and EU.



Monthly e-Newsletter updates the members about the business opportunities from India and EU. It also covers the details about newly joined members.



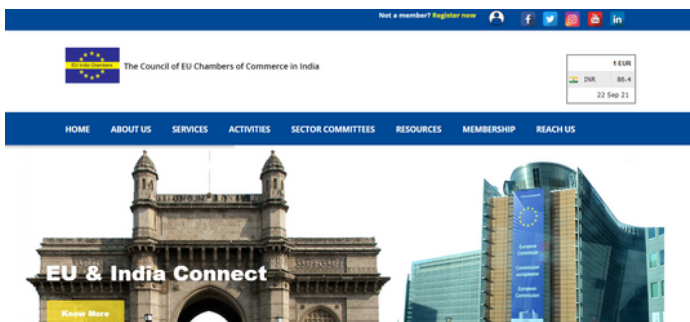
The Monthly Economic Reports received from Indian Embassies in EU Countries cover in-depth information about trade and investment between India & Various EU Countries & trade leads from EU.



Keeping our members Updated

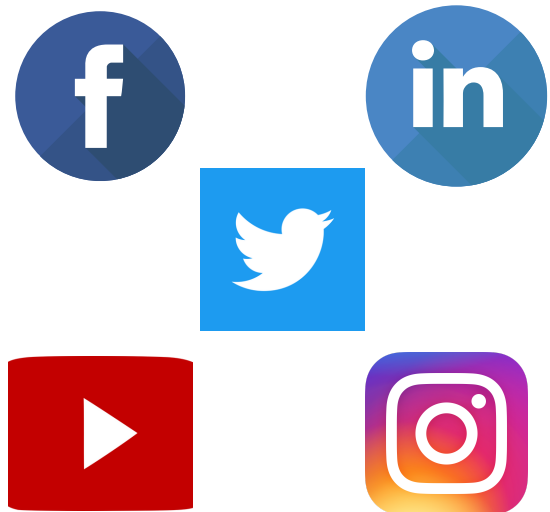
SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION



- A single point for all updates
- Includes Activities and Events
- Advertisement Opportunities
- Business Opportunities / Trade Leads from India & EU
- Covers Latest EU-India News
- Sponsorship Opportunities

The Chamber is very active digitally. There is a increase of almost 50% on its various social media platforms.



A Year in Flashback

Timeline



April 21
2020

Webinar on "BACK TO THE FUTURE - Impact of the changed world on Tax, Accounting and Financial reporting"

Webinar on "Pandemic Legal Intelligence-Business Risk Assessments"

April 23
2020



April 28
2020

Webinar on "Global Mobility Post COVID-19"

Webinar on "Global Mobility-Options for Investors to get Citizenship/PR"

May 1, 2020





May 8
2020

Webinar on "Pandemic Legal Intelligence – GST Unveiled"



Webinar on "Future of Hospitality in Post Covid World"

May 29
2020



June 14
2020

Webinar on "Apprenticeship-The Need of Hour"



Webinar on "Global Mobility – Options for Investors to get Citizenship/PR"

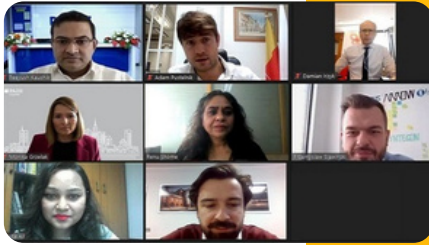
June 25
2020



July 21
2020

Webinar on "Sustained Push to Reforms in the Post COVID Era "





**January 28
2021**

Webinar on "Investment Opportunities for the Business Services Sectors in the City of Lodz, Poland"



Webinar on "Union Budget 2021 and its Implications"

**February 4
2021**



**February 11
2021**

Webinar on "How to Vitalize your Mental Well-Being"



Webinar on "Advance Tax: Important Validations Before Payment"

**March 12
2021**



**March 16
2021**

Webinar on "Access to Europe for Indian Products"





**March 19
2021**

Webinar on "Supreme Court Ruling for Software Payments: Way Forwards"



Webinar on "The New Labour Code- The change one should know"

**March 22
2021**



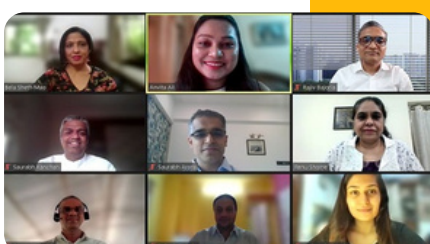
**March 25
2021**

Webinar on "What Recent GST Amendments Mean to Indian Businesses"



Webinar on "No Rona during Corona- Brand marketing growth during COVID times"

**March 28
2021**



**March 31
2021**

Webinar on "Production Linked Incentives-Framework & Developments"



The Inside Story

REPORTS

Webinar on BACK TO THE FUTURE – Impact of the changed world on Tax, Accounting and Financial reporting.

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with KNAV has organized the Webinar on BACK TO THE FUTURE – Impact of the changed world on tax, accounting and financial reporting on April 21, 2020

The eminent panellists were Mr. Uday Ved, Mr. Amitabh Khemka (Partner- IDT), Mr. Sanjay Kapadia (Senior Advisor- India Tax), Mr. Rajesh Khairajani (Partner- Valuation Services), Mrs. Hemlata Jhawar (Director-Assurance & Advisor)

The important topics discussed were Impairment, valuation of Inventory, Revenue recognition, Post-Sale discounts, Onerous contracts, Residency tests, Expat taxation due to stay being extended, Permanent establishment exposure, Transfer pricing margins, tax compliance.

Webinar on Pandemic Legal Intelligence–Business Risk Assessments

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with AMLEGALS has organized the Webinar on Pandemic Legal Intelligence – Business Risk Assessments on April 23, 2020

The eminent panellists were Mr Anandaday Misshra (Founder & Managing Partner), Mr. Rohit Lalwani (Principal Associate), Ms. Easha Manchanda (Sr. Associate), Ms. Srishti Agarwal (Associate). The important topics discussed were Contractual Obligations, Employers Perspective, Data Privacy, Damage control, Compliance, International Taxation, Implications.

Webinar on Global Mobility Post COVID-19

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with SmartMove Immigrations has organized the Webinar on Global Mobility Post COVID-19 on April 28, 2020

The eminent panellists were Mrs. Falguni Y. Parekh – Managing Director at SmartMove Immigration, Mr. Hemang Laaheru – Partner at SmartMove Immigration.

The attendees gained insights through a presentation by Mr. Hemang discussing investment options in various countries which will help them grow their business overseas as well as gain citizenship in various countries. Followed by the presentation was the question and answer session which covered the following topics: Immigration & Visa processing challenges faced by clients due to closure of government offices & consulates, Impact on global travel & bans, Immigration consequences and strategies due to work reductions, furloughs and lay-offs, Industry's respond to restrictions on entry and exit, visa and work permit issuance, tightened quarantine rules and taken other measures in an attempt to slow the spread of COVID-19, the impact international business, travel and assignment plans, Impact of the pandemic on investor visas & the points investors must consider at this given time.

Webinar on Pandemic Legal Intelligence – GST Unveiled

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with AMLEGALS has organized the Webinar on Pandemic Legal Intelligence – GST Unveiled on May 1, 2020

Mr. Anandaday Misshra (Founder & Managing Partner) spoke on Relaxation under GST, Force

majeure and restrains with tax implications, ITC restrictions and adjustments, taxliability on director under GST, Pre GST & Post GST litigation practice, ITC- the game changer

Webinar on Global Mobility - Options for Investors to get Citizenship/PR

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with Smart Move Immigrations has organized the Webinar on Global Mobility Post COVID-19 on May 8, 2020

The eminent panellists were Mrs. Falguni Y. Parekh – Managing Director at SmartMove Immigration, Ms. Dessis Iva Simeonova, Business Development Expert, New Balkans-Bulgaria, Mr. Mohammed Asaria, MD & Founder- Range Developers, Mr. Mike Xenic, President & CEO- Invest America), Ms. Charlotte Brun, Residence & Citizenship Officer – Vistra, Mr. Yiannis Pierides, Head of Overseas Sales- Leptos Estate, Mr. Sam Wolfe (MD- OneWorld Group)

The discussions were on investment opportunities in various countries which will help them grow their business overseas as well as gain citizenship in various countries. Participants also discussed various issues such as Cyprus helping clients in terms of making investments during this outbreak. The flexibility/ changes in the investment criteria s, technical solutions, Malta being the right place for Indian investors to consider as their plan B right now.

Businesses which will flourish in Malta keeping in mind an India Entrepreneur, Advice to most clients which are worried about investing during the current scenario, The benefits of investing in Grenada, Potential increase in applications which will in turn spark the Bulgarian economy amidst the covid – 19 pandemic, The key industries in Turkey and the important markets for Turkish exports that investors can benefit and The impact of covid 19 on UK and the scope for Indian flourishes in the UK.

Webinar on Future of Hospitality in Post Covid World

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with SmartMove Immigrations has organized the Webinar on Future of Hospitality in Post Covid World on May 29, 2020

The eminent panellists were Dr. Shabeeb Rizvi, Managing Partner at Yoko sizzler, Chef Rainer Zinngrebe, Vice President, Corporate Chef at Marriott International, Luxury Brands, USA, Mr. Roop Partap Choudhary, Managing Director at Noor Mahal Hotel & Jewel's Classical Group, Chef Ajay Chopra, Director at Raag, MasterChef India judge, restaurant consultant, Chef Chetan Sethi, Founder & Owner, Ustaadi Restaurants, Founder & Past Owner, Zaffran Restaurants, Mr. Amit Vachhar, Partner, Hotel Elegant International and Mrs. Falguni Y. Parekh – Managing Partner at SmartMove Immigration

The COVID-19 crisis has been extraordinarily disruptive to the hospitality industry. As major countries of the globe have implemented lockdown measures, forcing non-essential establishments to close down, restaurants, hotels, pubs, café's etc. have had to either temporarily close their doors or shut down business (in some instances) due to the lack of business. However, the hospitality industry has taken this grave situation as opportunity to show its generosity and solidarity by providing accommodation to health care workers, civil servants and even patients.

Food service teams and internationally renowned chefs have taken an initiative to provide free food to those working tirelessly to combat the situation. Gradually, hotels and restaurants have reopened globally, welcoming back guests while making sure they maintain safety and cleanliness guidelines. This one-hour online moderated session featured strategic, operational insights and the global outlook for hospitality sector from our esteemed panel of experts.

Webinar on Apprenticeship- the need of Hour

The Council of EU Chamber of Commerce (EU Chambers) supported the webinar on Apprenticeship- the need of Hour organized by ASSOCHAM held on 14th June 2020

The webinar covered the various benefits to the organizations & individuals and how they can avail them. Apprenticeships are industry-led training programs aimed at skilling and preparing youth for better employment. Apprenticeships comprise work-integrated training, designed and delivered as per the industry's requirements, either on the industry premises or facilitated by a training partner. Post-training, most apprentices get absorbed as employees and continue to grow in their chosen careers.

The scope of this webinar was to create awareness about the benefits of apprenticeships and NAPS in the backdrop of the skills-deficit faced by the industry and youth employability issues.

