



**Embassy of India
The Hague**

PRESS RELEASE
(The India-Netherlands Entrepreneurs Forum, 27 February 2024)

As a part of the outreach activities towards the Indian community in the Netherlands, the Embassy of India, the Hague organized the inaugural India - Netherlands Entrepreneurs Forum on 27 Feb 2024 at the Marriott Hotel in The Hague to provide a platform for Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) / (Non-Resident Indians (NRI) entrepreneurs to network, share experiences & promote cultural ties with diaspora. This event was organized with the support of the Diaspora Engagement Division in the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, and in partnership with various India-Netherlands business agencies/associations/organizations. This was a new initiative by the Embassy to bring together Indian-origin entrepreneurs in the Netherlands.

2. The event was attended by around 150 participants of Indian Origin/Non-Resident Indians (PIO/NRI) in the Netherlands who are engaged in entrepreneurial ventures as well as those who want to explore opportunities and engage in networking with experienced people in related sectors/ industries.

3. The event provided a platform for Indian-origin entrepreneurs to network as well as for those who wanted to share their experiences of the journey of setting up a business in the Netherlands and their success stories.

4. The Forum featured relevant stakeholders from the Dutch government who spoke about the business and start-up opportunities available in the country. Indian classical vocalist Sushmita Guha Thakurta entertained the Indian diaspora with a Bollywood mashup at the India-Netherlands Entrepreneurs Forum. Her soulful voice and impeccable rendition of foot-tapping numbers showcased her versatility as a singer.

5. During the Entrepreneurs Forum, the Ambassador released the Digital Directory of the Indian businesses operating in the Netherlands aimed at enabling effective networking amongst the Indian diaspora. The Directory provided an opportunity for the participating businesses to publicize their products and services.

6. In her opening remarks, the Ambassador of India to the Netherlands, Mrs. Reenat Sandhu, welcomed the participants to the inaugural edition of the India-Netherlands Entrepreneurs Forum. The Ambassador emphasized the importance and objectives of starting the Forum, highlighting India's remarkable economic progress, tremendous potential for growth of India-Netherlands bilateral economic relations, and the contribution of the Indian diaspora in making India a Viksit Bharat (i.e. Developed India). The Ambassador urged the Indian entrepreneurs to leverage the entrepreneurial spirit of the Dutch for mutual benefit. The Ambassador also stressed the efforts being undertaken by the Embassy in The Hague to promote business relations between India and the Netherlands through instruments like the Fast Track System and Joint Working Groups in the fields of water, agriculture, health renewable energy

& science & technology. Ambassador highlighted the excellent opportunities for business tie-ups in not only the existing priority sectors of Water, Agriculture & Health but also in new and emerging areas like AI, Semiconductors & Green Hydrogen.

7. Ms. Wampie Libon, Director of the International Enterprise Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered the keynote speech at the Forum, highlighting the immense opportunities for Indian entrepreneurs in the Netherlands & the scope of public-private cooperation. She gave an overview of the business climate in the Netherlands and encouraged Indian entrepreneurs, particularly women, to take advantage of the favorable business ecosystem in the Netherlands.

8. Mr. Martijn Croon, Advisor - Business Plans, Team Financing and Entrepreneurship with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) gave a presentation on starting a business in the Netherlands at the India Netherlands Entrepreneurs forum. He highlighted the governmental support, innovation support, and visa schemes for start-ups & scale-ups in the Netherlands. He also gave a brief about the startup facilitators operating across the Netherlands and urged the entrepreneurs to utilize their services.

9. Experienced and successful Indian entrepreneurs in the Netherlands shared their entrepreneurial journey & experiences in the panel discussion at the India - Netherlands Entrepreneurs Forum. The panelists included Mr. Vipin Moharir (Founder and Partner, The Gateway Group), Mr. Manu Katyal (Chairman of the Indian Business Chamber & Director - The Indian Kitchen Amstelveen), and Mr. Rohan Grover (MD, Nature Bio Foods B.V.). The Panel Discussion was moderated by Ms. Prachee van Brandenburg (Vice Chairman - Indian Dutch Financial Corridor & Municipal Councillor, Leiderdorp). The panelists emphasized the importance of networking and connecting with the right people, and integrating with the local Dutch culture.

10. The Chairman of the Netherlands India Chamber of Commerce & Trade (NICCT) Ms. Edith Nordmann and the Chairman of the Indian Business Chamber (IBC) Mr. Manu Katyal spoke at the Entrepreneurs Forum explaining their role & activities, and how they promote commercial interests of Indian businesses in the Netherlands. There was a round of self-introductions by five select Indian businesses operating in the Netherlands (Ariqt International, Biotacticals, Motus BV, Marveltest, and Vanan BV). These companies have established themselves with around 5-30 employees on their rolls or are working towards promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate agenda, or promoting India's G20 Presidency priorities, or are promoting the traditional systems of Indian medicine.

11. The Entrepreneurs Forum had a special focus on empowering women's entrepreneurship and saw participation by around 20 women. The women speakers at the event emphasized the synergy between personal fulfilment & professional success. The Entrepreneurs Forum also saw active participation from the budding entrepreneurs making the Question & Answer session lively. Starting a new business, strategy, Visas, and the importance of learning the Dutch language & culture have been emphasized by the experts during the Q&A session.

12. Select PIO/NRI businesses were able to showcase/display their products/services in the exhibition area during the event. This included Susant Mallick from CloudHub BV, Gopinath Jagadeesan from Ga mee naar India, Mangleshwar Srivastava from Evoke, Ankita Mohapatra from Color Kanya, and Rupesh Kumar from Ariqt.

13. The companies and the start-ups that attended the Entrepreneurs Forum were highly appreciative of the very fruitful discussions and useful networking opportunities provided by the event.