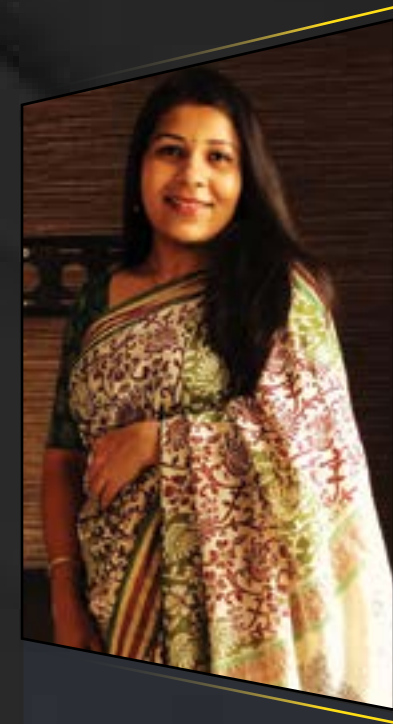


# Connect

February 2021

The magazine for alumni of member firms of EY Global in India



## Our Alumni heroes

Serving the community  
to make a difference

# Welcome

## EY Alumni

Welcome to the eighth edition of EY's annual alumni magazine, Connect.

I hope each of you and your families are safe and doing well.

The last year has been unprecedented at many levels. The pandemic disrupted our lives in an unimaginable way and reshaped the ways in which we conduct ourselves and our businesses.

I would like to share my condolences for our friends and colleagues who have experienced losses or have been nursing family or friends through illness during this time. It is never easy, but the last year was particularly tough, and I hope you get through it stronger on the other side.

However, on a more positive note, there have also been moments to pause and reflect, to be thankful for what we have and adapt to newer ways of life. In this edition of the Connect magazine, we are sharing how we all - you and us at EY - have come together to maneuver through the pandemic which also gave us an unparalleled opportunity to be there for each other, serve the society at large and be #StrongerTogether. As the cover story, we are proud to present a few exceptional contributions of our alumni along with EY initiatives with and for the society, government and businesses. These contributions are a reinforcement of our long serving purpose of building a better working world.

In this edition of the magazine, in addition to the firm and people update, we also bring our conversation with Rajiv Pillai, Group CFO at EuroKids. The interview highlights his interesting professional journey and personal milestones, which I am certain you will enjoy reading.

We also pay homage to our dear friend, Samir Bangara. Many of you would know him and would agree that his untimely demise in an unfortunate accident has left a void in many hearts, lives and the industry.

These are special times and it becomes more important that we are truly connected and are there for each other. The connection fostered among our current and former colleagues is extremely important to us. We have constantly endeavored to make this program, of almost 12,000 registered members, meaningful and relevant. We are committed to creating platforms that make this network special, especially in this digital and virtual world, a network that helps you grow both personally and professionally.

We would like to thank you for your continued support and your contribution to our initiatives and making our alumni program what it is today.

I would also like to use this opportunity to wish you and your family a very happy and healthy 2021.

Happy reading, and we hope you will write in to us with feedback at [eyindia.alumni@in.ey.com](mailto:eyindia.alumni@in.ey.com).

#StaySafe #StayConnected #Stay Positive #StayInspired

Warm regards,  
Farokh Balsara



**Farokh Balsara**  
Partner Sponsor  
India Alumni Program

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*The views expressed are personal to the individuals as profiled in the alumni interviews/articles.*



## Rajiv Memani

Chairman, India Region  
Chairman, Global Emerging Markets Committee

# Learning to dance in the rain

Hello everyone.

My warmest wishes to you all! It is always a pleasure to connect with you. The last year has been a challenging year for us all and I hope you and your families are keeping well. Indeed, one of the most important lessons coming out of COVID-19 is about supporting each other and staying connected, albeit virtually in the current times. Our endeavor, therefore, will continue to provide you, our Alumni, with opportunities to connect with each other and with EY. Clearly, this period is set to go down in history as one of the most life-altering. While disruption in the geo-political, economic and business arenas has been a trend for the last few years, COVID-19 threw us a curveball, creating a fundamental shift in the way we live and work.

At EY, we witnessed transformation at an accelerated pace across all areas and had to respond quickly. I am sharing with you below the highlights from our journey last year.

## Our #1 priority in the pandemic

The safety and wellbeing of our people. We have provided every assistance to our people impacted by COVID-19 including facilitating repatriation, while also taking steps to ensure the overall wellbeing of the organization.

Earlier in the year, to transition into a work from home environment, we accelerated the adoption of collaboration technologies and scaled up our IT infrastructure. A big shout out to our IT team who continue to provide excellent support.

As we adjusted to remote working, the priority was to keep the entire team positive and the Talent team has done a tremendous job here. A holistic well-being platform, including counsellor and medical support is available, in addition to multiple interventions such as "Chai, Coffee and Conversations", "virtual Antakshris", new virtual hobby clubs etc. We are also tracking the sentiment of our people very closely and are now doing our People Pulse Surveys every quarter as against every year earlier.

Meanwhile, as the country's overall pandemic management has improved, we are also offering an opportunity to our people to

come to office based on their comfort or for any deliverable that requires them to be in office. Our Facilities and Administration teams have done a remarkable job across India to ensure that all our offices are compliant with the norms on social distancing, health and hygiene.

We also doubled down on our virtual learning efforts, with the organization clocking 1 million learning hours on online platforms like Udemy and EY Badges. The highlight this year is the launch of the EY Tech MBA globally, in partnership with Hult Business School and available to all our people at no cost. This first of its kind MBA will help our people combine the power of technology skills with a leadership mindset.

Even as we stepped up our efforts to support our people during a pandemic, I am pleased that we have also continued to accelerate our diversity and inclusion agenda by including neuro diversity in our talent hiring efforts. Last year, we hired five neuro diverse candidates in member firms in India and are committed to advancing this important priority in the coming years.

## Addressing evolving priorities of our clients

The impact of the pandemic varied in different sectors with some affected more than others. At the beginning of the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown, the primary focus of clients was on immediate cash saving measures and business continuity. Staying connected with our clients and ensuring that we responded swiftly with solutions that they needed was our foremost priority. As things have settled into the new normal, we have seen a shift towards long-term transformative thinking - clients are increasingly focused on building agility and resilience in their businesses to deal with any disruption as also the phenomenal changes in consumer behavior that the pandemic has brought about.

For us, technology and digital have been the bedrock of addressing many of our client priorities as they have significantly accelerated their digital adoption during the pandemic. In addition, themes such as capital agenda, compliance and risk, considering the several regulatory changes, continue to be on top of clients' minds.

## Working with governments to fight COVID-19

Our Government & Public Services practice was at the forefront of helping state and central governments, truly bringing our purpose of building a better working world to life. Over a 1,000 team-members were engaged in COVID-related support to the central and several state governments on emergency response and pandemic preparedness, food and health security and economic assistance.