Webinar on "Impact of COVID- 19 on Logistics & Shipping Industry & Way Forward"

A webinar on 'Impact of Covid-19 on Logistics & Shipping Industry & Way Forward' was organized by The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce on 25th June 2020

Panelists were Mr. Vivek Arya, Managing Director, Rhenus Logistics India (P) Limited, Mr. Bhavik Mota, Director Head of Products South Asia, Maersk, Mr. Sujan Roy Head of International Business for Passenger Vehicles, Tata Motors Ltd., Mr. Jelle di Rooij, Sr. Manager Supply Chain Solutions, Holland International Distribution Council while the moderator was Mr. Abhijeet Nair, CEO FEI Cargo.

Mr. Ashok Barat, President of EU Chambers made the opening remarks by thanking all the panelists and introducing EU Chambers to the audience which has a very specific purpose of promoting bi-lateral business relations between India and countries of EU and Chambers' rich history. He also explained why this topic was chosen as Shipping is an unique industry as whenever a crisis occurs first one to be hit is supply chain and therefore shipping and logistics industry are hit and with this incident it was particularly bad as

along with goods even movement of people is halted however he was optimist about how this industry will see most massive turn around and a disruptive change in which it is carried out.

As the panel discussion started following introduction of all panellists, Mr. Arya said how there was chaos among people as lock down was announced but there was emergence of digitisation. There was also a mismatch from service taker and service provider side and it lead to stressing of supply chains and how in last few months we have seen de-globalization or re-nationalisation. He said he foresees in times ahead a lot of consolidation happening in logistics sector and these are the times for collaborative logistics in the interest of service taker.

Mr. Roy said we see in the places where lock down restrictions have been relieved where impact of virus is lower, demand is seeing a bounce back, surprisingly in India we are seeing demand is growing much stronger as compared to what we had foreseen. Unfortunately restarting complex procedure of manufacturing an automobile which needs work and coordination of around 3000 people, we haven't been able to supply vehicles in the quantities which we would have been able to provide for which the demand exists for our automotive sector and sectors as well which depend on Shipping and Logistic industry. Good news is that terror with which we started with has not materialised and impact has been rather mild and as when government will announce normalcy, people will go back to the old ways of consumption at a faster rate.

Mr. Mota talking about the global scenario said how a crisis in China puts entire world to risk as every single company who is global in nature has heavily invested in and by China in some form. He stated how IMF and World Bank have predicted a 5% drop in global economy while the impact on world trade will be 15% to 20%, so a new normal will see a slump of 20%. Chemical right now is the fastest moving product as it is needed for manufacturing of PPE kits, masks etc. but auto, retail and luxury segment of lifestyle sector are beaten and will take a long time to bounce back nobody knows how long it will take to recover. There is going to be acceleration of regional supply-flows as we see with US-China trade war, India-China sentiments right now, Brexit etc. but also environment changes and greater digitization which will reduce information asymmetry which we have in transportation right now.

Mr. Rooij said how street shopping saw a reduce, while e-commerce gained as many people started buying online, so supply chains will have to be redesigned in a much sustainable way to keep up with the increasing demand from eCommerce. He stated how there will be de globalisation or different form of globalization, which will reduce dependence on one supplier in China or elsewhere. He also mentioned how digitization means less human interface, robotisation and we might see more use of robots in warehouses and lastly data how you can share it with your peers and work better and take better decisions. Panel discussion was followed by Q&A round followed by vote of thanks.

Webinar on “Sustained Push to Reforms in the Post COVID Era ”

A virtual panel discussion was hosted by The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India on the topic “Sustained Push to Reforms in the Post Covid New Economic Order”.

Guest speaker for the panel discussion was Mr. Suresh Prabhu, member of Rajya Sabha and the former Union Minister for Commerce and Industry. Panel discussion was chaired by Mr. Ashok Barat, President of The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India, he introduced guest speaker and panelists and also threw light on the importance of subject of panel discussion. Panelists were Dr. Deepali Pant Joshi, Former Executive Director, Reserve Bank of India; Mr. Robin Banerjee, Managing Director,

Caprihans India Ltd. and Mr. Chhitiz Kumar, Business Leader- Precision Diagnosis and Connected Care, Philips India Ltd. and session was moderated by Mr Chandramowli Srinivasan, former CFO, SKF India Ltd. Caprihans India Ltd. and Mr. Chhitiz Kumar, Business Leader- Precision Diagnosis and Connected Care, Philips India Ltd. and session was moderated by Mr Chandramowli Srinivasan, former CFO, SKF India Ltd.

Mr. Prabhu threw light on recent EU India Summit headed by our honorable Prime Minister which was first ever such a virtual summit and how political, social relations between both countries can only happen if there is strong trade and commerce relationship. He mentioned among other issues which bind EU and India together is commitment towards climate change issues and

how can we use experience of EU for development of lesser developed states of India and how this times can be used to strengthen our relationship with EU. Upon asked if worst hit industries will revive back or be completely gone, Mr. Barat stated how Time is a great healer and history has shown over a period of time worst of times have passed as have good times, so industries and commerce will come back to normal and this is time for introspection on business models. e also stated how nearly for 2 decades human mind will induct a sense of caution human behaviour to purchasing pattern, social behaviour will change.

Mr. Kumar stated how business models will return to normalcy but there will be a change in business models and way we do business will change. How Corona has upgraded digital use for good as a Survey mentioned till February only 15 percent doctors were comfortable doing tele-medicine but today within a couple of months 90 percent plus of doctors are comfortable doing tele medicine.

Mr. Banerjee envisaged how a whole health infrastructure is absent in India and there is a great opportunity over there as for example there is no recuperating center, second area being food how can India step up in food sector, make something different and get into the shoes of Chinese supplier and food is a big industry and 360° consultancy also has great opportunity.

Dr. Deepali mentioned how banking sector is following a supply leading approach but there is delivery challenge for Aatmanirbhar program vis a vis banking. Global economic revival created by Covid and as the risk becomes more difficult to manage and as fears of global recession hovel us, there are 3 important macroeconomic challenges of managing pandemic and recovery for India first being managing growth and development, second being mitigate vulnerability and manage fallout of fiscal expansionism. Mr. Kumar also mentioned how Indian market is attractive but investors will have to make investments keeping long term in mind, as Indian market is also fragmented.

Mr. Srinivasan gave his concluding remarks stating how this pandemic has acted as a wakeup call not only for India but for entire world that we cannot take nature for granted, also how India needs to seize the opportunities presented itself by rest of the world looking for an alternative of China as a business friendly destination and reliable sourcing partner, we have ingredients in place but we need final united and committed

resolve to make it happen. He also envisaged how every crisis presents an opportunity, mankind has overcome many crisis and we shall do it again.

Panel discussion had large number of participation was followed by Q & A.

Webinar on “Arbitration In Post Covid World Charting The Path Ahead”

A virtual panel discussion was organized by the Council of EU India Chambers of Commerce in India in association with Kochhar & Co. on the topic Arbitration in Post Covid World Charting the Path Ahead.

Eminent panelists were Justice F.I. Rebello, Former Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court; Mr. Fredun Vitre, Senior Counsel Bombay High Court; Mr. Nilanjan Sinha Head- Legal, India and South East Asia ICICI Bank; Mr. Rajshri Chakrabarti, Senior Resident Partner Kochhar and Co. moderated the session.

Justice Rebello commented upon pending cases of Arbitration stating international arbitration won't be affected a lot, parties sit all across globe with video conferencing. Arbitration by video, nor do judges, lawyers, arbitrators don't have to travel to places and how it will bring down cost of arbitration. Mr. Vitre commented Covid 19 can result in positive result on arbitration as various stages of arbitration, where initial stages and end stage of argument be conducted on virtual platform but in between stage of recording has its peculiarities has to be physical or hybrid of digitalization and physical documentation. Mr. Sinha being dealing with legal and financial aspects shared his view how for large complex financial contracts for example derivatives, arbitration is necessary.

Right judgment and arbitration is even important from a country perspective if a country becomes low rated country. Justice Rebello informed for the present times in India 80% of adhoc arbitration and only 20% institutional arbitration. Rules are based on international standards. Mr. Sinha envisaged we have necessary degree of framework and infrastructure is available, problem is we don't decide procedure, we don't decide procedure, we just decide number of arbitrators, we tend to mimic, and people don't like to adopt changes.

and likewise happened in Stockholm we should also open doors to use facilities. Upon asked what the way forward is if one party is not agreeing for virtual hearing, Justice Rebello said there are sometimes people who like to delay, but parties are facing practical difficulties during Covid, but otherwise there should be no issues for virtual arbitration. On questioned upon is the role of courts diminishing with arbitration moving to virtual platforms,

Mr. Vitre pointed out that court interventions are important and helpful, in the initial stage of arbitration section 11 and section 9, court interventions will help arbitration. The problem arises in conduct of actual arbitration, regarding to technological issues pertaining to virtual platforms. Panel discussion was essentially positive about future of arbitration in India as in India there is resurgence in awareness that arbitration can be effective way of dispute resolution but we need system to be going as we have physical infrastructure in place. Panel discussion ended with a public Q and A round.

Webinar on “6 Mantras for Business Excellence for SMEs”

A certified 2 day interactive training session on 6 Mantras for Business Excellence for SMEs was hosted by EU Chambers of Commerce in association with Leap2Excel Consulting LLP on 16th and 17th August 2020

The speakers were Mr. Chandramowli Srinivasan (former CFO at SKF India), Mr. Kiran Rakhe (Practice head – Supply Chain Management), Mr. Abhay Desai (Sales and Marketing Professional) and Mr. Vithal Nayak (former HR head at Arvind, Pillsbury, Shapoorji Pallonji and SKF).

Speakers talked about the various challenges faced by SMEs such as Managing Working Capital cycle, Over dependence on few customers for business, Inconsistent Demand, Margin Pressure, Unable to get discount or credit, Managing Inventory, Rework and Rejection, Attracting & Retaining Talent, Maturity of HR Processes, Competition from unorganized sector leading to impact on profitability.

To overcome various challenges and to excel in business especially for SMEs they focused on the Six Mantras as Leadership (Influence & Impact), Strategy(Strategize & grow), Operations (Stay Nimble), Customer and Market (Value the

relationship), Human Asset (People as differentiators /creators) and Finance (Analyse & Prosper). Dr. Renu Shome, Director of EU Chambers of Commerce made her opening remarks and welcomed all esteemed speakers and participants followed by Mr. Vithal Nayak speaking about leadership covering up roles and traits of a leader backing his explanation by case studies. Mr. Nayak mentioned role of a leader to be evolving and communicating VMV to all the stakeholders, leadership commitment and role modelling of vision and values, building sustainable organization (Long-term vs. Short-term). Traits of leadership which include being focused on vision, creation oriented, developing adaptive solutions, empathy and embracing risk.

Mr. Abhay Desai then spoke about second mantra viz Strategy stating how strategy is all about what you should be doing and also about what you should not be doing. Strategy revolves around vision, mission and goal of the company. Mr. Desai explained four important aspects of strategy that is Geographical Expansion (Exports), Market Expansion, Product Extension (Complementing/New), Segment Expansion.

Mr. Kiran Rakhe spoke about challenges associated with operations such as frequent breakdown of machinery, high manufacturing cost, everything is being urgent etc., what needs to be done and transformation initiatives for operations of which he broadly spoke of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Total Quality Management (TQM), Lean / KAIZEN and Six Sigma.

