

KEN NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of Knowledge Exchange Network



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by **Rojit Sorokhaibam** - President, KEN
Serial Entrepreneur | Strategy & Technology Advisor



Dear Friends:

It gives me an immense pleasure to announce that KEN-Manipur (Knowledge Exchange Network-Manipur) is introducing its online digital newsletter for the first time as a step to share knowledge and expertise of global Manipuris and their friends with the youth of Manipur. As you probably know, the primary goal of Knowledge Exchange Network (KEN) is to focus on knowledge exchange with a view to bring genuine change and foster development policy in the state.

KEN and its members, in the recent past, have worked successfully with the government of Manipur and Manipur University, both formally and informally, in the areas of IT (Information Technology), Business Entrepreneurship, and public utility services by sharing knowledge and experience earned from the outside of Manipur by its valued member volunteers. We are confident, in the days to come, KEN and its volunteers worldwide can share valuable ideas and knowledge for the development of Manipur to various stakeholders in the state.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CONTINUE..

I am happy to say that this digital Newsletter will cover the stories of diverse community members from around the world sharing their valued success stories, knowledge and expertise on our online platform especially for the benefit of youth of the state.

KEN has taken steps to promote entrepreneurship in Manipur by giving free professionally structured consultancy to aspiring and existing local entrepreneurs who are based in Manipur to streamline their business process and modalities how a professional organization would operate.

For the first time in Manipur by any overseas diaspora union, KEN is all set to offer fully financed training programs on computer enabled entrepreneurship skill to the youth of the state to enhance their self-employability status. KEN would continue to work and offer a platform where all our citizens can reach out to our professionally experienced community members, interact and take consultation.

We, in the KEN are determined to support organization(s) dedicated to improving the lives of local people of Manipur through programs which would lead to social and economic empowerment. For this, we are proud of our volunteers and donors who, without seeking any return have sacrificed their valuable time and money.

Thank you
President - KEN

ABOUT KEN

KEN is a non-political and not for profit association of people of Manipur origin and their friends living in different parts of the world with varied professional backgrounds, experiences, skills and expertise.

With the world has become a global village and has witnessed an IT boom during the last two decades, many people of Manipur origin are now found working in every nook and corner of the world. Their knowledge, skills, incomes and expertise can be tapped and exchanged to build a competitive state which can enhance confidence among the public and investors which at the moment is in a challenging state in Manipur.

Knowledge is power; KEN believes, this will be the pivotal in bringing the much needed changes in Manipur and in the mindset of Manipur.

EDITORIAL

BREAKING FREE 'INSIDER'S CLUB'

BY DR. RK. LILAPATI DEVI



Knowledge Exchange Network (KEN), a non profit organisation established by the Manipuri origins living across the world is bringing out its first newsletter to disseminate information and knowledge from the Manipuris and others living abroad.

This whole venture is to give readers new ideas, perspectives of the exotic foreign countries in a way bit to democratise the knowledge, information and skills acquired from these lands rather than being confined within a closet.

The role of diaspora members and their contributions in the development of host country and country of their origin cannot be overemphasised. Human resource being a significant resource for every development activity, our men though located far away from their native land still beat the heart for their motherland, they are extending a helping hand to others to move on the path to development and glory.

