



FICCI E-NEWS

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"BE SEEN & BE HEARD"

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE:

by *Manish Mahtani*

VP for Domestic Affairs, Trade & Retail

The pandemic brought about by the Covid 19 virus has perhaps been the greatest challenge that our businesses have ever faced. This is true especially for many of our members engaged in manufacturing, wholesale, retail, technology, F & B, services and the BPO sector across various categories and industries.

In order to assist and encourage our members to pivot some of their business interests to the online space, last year we invited Lazada Philippines to expound on their platform's capabilities and assist our members with the on-boarding process & effective marketing. We followed that up with "eCommerce is easier than you think" presented by Ryan Tan CEO of NAVCO, which specializes in offering eCommerce solutions to distributors.



In this year's GMM in May we asked an expert to help us strategize on how to make eCommerce a sustainable route-to-market. Professor Andy Ferreira, a respected management professor

and a consultant who sits on the board of many companies, shared his insights on how to successfully adapt our businesses during the pandemic.

In February this year your chamber hosted "Perspective of Doing Business in the Philippines: A way forward for domestic & foreign investors" in partnership with the Embassy of India, Manila. This webinar highlighted the latest updates on CREATE, which introduces corporate tax reforms that will affect our businesses. Our resource speakers from SGV presented a high-level overview of how to set-up business in the Philippines, and discussed available incentives for domestic and foreign investors. The expert panel covered new tax policies including 'transfer pricing' and the documentation and reportorial requirements on transfer pricing, as set forth by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

As we see an uptick in the economy in the second half of this year with improved traction on inoculation and the containment of covid cases in the NCR region, we enjoin our members to engage with our board and encourage you to give us your suggestions on how we can further assist you to help weather the storm created by the pandemic.

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Mike Advani; Editor-in-Chief | Sharon Vaswani, O.D.; Associate Editor | Ella Gan & Zarah Corrales; Editorial Assistants | Lito Cinco; Editorial Consultant & Content Writer

FINALLY, VACCINES ARRIVE

Lead Story by LITO CINCO:



Finally after a long wait, the vaccines ordered by FICCI have arrived with the toll to start by August 3.

This was disclosed by FICCI President Mike Advani and he is strongly encouraging people, especially the employees of member companies to have themselves vaccinated.

"I understand that at the initial stages of the government's public vaccination program, some people refused to get themselves vaccinated for different reasons." said President Mike.

This is why FICCI, which supports the national government's campaign, on its own initiated a campaign among member companies to encourage their employees to get vaccinated. The campaign is requesting that companies come up with their own company slogan together with a creative photo encouraging and supporting the vaccination program," continued President Mike.

He is also reiterating to the member companies to support the program, more so now that variants of the virus have emerged and resulting to more cases.

According to President Mike, "the best vaccine is what is available, people should not be choosy about the vaccine brands, what is important is to get vaccinated as soon as possible, definitely there is unity in immunity which is the slogan we picked for our company," added President Mike.

"Together, we can fight this pandemic," he concluded.

LOOKING BACK

- On July 1, 2021, President Mike and some members of the board joined the broadcast of GoNegosyo in helping to encourage the positive message of vaccines to entrepreneurs.
- FICCI continues to make possible life-saving operations for Biliary Atresia patients. In the last month alone, 10 more children with their parents were sent to India.
- FICCI released a statement of support for bold moves needed to contain the Delta variant immediately.

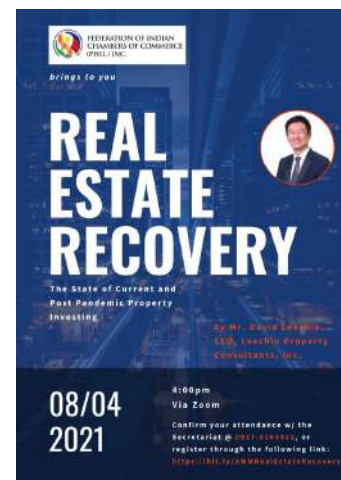


LOOKING FORWARD

- The vaccines have arrived and roll out began last July 2, 2021 for Moderna and will begin on August 3, 2021 for AstraZeneca doses.
- Plans are underway for the celebration of the 70 years of the chamber to be celebrated in the 4th quarter of this year.



- Widely known the country's top real estate advisor, Mr. David Leechiu will be the featured guest in the next GMM of the chamber which aims to provide key information regarding the changes in the property market as a result of the pandemic, while providing useful real estate investment strategies in the new-normal that has been scheduled for August 4, 2021 at 4.30pm.



NOW YOU KNOW A Lockdown of Learning

By VP Govind Daswani

Among the most significant advocacies that the FICCI has championed over decades has been the unwavering desire to uplift and empower Indian Businesses in the Philippines. Whether through information sourcing, simple networking, or inter-member services, the ethos of business-driven assistance has been deeply tied to our DNA.



Over the past year, as we have been collectively compelled to digitize our interactions, the FICCI jumped at the opportunity to upgrade its ode Indian businesses in the Philippines by holding regular learning sessions with the best of the best in various fields.

continued from page 1

With the core objective of delivering relevant topics and subjects that are needed right away, the chamber focused its webinars on two key categories: (1) Evolving your business to respond to the new normal, and (2) Operational and employee safety as we slowly return to work.

