



# IMA INDIA'S 24<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CEO ROUNDTABLE

TAKING ON THE NEW DISRUPTIVE FRONTIER  
PAUSE • PIVOT • PROPEL



1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2022



The Leela, Kovalam



Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2022

## Welcome Dinner

7:30 PM

*At the Club Deck*

Come together over dinner to kick-off the 2022 offsite, a weekend of shared learning or – as we prefer to call it – collective wisdom.

Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2022

## The Economic Outlook: Heavy Weather Ahead

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

**Adit Jain**, *Chairman & Editorial Director, IMA India*



Spillovers from Russia's invasion of Ukraine are hastening the deceleration of global economic activity which is now expected to slow to 3.2% in 2022. There are various downside risks to be watchful of, including intensifying geopolitical tensions, growing inflationary headwinds and rising financial volatility. Within India too, recession fears are weighing in on growth which is estimated to be lower than anticipated. CEOs will need to re-examine business strategies and develop suitable responses.

**Adit Jain** will provide an assessment of global mega-trends and their implications for business. He will also comment on India's medium-term economic prospects and offer a perspective on how companies can adapt to maintain growth and protect margins. Adit is IMA's Editorial Director and has authored over a thousand articles on business and economic issues over the years.

## Discussion Break

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM

## Reimagining Leadership

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

**Shiv Shivakumar**, *Group Executive President for Strategy and Business Development, Aditya Birla Group*



Covid-19 has posed new leadership and management challenges, as the terms of reference between employer and employee, business and society, and between entire nations and cultures, have changed. It has also unearthed a common purpose and urgency that has powered a shift in behaviours and ways of working. Progressive leaders are trying to adopt a posture based more on trust, transparency and empowerment than on authority and hierarchy.

But this requires both a new skill set and mindset – one that is based on a willingness to learn, a coaching mentality, comfort with uncertainty, the ability to experiment, to fail fast and to move on. Not many individuals in leadership roles today have necessarily been coached with these skills through their careers.

**Shiv Shivakumar**, currently Group Executive President for Strategy and Business Development at the Aditya Birla Group, has built and cultivated an entire genre of leaders through his 35-year career in some of the country's most prominent organisations, including PepsiCo, Nokia, Philips Consumer Electronics and HUL. He has been a Chief Executive Officer for half his career and was one of the youngest CEOs in India in 2003. He will share perspectives on what it takes for leaders to redefine old boundaries and get the most out of their people.

Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2022

## Luncheon

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

### Getting the Best out of the C-Suite

2:00 PM - 3:15 PM

**VS Parthasarathy**, Vice Chairman, Allcargo Logistics



Cross-functional collaboration helps you get the best out of your teams. However, most business leaders think about this concept narrowly: as a value to cultivate amongst their people rather than a skill they need to learn themselves. Most CEOs themselves have had exposure to just one function through their career – Finance and Marketing being the two most common. Therefore, their understanding of the challenges and dilemmas of the rest of their C-suite team

can sometimes be limited. With minimal cross-functional experiences of their own, they manage their direct reports through the eyes of their own functional training. Can this be a limiting factor – one they are not even aware of?

**VS Parthasarathy** (popularly known as ‘Partha’) is an individual with an unusual background. Over his 35 working years, he has held leadership roles in three distinct functions at the Mahindra Group – Finance, IT, and HR – before going to assume the business leadership role for the mobility services sector. He is currently Vice Chairman at Allcargo Logistics. Partha will leverage his experience of working through multiple functions to share a perspective on how the CEO can get the best out of the C-suite.

### Ride through the Mythical Backwaters

3:30 PM - 6:30 PM

*The Poovar Backwater Cruise*



One of the best ways to enjoy the rush of adrenaline is to go speed boating in Kovalam. Take a ride on the boat and enjoy the elegant beauty of the seashore as it passes you by. High velocity and strong waves make this water sport an exhilarating experience that might make one queasy from the thrills.

## Dinner

7:45 PM onwards



Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2022

## Geopolitical Risks: No Longer on the Periphery

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

**Pramit Pal Chaudhuri**, Foreign Editor at the Hindustan Times



The biggest external risk to India's growth outlook is the escalation of geopolitical tensions, especially as it spreads to the Asian region. The Russia-Ukraine crisis exacerbated global divisions, which were already hardening in the wake of China's growing assertiveness and a worldwide shift towards political nationalism. As flashpoints involving China with Taiwan and India mature to a point of potential conflict, these fault lines will only deepen. This will create burdensome challenges for businesses as regulations involving international supply chains, trade and investment, taxation, fund flows, IP and the movement of people will all become subject to geopolitical considerations as opposed to economic ones.