## Providing meals and relief to the needy

I feel humbled that we were able to help numerous disadvantaged groups throughout the crisis, not only through cash contributions but also by providing meals to stranded migrant workers using the strength and reach of our Foundation across the country. With the support of 26 NGO partners in 11 cities, we enabled 5.6 million meals for more than 250,000 people. In addition, all member firms in India made a significant contribution towards the Prime Minister CARES Fund. A significant number of our partners and people also volunteered their personal time to help with procurement of medical infrastructure, distribute meals and support the needy.

## Our business performance and areas of growth

The strict lockdown imposed by the government in the early months brought business activity to a halt, which impacted our business too. However, given the strong economic bounce back in the last six months, our business has also seen good momentum and we are back on our growth trajectory for the year.

As our clients, both in government and private businesses, embark upon their technology-led transformation journey, we are strengthening our capabilities in emerging technology roles and are significantly hiring talent in various technology roles across all member firms and the Global Delivery Center.

Like India, the global firm also finished the year strong in our financial year ending June 2020, even though we had three months of the pandemic impact. I believe that the NextWave strategy unveiled by the CEO, Carmine Di Sibio, has provided the firm a solid direction that has helped us not only navigate these uncertain times but also kept us committed to creating long-term value for all stakeholders including our people, clients and the society.

As we take pride in the way we have weathered the storm and celebrate our progress amidst unprecedentedly difficult times, I would like to also acknowledge the several challenges, including person loss, that many people have suffered during this period. We have been fortunate in many ways and are also mindful of the greater role we need to play in supporting holistic growth and progress of the wider society we are a part of.

# Thank you, our Alumni!

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I would like to share my deepest gratitude with you - our Alumni - who have supported us in every endeavor. This issue of the Alumni Connect also brings together the collective response of our alumni to COVID-19 as also of our organization, including our people.

Please do stay connected with us through the **EY Global Alumni Community** and other networking platforms that are available to you. I thank you once again for your continuing support and look forward to staying in touch.

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# Alumni heroes

From feeding stranded labourers to using social platforms to flag problems, here are some stories of our EY alumni who stepped up and served the larger community selflessly in the fight against COVID-19.

[Click below to read more stories](#)

## Fighting Hunger with Robin Hood Army

Arti Khandelwal



Arti Khandelwal worked with EY in the Audit team, Delhi, from 1994 till 1999.

Arti has been volunteering with Robin Hood Army (RHA) for some time now. RHA is a volunteer-based organization that works to get surplus food from restaurants to the less fortunate sections of the society in cities across India and 12 other countries.

Amid lockdown, she along with other volunteers visited several areas including slums in Delhi and villages in Noida, UP to distribute cooked food/ration and medicines to people in need, with the involvement of generous donors, local administration, and local police. RHA received many calls for help which were first verified, and aid was made available in whatever form needed.

They also reached out to senior citizens living alone to provide them groceries and medicines, as part of an initiative called **Senior Patrol**. Safety precautions and social distancing norms were always maintained.

Volunteers at RHA are **scouting villages and clusters** to get an estimate of people who need ration. Teams of courageous volunteers, observing safety precautions, are compiling detailed lists of families in these areas. Ration bags, called '**Bag of Smiles**', will be distributed to each family.

Working with RHA has been an immensely humbling experience for Arti. The enthusiasm and resourcefulness of fellow volunteers is amazing. To see a smile on the face of a child, to see people happy with so little, makes Arti aware of how much we can do, and so easily, to help the less privileged.

A few instances where they helped, captured by the camera.



## Volunteering with the Government for solving the challenges on ground

(The alumnus has requested anonymity)

The alumnus worked with EY in the GPS team, Gurgaon, from 2014 till 2018

The alumnus addresses the issues of vulnerable segments and sustainable aspects of delivery in Health, Nutrition and Dietary Diversity with as part of his work at his current organization, **Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI)**.

In response to COVID, he has worked directly with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to shape policy for private market engagement to tackle COVID, and then followed up with the procurement strategy for testing kits.

He supported the Madhya Pradesh Government to strategize the response while addressing the resuming of other nutrition and health services.

Apart from that, he volunteered to work with the Rajasthan Government to make the first migrant portal, and with the Odisha Government to create upskilling (reverse migrants) and state package for agriculture support.

At the community level, he has gathered responses from his condominium to support a daily wage workers colony near the area he lives and one old age home. They have been contributing an average of ~Rs 1500 per month from 200 families.

‘The saddest thing in life is to see people suffer from hunger and poverty in a world of plenty.’

Mouloud Benzadi

## Feeding the needy, selflessly and going beyond money to contribute

Ankit Goenka



Ankit worked with a member firm of EY Global in India, Gurgaon, from 2006 till 2009

He is a member of a foundation called ‘PREM foundation’ in Kanpur, which provides food to needy people on a daily basis.

The foundation has been providing food at hospitals, meals on wheels outside hospitals, and meals to migrant labourers on the roads during COVID-19. He shared his experience when he went to distribute food (photos on the right) for a couple of days during the COVID-19 lockdown crisis. Ankit helped the team in distributing food in trains carrying migrant labours and their families.

“Although one may contribute money for a cause, I believe it is also important to take out time and participate in initiatives without expecting anything in return - that gives one a great sense of satisfaction.”



## Together in the fight for survival

Sunil Sharma



Sunil worked with EY in the consulting team, Gurgaon, from 2009 till 2015.

Sunil started a Not-for-Profit organization (NGO) named People for Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Mankind (PREM) which serves underprivileged communities, such as construction labourers and their families, through different initiatives.

In January 2020, PREM started its first Non-Formal Education (NFE) Centre in Sector 51, Gurgaon, India for the children of construction labourers and enrolled 40 children in the first month. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this initiative was kept on hold until the situation normalized. However, it did not stop the foundation looking at other options to serve the society.

Due to the lockdown, daily wage workers, construction workers, contract labourers and street vendors were the ones who were badly hit and started moving back to their native places. These groups of people lost their only source of income and had no means to meet their daily needs, such as food and basic hygiene. PREM started an initiative by providing packs of raw food and basic hygiene material, and was able to serve 2000 impacted individuals by distributing 8000 kgs of raw food material (A pack contains 5 kgs of rice/ flour, 2 kgs of pulses, red chilli, turmeric, cumin seeds, 1 litre cooking oil, 1 kg of salt, 2 packets of biscuits, 1 soap bar and a pack of sanitary napkins).



When the initiative was started, it did not have any monetary support and there were no volunteers. They created a poster and started circulating it within their family, friends, residential societies and on social media to get support for impacted families. They managed to collect INR 4 lacs (approx.) through individual donations and volunteers and played a role in distributing food to those in need.

The initiative was then rolled out in coordination with the District Red Cross Society, Gurgaon to bring about a more efficient and effective distribution approach.