On second day Mr. Barat, President of EU Chambers of Commerce made opening remarks about the importance of such a session and role which is played by EU India Chambers of Commerce. Mr. Barat stated how these 6 mantras together won't only help one's business but also their professional, personal and family lives and members of the community and therefore this webinar is of crucial importance to all of us. Mr. Barat even talked about the term SMEs i.e. Small and Medium Enterprises and one can also incorporate micro enterprises and how it will be cornerstone of economic growth and revival in the years to come. Large corporations will always exist but their dependence on value chain and on value that is added by Small enterprises whether as a service provider, manufacturer as a supply chain addition etc. is not just critical but will

become more critical. World will always face a challenge in optimizing resources whether it is land, people, finance and a crisis like this will make resource optimization more difficult and hence small engines like this will have a greater sigma and this is true not only of India but of the world. Mr. Barat also stated how finance, marketing, strategy, leadership are very common words but woven like a string of pearls in a webinar like this can have huge synergistic effect on the way you look at it at individually and collectively will become more effective and will also help SMEs to work with large organizations not just from profit as well as sustainability point of view will also become very important.

Mr Desai talked about the 4th mantra that is Customer and Market talking about various issues such as over dependency on few customers for business, no strategy for customer retention & development, less focus on customer relationship management to name a few and then stated techniques of Market & Competition Mapping, Key Account Management (KAM), Enquiry Management System (EMS) & Order Loss Analysis (OLA), Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

Mr. Nayak spoke about the 5th mantra that is Human Asset and how to keep employees happy and satisfied so they continue working for organization year after year and in order to do so important aspects to be considered are planning and management, education and training, performance and recognition and well-being and satisfaction. Organization can use balance scorecard, aligning individual & team performance with organizational goals, defining expectations for performance reviewing performance regularly & providing feedback and having midyear and annual appraisal process to drive organization's performance.

Mr. Chandramowli spoke about finance and stated how it is important to understand managing finance is not similar to accounting. An external CA will make your Balance Sheet not manage it. Analysis and decision making should go hand in hand.

Managing finance he stated is about Analysis of Profitability, Budgeting & Costing, Data Management & MIS, Lean Capital Employed, Cash Flow Management, Capital Allocation and Risk Management. Each mantra was followed by case studies and every session was very interactive

with many Q&A round.

28th Annual General Meeting

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India conducted its 28th Annual General Meeting on Friday, October 16, 2020 followed by Panel discussion.

On the occasion, the Panel Discussion on "CHANGED BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT: GLOBAL EXPECTATIONS AND LIKELY RESPONSES" was organized and was attended by Council's members, Governing Board Members, Past Presidents, EU & non EU Diplomats, industrialists and bureaucrats.

Mr Ashok Barat, President welcomed all speakers- Mr Sunil Mathur, Managing Director & CEO, Siemens Ltd, Mr. Amit Nayyar, President, Paytm, Mr. Aymar De Lied Liedekerke Beaufort, CEO- BNP Paribas India, Mr Robin Banerjee, Managing Director, Caprihans Ltd, Mr. Hitendra Dave, Managing Director, HSBC Ltd., Mr. Chandramowli Srinivasan, Former Finance Director, SKF India Limited,

He thanked Chief Guest H.E. Dr Marjan Cencen, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia

Mr Ashok Barat initiated by thanking all the participants and said Chamber's inspiration are its members, the EU Delegation, the Consular Corps, representatives from the Government, various guests, thought leaders, media, critics, Past Presidents, Members of the Governing Council, Director and staff and numerous intermittent connects.

He started off by highlighting on the many inflection points and events of great significance – the birth and the growth of the EU, the transformation of India post liberalization and economic reforms and emergence of the new entrepreneurial India – to which EU chamber has been witness to it.

He drew attention to the fact that it was felt that creating and developing a relationship with this new block of nations required a focused chamber and that the hopes and promises have been addressed in great measure. There is always a lot more to be done and the EU Chamber is determined to do so.

Further, while elaborating on the underlying philosophy behind the creation of the EU Chamber. He said that traditionally, most chambers have two major roles cut out for them – (a) policy support and advocacy and promotion of trade and business. The founders of the EU Chamber without ignoring these two fundamental tenets, added very wisely a third dimension – "incubator of relationships".

Mr Barat believes that this chamber would be remembered more very proudly so, for having taken long term view on nurturing relationships and providing a steady platform for growing trade and commerce on the principles of trust and confidence.

He stressed upon the fact that the presence of His Excellency as our Guest of Honour this evening is a testimony to our determined approach to build relationships with those nations in the EU who have not had a large presence in India so far, but in whom we see a great opportunity ahead. It is not to say that we do not engage with the other nations. Our engagement with them is as resolute and continuing, as it has always been.

He underscored the fact that we owe to the members of other EU nations who have had long association with and presence in India. We have rightly incubated and well nurtured these relationships too!

Mr Barat thanked one and all and requested them to engage with chamber intellectually with their thoughts, leadership, ideas, suggestions and most importantly criticism, and to participate in the Chambers bright future.

Concluding, Mr Barat spoke about Dr. Pramod Chaudhary who is the Executive Chairman of Praj Industries a patron member of the Chamber. And, Mr Chaudhary is the first Indian who have recently been given the prestigious George Washington, Carver award 2020 for a stellar contribution in the area of bio impact.

H.E Dr. Marjan Cencen begun his remarks with congratulating Chamber on completion of 28 years.

H.E Dr. Marjan Cencen, shared few of the measures, which were adopted by Slovenia during the initial days of Covid19 crisis.

Slovenia declared the state of epidemic on 12th of March this year. And then, after two months was .

actually the first EU member state who has declared the end of the epidemic on 14th of May. Since 2nd April Slovenian parliament adopted the several intervention act to mitigate the effects of the epidemic.

On September 29, Slovenian government adopted a proposal for the fifth intervention package, approximately a 420 million Euro, the proposal reflected the economic forecast, which were more optimistic than those in the spring.

H.E Dr. Marjan Cencen underscored the new high-level trade dialogue agreed during the latest EU India summit is an encouraging step toward this goal. The key development challenges ahead are strengthening support for research, innovation and digitalization to increase productivity, green transformation and systemic adjustment of social protection due to demographic trends.

COVID-19 represents a challenge of our lifetime, like the climate change, the virus transcends the borders. He concluded by stressing the need to work together, fighting the virus is changing societies and economies to a new normal. Panel discussion saw eminent personalities sharing their thoughts on business environment in given times of pandemic and how countries like India can be more competitive and strengthen their strengths in-order to face global competition to be next manufacturing hub of the world. Here , are the excerpts of Panel discussion :

Mr. Sunil Mathur expounded to the fact while the world is anxiously awaiting an effective COVID-19 vaccine that can be readily distributed until then the priority is to reenergize organizations to act rather than react. He exuded confidence that here in India, which has been a front runner in a lot of these areas- E commerce, IT etc will yield positive returns on investment and payback periods.

Mr. Amit Nayyar after briefly introducing about existing Paytm platform shared their future plans about building and broadening their kind of scoping the financial services space, and what's driving the changes, in the financial services sector.

Mr. Chandramowli Srinivasan while moderating the panel discussion how the pandemic has changed a few of the feelings towards China in different countries and therefore, ask the

panelist, whether we go back to being as usual once the COVID crisis passes over.

To this Mr. Aymar responded that China, always have a very long-term strategy and we are just in the middle of the game and, we know what they have done up to now, but, we may have difficulties to understand, understand exactly what is the final targets. This trade battles and the way the change is potentially very interesting in the short-term. The big change will come through, resilience, sustainability, circular economy on which people will be measured if they're successful or not.

Mr. Hitendra Dave explained China is responsible for the cost of capital collapsing, the way it has, because it exported so much of deflation around the world.

Mr. Robin Banerjee clarified that China came into the world as a make or buy decision. The countries have realized that they have, they cannot depend upon one country, which is China to source their material.

Mr. Peeyush Kaushik echoed what Mr Hitendra also talked about source of information and digitalization by force, that's a crucial thing to learn that digitalization is not an option now. Aymar mentioning about coming out of COVID and from that perspective how they could get 80 to 90 percent people working from home.

Mr. Manish Bhatnagar, the then President elect thanked everyone and said they all had wonderful session last one hour or so. Ashok, I accept the honor of, following in your very big shoes, as difficult as it is to fill them, but, the way you talked about the history, the legacy, the purpose of the EU Chambers and educating us, I really liked the way you spoke about nurturing incubating relationships. And we saw that team in multiple different ways through Sunil's talk and Amit's talk and we will also to continue doing that because as we all know, relationships are the key to success in many, many ways.

Mr Manish Bhatnagar appreciated Mr Barat for the leadership of the EU chambers. And expressed to look forward to keep having Mr Barat informal guidance in the next years to come.

Going forward, Mr Bhatnagar articulated the

that Ambassador Cencen shared regarding Slovenia's response to the pandemic. He assured of the role that EU chambers offices will play to fast track collaborations -in supply chains, education digitalization that Ambassador highlighted between India and the EU.

Dr Renu Shome made the presentation of the various activities conducted during the year and how Chamber played pivotal role in strengthening the EU India bilateral relations and helped its member companies to take their business to further heights. She proposed the vote of thanks and expressed her gratitude towards all the speakers and participants.

He also thanked the sponsors for making the event successful:

Platinum Sponsors- Paytm, Punjab Chemicals
Gold Sponsors: ICICI Bank Ltd., Flywell Aviation, BNP PARIBAS

Silver Sponsors: SKF , HSBC, Seahorse, EXIM, SBI Pension, Indo Wind, Hindustan Institute of Technology , , ECGC, , KALISWARI Metal & Powders.

Webinar on “Finance for Entrepreneur / SME Owners”

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India organized a webinar on “Finance for Entrepreneurs/ SME Owners” on 15th December 2020.

Mr. Narayanan Sadanandan, Chairman of the Banking & Financial Sector of EU Chamber and MD & CEO, SBI Pension Funds Pvt. Ltd. chaired the session. The eminent speakers were Mr. Sanjay Athalye and Mr. Rajendra Joshi from Leap2Excel. The webinar was well participated.

Mr. Narayanan Sadanandan, welcomed all the participants and very briefly introduced the speakers. He talked about the Chamber's activities and how constantly promoting trade and business between EU and India. Talking about the scope of SMEs, he informed there is a about the gap of 20 trillion or 20 lakh crores which is done by borrowing from friends, money lenders and this gap of 20 lakh crores is trying to be met by formal sector.

He said 35% of country's contribution is coming from MSMEs and how MSME is the seed for most of the companies as most of the big corporates have grown out of MSMEs.

Mr. Athalye explained key challenges faced by MSME's such as managing working capital cycle, over dependence on few customers as most of the MSME's 70% to 80% of revenue usually comes from few clients, demand inconsistency and how to handle production, margin pressure from competitors, attracting talent and retaining them to name a few.

Mr. Joshi focused about the importance of source of cost. He spoke of the five forces that are always operational on the value chain of any business such as buying power, supplier power, substitute availability, new entrance and competition intensity, which are mainly guided by government policy.

Mr. Joshi gave the mantra of 'Analyse and Prosper', which encompass two elements that is profit management and balance sheet management.

Mr. Athalye explained how to make your balance sheet stronger, how companies can grow with equity capital or with a combination of debt and equity (Debt to Equity Ratio), working capital management, capital expenditure management and liquidity management by means of treasury policy and funds management.

He further stated that having lesser assets is better as opposed to traditional school of thoughts. He talked finance decisions which entrepreneur has to take such as degree of leverage, interest burden on firm etc. and how those are crucial for cash flow management for which liquidity is needed. He emphasized on the importance of knowing value of business and studying parameters of profitability, capital efficiency, growth, cost of capital.

