



# GLOBAL ADVISORY BOARD 2024

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## NEW DELHI



Professor **Ajay Dube** has taught International Studies at the JNU since 1995. He is Editor-in-Chief of the quarterly Brill from the Netherlands, and President, Organisation of Diaspora Initiatives, New Delhi. A specialist on Diaspora issues, author of 10 books and dozens of articles, he has guided over 60 Ph.D students.

## NEW DELHI



**Dr A Didar Singh**, is a former Secretary to the Government of India in which capacity he oversaw the activities of the erstwhile Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. He has held many eminent positions, including that of Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

## NEW DELHI



**Mr Amarendra Khatua** was part of the Vajpayee Government's Pravasi engagement during its inception when he served as Minister, Office of the Ambassador-at-Large for NRIs and PIOs, in New York between 2000 and 2005. Subsequently he became India's Ambassador to Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone.

## TOKYO



**Mr Anil Raj** is Founder, Rajgroup. A former technie-banker with Credit Suisse, Dresdner, Shinsei and Citi, he's a serial international entrepreneur operating NehaNTech—IT company Nirvanam—chain of Indian restaurants, Starkids—international kindergarten, manpower and India-Japan consulting. He's instrumental in bringing the first batch of Indian construction workers to Japan.

## NEW YORK



**Mr Ashook Ramsaran** is the President of the Indian Diaspora Council. Of Indo-Guyanese origin and settled in New York, he has in the past been President of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) International. He is a Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardee.

## PARIS



**Mrs Christelle Mandjiny**, former banker with France's largest bank, is a Paris-based environmental and social activist. She writes fictions on the unknown and hidden history of the indentured labor system practiced by the French in their colonies following abolition of slavery. Of Indo-Guadeloupean origin, she remains spiritually connected to India.

## DURBAN



**Dr Dasarath Chetty** is President of Research Committee 10 at the International Sociological Association, Visiting Professor at the Wuppertal University, Germany, Adjunct Professor at the Durban University of Technology, former ProVice-Chancellor at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He is on the Advisory Board of MAHSA University in KL, Malaysia.

## JAIPUR



**Dr Gauri Shankar Gupta** was Ambassador of India to Mongolia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat. His books include Unraveling Mysteries of Life-Modern Science and Ancient Wisdom, Science and Spirituality, Limits of Consumption-Environmental Degradation and Ancient Wisdom, Mongolia-The Land of Blue Skies.

## REUNION ISLAND



**Dr Jean Regis Ramsamy** is a prominent historian, journalist and author in the Indian Francophone diaspora whose aspirations he's articulated at several world events including the PBD. He has been decorated with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award in 2021. He spearheaded a campaign for an Indian memorial in Reunion Islands.



## KUALA LUMPUR



**Dr Kamalanathan Sappani's** grandparents emigrated to Malaysia in the 1930s. He practiced in Malaysia's Health Ministry. For two years he was Secretary, GOPIO International and built up an impressive network among PIOs across Asia-Pacific. He works to preserve Indic culture. His firm develops IT systems for excellence in patient care.



## LOS ANGELES



**Mr Kewal Kanda** founded GOPIO-LA (2013), was part of the core team for the RPBD in LA (2015) and chaired a diaspora committee to celebrate 75 years of Indian Independence in Southern California in August 2022. A mechanical engineer, he moved to the US in 1976 and served Boeing Co.

## GEORGETOWN, GUYANA



**Dr Kumar Mahabir** is a full-time anthropologist at the University of Guyana. He earlier served University of Trinidad and Tobago. An author of 12 books, he is the recipient of the Hummingbird Silver medal, distinguished alumni award from UWI, A. Curtis Wilgus Grant, and Organization of American States (OAS) Fellowship.

## LONDON



**Lord Rami Ranger** is Chairman of Sun Mark Ltd. His firm has been decorated with the Queen's Export Excellence Award a record five times in a row—a British record. He is Chairman of the British Sikh Association, and has donated over a million pounds to the Conservative Party.

## MAURITIUS



**Mr Mookhesswur Choonee**, GOSK, is the President of GOPIO International, Mauritius and the Founder President of the International Indentured Labour-Girmitiyas Foundation. He has served as Cabinet Minister in the Mauritius Government for multiple terms over 14 years and has been his country's Ambassador to India for five years.

## SAN JOSE



**Mr Niraj Baxi** is Co-Founder of the Asian American Hotel Owner's Association (AAHOA), past President of the GOPIO International, past President and Chairman of the National Federation of Indian Americans (NFIA). A third generation insurance and finance professional, he's been a former Charter Member of the The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE).

## AMSTERDAM



**Drs Rajindre Tewari** is Global Chairman, GOPIO's Cultural Council, Secretary General, EU-India Council. As past Chairman of the Netherlands India Chamber he led trade missions to India. He is CEO of Mahler Emerging Markets Investment, Chairman of IEFPP India Pvt. Ltd, and past chairman of Holland's fourth largest pension fund.

## MAURITIUS



**Dr Sarita Boodhoo** is Chairperson of the Bhojpuri Speaking Union under the aegis of Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage, Mauritius. On behalf of her Government she set up the World Hindi Secretariat between 1997 and 2001. Well-versed in Indology, she has an abiding interest in Indian Diasporic studies.

## SAN JOSE



**Mr Sayantan Chakravarty** is Editor and Publisher of India Empire magazine, a monthly started in October 2004 with a specialization in Indian Diaspora and international diplomacy. A career journalist, his writings have featured in the *Best of Indian Express of 25 years* and *Best of India Today of 25 years*.

## HAMILTON



**Mrs Suman Kapoor** is a past regional coordinator for GOPIO International's Oceania region. She is the immediate past president of the National Council of Women, Hamilton. She has made valuable contributions to ethnic communities in New Zealand. She received a Times Now award in 2013, and dozens of other recognitions.

## BRISBANE



**Mr Umesh Chandra, OAM**, is the Publisher of Brisbane India Times and the Owner/Presenter at Australian Indian Radio. He is also President of the Queensland Multicultural Council, Chairperson of the Human Rights Council, and a life member of GOPIO International. In 2020, he was decorated with the Order of Australia Medal.

## PORT OF SPAIN



**Mr Winston Dookeran** has served as Acting Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the country's Foreign Minister, and Finance Minister. Currently he's Professor of Practice at The University of the West Indies. He's been honored with Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award and the Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