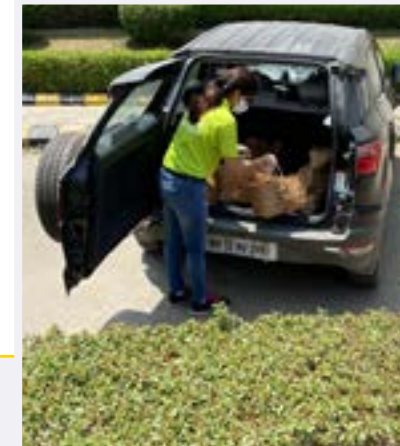
## Fighting the hunger, together

Karan Puri



Karan worked with EY in the Tax team, Gurgaon, from 2011-2012.

As a resident of his society (Sector 51 Gurgaon, Orchid Island), he was a part of a community initiative where he contributed 82 cooked meals for distribution at nearby needy areas. The meals were collected and distributed in neighbouring slums. Karan shares, "We understand this human suffering and why such a situation should have never emerged. We are contributing ration, clothing and money, however little, to help tide over, at least a few. We are also creating awareness and lending our voices to help their plight. #Gurgaon! let's do more to fight hunger, together!"





Click below to read more stories

## #GoMumbai initiative for meal distribution

Farhat Navlakhi Saxena



Farhat worked with EY in the business consulting team, Mumbai, from 2008 till 2015.

She started #GoMumbai initiative with generous support from biryani lovers who stood with her and her team. They distributed over 9,345 meals to the needy.

About 350 Indian meals were made and packed each afternoon including wholesome dal, khichdis with fresh vegetables. Everything was prepared in hygienic kitchens where the staff was masked, suitably sanitised and temperature-checked each day.

Most of the meals were distributed via charity organizations and NGOs like Nobody Ever Sleeps Hungry (NESH), and Giants Group of Byculla. Representatives from these organizations collected hot meal boxes each evening from GO! Biryani's kitchen and personally distributed them to the needy residents in various pre-designated spots in the Western Suburbs in Mumbai, India.



## Serving stranded labourers during pandemic

Atul Hurkat



Atul worked with a member firm of EY Global in India, Pune, from 2007 till 2008.

Atul wanted to do something for the stranded labourers who suffered a lot during the nationwide lockdown. Moved with the innovative idea to feed them during the day and at night, they started to collect prepared food from colonies and carried it in cars along

the district boundaries of Wardha on NH 7- Hyderabad Nagpur Highway.

They started with a team of 4, and soon other people too started joining their mission of feeding stranded labourers. It started with 50- 100 labourers/students/families in a day and increased to 1000-1200 by the end of lockdown 1 and 1500-1700 labours by the end of lockdown 2.

In this initiative, Atul and his group was supported by a team of one of the volunteer organisations in India, which helped in getting information on walking labourers and distribution of food. A team of schoolteachers prepared food and another team collected donations from dal mills and vegetable vendors, grocery shops for community kitchen. There also was a team who carried food on vehicles to each distribution location and a total of more than 30,000 labours were fed over 2.5 months.



### Local funds raising, food kits preparation and distribution

Atul has been associated with the initiative of providing food and ration kits to the needy in areas of Hinganghat, Maharashtra with the help of various other social organisations and Government authorities. Their team was involved in preparing, packaging and loading kits for distribution. They distributed over 24,000 food kits to the needy in Hinganghat in partnerships with various social organisations.

## Social media for social causes

Amrita Bhinder



Amrita worked with EY in the team, New Delhi, from 2006 till 2007.

In the nationwide lockdown, our EY alumna, Amrita Bhinder, columnist and social activist, also got a sense of the 'all-important' role technology could play when she used a social media platform (Twitter) for [flagging](#) a delay in the supply of medicines to her neighborhood chemist, to the Chief Minister of Haryana. She got to know that the local chemist had run out of insulin stocks as the delivery was getting delayed due to the travel restrictions on cross border movement. Fearing a shortage of insulin for not only herself but also others in the community, she flagged it off to the concerned authorities.

Not only did she get a response within minutes assuring that the issue would be looked into, and if need be, they also offered to help by providing insulin. She got a response from [police officials](#), providing clear instructions that allowed essential items including medicines. She also received assurance that she could reach out if she came across any more issues in the future. After having reported the challenge the area where she lived has not faced any shortage of medicines at the local drug store.

Social media makes it possible for people to seek help beyond physical distances. In another such instance, she was tagged in a [tweet](#) where an ambulance was required to shift a cancer patient from a small town Belagavi to Bengaluru in India. While the District Collector's permission was taken by the concerned party, it was at 1 am when this emergency arose. She [tweeted](#) to the Bengaluru Police's Twitter handle along with the city's commissioner of Police and the Union Health Minister of India, Dr. Harsh Vardhan. Within a few minutes, Bengaluru Police [responded](#) by marking the state's Department of Information and Public Relations COVID-19 team, which [informed](#) that they were in contact with the person and assistance would be provided. Thereafter, she was updated by the official Twitter handle COVID19: Home Quarantine-Karnataka that the patient was enroute Bengaluru in an ambulance and that they were available if any further assistance was needed.



## Supporting boathouse owners of Srinagar

Swati Sharma



Swati worked with EY in the tax team, Pune, from 2013-2015.

She has been trying to collect funds through a crowd funding campaign she started for Kashmiri boathouse owners of Dal Lake, Srinagar, who are facing aggravated hardships during the pandemic. They have lost livelihoods since a few years now and are living in poor conditions. Their boats are in damaged conditions due to lack of funds due to insurgencies, and a huge fire that broke last year. The pandemic had deprived them of the means to obtain daily food and much needed medicines.



# EY's response to COVID-19

Supporting our governments  
and communities to address  
the Covid-19 challenge

Many of our team members were and are still at the frontlines, working tirelessly with the authorities in ground-zero conditions, sometimes beyond the call of duty, playing an active role, in delivering solutions to effectively fighting the many fallouts of this public health emergency.

With our commitment and creativity, we helped Governments and local administrations deliver food security and essential services to citizens, especially migrant labor, who were hit hard by these extraordinary circumstances. Our teams facilitated the delivery of essential medical supplies to healthcare facilities and directing people to the right resources for help, through technology-enabled innovation.

It was heartening to note that we continued to live our purpose in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It's truly commendable to realise what we have achieved together, and I am certain that we will continue to create a positive impact, even as the situation continues to evolve and the challenges reshape themselves with every passing day.

## Helping the Government in emergency response and planning, food and health security, economic development assistance

In barely a few weeks of the COVID-19 outbreak, our Government (GPS) Practice repurposed their ongoing engagements with several central ministries and 19 state governments to help with COVID-19 emergency response, pandemic preparedness, food and health security and economic development assistance. Over 250 team-members - truly COVID-19 warriors - present in over 23 locations, worked along with government officials to fight COVID-19.

## Key areas of intervention

### Pandemic Preparedness, Emergency Response and Monitoring

Our teams helped the state governments in crisis management with staffing of the Chief Minister's emergency control rooms to ensure timely distribution of essential goods and services, identifying and setting up quarantine facilities, medical and hospital supplies, making protective equipment available for healthcare workers, support for approvals to businesses, production and transportation of essential commodities, and monitoring of emergency response with data analytics.

