

IndiaNews

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Focus Asia

Global Indian Business Summit in S'pore recognises top business performers



L to R: Mr. Mr. Dino Varkey of the Varkey Group, Mr. Gopinath Pillai of Gateway DistriParks, Chairman, Global Indian Business Network, Mr. George Abraham, Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, Mr. Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Mr. Sonny Aswani of the Tolaram Group and Mr. Amit Lohia of the Indorama Group, at the GIBN awards evening.

High level businessmen from the global Indian diaspora of over 20 million, representing dynamic corporations in the manufacturing, retail, real estate, IT, infocomm and service sectors, amongst others, gathered in Singapore in November at the Global Indian Business Summit (GIBS). The event was held at the Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre in conjunction with the 5th Global Entrepolis @Singapore (GES). Dr Balaji Sadasivan, Singapore's Senior Minister of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Ministry for Information, Communication and the Arts, delivered the keynote address.

"The global Indian Diaspora now comprises over 20 million Indians of South Asian origin in 136 countries. I see GIBS' role as a catalyst in raising awareness of the business opportunities and forging links between the Indian Diaspora and the Asian Business Community," he said. New opportunities are being created by the closer economic engagement between India and Singapore and events such as these attract

attention to these opportunities, he added. This was the second annual meeting of GIBS, initiated by the Global Indian Business Network (GIBN) based in Singapore and actively supported by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Indians of South Asian origin are found in 136 countries around the world, and in 40 of these countries they exceed 50,000 persons. They make up more than 40% of the population in Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana & Suriname. There exist smaller minorities in Malaysia, S. Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda, U.K., U.S.A, Canada & Singapore

Last year's maiden event built an interactive platform for Indian businessmen from all over the world to share their success stories. This year more avenues were opened up as the most promising Indian States and Indian industry clusters held special sessions on Art, Culture & Tourism (ACT), IT Enabled Services (ITES) and the Knowledge Industry. Top Indian businessmen from various Indian States and industries, as well as Global Indians spoke at the pinnacle event of the Summit. The continuing

robust growth of the Indian economy and the change in focus of the world from the growth in Western economies to that in Asia, only lent more buzz to the four-day event. "Numerous networking opportunities were thrown up to transact new business and learn from successful role models," said Mr. George Abraham, Chairman of GIBN. "A business-friendly place like Singapore provided immense opportunities to Indian businessmen to use it as a gateway to the world, he added. The Summit culminated in the first Global Indian Business Awards.

The recipients of the Global Indian Business Awards 2007 were:

- 1) Mr. Sonny Aswani, Tolaram Group (Estonia)
- 2) Mr. Amit Lohia, Indorama Group (Indonesia)
- 3) Mr. Gopinath Pillai, Gateway DistriParks Limited (India)
- 4) Mr. Sunny Varkey, Varkey Group (Gulf & Middle East)

The Awards Panel comprised Mr. Vikram Khanna, Associate Editor, Business Times, Singapore, and Mr. P.N. Balji, Editorial Director for News, Radio & Print, MediaCorp Pte Ltd.

A gala dinner was held on November 15 to present the awards to the successful diaspora Indian business people who have demonstrated the ability to start a business, grow it in the countries they are residing in, and expand their operations beyond their borders. At the Awards Dinner, Mr. Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, highlighted the role of the Indian diaspora in the economic growth of their respective countries and the Global Indian Business Awards as an important focus on otherwise unknown global businesses.