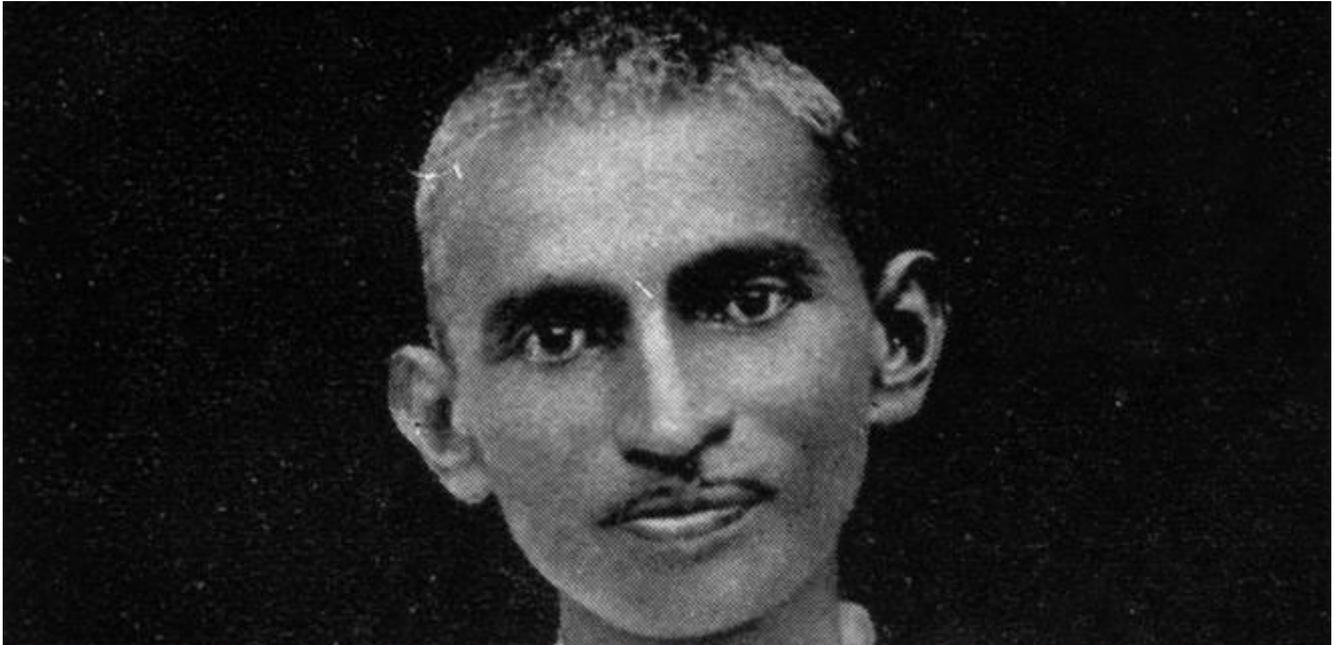
Here we script the success stories of two Manipuri diaspora members who have carved a niche for themselves in their chosen fields in the foreign countries; Alian Sauntak and Radha Binod Sharma. Though born in nondescript, silent places, these people chose to leave their native lands, took destiny in hands, crossed many hurdles and sowed their seeds of success and made a mark in these bountiful exotic lands.

Hope, these stories will enrich the resource, connection, confidence and inspire people who want to explore the world and fulfil their dreams of success.

Diaspora members whose origin is Manipur or the North East must come forward to share their own stories and break free the insider's club. Public, especially the youth in the state are expected to join hands and welcome the initiative for their development. To make such an effort initiated by the diaspora members a success, we insist the government act like connecting agent between these two bodies: local and international.

ENGAGING DIASPORA MEMBERS AND ITS ROAD MAP: AN OVERVIEW ON DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

BY BISHWAJIT OKRAM



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

It won't be preposterous to say that India got its freedom by engaging the then NRI (Non-Residence Indian) in South Africa, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as leader of the freedom movement. Japan had learned this benefit since Meiji era. In fact, the world has seen over the centuries how diaspora members have helped their host country as well as their countries of origin in many areas of development: economics, intellectual, social, philanthropy, political and cultural. Acknowledging this significant global impact, today many scholars are advocating the states to embrace diaspora members for engagement in many developmental activities.

Bishwajit Okram
Fellow of Certified Chartered
Accountants, UK.
Associate Member,
CPA Australia.



It is also hard to argue that the western world of today which we refer to as developed world, their development would not have been possible without their diaspora members' knowledge and material resource at some point of time in the history.

It is a fact that how Irish diaspora members had helped in building the road and infrastructure in the USA and the UK during the 19th and 20th centuries and at the same time, they helped support the economy back home.

Later, countries like India, china, Japan and Africa followed suit. At the moment, Chinese and Indian are the biggest diasporas worldwide contributing immensely to the development of both their countries of origin as well as their host countries.

The Chinese diaspora known as "Jews of Asia" is considered as the most successful diaspora across Asia, according to a report by Management Today (<http://www.managementtoday.co.uk/worlds-successful-diasporas/article/648273>). Indian diaspora members are the 2nd richest diaspora community in the USA after Jews according to a report by Forbe's magazine.

All these points show that the diaspora has the potential to contribute to the development of their countries of origin if they engage fruitfully on sharing knowledge and earning foreign exchange.