### Technology solutions for speed and scale

#### Techathon 2021

As India grapples with the enormous task of vaccinating 1.3 billion people against COVID-19, EY Techathon 2021 invited university students from all disciplines to come forward and develop novel solutions to immunize Indians, considering the challenges of the country's vast geography, demographics and infrastructure. Participants were to use the latest technologies, develop a model immunization program and present it to an esteemed jury.

The finalists gave a grand-finale presentation to the Jury on 15 February 2021. Team Insane Coders from Thadomal Shahani Engineering College, Mumbai stood winners in the EY Techathon 2021. Their solution enabled vaccine provenance using Blockchain along with increasing vaccine adoption through gamification. The team from Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai were declared as runner ups. Along the way, the students learnt about EY's technologies and platforms, talking to our experts to learn ways of applying new digital paradigms to solve problems. The winners have received exciting cash prizes, along with internship in EY's Technology Consulting team with opportunity to learn how machine learning, data and analytics and automation are changing the working world.

For more information, follow #iSolve4aBillion or visit [ey.com/en\\_in/Techathon](https://ey.com/en_in/Techathon).

### Main safe to aap bhi safe

Our teams pan-India collaborated in record time to produce the 'Main safe to aap bhi safe' video, now 'live' on all Mygov.in digital and social channels, including the government's Aarogya Sethu app. The video was produced on our own initiative and completely in-house by an enthusiastic group of GPS team-members along with our design center. What makes it totally unique is the fact that many female colleagues across EY, in spite of no prior experience rose to the occasion for translation and voice dubbing into 12 different languages. The video has been highly appreciated by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.

[Click here to view this video](#)



We have developed an app, rolled out in various states which uses geotagging to update users on their location, relative to the spread of the virus, facilitates connectivity with medical institutions and enables resource management of the state to accelerate relief measures. We have also built technology platforms to enable governments to issue ePasses and an app that helps citizens locate providers of essential services in the city.

## Food Security and Migrant Support

We have helped the state governments of U.P, Gujarat and Bihar to make food grain available to 32 crore vulnerable people during the lockdown. Within just two days, our teams successfully reprogrammed software in 83,000 PDS shops in U.P to add the central government's additional quota of free rations as also thousands of returning migrant laborers as new beneficiaries.

In Maharashtra, we have collated details of 1.35 lakh migrant laborers and are now working with the government in providing them facilities like shelters, food, rations and medical support.

## Economic development initiatives, supporting industry

We helped the Ministry of Tourism launch strandedinindia.com, a dedicated portal to help foreign tourists stranded in India with information and guidance.

## Helping policy-makers and business leaders find solutions

### Providing insight to government leaders

One of our most experienced Partners, who is also widely regarded as a thought leader contributed significant time to provide insights to a very senior government leader and also facilitated conversations with the country's leading CEOs on how the healthcare and essential medical supplies production, distribution and delivery could be accelerated and made more effective. In a very short period, we provided detailed recommendations on economic stimulus and relief to the Niti Aayog and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

### Supporting a CEO cohort

We helped a cohort of 30 CEOs and the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce in Pune on a voluntary initiative to expedite the manufacture of COVID-19 testing kits hospital preparedness.

# Knowledge Our latest insights

[Click to read more](#)



## [COVID-19: projected impact on Indian Private Equity/Venture Capital \(PE/VC\)](#)

The report highlights how General Partners will manage the crisis in 2020 and the projected impact on PE/VC investments, strategies, sectoral analysis, exits and fundraising.



## [Impact of the pandemic on Indian corporate results](#)

This publication provides a summary of the impacts across different corporate sectors and changes in other macro-economic factors during this period. It also contextualizes the pandemic's tangible potential impacts in the times to come.

## [Managing the impact of COVID-19 on India's supply chains](#)

The report outlines the disruptions caused in the sectoral value chains due to the pandemic and provides a roadmap of a strategic plan to return businesses to scale expeditiously.



## [Healthcare goes mobile: evolution of teleconsultation and e-pharmacy in new Normal](#)

The report focuses on digital health, tele consulting and e-pharmacy growth and the need for policy support to provide the right growth momentum.



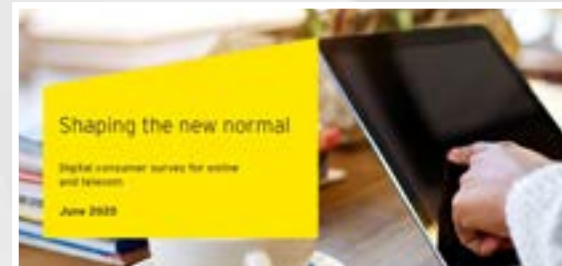
## [India Tax Insights](#)

India Tax magazine shares insights from EY Tax Partners and industry leaders on evolving tax and policy changes, and economic developments. This issue focuses on tax aspects relating to digitalization of the economy.



## [EY GCC Pulse Survey, 2020](#)

The survey highlights the outlook and new trends of Global Capability Centers (GCCs) around five focus areas including, Vision and Strategy, Digital, Talent, Operations and Resilience. It defines their strategy centred on technology enablement and develop an innovation culture.

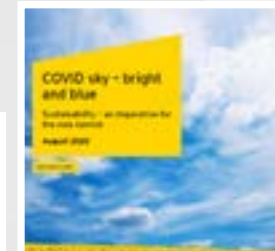


## [Shaping the new normal: Digital consumer survey for online and telecom](#)

The survey report analyses views of 2,600+ consumers to highlight the changing behaviour and perception toward digital services. The EY Digital Consumer Survey reveals that 90% of consumers are connecting more to the virtual world.

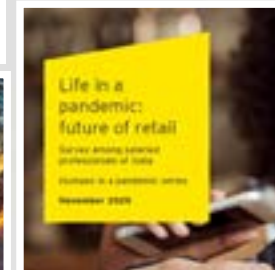
## [Securing a robust and sustainable future for the Indian steel industry](#)

The EY-CII joint study highlights the importance of a unique strategic plan to nurture the future of a robust and a sustainable steel industry in the wake of adequate incentivization for adoption of digital technologies by the Government and private sector investment.



## [Sustainability - an imperative for the new normal](#)

The report emphasizes the need for an environmentally and socially sustainable recovery in the context of the challenges faced by the society beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.



## [Life in a pandemic: future of retail](#)

The report looks at the impact of the pandemic on consumer preferences regarding in-store retail shopping in the wake of digital transformation.



## [How can divesting build resilience and drive value beyond the crisis?](#)

The study is based on responses from 40+ Indian organizations across sectors and focuses on success factors, challenges, collaboration landscape, and growth areas for divestments in India considering the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.