Dr Renu Shome formally proposed a vote of thanks and stated important role played by the Chambers especially during the tiring times of pandemic.

Webinar on “Implementation of AI & Advanced Analytics for Consumer Goods and Manufacturing Industry”

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India in association with Tiger Analytics has organized a webinar on “Implementation of AI & Advanced Analytics for Consumer Goods and Manufacturing Industry” on 15th January 2021

Dr Joseph Shields, Co- Chairman of the ICT Committee welcomed speakers Mr. Durjoy Patranabish, Head of Global Business Tiger Analytics and Mr. Sriram Krishnamurthy, Vice-President, Data Science, Tiger Analytics and all present.

Mr. Kaushik highlighted that EU Chambers is one of the foremost trade promotion organizations in India established to promote, foster and extend commercial and economic relations between India and the EU. The Chamber's primary promoters consist of European Bi National Chambers and European Bi National Business committees and its Chief Patron is the Ambassador and the Head of Delegation of the European Union to India.

The membership of the Chamber includes representation from several industry sectors- such as banking & financial, infrastructure, automobiles, Pharmaceuticals, electrical and engineering, shipping and logistics, consultancy, IT, Energy, Agricultural products etc.

EU Chambers also has functional advisory and sectoral committees across various sectors of the industries by very senior people from industry. These committees in the Chamber can support SMEs in various European countries seeking to establish strong business relationship with India whether it is trade partnership, technology exchange, joint venture, Green field investment. We shall be delighted to offer and extend our Chamber services to them.

ICT is one of the committees see a strong partnership between trade, technology exchange and investment perspective. During pandemic period, we tried our best to keep our members abreast with latest trends, happenings from

business and technology perspective and this webinar is one such efforts.

We all know the importance of AI and Analytics in various sectors and specifically when we look at consumer goods and manufacturing Industry. I am sure today all of us will have an exciting time to hear Mr. Durjoy and Mr. Sriram on their perspective on how AI and Analytics are disrupting various industries and specifically for Consumer Goods and Manufacturing Industry. So Mr. Durjoy and Mr. Sriram welcome to the panel, we would like to hear from you. All the very best.

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Durjoy Patranabish and Mr. Sriram Krishnamurthy

They discussed how is Advanced Analytics moving, what has been its journey so far, where are the areas where it becoming more prominent and what are different types of solutions that are being used by different organizations. But more importantly what are key drivers of AI, Advanced Analytics and elaborated with two cases in consumer goods, manufacturing industry.

Basically, AI can be broken into 2 pieces, one is general intelligence and other is narrow intelligence. General intelligence is when you try to replicate what human being does under different circumstances, constraints. A complete system that is indistinguishable from a human. Many believe building a robust AGI is the ultimate goal. However, not much progress is made till date.

Narrow intelligence is replicating human behavior in specific areas, situations and that's where we have made great progress, whether it is marketing and sales, taking manufacturing decisions, taking supply chain decisions and that's where narrow intelligence comes into play. There has been progress that has happened in use of products or use of custom solutions that organizations have built for themselves now in product space there are multiple players similarly on services side there are multiple players.

According to a study by McKinsey Global Institute, AI is estimated to create an additional 13 trillion US dollars of value annually by the year 2030 and according to Gartner 15% of all customer interactions will be handled by AI Chatbots by 2021, that tells the speed at which AI is becoming more real. The data or information we capture as

human beings is covered from various sources. A lot of utilization of image data, visual data, video data, audio data that is coming into play, IoT, sensor data is becoming huge. Use of Machine learning, deep learning has become huge in current world. The whole AI ecosystem is becoming more mature. The more important thing is how you connect AI solution to end user that is important or else the whole anticipation of AI will not be anticipated. The overall affordability of doing analytics with tools, products with variety of service providers and make it democratized in some sense that's probably driving AI and advanced analytics.

Today 31% of organizations are able to adapt valuable insights of existing data, they are trying to question the fact do we need to invest more where we are under using information using BI and other traditional analytics solution. Another thing is data has mushroomed over a period of time as we have built new business models, new applications, new infrastructure so therefore data are not joined up together.

Finally, in terms with talent pool that's obviously in short supply again AI, data science is something new, people are trying to get trained themselves but also the fact that quality in the market may not be appropriate to build a robust AI solution.

Obviously, AI and advanced analytics is that people are moving from piloting to operationalizing and generating business out of it. There's definitely movement is happening in terms of expanding the scope of AI and advanced analytics beyond structured data so a lot of effort is going on around use of non-structured data in the form of audio or image or video form. Obviously, cloud is gaining popularity.

There is a lot of focus on real time decisioning so therefore continuous analytics is becoming new norm. Focus on data security is rising, each country through its laws is becoming more protective of consumer data so therefore it is becoming in some sense segregated. More and more data scientists are doing ML ops and ML engineering and data engineers have also started doing ML ops and ML engineering. So, there is cohesion between both data and advanced analytics world.

Emerging verticals traditionally such as BFSI, telecom, retail which were early adapters of AI and advanced analytics but now manufacturing,

healthcare becoming strong advocates of AI & Advanced analytics. Companies are trying to acquire capabilities of AI & advanced analytics, they are trying to do either organically or inorganically.

Coming to consumer and manufacturing industry, these are sample set of solutions are built at Tiger for some of the clients whether in the R&D side, or on finance and operations side and manufacturing side we have done tons of work on predictive maintenance, anomaly detection such as environment, health and compliance, safety, IOT analytics, supply chain side. Tiger Analytics have done forecasting of out of stock, on shelf availability, supply carrier performance analytics. On the HR side, they worked primarily around team optimization, team scheduling.

Similarly, on sales and marketing analytics from marketing stand point Tiger Analytics have done lot of work in emerging trend and business as they want to know what are the new product ideas and what are new ideas that should be focused on, prioritizing on R&D efforts. Similarly, consumer promo optimization and sales and strategic management, trade promotion optimization, pricing analytics and direct to ecommerce or direct to consumer channel, how do you manage your consumers directly so these are the broad landscape of what is being done on consumer industry and manufacturing industry.

Mr. Mr. Sriram Krishnamurthy deliberated on how Tiger Analytics have contributed in consumer and manufacturing industry to showcase what can be done with the breadth of AI.

Tiger analytics has created a methodology to map ASIN (Amazon Standard Identification Number), PPG (Promoted Product Group) and successfully mapped ASINs corresponding to 91% sales. It has built machine learning models for 200+ PPGs across all categories corresponding to 80% sales with a weighted MAPE of 8%, developed a tool for future scenario planning to estimate lift vs cannibalization and identified sample pricing scenarios for enhanced true lift over base sales for one category which lead to gross lift of \$3.2 Million (1.5% of base sales)

Manufacturing industry case study of India Steel Manufacturing MNC whereby Digital Twin Reliability Model Improves Predictive

Maintenance and impact delivered was a saving of USD1.7 Million (INR 12.75Cr) in terms of cost of maintenance saved and additional production time gained. Current Equipment Anomaly Detection Process of the company used largely, operator driven manual inspection for anomaly detection with a few models for a few sensors and the company engaged with Tiger Analytics to improve equipment maintenance by building a digital twin model that is analyst independent and automatically selects the best model for equipment anomaly detection.

Tiger Analytics did predictive analytics solution for different equipment's in the Blast Furnace area and analysis approach included Initiation & Data Discovery which involves extraction of raw data from equipment and data pre-processing and cleanup. Forecasting input gaps in time series data resulting from machine being idle/tested, tested arima, random forest, arimax, smoothing based on mape selected random forest.

Output was real-time dashboard that is updated to reflect system health, anomalous behavior, 72-hr forecast of reliability and sensor-based root cause analysis. Business outcome of the analysis done by tiger analytics is that their solution has so far resulted in a saving of USD 1.7 Million (INR12.75Cr) in terms of cost of maintenance saved and additional production time gained, scalable models are being deployed in blast furnaces, crushers, fans, transformers, and similar equipment across the company, transparent approach; no dependency on external IPs and solutions such as GE Predix and on-demand future upgrade possible due to open design concepts.

The webinar was concluded by a public Q and A session and a vote of thanks by Dr. Renu Shome, Director of EU Chambers of Commerce in India.

Webinar on “Investment opportunities for the Business Services Sectors in the City of Lodz, Poland”

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India has organized a webinar on “Investment opportunities for the Business Services Sectors in the City of Lodz, Poland” 28th January 2021

Mr Peeyush Kaushik, Vice President welcomed all speakers- Mr. Damian Irzyk, Consul General, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Przemysław Sławiński, Services Head, Infosys, Poland and Ms. Monika Grzelak, Manager, Centre for Strategic Investments Polish Investment and Trade Agency.

He thanked Guest of Honour Mr. Adam Pustelnik, First Deputy Mayor the City of Łódź, Poland for participating at the webinar.

He introduced Mr. Adam Pustelnik, Deputy Mayor of City of Lodz, Poland, who was graduated from the University of Lodz in master of law, International Relations), the European Academy of Diplomacy and the University of Oxford. He worked among close cooperation with Union Business and played a key role in facilitation of economy and relations between Poland and India.

Mr. Kaushik highlighted that EU Chambers is one of the foremost trade promotion organizations in India established to promote, foster and extend commercial and economic relations between India and the EU. The Chamber's primary promoters consist of European Bi National Chambers and European Bi National Business committees and its Chief Patron is the Ambassador and the Head of Delegation of the European Union to India.

The membership of the Chamber includes representation from several industry sectors- such as banking & financial, infrastructure, automobiles, Pharmaceuticals, electrical and engineering, shipping and logistics, consultancy, IT, Energy, Agricultural products etc.

EU Chambers also has functional advisory and sectoral committees across various sectors of the industries by very senior people from industry. These committees in the Chamber can support SMEs in various European countries seeking to establish strong business relationship with India whether it is trade partnership, technology exchange, joint venture, Green field investment. We shall be delighted to offer and extend our Chamber services to them.

He also talked about the bilateral trade relations between Poland and India it is India's largest trade partner and export destination in the Central European region, with bilateral trade

growing almost seven-fold over the last ten years. As per Indian statistics, the overall value of bilateral trade in 2019 was US\$ 2.36 billion.

The Indian investments in Poland are valued at over US\$3 billion, which comprises companies such as ArcelorMittal, Videocon, Escorts, Strides Arcolab, Ranbaxy, EsselPropack, KPIT Cummins, Zensar Technologies Ltd, and many more. Total Polish investment in India is estimated at US\$ 672 million. Important Polish companies present in India: TZMO S.A. (sanitary equipment USD 200 million), CanPack (packaging, USD 200 million), Famur (mining, USD 75 million), GeofizykaToruń (geology, USD 50 million) and many more.

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Adam Pustelnik, First Deputy Mayor the City of Łódź, Poland

The economic relations and ties between Poland and India particularly eastern region Poland cooperation with India is very deep and its very important one of the biggest in the service sector which constitutes for the middle class. Infosys came into the time when there was the economic situation was far worse. It contributed vastly to the economic growth for the city and to a large extend a good economic situation that we are right now.

The interesting fact of the city of Lodz, Poland is the wide cultural diversity -Indian Asian that Poland shares with great pride. Undoubtedly, this diversity has enviably placed city of Lodz in a economic vibrant orbit.

I also believe that there is a huge scope for growth in deepening our relations in the COVID and post COVID times. The major factors that create or attract investments are no longer limited to the strategic advantages that city of Lodz offers. Even at the country level, Poland -a member of EU is very well engaged with the European Union to exploit the strategic advantage for itself and also for its economic partners and allies.