ENGAGING DIASPORA MEMBERS AND ITS ROAD MAP: AN OVERVIEW ON DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES CONTD..

According to a report by a Geneva- based Migration specialist Piyasiri Wickramasekara, skilled diasporas transfer knowledge to their country of origin and unskilled diasporas transfer money. Ironically, a separate study carried out by Geneva Academy Research Network suggests that most of the contributions are limited to individual initiatives, especially for countries like India and, lack of state support from both the countries of origin and the host are also key limiting factors in encashing their potentials.

One inherent hurdle, however, according to the same study is the lack of unity among diaspora members even if the states are willing to provide the necessary support- mechanisms. Many countries in Africa and Asia are finding this as a big challenge, though many countries have started to implement active engagement policies. Indian consulates and embassies across the world are taking up this engagement of diaspora members very seriously. The author of this article himself attended few such events in some parts of the Europe. But it is found that, the pursuit of this engagement is an uphill task, not free from many shortcomings due to improper planning of policy and lack of proper road map.

According to GFMD-Global Forum on Migration and Development, diaspora engagement should have a proper roadmap. The road map should begin with the identification of goals and capacities of the recipients and the providers. This should be followed by capacity building measures to be initiated by the country of origin. Then, the next step is the continuous exercise of building the trust by mobilising the stakeholders and engaging diaspora members in developmental activities.

India has started this initiative since 2001 and established Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in 2000. It created an official ministry called Ministry of Indian affairs in 2004. Recognising NRI's contribution and commemorating MK Gandhi's return to India on 9th January 1915, , India started to observe Parvasi Bharatiya Divas (PVD) every year since 2004 as a mark of gratitude to all the NRIs.

One of the excellent initiatives, the government of India has taken up, which also highlights her sincerity in engagement with the NRI community abroad, is the NRI platform for Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin abroad (STIOs) by the Dept. of Science and Technology. (<http://www.vajra-india.in>) Piyasiri Wickramasekara, however still suggests that countries of diaspora origin should provide more enabling environment for diaspora engagement which in fact India is lacking, hence the benefit is not being able to reach out far and wide so far.

AN ARTIST OF MANIPUR ORIGIN IN THE WESTERN WORLD

A STORY ON RADHA BINOD SHARMA, FOUNDER, IMA FOUNDATION

Radha Binod Sharma, is an established artist based in London, who has come a long way to becoming what he is today. A Manipuri by origin, he was born in Kamalpur Tripura and grew up in Agartala. He is now based in London, where he is the founder of an art organization dedicated to curating and promoting www.imafoundation.com. He established this in 2008 with the hope of giving a platform for the artists from Indian Sub-continent to showcase and capitalise their works. His online platform is geared towards being a hub for art lovers and art creators or art buyers. Selected Artists are able to showcase their artworks, represent biographical information and other information pertinent to the indigenous arts of India. It is a collaborative and a creative partnership between artists, educators and patrons of art.



AN ARTIST OF MANIPUR ORIGIN IN THE WESTERN WORLD CONTD..

Radha Binod has a strong personal track record and his artistic skills have led him to be widely exhibited in India and abroad. His tertiary education was in Fine Arts (Painting) 1984-1989 from the Kala Bhuwana, Viswa -Bharati University, Santiniketan in the West of Bengal and 1989-1991 Faculty of Fine Arts in Creative Painting, M.S. University, Vadodra. He was also awarded a scholarship by the Kanoria Centre for Arts to conduct research from 1991-1994.

One of the key tenets of IMAFoundation.com is to highlight the importance of self-identity as an antidote to the cultural hegemony instilled among the colonial people since British Raj. Radha Binod has sought to encourage confidence and authentic self-expression as a key aspect to develop in artists. In taking up this challenge, he has sought to encourage artists through mentoring them and by showcasing and exhibiting contemporary Indian art to various international audiences.

IMAFoundation.com is also committed to the idea of expressing fundamental universal and heartfelt truths as the basis of authentic power and realising human potential.