## [Can enterprise intelligence be created artificially?](#)

The EY-NASSCOM report explores the maturity of AI adoption faced by organizations in their enterprise AI journeys. It also highlights the importance of organizations to address the key aspects of talent, data and technology governed by strong risk management framework and realize the transformational benefits of AI.



# Pushing the barriers of excellence

Rajiv Pillai  
Chief Financial Officer, EuroKids International

## Early life

Born and based in Mumbai, Rajiv is a true Mumbaikar. Coming from a middle-class family, his mother worked for the railways and his father worked with a pharmaceuticals firm. Rajiv considers himself fortunate for receiving a good education at a convent school with great teachers, some of whom changed the course of his life. It was during his college days, deeply inspired by his brother-in-law who was a Chartered Accountant and worked for a Big Four, that Rajiv decided to pursue a CA degree.

## Beginning of the EY journey

Rajiv started his career with the prestigious mid-sized firm called Mahajan & Aibara as an article intern. His stint at EY began in 2001, when he got the opportunity to work with the management assurance services practice, now known as business advisory services, which was starting up at that time. As soon as the results of his CA exams came, he was promoted to an associate within 3 months. "I was thrilled when I got the joining letter. It was a big moment in my life," he reminisces. That led to the beginning of Rajiv's EY journey, which he refers to as one of the fondest and the most enriching ones of his career.

## The EY experience - from mundane to the magnificent

At EY, Rajiv's experience straddled across many areas from process audit to integrated IP audit, process advisory, consulting, business advisory, firm cost reduction, market assessment commercial strategy during his 10-year stint. He saw the firm scale up and grow relentlessly. He remembers his decade long journey with EY as a great learning



At EY, we were always pushing the barriers of excellence.



experience. From mundane to the magnificent, is how he describes his initial EY experience. In his initial days he got a chance to do everything from physical verification, to cost reduction and process improvement assignments. He remembers doing assignments across sectors including steel, FMCG, advertising, core manufacturing, and pharmaceuticals. "At EY, we were always pushing the barriers of excellence", he added.

## Of fond memories and relationships at EY

Rajiv recollects working with a very closely-knit group, like a family. When he joined the firm, his practice had about 30 people. By the time he left, the firm had scaled up and there were over 3000 people in the practice with over 10,000 people in the firm. Rajiv used to work at EY's Nariman Point - Express Towers office. He has very fond memories of



The pandemic has presented us with the opportunity to extend our business to a 3 stack model with an online, physical classroom and the hybrid version of online and in-school learning.



breaking bread with his friends at EY. One of the things that Rajiv really misses about his EY experience is traveling across India and the world. "I got to meet so many people across cultures with different perspectives and it really broadened my horizon" he cherishes. He also got a chance to work in the US for the 'India Advantage Program' and served many large clients. At the same time, Rajiv saw a lot of growth and potential in India and decided to come back. Talking about how the EY experience shaped him, "EY had a very rigorous work ethic. The experience with the firm really shaped me in terms of structured thinking, attention to detail, and root cause analysis. There was a strong focus on excellence and every assignment was about delivering value to the client". According to Rajiv, EY has the most amazing client services, which includes understanding client issues and trying to view solutions that matter to the client. "I am fortunate to have learnt all these skills from the stellar professionals that I worked with at the firm", he added.

## Moving on from EY - the second phase of his career

In 2011, Rajiv realised that he had enjoyed doing a variety of work at EY and was desirous of adding more value from the other side of the table i.e. getting industry experience. That is when his stint at Lupin, a global pharmaceutical company, began where he spent close to nine years. Rajiv knew and had worked with Ramesh Swaminathan, CFO, Lupin who provided him the opportunity to join the organization. He mentored Rajiv and gave him the guidance and freedom at work to achieve newer heights. Rajiv joined Lupin as the Head of Corporate Planning and Investor Relations and subsequently led the business finance group. According to him, Lupin was a very fulfilling and different part of his professional career, as he got to experience the business from the perspective of the management and the investor community. He saw the company scale up from a Rs. 5,000 crore turnover to Rs.15,000 crores during this stint. The challenge was to ensure that systems, processes and people keep the pace of the growth. The business finance team was involved in all major transformation initiatives and he is proud of the benchmarks that were set on excellence by the team. He recruited fresh talent and built the business finance team and started the CA training program at Lupin. In his last role at Lupin, he was appointed as the Head of Finance, IT, and procurement for North America, and Finance for Latin America and EMEA.

## Next chapter unfolds - EuroKids International

Rajiv feels that it is important to disrupt and challenge oneself from time to time. When he got an opportunity to join EuroKids International, one of the leading education service providers in



the country, he decided to take it up. Rajiv is the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the KKR-backed company. Talking more about why he decided to join the company, he said, "I had never worked in the education sector, but I believe that it has a great amount of potential. My interaction with the management team and the idea of working in a sector which has such tremendous potential for influencing the development and future of our country further reinforced my decision to join the company".

Rajiv is thoroughly enjoying his time at the company and is very excited about how things are shaping up in the education sector and for the company. Throwing light on how EuroKids is differentiating itself in the market, he says, "Until the pandemic, we were providing education in the school premises, however the pandemic has presented us with the opportunity to extend our business to a 3 stack model with an online, physical classroom and the hybrid version of online and in-school learning."

## India's growth story

Rajiv sincerely believes in India's growth story and feels that the best is yet to come. Particularly after the pandemic, he trusts that the economy and industries are going to bounce back, and investments and growth will be at a much-accelerated pace. Talking more about the pandemic, he says "It has taught us that we are enormously resilient, and the power of the human spirit is undeniable". He further adds that the pandemic has broken all notions and myths of what cannot be done.

"The pandemic surely took away a lot from us, but it has also given us things that we should make a lot more out of," he adds.



## Consulting versus industry

Rajiv believes that working in consulting and the industry has its own set of merits. Consulting provides a diversity of experience, keeps you abreast with newer technologies, and involves taking on the challenges where you are thought leaders to advise clients. He recommends that young professionals should spend some time in consulting in the initial years as it teaches one about how to think from a client perspective, structure thoughts, articulate one's views and have a solution-oriented focus. Talking more about it, he says, while the consultant's job is to recommend, the corporate's job is to implement, and the final execution of recommendations is what resides with the corporates. The common thing across both the roles is - how are we adding value, which also has been Rajiv's guiding principle. "As a professional, whether in consulting or corporate, our responsibility should be to work and deliver three aspects of value: value creation, value protection, and value enablement," he adds.

“

EY had a very rigorous work ethic. The experience with the firm really shaped me in terms of structured thinking, attention to detail, and root cause analysis. There was a strong focus on excellence and every assignment was about delivering value to the client.

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## Work philosophies

Some philosophies that Rajiv learnt at EY and continued to abide by were - getting the right person for the job, overinvesting in people - the people element is central to success, always getting people who are smarter than yourself, consciously rotating people and giving them opportunities to work on different assignments, giving people the freedom to operate and keeping them motivated. "If you focus on integrity, humility, and excellence within teams, you are there!" he adds.

