



Confederation of Indian Industry

CII Startup Delegation to UAE

Oct 15-19 2023

Dubai & Abu Dhabi

A Report



CII Startup Delegation to UAE

15 - 19 Oct 2023 : Dubai & Abu Dhabi

Recognising the significant role of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region in India's economic and strategic interests, CII has been proactive in strengthening ties with GCC countries. As India is committed to fostering robust relationships with GCC nations, CII has implemented various initiatives to boost trade and investment. Furthermore, CII's sector-specific committees and task forces focus on domains such as energy, infrastructure, and technology, fostering bilateral cooperation in these areas. The noteworthy achievement of bilateral trade between India and the GCC countries exceeding US\$160 billion in 2022-23 reflects this substantial upswing. Looking ahead, CII remains dedicated to enhancing economic and strategic ties with the GCC region through continued collaboration with both governments, with a particular focus on promoting innovation and startup ecosystems.

India boasts one of the world's largest and most vibrant innovation and start-up ecosystems. Indian entrepreneurs possess the skills and experience to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities globally. CII actively supports the Indian startup ecosystem through its Centre of Excellence for Innovation, Startup and Entrepreneurship (CIES), as well as through its network of offices across the country. Key interventions include facilitating corporate connections for funding and market access, mentorship, capacity building, and global networking.

Many Indian startup founders have expanded their businesses into the GCC region, meeting current and emerging needs. India's startup ecosystem, comprising founders and experienced professionals, is poised to play a crucial role in catalysing the startup ecosystem in the GCC region for mutual benefit. To harness this opportunity, CII has established the India-GCC Start-Up Council (CII-IGSC) to bridge the gap between



public and private stakeholders and connect technology start-ups with investors actively focused on the region.

Under the aegis of the India - GCC Start-up Council, CII organised a Startup Delegation to the UAE from 15th to 19th October 2023, coinciding with the GITEX Global and Expand North Star event in Dubai. The delegation comprised of CII National Startup Council members, founders, co-founders of Unicorns, and growth-stage startups with an objective to enhance market access, facilitate investor connections, and promote talent mobility for technology start-ups in both India and the GCC region.

CII delegation had meetings with Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi; Ministry of Economy, Dubai; Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy; Dubai Economic Development Corporation; Abu Dhabi Global Markets; Gulf Islamic Investments; Dtec Ventures; WAMDA Capital; HUB 71; Gulf Business Incubator; DIFC Fintech in Dubai.

The delegation provided the members with ample opportunities to explore potential collaboration and networking opportunities with Embassy, Government Nodal departments, Incubators, Investors, VC's, from UAE and connected with important stakeholders for business and market access.



Visits & Meetings

The CII delegation attended the GiTEX Expand North Star, the largest startup expo in Dubai Marina. The expo provided ample opportunities to explore potential collaboration and networking opportunities with the cutting-edge & Next Gen tech providers and potential investors, venture capitalists from GCC and other countries and connected with important stakeholders for business and market access.

<https://www.expandnorthstar.com/>

The CII Startup delegation had an interactive session with Mr Saeed Al Gergawi, Vice President, Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy at DCDE pavilion at Expand North Star, Dubai, on 16th Oct 2023. Mr Saeed explained in detail about the one stop solution available for the new business setup in Dubai.

<https://www.dubaichambers.com/>



CII Startup Delegation with Mr Saeed Al Gergawi, Vice President, Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy at DCDE pavilion at Expand North Star, Dubai



The delegation members had an exclusive discussion with Mr Varun from WAMDA Capital <https://wamdacapital.com/> and Mr Elliott Denham Startup Programs, Dtec Ventures at Expand North Star event on 16th Oct. The discussion provided the insights about venture funds and Sandbox Startup Program available in UAE. <https://dtec.ae/ventures/>



CII Startup Delegation led by Mr Kunal Bahl, Chairman, CII National Startup Council, Co-founder & Chairman of AceVector Ltd attended the roundtable with Mr A Amarnath, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India in Abu Dhabi on 17th Oct at the office of Embassy of India located in Abu Dhabi. Mr A Amarnath welcomed the delegation with a brief introduction about the role of both Governments in promoting startup ecosystem. He also highlighted the Elevate Pitch Sessions by Consulate and India UAE Startup Bridge Platform for the market access and investment.



CII Startup Delegation with Mr A Amarnath, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India in Abu Dhabi, UAE

Mr Kunal Bahl invited the Embassy to jointly host the Investors meet in India with the participation of potential investors from UAE.

<https://indembassyuae.gov.in/index.php>

Ms Helen Bachir, Special Projects & Delegations Lead, Hub 71 received the CII Startup Delegation and delivered a detailed presentation about the startup initiatives by Hub 71 located in Abu Dhabi on 17th Oct. Ms Helen highlighted about the priority sectors of focus and the delegation also had a facility tour at HUB 71.