Radha Binod settled in London in 1998. He assessed the contemporary status of Indian art as it was being represented in the global market and felt committed to supporting and uplifting the confidence and morale of the talented artists back in India. His artistic sensibility and personal experience felt the need to foster a global platform for these artists to represent the unique dynamic of Indian art- expressed through the colours, sensibility and fluidity; the very essence of identity of Indian heritage and tradition. This aspect gave birth to establishing www.imafoundation.com, a platform that nurtures and showcases Indian art on a global scale.

Before his emigration to the UK, Radha Binod, had organised numerous solo exhibitions at Bangalore, Berlin, Agartala, and especially Mumbai. He was a part of numerous group exhibitions which led him to travel widely across the Indian sub-continent. For his hard works and talent, he successfully secured prestigious awards and fellowships such as the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant of Canada, the Delfina Studio Trust residency programme in London (a prestigious award and the first time awarded to an Indian) and the Charles Wallace Trust Grant of London. Recently Radha Binod has been working for the UNESCO-World Humanities Conference which was held from 6th August to 12th August 2017 in Liege, Belgium where IMAFoundation.com curated ANUBHAV, a live installation of arts, talk, meditative experience, videos, martial art display of Thang-ta to an international audience. In the near future IMAFoundation.com is also working to produce a cultural event relating to Manipuri Thang-Ta; the sword wielding martial art form that displays the art of harnessing inner power through dynamic dance movements and various visual representation.

He is also keen to research the details and significance of a key martial instrument called the Arambai which is now absent in its original form from the state. Only one original instrument exists and it is housed in a Museum in Oxford, UK. He feels it is imperative that the Manipuri cultural heritage is understood and safeguarded for future generations. With his passion for all art-forms and in particular the endangered arts of India such as Manipuri arts and cultures, he is positioned well to act as ambassador of indigenous culture in the global arena. As a native of Manipur Radha Binod is inherently committed to showcasing Manipuri arts in contemporary society. His recent success of the ANUBHAV project with UNESCO has paved the way for future projects to be organised in India and in the wider world.

A COMPASSIONATE JOURNEY

A STORY ON ALIAN SUANTAK, DIRECTOR & CO-FOUNDER OF PANACEA CARE LIMITED

The journey of life is not always smooth. Life at times can be painful, lonely, broke or at times miserable due to illness or infirmity. Things can get worse dealing it without friends or family members. Happiness and fulfilment in life can be a far cry from our living. Living can become a nightmarish journey at times. Understanding all these human problems, Alian Suantak, a gentleman from Manipur started his compassionate venture called "Panacea Care" in the greater London a few years ago.



A COMPASSIONATE JOURNEY CONTD..

Alian Suantak, a Vaiphei tribe from Imphal, is now a successful entrepreneur in UK. His brainchild, Panacea Care, a service provider of Supported Living and Domiciliary care is spreading the light of love and compassion, and giving meaning of living in this beautiful world.

A compassionate heart, God loving and a spirit of entrepreneurship led the birth of Panacea care. Alian converted his passion for serving humanity into this entrepreneurial venture which has become synonymous with love, care, solace and overall wellness.

Alian's journey to pursuing a career in serving people is not a surprising matter. Having a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Theology from COTR College, Vizag, Andhra Pradesh and a stint of two years as a training coordinator in a Christian charity organisation in Bangalore, Alian flew to London to enhance his hands- on-practice in human care and love, took a Master's degree in Advanced Psychosocial Practice with Children and Adults under the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London, and finally his own passionate, compassion filled service called Panacea care blossomed giving a touch to happy living to many a people in London.

Alian and his dedicated team members specialises in providing a friendly and personalised care for people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties. There are many other therapeutic activities that are prescribed according to the needs of the people in order to reach their optimal mental and physical health.

As a result of Alian's entrepreneurial efforts, today Panacea Care is a well-established and well known organisation, promoting mental health recovery services in London.

His advice to the youths is that they should stay focused in their studies and follow what is truly passionate in their hearts. This man, who had his early education from Adimjati Little English School and Modern College, Imphal, says his primary aim for setting up a care business in London is not for wealth, fame or power, but to serve humanity.

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking time to access and read our newsletter. This is our first in the series of many more to come on quarterly basis.

E-mail info@kenmanipur.org and tell us your feedback about the newsletter.

Want to write for us: We're always particularly interested in people with particular expertise or experience in the relevant areas (in your professional or personal life). Bear in mind that when writing for us, you are writing for a global, diverse audience.

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