## Beyond work

Rajiv starts his day by playing badminton and it is something that refreshes him every morning. Rajiv thoroughly enjoyed running half marathons in the past and wants to start running again. His dream is to run a triathlon, which is an endurance multisport race consisting of swimming, cycling, and running over various distances. Rajiv is an avid traveller and misses traveling during the COVID times. He wishes to explore most of the Himalayas while trekking and mountaineering. A big foodie himself, Rajiv enjoys meeting new people, embracing new cultures and relishing the food of these cultures. He shares that it is something that he got from EY because of the work travel that he did. He has a keen interest in watching movies and interestingly can watch movies across various languages like Korean and Spanish. He feels that sport and spending time with friends and people one feels happy in the company of, is very important in life. "I am sure that's true for everybody but in life, the four things that I focus on are health, family, work, and friends" he adds.

“

As a professional, whether in consulting or corporate, our responsibility should be to work and deliver three aspects of value: value creation, value protection, and value enablement.

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# Stronger Together at EY

Sandeep Kohli

Partner and Talent Leader | EY India

2020 has been an unprecedented year for the world as we know it. Despite the challenges owing to the pandemic, our people are demonstrating resilience and dedication in helping each other, our clients and our community. As an organization, we are proud to have emerged stronger and more united than before.

Now more than ever, the safety and wellbeing of all EY people has become our top priority and we have taken focussed interventions towards this.

## EY Cares

EY Cares is our commitment to ensuring our people's wellbeing and empowering them to make healthier lifestyle choices while bringing out their best selves. EY Cares is our four-pillar well-being framework, which underpins everything we are doing to support our peoples' well-being and empowering them to take control of their own emotional, physical, social and financial well-being.



### 'Physical wellbeing'

dimension focuses on encouraging and supporting health behaviours, that build endurance and allow for renewal.

### 'Emotional wellbeing'

is about nurturing mental wellness through ongoing learning, resilience and promoting a healthy work environment.

### 'Social wellbeing'

promotes work-life balance and encourages positive interactions and connections with others, both inside and outside of the workplace.

Through **'financial wellbeing'**, our focus is to enable our people with various financial wellbeing benefits while educating and making them aware of financial management.

A host of interventions have been taken in this direction: our full-fledged 'Employee Assistance Program' (EAP), is enabling our people to enhance the emotional, mental and general psychological wellbeing. Our employees can call up and talk to trained psychologists. We have also rolled out online doctor consultations, with an external partner, considering people are hesitant to go to hospitals unless absolutely necessary. Our 'Champion wellbeing series' is helping our people learn from wellbeing experts from across the world.



## A global first EY Tech MBA

EY, globally, has launched a first-of-its-kind EY Tech MBA in collaboration with Hult International Business School for all EY people. A part of our NextWave: Talent strategy, this new program is a global 'first' in the world of business education. Offered free of cost and delivered entirely online, it gives all our people a phenomenal opportunity to build transformative mindsets and tech skillsets imperative to thrive in tomorrow's workplace. It is also a unique opportunity for our people to invest in their future by developing technology skills, a leadership mindset and building their own exceptional EY experience.



## EY Social!

As work from home became the preferred mode of operations, ensuring that our people were equipped with the right support to aid this new way of working was a given, but it became equally important to engage and build morale. With this objective, we introduced our very own virtual platform of hobby clubs to pursue 'passions beyond work' and network with like-minded people in the organization. Through EY Social, we regularly organize contests, workshops, and sessions with experts - to ensure that our people stay connected with their interests outside of work.



As we find a way to cope with this new normal, our purpose of *Building a better working world* has never been more evident - albeit now in an increasingly virtual working world.

## Personalized learning

Our EY Learning model offers customized learning journeys along with granting our people access to a wide range of learning assets, opportunities and an overview of the EY Badges program. We are also leveraging virtual learning capabilities through a tie-up with Udemy, where our people get free access to over 3,000 courses across the board. This year, we continued with our annual milestone programs. Despite the virtual set-up, our new promotees were able to network with peers across service lines, markets and regions.



## Our people make us better

Ranked as the most attractive professional services employer for students by Universum 2020.

Among India's Best Companies To Work For, 2020, by Great Place to Work.

Ranked among the Top 10 Best Companies for Women in India, 2020, by AVTAR.



## State Bank of India appoints former EY Partner **Charanjit Attra as the new CFO**

Former EY Partner, Charanjit Attra has been appointed by SBI as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Charanjit was a Partner with the EY Financial Accounting Advisory Services (FAAS) from 2015-2020, before taking over the role with SBI. He has over 20 years of experience working across various industry sectors with financial services as the core area. In his previous roles, he has served as the Group CFO of 3i Infotech and CFO of ICICI Securities.



## Eris Lifesciences gets former EY partner **V Krishnakumar on board**

Private equity fund ChrysCapital-backed Eris Lifesciences has appointed former EY Partner V Krishnakumar as an Executive Director and COO. Krishnakumar worked as a Partner with the EY Investment banking advisory team from 2011-2020 and used to head the life sciences M&A practice. He has over 22 years of professional experience across corporate finance and the pharma industry. Prior to EY, he has served as an Executive Director, investment banking at Avendus Capital and President, strategy at Piramal Pharma Solutions.



# Partner movements

# EY News in Brief

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## 01

### Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw receives the World Entrepreneur of the Year Award, 2020

Dr. Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Executive Chairperson of Biocon Limited, was conferred with the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year (WEOY) Award 2020 on 4 June 2020 at a virtual award ceremony that was viewed by over a million people worldwide. In the award's 20-year history, Dr. Shaw is the third Indian to win the coveted EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year title, following Mr. Uday Kotak of Kotak Mahindra Bank (2014) and Mr. N R Narayana Murthy of Infosys Technologies Limited (2003).

The 22<sup>nd</sup> edition, EY Entrepreneur Of the Year Awards - 2020 are scheduled for 25 March 2021.

To know more, please [click here](#).



## 02

### EY in India bags top honours at DivHERsity awards 2020 by Jobs For Her



EY was felicitated with six Top 5 honours at DivHERsity awards 2020 held in March 2020.

Continuing our streak from last year, EY has won the following awards for the second consecutive year: Top 5 Companies in DivHERsity (Large Enterprises), Top 5 Most Innovative Practices - DivHERsity Program, and Top 5 Most Innovative Practices - Women Leadership Development.

This year, we have also created our mark in the following categories: Top 5 Most Innovative Practices - Women L&D Programs, Top 5 Most Innovative Practices - DivHERsity Policies, and Top 5 DivHERsity Champions (Large Enterprises)

Our women leaders and colleagues collectively have played a key role in winning this recognition.



# EY News in Brief

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## 03

### EY Controller Leadership Network (EY CLN) concludes its third edition

Launched in June 2020, the EY Controller Leadership Network (EY CLN) brings together over 1000 corporate controllers across sectors and locations on a common networking platform every quarter to exchange experiences, learnings, and ideas on topical matters.