**Pramit Pal Chaudhuri**, Foreign Editor at the Hindustan Times, is a specialist in the field of geopolitics and its interplay with the economy. A senior journalist, he is presently a Fellow and Head of Strategic Affairs at the Ananta Aspen Centre of India and an advisor to two consultancies, the Rhodium Group and BowerGroupAsia. Pramit has been a Member of the Indian government's National Security Advisory Board for four years. He will present his views on how global power systems and Asia's security architecture are shifting in profound ways.

## Discussion Break

10:45 AM – 11:15 AM

## Power Play: India's Shifting Political Landscape

11:15 AM - 12:15 PM

**Rajat Sethi**, Political Strategist and Adviser to State Governments



The electoral success of the BJP reversed a decades-old trend of weak coalitions and wafer-thin majorities where reforms were sacrificed at the altar of populism in a battle for political survival. The rise of Mr Modi promised to change all that. But the reality is rarely so simple, and deep into the BJP's second term today, India's political economy still remains something of an enigma. Many significant changes – the Aadhar-mobile-based financial revolution, subsidy reforms, the drop in political corruption, the provision of basic amenities and the nation's revitalised military posture – have been implemented with a scale and efficiency India has never known. At the same time, some economic priorities – privatisation, fiscal reforms, tax reforms, ease of doing business – have received less attention. As one analyst put it, while the historical template of economic policy making in India has been expelled, its replacement is as yet still evolving. How is this phenomenon likely to play out in the coming years?

**Rajat Sethi**, a key contributor to the BJP's political strategy as well as economic policy positions, will provide a perspective on these issues. Rajat has degrees from the Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, and spent the first ten years of his career in the corporate world. Subsequently, he joined the BJP where he played a key role in its electoral successes through the use of new-age analytical tools. Thereafter, he has been an Advisor to the Chief Ministers of Jharkhand and Manipur, and is also a Senior Research Fellow at India Foundation, an economic and policy think tank.

## Change of Hats

12:15 PM – 12:20 PM

## How CEOs Can – and Should – Lead the Charge in CX

12:20 PM – 1:20 PM

**Shivakumar Ganesan**, Co-founder and CEO, Exotel



Improving the consumer experience (CX) has become a top CEO priority as a way for companies to attract and hold onto the best customers. Leading businesses are aware that they are in the customer-experience industry and that 'how' an organisation serves its clients is becoming to matter just as much as 'what' it offers. Therefore, it is imperative that businesses focus on the entire, end-to-end client experience. What does it take to design a CX strategy that drives business outcomes? What role can CEOs play in shaping consumer experiences? What are the pitfalls to avoid? What cutting-edge technologies may businesses use to build an enduring CX?

**Shivakumar Ganesan** (popularly known as 'Shivku') is the Co-founder and CEO of Exotel, Asia's leading full-stack customer engagement platform. Shivku has over two decades of experience in designing new products and services with highly consumer-centric companies. Previously, he worked at Yahoo! as a Product Manager and at Flipkart as the Vice President of Products and Technology. He is also the founder of Roopit, a medium-agnostic C2C marketplace. Shivku will draw upon his experience to share learning from companies that achieved breakthrough results in delivering exceptional customer experience.



Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2022

## Sadhya Lunch

1:20 PM – 2:20 PM

No trip to Kerala can be complete without the experience of the traditional ‘Sadya’ – a wonderful, multi-course meal served to guests as a community and in traditional Malayali style. Join delegates for this wonderful sit-down luncheon.

## Bridging the Old and the New: A Dialogue with a Current Generation Promoter

2:20 PM – 3:20 PM

**Vineet Agarwal**, Managing Director, Transport Corporation of India



Historically, India was dominated by promoter-led businesses. Some withered away as the economy transformed but a handful went on to become world-class corporations. One such fine example is Transport Corporation of India (TCI), one of India’s largest logistics companies. Established in the 1950s as a trucking company, it has today become the country’s foremost integrated multimodal supply chain solutions company. **Vineet Agarwal**, the current generation promoter-leader who took over the business in 1996, stewarded this transformation. While it has a lot to do with technology, modern work practices, aligning with market trends etc, it is at some level a story of coalescing the ‘best of the old and the new’: combining the raw instincts and loyalties in a promoter-driven company with the technically superior practices imbibed from research-driven or ‘professionally-run’ organisations. There is much the two can learn from each other.

In a candid discussion, Vineet will reflect upon the learnings and lessons he drew upon from TCI’s historical legacy and those he had to discard. In the process, he would seek to offer lessons that other businesses can learn from TCI’s experiences.