Also, one of the unique elements in Poland and in Lodz is that the entire country is covered by the so-called one investment zone that is Polish Investment Zone where the entire country is one big special economic zone territory. I think it was a great move by the Government it positions us

economically better the way we were in the past. One of the unique selling points from the logistics perspective is the best located area at least in the Central Europe because it is a mere junction and crossroads of all pan European highways, roadways and railways which connects and makes us so available that you can access us in a very short time almost every point of the world. It gives us a huge advantage.

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Damian Irzyk, Consul General, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland

It is a good platform and opportunity for me to share why Poland is an attractive investment destination. So, let me start with the broader economic system of Poland. It good to remind that Poland back in 3 decades is on a constant growth path. Same as India, we managed to grow without any interruption in 2008 and 2009 where western world was somehow struggling with the shrinking GDPs, Poland as well as India kept rolled.

The major rating companies acknowledged Poland's economic success. They have rated Poland on a bigger scale, which is very optimistic. What is more important is that our image was not even shattered by COVID 19 pandemic last year. What is the good thing that Poland was least affected by the COVID pandemic lockdown and so our economy was probably shrinked by 4.5% last year which is relatively good comparing to other countries which were fighting COVID?

Poland is a very reasonable price country I would say when it comes to services, pricing of land, properties, etc. My whole generation is actually growing up together with economy. We have many reasons to be optimistic about the growing of Poland's economy. All the ranking, business global competitiveness are within our region, it is important to emphasis on as a region Central Europe, and we are in the middle of the continent. Poland is now on number 3 when it comes to inflow of investments. The economic indicator is also reflected by the investor sentiments around the globe. There are currently 200 projects running across Poland. What is important now is Poland used to be and now is the recipient of EU both grant and privilege loans. You might be aware that EU as a huge financial programme, which was agreed in summit last year for the year

2021 and 2027. We are expecting to receive about 67 billion euros during this financial period.

So, it will further improve our infrastructure and further invest in Polish development. I mentioned the strategic location, which is worth to say the case of one Indian investor who was travelling to Germany and trying to purchase a company there to gain a better access to the EU market. He travelled whole Germany and he could not find anything there that was really kind of interesting to them. So this investor was from Maharashtra by the way very close to my heart and my location now. Then he realised actually next to Germany there exist a very dynamic country named Poland. Then he purchased 2 factories there and he realised that it is actually is just 2 hours drive from Berlin the capital of Germany and he can easily produce in this region and selling this to Germany and further west to France, Spain and Italy.

This shows us how Poland is continued to locate in Europe, it is also spotted by the Chinese road project from China to Europe, and then it is difficult to overpass us. Poland is very close to Baltic Sea and we have an access to the deep sea that makes Poland very accessible via deep seas. Poland has recently experienced a rapid development in international airports. There are 13-14 international airports in Poland and our national carrier launched direct flights to New Delhi and that has stopped due to COVID now but we are looking forward to return to the airport now. There is a direct connection between Warsaw and Mumbai but only cargo flights and I hope this experience will result in more Polish airlines presence in Mumbai and eventually it will cut short our travel to Warsaw in just 7-8 hours comparatively in today's 10-12 hours.

Excerpts from the speech of Ms. Monika Grzelak, Manager, Centre for Strategic Investments Polish Investment and Trade Agency:

PAIH is working with a network of 150+ experts in the fields of trade and investment, based in Poland and abroad. The languages spoken in Poland are- English, Chinese, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, Russian, Japanese, Czech, Slovak. In Poland there do exist around 950+ offers in a centralised database of investment sites (plots, warehouse & office space). There are currently 190 active projects

running in Poland.

Poland is the fifth most populous country in the EU with 38,4 mn inhabitants. Warsaw is the capital and largest city in Poland, which has 2.7 m citizens in the agglomeration. The currency of Poland is Polish Złoty (PLN) 1 EUR ~ 4,55 PLN 1 USD ~ 3,76 PLN. In Poland Polish is the national language with 56% of Poles declares speaking at least 1 foreign language. Tax rates are CIT 19% (base rate), 9%, 5%, VAT 23% (base rate), 8%, 5%, 0%, PIT 17%, 32%.

Some of the key industries in Poland are automotive and electro mobility, Aerospace, Business Services Sector, Research & Development, Food processing, Electronics and white goods. Poland is the largest country in Central Eastern Europe and the population stands 38,4 mn which is 5th in EU. 23 million of Poles are of working age. Poland has the largest inflow of foreigners for employment in the EU.

Before COVID, Poland was already EU leader in capital inbound investment. There is 14% year-to-year increase in the number of FDI project in the year 2019. Poland has the highest growth rate in the OECD between 1990 and 2019, with no recession since 1991. Poland has one of the smallest real GDP declines in the EU (-3,6%).

Poland has modern Service Sector and its locations by maturity are of 4 tiers. The main shortlisting criteria are: HR resources (availability, skills, cost), Offices (size, availability, location, cost), Competition (location, size), Logistics. Incentives available for new investments in BPO/SSC: Polish Investment Zone CIT exemption, between 10- and 15-years tax-free. Cash grants for strategic projects up to 10 or 15% of investment costs. EU Funds available for innovative and R&D projects.

In Poland for R&D, there are more favourable conditions for shared growth. There is a straightforward procedure – one-stop-shop at the Ministry of Economic Development. It has easier access to funds for innovativeness development from public aid programs. Annual benefits – R&D expenditure is deductible from your tax base. When it comes to R & D tax cuts- SMEs and MNCs are treated equally. Poland has a long-term tax

benefits – tax cuts are available over 6 consecutive tax years. The 5% tax rate is eligible income gained through the sale of IP rights. Poland covers the most popular IP rights – copyright in computer programs, patents, industrial designs. Poland has a long-term tax benefit – applicable during the entire lifespan of the rights. Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Przemysław Sławiński, Services Head, Infosys, Poland

Mr. Przemysław Sławiński said Infosys in Poland has 800 employees, 1 client and 1 service line English. The services, which are offered: F&A, S&P, S&F, HRO, Services diversification and Consulting Services.

Infosys in Poland is located in Green Horizon with Class A building in Lodz, which is spread across 33000 square meters. Its process Management New Center located in Wroclaw has 30 clients, +2300 employees.

Infosys in Poland has opened a new center in Poznan, which has + 30 clients with over 2500 employees.

Excerpts from the speech of Dr. Renu Shome, Director, The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India

On behalf of the Council of EU Chamber and my own I thank our today's Guest of Honour Mr. Adam Pustelnik, Deputy Mayor, City of Lodz Office, Poland for being here amidst us today at Webinar-Investment Opportunities for the Business Services Sectors (IT, ICT, BPO, BPM, GBS, SSC) in the City of Lodz, Poland of the Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India.

My sincere gratitude to our today's Speakers/ Panelists: Ms. Monika Grzelak, Manager, Ctr.-Strategic Investments, PAIH and Mr. Przemysław Sławiński, Services Head- Client Operations, Infosys, Poland.

I also take this opportunity to deeply thank our today's Special Guest Mr. Damian Irzyk, Consul General, Consulate General Republic of Poland in Mumbai for joining us.

It gives me immense pleasure to inform you that the EU India Chamber has undertaken many programmes in the past year for its members, with the purpose of getting the industry together and sharing its common view concerning

promoting trade and commerce between India and European Union.

Friends, we assure you that the Council will always strive to promote the trade relations between Poland and India and undertake many such activities, which shall help our members to know about the latest happenings concerning the trade and investment between the two countries.

The EU Chambers are pleased to organize for you, this Webinar "INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BUSINESS SERVICES SECTORS (IT, ICT, BPO, BPM, GBS, SSC) IN THE CITY OF LODZ, POLAND" which is a very interested subject.

In the year 2011 The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India had signed a MoU with Poland India Chamber of Commerce in presence of Mr. Mieczysław Kasprzak,

Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Mr. R P Singh, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

EU Chambers has also mounted a Business Delegation to Poland in the year 2018 with the objective to promote trade and bilateral business relations between Poland and India.

India and Poland share a long-standing friendly relationship, marked by high-level political contacts, vibrant economic engagement and traditional cultural links. A cordial political relationship has emerged in the current century, particularly after Poland joined the EU in 2004, and became one of India's key economic partners in Central Europe.

Poland had been included in e-visa scheme with effect from August 15, 2015 and now rising number of Poles are availing e-visa facilities. In 2019, 26,061 Poles availed of Indian visa services (Regular 3017 and e-visas 23,044). Ladies and Gentleman, once again I would like to thank all of you for participating in the Webinar. Hope you all enjoyed this session!

Webinar on 'Union Budget 2021 and its Implications'

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India organized a webinar on 'Union Budget 2021 and its Implications' on 4th February 2021.

Immediate Past President, Mr. Ashok Barat chaired the meeting welcomed all present and the speakers Mr. Alok Agrawal, Partner, Deloitte India, Mr. Jimit Devani, Deloitte India, Mr. Anoop Kalavath, Deloitte India and Mr. Gautam Nayak, partner CNK & Associates LLP.

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Barat:

My first few remarks this was a bold budget not from the content part but the message it sent out to the world. India is a very complex country and we have our own challenges be it socio-political, economic, challenges of diversity and at times you have to stand up for what you think you are doing right rather than what is classically right.

You would have seen reactions from rating agencies coming and saying we will downgrade you etc. as that may happen because they are driven by what is classical measurements of it should be. But there comes a moment of time when you have to do what is good for you according to your basic understanding of what is good for the country and this sends out a strong message of character of the nation and that it stands up for what it thinks should be done and I think from time to time other nations will also follow the same path so I believe this budget for its tenure has to be applauded.

Second point is that this tax was not a centerpiece of the narrative, I think over the period of years budget got trivialized into deciding what should be the tax regime and rest of the narratives would often get lost in the last part of Finance Minister's speech. For some reason that should have not happened, this budget is nothing but presentation of the annual plan for the nation for the next year. I would say respectable position of the budget was trivialized because of whole conversation on tax. This time that has been removed and we have talked about substantive issues that what makes the budget special to talk about.

There are four issues which I would like to talk about first one being stability of tax rates, it is not anybody's case whether tax rate should be high, low or could have been higher or lower, the very fact that it has remained stable in board rooms for entrepreneurs, for promoters, multi-national corporations. The instability of tax rates is far more dangerous than whether the tax rate should be high or low. If it is high we need to find a business model to work around it, if it is low than you take advantage of it but the moment it keeps changing from year to year, all planning and particularly industries which require investments for long terms there is a problem and the fact that we have broken that jinx of having to fiddle around the tax rates every year, conceptually I think it is a very good move.

The second one that I am not calling it bad or good, is the issue about respecting a court judgement. I think from time to time we as a nation have failed to uphold the respect that judiciary should have when it pronounces on interpretation of a law. In fact that is the role of judiciary and in this particular case there is a very tricky amendment as I understood it is not retrospective but retroactive so 11 months of the year have gone and suddenly you have confronted with a change that you never anticipated earlier just because there was a judgement in between, I think this sends a very wrong signal and it shows us a poor light of not being respectful of judiciary interpretation so this is second point.