Three insightful sessions have been concluded with prominent industry stalwarts as speakers including Amit Sood, Finance controller, Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), Prabhakaran Chandrasekaran, Finance Controller, JSW Steel Ltd. and Kedar Upadhye, CFO, Cipla Limited. The recent session held on 18 December 2020 focused on the wish list from the upcoming Union Budget, key highlights from labour laws and quarter-end considerations.



## 04

### Our tax team takes another leap in the Digital space

EY India's Direct Tax practice has launched the following Digital Tax solutions with the objective of boosting efficiency by assisting clients in their day to day operations:

- **The DigiLiM+™:** solution's new avatar provides meaningful data insights and better compliance support with two additional modules: Compliance and Project Management and Analytics. The solution is a digital repository for litigation and compliance data.
- **DigiTDS:** aims to boost efficiency in all segments of the withholding tax lifecycle i.e. data, process, compliance, reporting and management dashboards. It is cloud-based, scalable and secure, and enables greater flexibility.
- **DigiTCS:** our one-stop solution which automates the entire Tax Collected at Source (TCS) compliance and reporting framework.

To know more about these solutions, you can write to [digitaltaxwincentre@in.ey.com](mailto:digitaltaxwincentre@in.ey.com)

The EY Tax team has also launched, EY Digital Tax Advisor which is an online service for the mid-market segment and greenfield entrants and gives its subscribers access to the EY Tax knowledge repository and option to connect with EY experts. Access the link to know more.



## 05

### EY Cognitive Cyber Centre set to transform India Inc.'s info-sec journey



EY Cognitive Cybersecurity Centre (CCC) is a next generation Security Operations Centre (SOC) that serves as an end-to-end information security, incident detection and response platform, powered by emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI and ML). It has the potential to advance an organization's security program in the maturity curve with the help of proven methodologies, processes and technologies.



# EY News in Brief

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## 06

### The CEO perspective How COVID-19 is defining business purpose

As COVID-19 continues to create uncertainty, fear and concern for many businesses, people and societies, the need for more human, purposeful conversations feel increasingly important.

Our Global CEO and Chairman, Carmine Di Sibio, joined a distinguished panel of CEOs from across the business landscape to discuss how COVID-19 is changing business purpose. Looking beyond the financial and operational strains of COVID-19, they considered how its impact on humanity and societies is shifting expectations of business purpose, its leaders and how people work.



[Watch the webcast on-demand](#)



## Why do uncertain times need the certainty of purpose?

[ey.com/betterworkingworld](https://ey.com/betterworkingworld) #BetterQuestions



The better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.



**Krishna Chaitanya**, currently a partner with the Consulting team in Chennai, re-joined EY in February 2019. In his earlier stint with EY between 2004 - 2009, Krishna worked as a manager with the consulting team. Krishna has over 18 years of diverse experience across risk management and corporate governance.

# Coming back <sup>to</sup> EY

**Q.** Please share the experience of your first stint with EY.  
In my first stint, I joined EY's risk consulting team in Chennai in January 2004. EY allowed me to learn a lot of aspects of professional services in the marketplace while working on both domestic and international projects. When I joined, I remember we were based out of a small office at TTL house in Chennai, with an overall strength of about 200-250 people. In comparison, we have over 2200 people now. The risk consulting team, which had about 35-40 members, grew into 60-65 people in a fairly short period of time. During that time, the Sarbanes Oxley (SOX) projects started booming worldwide and I even got the opportunity to travel to the US and spend time working with some of our clients there towards the end of 2004. On coming back, I got an opportunity to work with two Global IT technology companies based in Chennai and help them through their SOX implementation process. I was also instrumental in helping set up the Information management and analytics services (IMAS) data analytics lab and was leading the IMAS solutions from 2006-2009. I also travelled to Cleveland around 2007-2008, to help with the global methodology for IMAS. In a nutshell, I had a wonderful learning experience and built some great relationships in the firm.

**Q.** What motivated you to re-join EY?  
For me, re-joining EY was a natural calling. In the risk advisory space, which I am very passionate about, EY was a clear front runner. After a great first stint at EY and working with another compete firm for 9+ years, when I got to know that EY had a requirement for a senior role in risk advisory services, it really made sense for me to come back. After having spent a considerable amount of time in the Chennai market, I had an outsider view of EY and a sound understanding of the professional services space and I took the opportunity to work with EY once again. I always had fond memories of EY, so it was very natural for me to come back. If not for EY, I would not have considered any other firm to make a move in my career at that point in time.

**Q.** How did you stay connected with EY as an alumnus during the time you were away?  
Being a Partner in the risk consulting space at a compete firm meant that I was very well connected with many people at other firms, and especially EY since I had good friendships and connections with my past colleagues, seniors, and mentors. People like Terry Thomas, with who I had worked in the past and few others really made a big difference for me to re-join EY. Also, the regular alumni meets helped significantly in staying associated with the firm over the years.

**Q.** You spoke about alumni meets, could you please tell us more about your experience with the alumni program?  
I believe the India alumni program started about 6-7 years ago. It used to feel nice when I used to get an email from Farokh Balsara, Partner Sponsor for the alumni program. It had a great touch. I also attended a couple of physical alumni meets in Chennai. I feel that these are exceptionally great things and one doesn't see many organizations do it. This is something that has been a hallmark of EY. I extend my compliments to the team running the alumni program. It is good to see sustained efforts on this front.

**Q.** Your journey with EY traces to more than a decade ago. How have you seen EY evolve over the years?  
EY, in my view, has grown tremendously from the time of my first stint and now. The scale and size of operations have expanded significantly, as well as EY's position and leadership in the space that we operate in. It has grown from strength to strength over the years, and when I came back, I found a lot of common threads, processes, and aspects that made me have a very fond association with EY in the past and are continuing. At the same time, there is a lot more strength, new solutions, and a greater focus on technology. We are doing things that are ahead of the market in many ways.



**Q.** How did your prior experience at EY help you during your associations with other firms post EY?

I was with EY in my formative years and it helped me fine tune my skills, get my fundamentals right, and learn to have a very strong focus on quality. EY's value proposition back then was 'Quality in everything we do' and it set a big impression on me in whatever I did. Even in my career outside EY, there are many values and fundamental beliefs that stood by me and made sure that I was successful as a professional. And of course, I also value the time that I had invested and the learnings that I got in risk consulting which helped me build a successful career in the space.

**Q.** You have worked with EY, compete and in the industry. What has been your favourite profile and why?

Undoubtedly, my favourite role is what I have been doing since my first stint at EY in the risk consulting space. It has been my professional focus and forte. As an individual, working in the risk consulting space keeps me interested and excited all the time because there's enough opportunity to learn and variety in what we do. This includes working with multiple clients in multiple scenarios. It is my favourite profile and has kept my interest sustained over a long period of time.