## Discussion Break

3:20 PM – 3:35 PM

## The New CEO-CHRO Partnership

3:35 PM - 5:00 PM

**Srikanth Karra**, CHRO, Mphasis

**Rachna Mukherjee**, CHRO, Schneider Electric India

**Prasad Rajappan**, Founder and MD, ZingHR



Srikanth Karra



Rachna Mukherjee



Prasad Rajappan

Traditionally, the CEO’s strategic role was to articulate the company’s vision while the CHRO’s was to translate it into culture and processes for the people on the ground. That version of the CEO-CHRO partnership was summarily tossed out in the wake of the pandemic as the entire executive leadership found itself thrown into unfamiliar roles and relationships. Today, as we return to a ‘new’ normal, the world seems an unfamiliar place. Employee mindsets have changed, business models have been upended and at a deep, visceral level, all of us as individuals think differently about concepts like ‘work’, ‘job’, ‘performance’ and ‘reward’. Quite frankly, the business lexicon itself is being rewritten. Driving a high-performance culture, developing a future-ready leadership pipeline and ensuring organisational cohesiveness have, therefore, acquired new dimensions as management challenges. What contours should the new CEO-CHRO partnership take in this context? Where might they fall short in meeting the expectations of the other in this most crucial of executive partnerships?

Join us in a free-wheeling dialogue with two veteran CHROs, one from a Services background and the other from the brick-and-mortar world, and one specialist. **Srikanth Karra**, CHRO at Mphasis, is an industry veteran and seasoned human resources officer with over 30 years of experience in business-focused, innovative, HR systems and processes. Previously, he has worked with companies like ITC, Aztec Software, GECIS, Syntel, Airtel and HP India. **Rachna Mukherjee**, CHRO at Schneider Electric India, carries a diverse experience of over 25 years in multiple areas across the HR domain. Previously, she was with Aircel and has played key strategic roles in organisations such as Microsoft, IBM, Escotel Mobile Communications, NIC and Blue Star – Hewlett Packard. **Prasad Rajappan** is the Founder and MD of ZingHR, a global enterprise cloud HR applications provider working to simplify Human Capital Management. Prasad has over three decades of experience and has previously worked with companies like M&M, EY, Reliance and SAP.

Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2022

## Sundowner Experience

*Leela Sky Bar*

5:15 PM – 6:30 PM



Gear up for the ‘ultimate sunset experience’ from Leela’s sunset deck that oversees the vast expanse of the Arabian Sea. The deck is a cosy place to sit, relax and sip your bubbly even as the sun bids goodbye.

## Laugh it off with Stand-up Comedy

*Neeti Palta, Award-winning Comedian*

7:30 PM - 8:15 PM



Put your hands together for an entertaining live show with **Neeti Palta**, an award-winning comedian, who has been a part of the comedy scene since its inception in India. With a writing background in advertising and TV, she draws influences from real-life experiences, humans and our Indian innateness. Neeti will tickle your funny bone and at the same time stimulate your intellect.

## Dinner

8:15 PM onwards



Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2022

## Cyber Security: It is Not About IT Alone

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

**Amit Dubey**, Author, Innovator, National Cyber Security Expert and Crime Investigator



Cyber crimes have dramatically evolved in nature and scope in the last few years. Recent data by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN), the government's nodal cyber security agency, shows that cyber security attacks increased by 500% since the lockdown in March 2020. The majority of data breaches are on account of human errors. However, there is a silver lining to this. If executives are educated to identify and respond to such threats in advance, the bulk of breach incidents could be avoided. What should companies do to safeguard their systems? What must CXOs and business leaders be mindful of, at an individual level?

**Amit Dubey** is a National Security Expert and a Crime Investigator on Cyber Forensics and Ethical Hacking for various Indian investigation agencies and Police departments. A prolific speaker on TV, radio and YouTube, Amit is frequently invited by arms of the government, including defence forces, to train their cyber professionals. He is the author of two books, *Hidden Files: Tales of Cyber Crime Investigation* and *Return of the Trojan Horse: Tales of Criminal Investigation*, which include learnings from some of his more thrilling cases. Amit, through real-life examples, will provide guidance on how to improve personal security consciousness and avoid common pitfalls, and share case examples of companies that have been victims of cyber-crime.

## Discussion Break

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

## Leadership Lessons from the Armed Forces

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

**Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan**, Former Director-General of Assam Rifles



Having the confidence and character to become a better version of yourself and create value for others are key factors that constitute leadership. The armed forces have many lessons to offer because virtually every situation an organisation faces has been previously encountered and resolved in the Army. After all, the Army grooms its leaders to take men into battle without pay hikes, ESOPs or any material incentives. They are expected to deliver each and every time and the price of failure is far higher than in any other human endeavour. **Lt Gen Shokin Chauhan**, the former Director-General of Assam Rifles who has served at the apex level in the Ministry of Defence and Home Affairs, will offer valuable leadership lessons that lend themselves to application across domains.

## Brunch and Close

12:00 PM onwards

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