Third one is setting up a conciliation mechanism the fact is that as a nation we have started looking mediation as a major form of dispute resolution. One of the reason why India continues being so low on the list of nations for ease of doing business is because the administration is extremely slow and painstakingly poor not from a quality perspective but from a time and cost perspective. And as you are aware there is a new mediation law which is likely to come in the next 12 to 15 months which will atleast in commercial litigation make it mandatory to go through the process of mediation and settlement rather than going through an elaborate process of court proceedings. The fact that this concept of conciliation or mediation has been introduced in the tax law is to me a very good significant gesture to make sure that when ultimately law

comes people will realize it will apply not only to commercial contracts but also to the governments particularly in matters of fiscal rights. Fourth conceptual point that I would like to talk about is creation of so called bad bank. I sit on the board of a bank and I know what kind of problem this creates in any kind of strategic planning that bank wishes to do so. The point I am trying to make is this is going to work well if it is implemented well so as a concept I have no issue but if it is not implemented well if we take shortcuts and address too many needs of various stakeholders. This good concept will have bad end. So these are the four conceptual things I wanted to talk about which good, bad, indifferent as there are different ways of looking at whether it is hike in the insurance cap, recapitalization of banks, facilities given to one person company, faceless appeals in IT etc.

These are some of my impressions and reactions based on what I felt and discussed with my friends and

colleagues, I thought to put them on a table as I thought panelists would take them up in some form or shape when they are talking about individual provisions and individual issues in the budget. So thank you very much and over to you and I am very grateful to EU Chambers for organizing this wonderful webinar

Individual Taxation

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Alok Agrawal:

The tax slabs under the old regime and new regime remain unchanged after the Finance Act, 2020. It may be noted that the regular surcharge would be applicable based on the income levels.

Mr. Agrawal also threw light on Leave travel concession exemption, stated that leave travel concession exemption is granted to salaried employees to the extent of expenditure incurred in relation to travel within India in a block period. Current block is from 2018-2021.

In view of outbreak of COVID pandemic, and resultant disruption of transport and hospitality sector, it is proposed to provide tax exemption to cash allowance in lieu of LTC subject to conditions to be prescribed. It is also proposed to clarify that where exemption in respect of prescribed expenditure is allowed, no further exemption

would be allowed on the same expenditure to any other individual. This amendment will take effect from 1 April 2021 and will apply for AY 2021-22 only. He talked about other amendments include extending due date for filing return of income for Partners of a firm as in the case of a firm which is required to furnish report from an accountant for entering into international transaction or specified domestic transaction, it is proposed that the due date of filing return for partner of such firm be extended to 30 November of the AY and the above amendment will take effect from 1 April 2021 (i.e. AY 2021-22 onwards)

Mismatch in income of non-residents as withdrawal from retirement funds by residents who had opened such fund when they were non-residents could be subject to double taxation (on accrual and receipt basis) In order to address this mismatch, it is proposed to insert a new section specifying the manner of taxation of such income and this amendment will take effect from 1 April 2022 and will accordingly apply to the AY 2022-23 onwards.

He also mentioned relaxation of filing of return of income for senior citizen aged 75 years and above which implies senior citizens aged 75 and above are exempted from filing ROI if they have only pension income and interest income (from same bank in which pension income is credited) and taxes are deducted on such income. This amendment will take effect from 1 April 2021

Extension of date of sanction of loan for affordable residential house property as the outer date of sanction of loan is proposed to be extended from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2022 for claiming the benefit of deductions under Section 80EEA towards deduction in respect of interest on loan taken for a residential property from a financial institution.

Restriction on exemption of Interest from PF which implies EPF interest proposed to be subject to tax if the contribution in a financial year is more than INR 0.25 Million. This amendment will take effect from 1 April 2022 and shall apply to the assessment year 2022-23 and subsequent assessment years.

Mr. Agrawal spoke on social security segment and informed that the FM in her speech acknowledged

the conclusion of long drawn exercise of overhauling existing Labor laws with implementation of Labor Codes. The key points outlined by the FM upon implementation Labor Codes included Social security benefits to be extended to gig and platform workers, minimum wages to apply to all categories of workers and will be covered by the ESIC, women will be allowed to work in all categories, including night shifts with adequate safeguards, compliance burden on employers to be reduced with single registration and licensing and online returns.

Direct Tax

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Jimit Devani:

Mr. Devani informed that there is no change in tax rates with regard to corporate taxation. Tax incentives given during this budget are the definition of 'zero coupon bond' is proposed to be modified to include bonds issued by an infrastructure debt fund. Such bonds have to be notified; Tax holidays for real estate as the deadline for the approval of affordable housing projects for tax holiday proposed to be extended to 31 March 2022.

Tax holiday proposed to be granted to rental housing projects, which have to be notified on or before 31 March 2022, and need to fulfil the notified conditions and to extend tax holiday for eligible start-ups incorporated on or before 31 March 2022; similarly, the outer date of transferring residential property for long-term capital gains tax relief, pursuant to investment in eligible start-ups, is proposed to be extended to 31 March 2022; an employee's contribution to welfare which is deemed to be an employer's income, will be tax deductible only if such sum is credited to the relevant fund on or before the prescribed due date per the law. A deduction for such contribution will not be available on a payment basis.

Other key proposals include with effect from 1 April 2020, no TDS on payment of dividends shall apply to income credited or paid by an SPV to a business trust (i.e., InvIT/REIT), to facilitate strategic disinvestment of public sector companies, it is proposed to amend the law to enable M&A transactions of such companies, to amend the law to provide for tax neutral

conversion of urban cooperative bank into a banking company, to expand the safe harbour from 10 percent to 20 percent in case of transfer of a residential unit during 12 November 2020 to 30 June 2021 by way of first-time allotment to any person for consideration not exceeding INR 20 million. Second topic under direct tax covered by

Mr. Devani was international taxation. With regard to equalisation levy in-order to provide 'online sale of goods' and 'online provision of services' to include one or more of the online activities such as acceptance of offer for sale, placement of purchase order, Acceptance of purchase order, payment of consideration, supply of goods or provision of services, partly or wholly and the consideration will include for sale of goods irrespective of whether the e-commerce operator owns the goods; or for provisions of services irrespective of whether the service is provided or facilitated by the e-commerce operator. The consideration liable for equalisation levy shall not include consideration, which is taxable as royalty or fees for technical services in India.

Incentives for IFSC units comprise to relax conditions (to be notified separately) for eligible investment fund and eligible fund manager, if the eligible fund manager is located in an IFSC and commences operations on or before 31 March 2024, to extend the benefit of exemption from transfer of specified capital assets on a recognised stock exchange in an IFSC, to investment division of OBU, subject to conditions, to exempt income of a non-resident as a result of transfer of non-deliverable forward contracts entered into with an OBU of an IFSC, subject to conditions, to exempt royalty income of a non-resident on account of lease of aircraft to an IFSC unit, subject to conditions and to extend the tax holiday for an IFSC unit to income from transfer of aircraft or aircraft engine, which was leased to an Indian airline, subject to conditions.

Indirect Taxes

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Anoop Kalavath: With regard to the proposed amendments under Goods and Services Tax (GST) are largely intended towards improving the taxpayer's compliance behaviour that may also affect working capital. However, the retrospective amendment in

interest-related provision and doing away with the GST audit certification requirement are steps in the right direction.

Certain changes are directed towards use of technology to reduce paperwork and enhance the ease of doing business. On the other hand, the move towards rationalising customs duty exemptions aims to promote domestic manufacturing.

Also, some stringent penal provisions are introduced to curb unlawful refund claims filed by exporters.

The alignment of the Indian Customs Tariff Act with HSN 2022 is to ensure the classification of goods is done based on the global principles of classification.

Changes made under IGCR rules address long-pending industry demand to further enhance the ease of doing business.

A majority of the changes made under BCD rates do not have any impact, with an equal rate of AIDC levy, on customs duty rates.

Extension of the benefit of the project import scheme to high-speed rail projects is a welcome change.

Increase in customs duty rates on a majority of the products is aimed towards encouraging local manufacturing.

Apart from these rate changes, the government has also temporarily revoked levy of anti-dumping duty/CVD currently applicable on certain items of steel.

Excerpts from the speech of Mr. Gautam Nayak:

Good evening ladies and gentlemen if you look at the backdrop under which this budget was delivered, there were difficult options before the finance minister, you had a steep fall in GDP as well a steep fall in tax revenues so we are looking at a steep deficit. So we had a fall of GDP on current year estimated 7.7% and 15.7% in first half and 0.1% in second half.

The agriculture continued to grow at 3.4%, industry contracted by 9.6% and services contracted by 8.8%. So the estimate that India will bounce back etc. if you look at the estimates by

reserve bank, IMF etc. have said India will have 15.4% growth and real GDP growth of 7% so looking at budget estimated at 14.2% growth in the GDP. we have taken a conservative estimate. And fiscal deficit was original estimate was 3.5% according to Fiscal Responsibility Act which government had adopted few years back but actual deficit would be somewhere 9.5% so what this government has budgeted is reduced 6% of deficit in FY 2021-22 and gradually we will reducing it and bring it to 4.6% of GDP around 2025-26. What is important today is inducement of growth.

The other aspect is when you look at this budget what the finance minister has done is clearly avoided populism as no populist measures which we used to see every year which I think is a very good thing. The efforts that you look are to jumpstart the economy by spending on schemes and areas where there is a significant multiplier effect so the idea is long term growth trajectory is to move up so this is a virtuous cycle which can lift the economic cycle and businesses.

How do you raise money for this was the question as you are increasing spending so raising tax would have negated expansionary effect of spending due to inflation as it would have gone up by raising taxes so only option was to keep the fiscal deficit by borrowing to spend. So as against \$ 7,800 billion borrowing from market last year, this year it has anticipated government will borrow in year 21-22 almost 12,000 billion around 54% so again for such a high borrowing there is a risk of having high interest rates in the economy so that is something which we will have to be prepared for.

Now the rising debt levels of the government that I think will be the strain on economy but Finance minister has taken a conscious gamble as let borrowings increase in near term hoping that economic growth will more than compensate for that which will enable easy servicing of the debt. As you see theme of the budget as you see mentioned by the finance minister is Aatma Nirbhar Bharat and if you look at the whole budget major increase in spending is on infrastructure where you see 35% of expenditure of government as Capex.

Government will have to show it is genuine in privatization of infrastructure projects etc. Other thing is wanting to increase the pace of monetization of public infrastructure assets through infrastructure investments as we have already seen couple of infrastructure investments one is road developer and one is power grid. So these are the ones in which infrastructure investment which have already gone public. The other thing is government is focusing on transport so they are talking about construction of roads and highways and 50km per day is the target that they are looking at and dedicated trade corridor are expected to start from June 2022 and this bridge will be really affordable even if digital costs have gone up transport sector be more affordable for the industry.

Government has talked about divestment as last year they announced LIC divestment and it is still pending maybe because of pandemic, Air India is on the cards for some time and BPCL is nearing privatization but again one will have to wait and see if it will work.

Overall given the circumstances it is a good budget, hassles are much lower as government has not carried out many changes as far as procedures are concerned the government's intentions are right and question is about implementation. I am more optimistic than being pessimistic on this. On that note, I think I will conclude. Thank you.

The webinar was concluded by public Q & A session and a vote of thanks by Dr. Renu Shome, Director of The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India.

Webinar on 'How to Vitalize your Mental Well-Being'

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India organized a webinar on 'How to Vitalize your Mental Well-Being' in collaboration with the ICICI Bank. on 11th February 2021.

Dr Renu Shome, Director welcomed all the speakers and participants at the webinar. She

introduced the speakers and briefed about the activities of the Chamber.

