

## **GOPIO CONDUCTS SUCCESSFUL US LAUNCH OF ITS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN NEW YORK - CHAPTERS TO BE INITIATED ALL OVER THE WORLD**

GOPIO, the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin ([www.gopio.net](http://www.gopio.net)), together with the New York Consul General of India, announced the USA launch of GOPIO's International Chamber of Commerce (GICC) at the Indian Consulate in New York on April 28, 2017. GICC was inaugurated earlier at India's business capital in Mumbai on Jan. 10, 2017 by the Governor of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu Shri Vidyasagar Rao.

Honored chief guest Mrs. Riva Ganguly Das, Consul General of India and GOPIO's elected GOPIO officials hosted this event for the Indian Diaspora of the New York Tri-State region. The inauguration event was attended by approximately 150 members of the NRI (Non-Indian Resident) and PIO (Person of Indian Origin) community. The Networking Cocktail started at 6:30 pm, followed by the Launch Ceremony at 7:00pm and Dinner at 8:15pm.

Master of Ceremony Prakash Shah, Co-Chair of GICC kicked off the event, with introductory remarks, "GOPIO has tapped into a long-felt need for an international networking organization for the business People of Indian Origin. GICC has gotten off to a flying start after the January 10, 2017 global launch in Mumbai (India) by the Maharashtra Governor, with requests from around the world pouring in to open GICC chapters in all the major cities". Shah stated GICC objectives as, "GICC aims to bring together the business people of the Indian Diaspora, providing them the networking opportunity on a common worldwide platform."

Indian Consul General Riva Ganguly Das welcomed the attendees to the Consulate for the US launch of GICC, commenting "GOPIO is the only organization that truly represents the interests of the worldwide 30 million Indian Diaspora." She praised this latest GOPIO venture launch remarking, "GOPIO 's GICC initiative is most timely and very much needed at this time."

Other speakers included H. R. Shah, Chair of the GICC launch; GOPIO Life Member and Parikh Media Chairman Dr. Sudhir Parikh and New Jersey Assemblyman Raj Mukherji.

H R Shah, this year's recipient of Padma Shri award from Indian President, who Chairs the GOPIO's Board of Advisors and is Chairman of TV Asia, quoting a number of key statistics on Diaspora businesses explained why an effort such as GICC was very much needed. Mr. Shah also served as the GICC Launch Chair.

Event sponsor State Bank of India (SBI) was represented by senior officers at the launch. SBI's new USA Country Head Ashwini Tewari said that SBI fully supports GOPIO efforts and SBI see great opportunity ahead to work with Indian owned businesses.

Dr. Thomas Abraham Chairman of GOPIO International presented the details of GICC including the genesis of GICC, "The Biennial Convention in 2016 held in New York became a corner stone for GOPIO to be more involved in business, technology, investment and philanthropic activities to mobilize Diaspora resources for the common good. At this meeting, GOPIO General Body decided to initiate GOPIO International Chamber of Commerce (GICC) as a business platform for the Indian Diaspora."

"GOPIO International is the most networked Indian Diaspora organization which is a brand, and unlike other chambers, GOPIO International Chamber of Commerce (GICC) will cater to the Indian Diaspora businesses and entrepreneurs and will be the only globally networked Indian Chamber of Commerce," Dr. Abraham added.



Photo above: GICC USA launch with lighting of the lamp, from l. to r.: GOPIO Upper New York President Jhairam Persaud, GOPIO North Jersey Vice President Rajul Shah, GOPIO's Tri-State New York Area Coordinator Lal Motwani, Parikh Media Chairman Dr. Sudhir Parikh, GOPIO Intl. Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham, GOPIO Intl. Coordinator Dr. Rajeev Mehta, Consul General Riva Ganguly Das, GOPIO-New York President Beena Kothari, AIA President Govind Munjal, Assemblyman Raj Mukherjee, GICC Co-Chair Prakash Shah and GOPIO-CT President Anita Bhat

GICC would serve as a non-geographical chapter of GOPIO International and will create worldwide networking opportunity for people of Indian origin in business and professional services. As there are over 3 million businesses owned by People of Indian Origin around the world within the Indian Diaspora of 30 million, GICC provides a great opportunity for one to become a Sponsor Member or Life Member. GICC will encourage and promote increasing levels of business investments by and among NRI/PIOs in various parts of the world.

GICC will reach out and set up chapters in neighborhoods with large number of Indian owned businesses and services. It will also launch chapters in small towns, cities, counties, states/provinces and countries. Hopefully GICC will emerge as the most networked Indian Diaspora business group. Unlike other chambers, GICC's biggest advantage and benefit to its members and chapters will be that it will be the most globally networked Indian Diaspora business group.

The launch program was put together by GOPIO's Tri-State New York Area Coordinator Lal Motwani and GOPIO New York President Beena Kothari and was supported by other GOPIO Chapters in the New York area; GOPIO-Upper New York, GOPIO-Connecticut, GOPIO-Central Jersey and GOPIO-North Jersey. The event was sponsored by the State Bank of India in New York



Photo: GOPIO officers and State Bank of India officers after the GICC launch in New York, from l. to r.: Dinesh Mittal, Dr. Asha Samant, Shailesh Naik, Nami Kaur, Shelly Nichani, Kenny Desai, H.R. Shah, Lal Motwani, SBI Country Head Ashwini Tewari, GOPIO Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham, Beena Kothari, SBI CEO R. Viswanathan, Varghese Ninan, Rajul Shah, Dr. Sudhir Parikh, GICC Co-Chair Prakash Shah, Meera Banta and Dharmatma Saran