Our speaker series has included leading professors from the Asian Institute of Management, executive teams from esteemed companies such as SGV and Marsh, the most sought after voices in e-commerce such as lazada and navco, and various world-class doctors and wellness experts to help address our transition back to normalcy.

Presently, we have spent time with regard to learn more about our member's needs through formal and informal surveys, and will be delivering subjects that are in most demand such as succession strategy, tax planning, and more strategies to win the world of e-commerce.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Raju Sujanani



THE NEW AGE OF DOING BUSINESS: BRAVADOS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

By LITO CINCO:

In the last year, entrepreneurs and executives alike had to change quickly, adjusting to running their businesses during some extremely unusual times. It's been a lot, and it's been hard, but in the long run, these challenges are likely to make a lot of business owners and executives stronger. Here is a story of how one company in Manila, Philippines managed to change their business model in the midst of a pandemic

Bravados International Corporation (BIC) was founded in 1980, a company focused on wholesale garments, trading, and distribution by Raju Sujanani.



"We started with locally produced garments and were supplying the top retail stores in the country. To keep ahead of the competition, we shifted to importing garments from nearby Asian countries and expanded our product lines to include accessories and other products. This move allowed us to expand our business with several more inventory offerings," said Raju. "With open markets and more choices, the business experienced steady growth. Adapting to changing trends has always been the cornerstone of my business strategy," he continued. Alongside exceptional customer service and a variety of offerings, he kept his client base strong even through economic dips and market lows. In the last few years, Raju has also ventured into commercial and residential real estate.

Business and commerce in the Philippines came to a screeching halt in March 2020 when the world found itself in the midst of a global pandemic. No one could have predicted the magnitude of impact Coronavirus had on the economy. Where many businesses were forced to shut down, leaving thousands without jobs or source of income, BIC made strategic decisions to reduce the impact and keep overheads low during a time of no profit.

"Just like other retailers, our sales were greatly affected due to lockdown orders. When it became evident that our primary business model of end-to-end retail and delivery was not feasible, we quickly looked into online sales and set up our virtual stores. While sales volume was not as significant as in-person transactions, it has allowed us to continue to retain staff. The shift to online product marketing and sales took significant set up and employee training, but it was a push

that was needed to propel the business into e-commerce," explained Raju.

With the toughest year behind us, we anticipate that customers will continue to choose the in-person experience of shopping in 2022. The Philippines is known for its "mall culture" and that, in conjunction with easy online shopping, will provide multiple streams of income for the company."

Raju appreciates the support of the FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and the value they add to the business community, more so during this challenging time. "The current and past boards have always been proactive in helping the local Fil-Indian businesses. The organization connects us with other members and expands our network with government agencies and offices. The chambers' strong ties with the Indian embassy allows us the opportunity to create open communication regarding new policies and procedures that affect businesses such as BIC. I look forward to reading their newsletter and learning more about FICCI's initiatives and programs."



Raju shares his thoughts on the future, "There is still a lot of uncertainty with how our clients will choose to respond when the country fully opens, and while we cannot plan for the future, we are hopeful that the economy will bounce back. This country is known for its resilience and I have no doubt that commerce will improve."

"Our lives are changing daily, and so should the way we do business. I am proud of the way our company has adapted to this unforeseen market and unpredictable landscape. It took a big shift in perspective and breaking mental barriers to change the way we set up our daily operations and understand the changes needed to adapt. This experience has been very telling in our ability to survive, both personally and professionally."

Bravados International Corporation's story is truly one of resilience, changing the status quo, and doing business in this new economy.



AND THEY SAID...

Keep up the good work! 🙌

- Ravi Samtani

Kudos and thank you 🙌🙌

- Chairman Rex Daryanani

Congrats to the board! 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌

- Ravi Daryanani

Wonderful Director VP Dr Sharon!

Congratulations to Pres Mike & the entire board!

-- Past President Ramesh Dargani

JULY BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS:

- 1 - Prem Hemandas - Genpharm Inc.
- 2 - Pratik Abichandani - Aglobal Care Inc.
- 4 - Jai Kishan Chhattani - Indvl. Member
- 5 - Mike Parwani - Alpha Omega Implex Phil Co.
- 5 - Ravi Keswani - Alpina Heights Properties Corp.
- 5 - Tony Jeswani - Kams International Inc.
- 6 - Mr. Pishu Mirpuri - Past President & Reinsurance Brokers (Phil) Inc.
- 7 - Shyam Advani - C.P. Optics Inc.
- 9 - Prakash Chandnani - Indvl. Member
- 12 - Rakesh Lakhnpal - Ashutosh Amol Lending & Trading Corp.
- 13 - Deepak Budhrani - Ramesh Trading Corp.
- 14 - Mr. Pushkar Misra - VP for International Affairs, Trade, IT & BPO
- 15 - Arvin Pessumal - World Class Concepts Inc.
- 15 - Prema Ramchandani - Krishna Silkscreen Textile Printing
- 16 - Mr. Bob Mirani - Past President
- 28 - Leon Araneta - Kashmir Foods Corp.
- 29 - Bhagwan Pessumal - Bhagwan Heater Corp.
- 29 - Vijay Chulani - Orogem Jewellers Inc.
- 30 - Ramil Roldan - Wipro Philippines Inc.
- 31 - Haresh Mirpuri - Durus Industries Corp.

We welcome your suggestions for FICCI E-NEWS, just as we welcome informative articles you may want to contribute.

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