The speakers were Dr. Aditya Gait, Spiritual Director at Ananda Pune City Centre, Trained Rural Surgeon, Yoga Allianz certified Yoga Teacher, Dr. Amit Aggarwal , Physician & Researcher Associate Professor at SNK Medical College, Pune and Dr. Supriya Iyer , Clinical Psychologist at Chaitanyam Advisor India Pvt. Ltd. Mr. Santosh Pai, Senior Client Banker & Zonal Head Multi National Clients Group, ICICI Bank Ltd. India after thanking the host, talked about as how the Covid-19 has affected a person's mental health and problems such as anxiety, insomnia and depression have become very common. That is why it is important to keep organizing webinars on mental health. A Report by WHO states that because of the pandemic the cases of anxiety and stress has risen by 30%, which was earlier only 5%. So, adopting meditation and yoga are some of the ways to mental well-being.

He also welcomed all present and said I am hoping all to be revitalized after the session.

Excerpts from the speech of Dr. Supriya Iyer:

She initiated her talk by thanking the organizers and said health is not about what is to be eaten and doing some exercises. It is also, about how you feel. Her main idea is how to achieve Positive Mental Health and for this, she discusses 10 different ways.

- Talking to people: Sharing your feelings with others lightens you up and makes us feel free.
- Thinking Errors: By writing down the feelings and identifying the errors. Cognitive Distortion, the idea of guessing the future is developed.
- Mindfulness: Engaging in activities, which involves both body and mind, be completely involved in what you are doing, rather than thinking of the past or future. Some of the things includes walking, spending time with the nature and guided meditation.
- Challenging thoughts: Never think negative about yourself. Replace them with positive thoughts.
- Connecting: Connecting with family and .

friends help to boost your emotional health

- Relaxation: Scheduling a time for yourself, what is called as the me-time. Here you focus on yourself and relax your mind, body and soul. Have this time every day.
- Strengths: recognise the individuality, work towards your strength, and boost your confidence.
- Values: Connect to the values you are carrying like discipline, punctuality and stay connected to that. This will make your life meaningful.
- 9. Exercise: Any kind of exercise with positive thoughts which enhance your rationality and awakens you up from within. Power yoga, gyming, jogging etc.
- Solve Problem: Solving your problem would reduce your anxiety and gives you a practical aspect to your life.
- Taking care of yourself is a form of self-respect. Therefore, everyone should find time for themselves and love himself or herself.

Excerpts from the speech of Dr. Aditya Gait:

At first, he thanked the host and the organizers and congratulated Dr. Iyer for the amazing presentation.

He gave an analogy where in if a doctor gives a prescription and we put a frame and are happy, this will not work. He narrated a story where he and his friend were travelling in Rajasthan and they saw a tiger and a python. There are many triggers when we see dangers, which are challenges to our mental health. We can prepare our nervous system for them. Now he metaphorically says that the tigers are everywhere. For every little thing in our life, we become so tensed as if we saw a tiger.

All the cultures have emphasized on ancient technologies that can bring a change in the brain and the body cells and neural system and control them and be adaptable. Then we will feel wonderful all the time. The footing of our life is very important that no matter what life throws at you, you can very smoothly get out of it.

Excerpts from the speech of Dr. Amit Aggarwal:

He said that the scientists have proved that when we meditate there is a significant change in the structure of the brain. He showed these changes through the slides as to what exactly are the changes.

He shared two images on the screen during presentation. The one on the left was that of a meditative person and the other one on the right side was of an ordinary person. The left image was full of red glow in the front and back part of the brain whereas the other did not have at all. Left image showed that it was more active.

The front part of the brain is called the pre frontal cortex. Amygdala starts firing when you are anxious. It prepares your body for the situation. The whole machine becomes active. This is fine occasionally.

However, today this is happening very frequently. Stress affects the whole body.

The more and more your pre frontal cortex becomes active, the more conscious you are. Once it is active, you become more active and you can take better decisions.

You also become creative, foresight increases and you become happy.

Some of the things that were discussed were

- Upright posture.
- Energising Techniques.
- Breathing Techniques.
- Uplifted Gaze.
- Visualisation
- Meditation

Then, he began with the workshop.

At first, he asked the participants to close the eyes and score the mental wellness in a 0-10 scale. Score the same for your body.

Then, he started some exercises.

- Double Breathe: A short and a long inhalation from the nose, and a short and long exhalation through the mouth. Do it for three times.

Now, once you do the double inhalation, flex the body and along with double exhalation, relax your body. Do it five times.

This could be done in single breathe also.

- Now start walking on the place and tell yourself that "I am Positive, Energetic and Enthusiastic"

Now, bring your hands and tap on all over your body and say to yourself " I am master of the body and master of my mind".

Brush your body and say aloud "Awake, Rejoice my brain cells " and "Be glad my brain, be wise and strong" "Awake my sleeping children awake". Relax the area around the abdomen, and take a few relaxing breathes.

- Full yogic Breathe:

Note: Spine surgery, pregnancy, eye surgery, very high BP should avoid doing this.

Inhale and go up and exhale and go down.

As we inhale, expand your belly taking in all the positive energy.

And exhale all the negativity throughout the body. Inhale optimism, vitality and joy. Do it thrice.

- Try to sit away from the back of the chair. Most of the nerves originate from the spinal cord so try to sit straight.
- Uplifting the gaze: Sitting up straight Keep the chin parallel, close your eyes lift your eyes by 15 degree. The attention shifts to the area between the eyebrows.
- Even Count Breathing: Inhale through the nose, hold the breathe and breathe out through the nose. Do it five times.

We can add one more point. After exhalation, hold it for some time and then inhale.

Do it 6 times.

Now observe your breathe, the incoming air is cooler and full of positivity. The air that goes out is warmer and full of negativity. It is helpful in

increasing your concentration. If the mind gets distracted, bring back to the breathing again.

Become aware of the deep stillness in your head and enjoy the peace. And be quiet for about 2 minutes.

- Affirmation: Slowly decreasing the sound say to yourself "Within me lies the energy to accomplish all that I will to do".

First, say it aloud and then whisper and then in your mind.

- Inhale through the nose and breathe out through the mouth. Do it 3 times.
- Now score your mind and body again. Great things come out of profound stillness.

You will definitely see a change in yourself.

Ms. Richa Lekhi, Senior Client Banker and Zonal Head Multinational Clients Group, ICICI Bank proposed vote of thanks. She thanked all the speakers for such an insightful presentation. She concluded by urging all the attendees to religiously follow the exercises given to combat mental stress and welcome a joyful life.

Webinar on "Advance Tax: Important Validations Before Payment"

The Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India along with Dev Mantra Financial Services Pvt. Ltd organized a webinar on "Advance Tax: Important Validations Before Payment" on March 12, 2021 .

The speaker was CA Pratik Niyogi, Associate, Dev Mantra Financial Services Pvt. Ltd. The webinar covered what is Advance Tax, Liability to pay Advanced Tax, manner of computation and steps to compute, payment of Advance Tax, due dates for installments and so on.

Dr. Renu Shome, Director, EU Chambers welcomed the attendees she briefed the attendees with the activities of the chamber and also introduced CA Pratik Niyogi.

CA Pratik Niyogi mentioned that the Tax that is paid as income is earned. This scheme of advance payment of tax is also called as Pay as you earn income. Tax is paid in advance when Tax Liability is more than 10,000. Advance Tax is paid in the previous year itself, thus the Tax is paid in the year of earning income itself.

He further explained the tax rates for Domestic companies. He mentioned eight steps to compute Tax under section 209.

He explained the due dates for installment of Advanced tax. If the due date is on or before 15th June the amount payable is not less than 15%, if its on or before 15th September then the amount payable is not less than 45% of Advance tax payable. If the due date is on or before 15th December then the amount payable is not less than 75% of Advance tax payable and if the due date is on or before 15th March then the amount payable is not less than 100% of Advance tax payable.

He further added that Interest on Non payment or short payment of Tax is applicable when someone fails to pay advance tax or the Advance tax paid is less than 90% of Assessed tax. The rate of interest charged is 1% for every month or part of a month. The interest charged is on assessed tax. It is applicable from 1st April of the A.Y. to the date of determination of income or where regular assessment is made to the date of regular assessment.

The interest on shortfall is not payable on the amount of capital gains; or Income of the nature referred to in sub-clause (ix) of clause (24) of section 2; or Income under the head profits and gains of business or profession & in cases where the income accrues or arises under the said head for the first time; or Income of the nature referred to in sub-section (1) of section 115BBDA and the assessee has paid the whole of the amount of tax payable.

He mentioned the tax reforms in the Atmanirbhar Bharat. He also explained few case studies. The webinar was concluded by Q&A.

Webinar on “Access to Europe for Indian Products”

The Speakers of the Webinar were Mr. Sharad Kumar Saraf, Chairman, Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd., Mr. Jelle De Rooij, Sr. Manager Supply Chain Solutions, Holland International Distribution Council (HIDC), Dr. Viju Jacob, Managing Director, Synthite Industries Private Ltd.

Dr. Renu Shome welcomed all the attendees and spoke about the activities of the Chamber. Mr. Abhijeet Nair, Chairman of the Logistics and Shipping Committee, introduced the subject and said that in the age of e-commerce everyone wants everything to be delivered quickly and hence the concept of being locally available has gained more significance.

He also said that EU is one of the biggest buying house in the world and it is very big opportunity for Indians to explore and many prefer having their products on time and hence the concept of being locally present is the next big thing.

Mr. Sharad Kumar Saraf the first speaker at the webinar shared the perspective of Indian Exporters with regard to access to European Market. He mentioned that his company Technocraft Industries (India) Ltd is a client of almost all the logistic companies, the company believed in expand and looking for new markets increasing its exports. He said in the 80's there were no fax machines there were only telex machines, it was difficult to get foreign currency from the RBI making the exporting a difficult job. In 1990-91, the Government of India (GOI) opened Indian Economy by taking some path breaking steps. As the economy was opened Mr. Saraf said he realized that if you want to serve the customer it was important to get as close to the customer as possible. He realized that the large market, which would appreciate our qualities or services, was Europe. He stated that Technocraft is exporting to more than 60 countries worldwide. Mr. Saraf shared India's performance with EU. He said that in the calendar year 2020 India exported to EU (excluding UK) was USD 38.5 billion, which is nearly 14% of our total export. India's export to

UK in 2020 was USD 7.9 billion which is 2.86% of our exports. India's import from EU in the year 2020 was USD 37.70 billion which was 9.8% of our imports and the imports from UK was only USD 3.1 billion which is 0.82%. If we combine UK and EU then we have a positive trade balance. Since UK has exited EU now, India is now working for a very favourable free trade agreement with the UK. He mentioned that to export to the EU is a little difficult as they need very high quality and it takes a lot of time to convince Europeans that our quality is good, the EU are also obsessed with registrations and certifications so a lot of testing is required to be done in their laboratories which is also very expensive.

Mr. Saraf suggested the ones who have a business in EU to use the services of Mr. Jelle de Rooij and also suggested that if a company wants to do large volume business then it is necessary to stock the products and give quick deliveries.

Mr. Jelle de Rooij who was the next speaker spoke about how Indian companies can serve their European Customers from logistic perspective in the age of e-commerce. He mentioned that E-commerce in Europe has grown tremendously due to the pandemic. He mentioned that HIDC was founded in 1987 by the Dutch Logistics Industry and has grown to 300 members all-active in logistics. Half of the members of HIDC are logistics service providers. They focus on exporters from North America and Asia, they give them neutral advice on their supply chain setup for the European Markets and introduce them to the right partners.