**In my view, one of the strengths of professional services firms, and particularly EY, is that you have flexibility in the way you want to plan things and draw a balance.**

**Q.** Could you please talk a little about your current profile?

As a part of the Risk Consulting team, we provide services which help our clients deal with a broad range of risks, including helping them identify and mitigate various kinds of risks, monitor their operational processes and performance and help them with their corporate governance aspects. Within the risk consulting space, we work with clients on their process risk systems and internal audits. We also help them define policies and procedures, areas related to compliance and process improvements, and their corporate governance journey.

**Q.** How do you strive to maintain a good work-life balance?

My perception of work-life balance is slightly different. Times when you know that you have personal work or a situation demands personal attention, these are times you can definitely switch off. Especially at firms like EY we can do that in a much better way because considering the strength and talent in the firm, if you can plan and develop second-line talent well, it gives you the ability to balance yourself, your personal life as well as your work life. So, it has never been a challenge for me and within EY I think it is even more possible. In my view, one of the strengths of professional services firms, and particularly EY, is that you have flexibility in the way you want to plan things and draw a balance.



**Q.** What advice do you have for the young professionals?

Young professionals who are embarking on their journeys, need to stay focused. The initial years are the most difficult years where they really need to learn and get their fundamentals right. So, they should have an open mind, observe, learn, and contribute incrementally to their practice and the firm, as time passes. They should always focus on sharpening the saw and building strong technical skills. In the long run as well, to work with multi-cultural, multi-faceted, high-performing teams, they must develop a positive attitude towards work, which will help them progress steadily towards their goals.

**Q.** What is your motto in life?

I always believe in continuous improvement. If we are not learning something new and are not working towards improving, then we are not doing justice to ourselves. Also, I believe that work should not be our only focus in life. We should try and pursue our hobbies. I have seen a lot of professionals having amazing talents within EY and have seen avenues where we support and help people exhibit those talents. I play a couple of instruments and compose music which has helped me balance work-life in a good way. Therefore, my motto in life is improving continuously and staying passionate in whatever you do.

**Q.** Considering the current scenario and the year 2020, how do you think EY has performed during these times in terms of keeping teams connected and the initiatives we have taken for the clients?

The pandemic, initially when it hit, posed serious challenges for the market. EY being technologically well equipped was far ahead of many other firms in the way we are dealing with the crisis. Our teams are connected, they are technologically enabled with a focus on information security, which has helped us sail through challenging times with minimal disruption. We have managed well by continuing our services with a strong client focus and at the same time winning in the market. We are serving our clients differentially and helping them address newer risks in a manner that will help them become stronger as they move forward.

**Q.** What are your expectations from 2021?

I see 2021 shaping up steadily. When the pandemic initially hit, there was a fair bit of uncertainty in the initial few months, but very steadily things are coming back to normal and we are able to confidently move our work across. I only see 2021 getting better because I think the worst is behind us. In 2021, we will surely be continuing along our growth journey.

# Reminiscing, reconnecting reuniting...

EY India alumni reunions

## Reconnecting and reflecting on the EY legacy

The EY alumni reunions provide a wonderful platform each year to commune together, reminisce about good old times, meet up with old friends and make new ones.

While we cannot physically be together this year, take a glimpse of our Mumbai reunion hosted in the year gone by. It was an evening permeated with nostalgia and witnessed a delighted gathering of over 110 alumni. It only goes on to show how greatly you cherish reliving the good old days and keeping in touch with the accomplishments of your former colleagues and organization.

We look forward to the day when we will all come back together again, as we have before, to celebrate our association.

Till we meet again...

**Mumbai**  
December 2019





## EY Alumni Network remembers

### Samir Bangara (1974 – 2020)

The EY alumni team regrets the untimely passing away of our EY alumni and entrepreneur Samir Bangara. Samir was the co-founder and Managing Director of Qyuki, a creator focused multi-platform media company with Shekhar Kapur and AR Rahman as co-founders. Samir passed away in an unfortunate road accident on 14 June 2020.

As many would know him, he was a gem of a person with a warm, refreshing and enriching presence. He was an inspiring and empathetic leader to his teams and had supported many people with their careers.

He was the former Managing Director (Digital) of DisneyUTV and had about two decades of extensive experience in the media and technology industries. Samir worked with EY in India between 2000 and 2005, as a Vice President in the investment banking advisory team. He will always be remembered for his immense contribution to the media and entertainment industry.

We request our entire EY alumni community to join us in praying for his soul and extending our sincerest condolences to his family. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Samir and I spent 4 years between 2000 and 2004 as colleagues. We had a great time working together as part of the technology investment banking team. He was a great team player and a good friend. He was a wonderful human being and it is a great loss for all of us. It is quite tragic to hear this. We will pray for the departed soul to rest in peace. May the almighty give his family the strength to tide over this difficult period.

Mahesh Parasuraman  
Amicus Capital Partners, Bengaluru

I know Samir very well and please convey my heartfelt condolences to his family! May his soul RIP.

Ravi Shankar Ramachandran  
Connect2Expert Consultants, Chennai

It is really shocking to hear about Samir. He was a gem. I worked with him during his EY days and he was full of energy and positivity every day. I recently bumped into him in a hotel in Mumbai during one of my India visits and we exchanged latest contact details to stay in touch. He was a positive impact on everyone he met. Great guy! The world is going to miss him. May his family and friends get the strength to bear this unimaginable loss. Samir you will be in everyone's hearts, forever!

Sandeep Chandak  
Varde Partners, Singapore

I am deeply saddened to learn about this unfortunate incident, unable to comprehend. I was a part of the same team for the entire tenure Sameer was with EY. I always have a very refreshing memory of him, especially as a person who was so cheerful, sincere and always full of life. I pray to God to provide strength to his family to bear this loss and bless them. Please accept my heartfelt condolences. May God give peace to the divine soul.

Rajeev Gupta  
B S R & Co. LLP, Gurgaon

This is indeed so sad. Samir was such a wonderful guy! I distinctly remember interactions with him at our Pushp Vihar offices – very humble, intelligent, and someone with meticulous manners. It was a sad day when he decided to move on from EY, but he was destined to do better in life. He chose his path and I'm sure we were all happy for and proud of him. Bumped into him a lot of times at airports and he would always walk up to greet, which was very typical of his grace. This loss of talent will leave a void with us. God bless his soul. My sincere condolences to his family.

Rajiv Sahni  
Founder, Icon Global Advisory, Gurgaon

This is heart-rending. We had worked together, and he was a lovely lovely guy.

Sanjiv Agrawal  
Mumbai

# Join the EOY Virtual Awards Ceremony

Save the date: 25 March 2021, 7:00 p.m. onwards  
[Click here for more](#)

## Our eminent jury



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Asian Paints

Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw  
Biocon

Uday Kotak  
Kotak Mahindra Bank

Deep Kalra  
MakeMyTrip

Rajnish Kumar  
State Bank of India  
(Former Chairman)

Rishad Premji  
Wipro

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ED None

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