He mentioned that Brexit being a very hot top in the EU and at HIDC they are very busy right now as there are many companies who are redesigning their European Supply chain and generating new relationship. Many companies considering Netherlands for short term and long term to set up their companies. There has been a dramatic drop from the exports from the UK to EU and the EU exports to the UK has been postpone by the UK governments. He mentioned that HIDC is currently working with more than 100 UK companies that need a 'quick fix'. Many North American companies are realizing that the UK and EU will indeed be a separate markets and there is a need to change

accordingly. The Guardian in its publication on January, 23, 2021 had mentioned that British businesses that export to the continent are being encouraged by the government trade advisors to set up a separate company in the EU in order to get around extra charges, paperwork and taxes resulting from Brexit. He said that due to Covid one saw an increase in online shopping also many first time online shoppers. But also when you look at the supply chain, the long supply line for example the far east Europe have proven to be very vulnerable but now the consumer is now more used to e-commerce, so there has now been a sustainable shift. The European market is the second largest consumer market with 27 countries after Brexit. Once you custom clear your products into the EU you are allowed to move your products easily to all these countries. If you look at the European market (EU) size the number of inhabitants is bigger than the USA. Besides the e-commerce boom 75% of European Consumers shop cross-border, this is very interesting as for online shoppers the market is very big. Since buyer expect a good service a company must focus on Convenience, Speed of Delivery, Cost Transparency and Great Customer Service. He mentioned that to serve your European Customer one should study the Market Size, market structure, Country differences and cultures, language differences. It's necessary to set a clear business strategy like route to market and sales channels. There are limitations for Indirect supply chain models as there are no direct contact with the customers, no market data etc. the European customers end up paying import duties and taxes which is less attractive to them. One can opt for direct service to future clients as you will have stock in the local markets and have control of your supply. Such model makes one very flexible, there is a lot of activities that one can think of and extend his or her business.

He mentioned that in Netherlands you are exempted in paying the import VAT. For European Customer you are the desired supplier as they want one stop shop principle, one invoicing covering products, transportation and duties and taxes etc. He mentioned that Indian Companies can consider to invest in Netherlands as it's the famous gateway to Europe. It also has good infrastructure, it's the number 1 logistics hub in

Europe, has competitive cost for labour, real estate and transport, there is no VAT payments at imports, it has 3 main ports for air, data and sea and has excellent connectivity to Europe and all continents.

Dr. Viju Jacob talked about the his company Synthite established in the year 1972, has been a pioneer in the field of value added spices and has special focus on EU business with more than 15% contribution to the total business. Synthite is also into wind-energy, hospitality, realty, seasoning and flavours. The business of Synthite during the pandemic was 20% more as the demand for turmeric and pepper was high for high immunity level. When the FDA and FSSI in India is compared with the EU, European MRL's are very high and it's a very difficult task to get in material to Europe. Despite of Synthite trying its level best in getting the MRLs right they still face challenges.

He said that the recent changes to the MRL level for pesticides, by setting it to extremely low levels of 0.01ppm for most molecules, have given an indication that EU is indirectly enforcing stringent Non-Tariff Barriers. The Government of India has highlighted the issue with WTO as the levels are even stringent than CODEX level, which are globally accepted, and less stringent. The recent MRLs specified have a cascading impact as most of the agri produce come from countries such as India, China etc., wherein even the approved bio pesticides have higher MRLs. Therefore, these are all the challenges faced by spice industries from India or from any other country.

Mentioning about the Regulations in Registration of Herbal Medicinal Products he said that European Medicines Agency (EMA) has set guideline as 30 years of use, including 15 years in EU for Traditional Use registration of Herbal Medicinal Products. This is an upfront barrier for new formulations in Ayurvedic and nutraceutical products from India as it will prolong the time to market. Even for registration under well-established use marketing authorization, efficacy study on medicinal use within EU for at least 10 years is required. Easing of the above guidelines is required for giving a competitive advantage to the Ayurvedic & nutraceutical products from India. These are the challenges that a company faces while dealing in nutraceutical products as

well as MRL for spices extract because when one does the MRLs its difficult to get the structure of the MRLs, its difficult because when one does the extraction the spice gets concentrated so whatever pesticides are therein the spices get concentrated and the MRL levels goes up. He mentioned that he would like to take this issue with the EU (policy or standards maker) as it is more than the CODEX.

Mr. Bhavik Mota summarized the webinar. He thanked the Speakers for taking the time out of their busy schedule and for sharing their thoughts and opinion, which was very helpful. He said that we have talked enough above Covid and Post Covid, and the way world evolved and according to him what customers are looking either in pre covid or post covid is a greater resilience because what we are talking today is mainly about India to Europe market and if we list down the top commodities the number 1 commodity that goes from India to Europe is basically lifestyle retail and apparels. And it is the commodity that is very transit sensitive because it is about reaching in time in the stores for the fashion or for the season. So the relevance of having very predictable and resilience supply chain is very important. What the Europeans also look for is the agility as in the demand of a product is very volatile according to him nobody can make predictions about the demand. It is important to manage this kind of uncertainty as everybody is looking out for multiple options and there are various products that the industry is looking into.

There are customers who are saying that take my cargo from my source to a transshipment port, store it because I don't know whether the next demand or surge is going to be in UK or in Belgium or elsewhere and two weeks later they will send an order to deliver 7 boxes to UK or any other specific country, so they don't have a clear line of sight for a long period and they want agility and that's why the solution has changed from storing at a destination to storing at a transshipment hub where they can decide at the last minute and have that kind of agility. The second aspect is that there are a lot of last minute request of sending products in time. Customers are also looking for a combination of sea and air product. Lastly the service industry in Europe was doing very well but the demand immediately after

Covid slipped, for 2 months nobody knew what to do and then when the demand started rising it started rising on the essential retailers side reason being lockdowns and restrictions what was running down the clock in most of the countries in Europe and otherwise such as super markets and small time stores. So all the dollar stores and best seller companies their demand had gone up almost 3x and nobody had predicted such a high surge. This surge also gives a unique opportunity for Indian exporters to be a partner for Europe. As the products that are made in India have raw material available, there are lot of tariff restrictions on our neighboring countries hence we are a preferred partner for European Countries,

In India the supplier/exporters are happy to send small parcels because the demand is so dynamic and fluctuating, being English the second language the communications of Indians with Europeans becomes more and more easier. He mentioned that we have a great opportunity in Holland which is a developing port, along with other ports in the EU. He mentioned that there are great opportunities and we need many more sessions to help our member companies to understand the dynamics of business and the way the world is evolving. He concluded saying that it was a very engaging and learning session for all of us.

Webinar on “Supreme Court Ruling for Software Payments: Way Forwards”

The Speaker for the webinar was CA Amit Patni, Associate Director, Dev Mantra Financial Services Private Limited.

Dr. Renu Shome welcomed all the attendees and the speaker. She introduced CA Patni and very briefly educated the attendees about the activities of the Chamber.

CA Amit Patni thanked Dr. Shome for introducing him and welcomed all the attendees. He mentioned that the topic of the webinar was very important and relevant. He mentioned that today he will discuss on whether payment for use of

relevant. He mentioned that today he will discuss on whether payment for use of computer software is a royalty payment and if yes then what would be the tax implications and if no then what would be the tax consequence. He mentioned that the judgment passed had a beautiful interplay between the Income Tax Act and the Copyright Act.

Giving a background of the topic he mentioned that it is important to understand while making payment to a foreigner whether the payment is subject to Tax or not. He explained the meaning of royalties under Tax Treaty and under the Income Tax Act. He further added that Royalty is taxable at 10% on gross u/s 115A if received by a non-resident from a resident and Non-resident does not have a PE in India. Royalty is taxable at 40% on net income basis under 44DA of Act if non-resident has a PE in India and the right/property/contract in respect of which Royalty is paid is effectively connected with the PE.

He explained the meaning of Copyrights and highlighted certain provisions of copyrights which were used extensively by the Supreme Court. He also said that for software also the Copyrights Act 1957 will be applicable. He gave a background of the Supreme Court Judgment. He mentioned that the issue before the Supreme Court was that whenever there was a payment by resident Indian end users or distributors to non-resident computer software manufacturers/ suppliers for the distribution/use of computer software it can be characterized as royalty under section 9(1)(vi) of the Income Tax Act 1961 and the Indian Tax Treaties thereby requiring deduction of TDS under section 195 of the Act. The facts that were before the Supreme Court was that the distributor is granted a non-exclusive, non-transferable license to resell computer software. No right has been granted to sub-license or transfer, nor is there any right to reserve engineer, modify, reproduce in any manner otherwise than permitted by the license to the end users. What is paid for by way of consideration by the distributor in India to the non-resident manufacturers or suppliers, is therefore the price of a copy of the computer program as goods. The distributor does not get the right to use the product at all. The end user can only use the computer program by installing

it in the computer hardware and cannot reproduce the same for sale or transfer i.e. no act contrary to the terms imposed by the EULA. The license granted vide the EULA is not a license in terms of Section 30 of the Indian Copyright Act 1957 but is a license which imposes restrictions or conditions for the use of the computer software. The Supreme Court has upheld the principle that once a DTAA applies, the provisions of the Act can only apply to the DTAA, the definition contained in the DTAA itself has to be looked at. The SC has reaffirmed the position laid down in the case of GE Technology Centre Pvt. Ltd. That the machinery provisions of TDS under section 195 of the Act is inextricably linked with the charging provisions as a result of which, the TDS obligation arises only when the sum is chargeable to tax under the provisions of the Act read with DTAA. The SC has rejected the revenue's reliance on the decision of the SC in the case of PILCOM on the basis that the same was in the context of Section 194E which does not have any reference to payments being chargeable to tax under the Act. Further, the SC has also rejected the argument of the revenue that some of the EULAs term the transaction not as a sale but as one of licensing. The SC has noted that it is a settled law that in all such cases, the real nature of transaction must be looked at by reading the agreement as a whole.

He further mentioned that the SC has noted that the list of appeals are concerned with DTAA's among India and 18 other countries which are based on the OECD Model Tax Convention on Income and on Capital, wherein the definition of royalties is substantially similar to that of the OECD Model Tax Convention and that the definition of royalty under the DTAA is exhaustive as it uses the expression 'means'. The term royalties refers to payments of any kind received as consideration for the "use of, or the right to use, any copyright" of a literary work. Having noted the above the SC has held that the transfer of all or any rights as mentioned in the CA is a sine qua non for the payment to qualify as royalty.

There was discussion in the judgment that OECD commentary should not be used in order to interpret the treaty positions because the government had

already raised its reservations against the commentary on some of the areas. So we need to focus also on the reservations imposed by the government and not simply rely on OECD commentary. This proposal was rejected by the SC. SC has made a note of the CBDT Circular No. 10/2002 dated 09 October 2002, which prescribed the format for the certificate to be issued by a Chartered Accountant while making foreign remittances wherein a distinction has been made between payment towards royalties and payment towards computer software which is taxable as business income.

He concluded by saying that with effect from April 1, 2020, an EQL @2 % was introduced on goods supplied/ services provided/ facilitated by non-residents to India through an electronic platform. A proposed amendment this year states that only those payments which are otherwise not taxable as royalty or fees for technical services, shall be subject to the EQL. Since software license fee is not taxable as royalty now, it should be examined whether the same could be subject to the 2% EQL.

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