<https://www.hub71.com/>



Mr Faisal Abdulla Al Mansoori, Senior Vice President - New Age Finance, Abu Dhabi Global Markets (ADGM) hosted the CII delegation at Abu Dhabi Global Markets office, Abu Dhabi on 17th Oct. Mr Faisal Abdulla Al Mansoori gave a brief presentation about the Abu Dhabi Global Markets role and support to nurture the startup environment. <https://www.adgm.com/>



Mr Kunal Bahl, Chairman, CII National Startup Council, Co-founder & Chairman of AceVector Ltd with Mr Faisal Abdulla Al Mansoori, Senior Vice President - New Age Finance, Abu Dhabi Global Markets, Abu Dhabi





An exclusive roundtable session with Dubai Economic Development Corporation was organised on 18th Oct in Dubai. Mr Rahul Garg, Co-Chairman, Unicorn Forum, and Founder & CEO, Moglix along with delegation members attended the session with Mr Mohamed Sharaf, COO Investment Attraction, Dubai Economic Development Corporation.

Mr Mohamed Sharaf highlighted the role of FDI from UAE and the ICT is the 3rd largest beneficiary sector and also invited startups to grow and thrive from UAE. <https://ded.ae/>



CII delegation attended a roundtable with Mr Pankaj Gupta, Co-founder & Co-CEO, Gulf Islamic Investments on 18th Oct. Mr Kunal Bahl delivered the welcome remarks and mentioned about the role of CII National Startup Council to create a strong platform for Indian startups in GCC region.



Mr Kunal Bahl, Chairman, CII National Startup Council, Co-founder & Chairman of AceVector Ltd with Mr Pankaj Gupta, Co-founder & Co-CEO, Gulf Islamic Investments



Mr Pankaj mentioned about the role of post covid relationship with other countries and happy to collaborate with Indian startups and the cost benefit analysis in Dubai for startups looking to expand in that Region. He also highlighted the priority sectors like Food/Agri Tech; Healthcare; eCommerce; Fintech. The interactive discussion provided the members about the Investment portfolios and how the investments work in the GCC regions for startups. <https://gii.ae/>



The CII delegation visited the iAccel Gulf Business Incubator on 19th Oct located in Business Village, Dubai. The delegation was well received by Mr Deepak Ahuja, CEO and Co-Founder and Mr Shalabh Jakhethia, Managing Partner & Chief Operating Officer. Members had a detailed presentation about the iAccel Gulf Business Incubator. Mr Deepak addressed the importance and benefit of partnering with iAccel for market access and business expansion in Gulf Region.



CII Startup delegation at iAccel Gulf Business Incubator, Business Village, Dubai

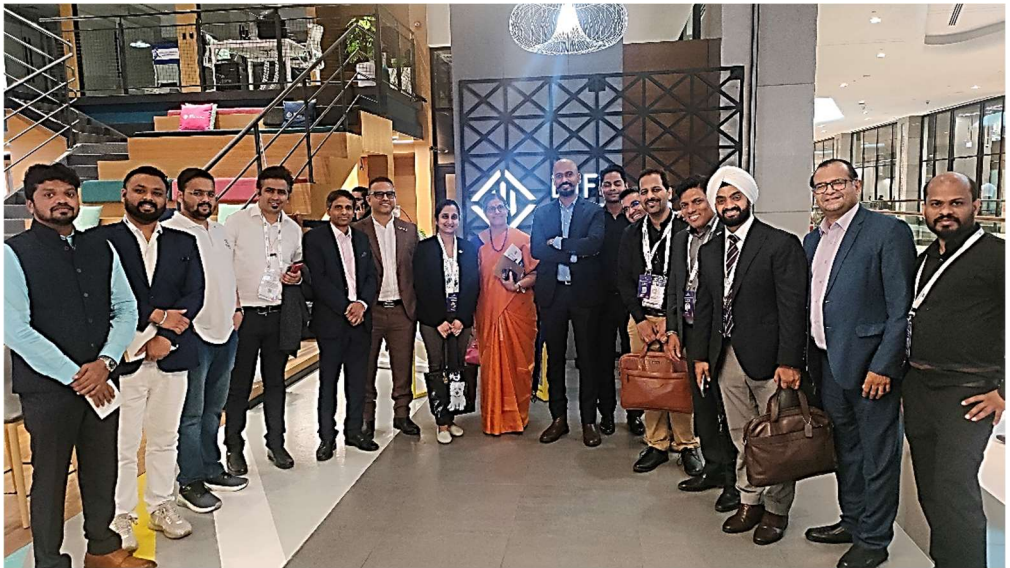
He also highlighted the requirements for startups / founders via an ecosystem that provides critical support including fund-raise, market access, mentorship, infrastructure, etc., iAccel is keen to collaborate closely with CII, for the global expansion of Indian SMEs/startups. <http://www.iagbi.com/>

CII delegation attended the Meeting with Ministry of Economy, Dubai on 19th Oct at Ministry of Economy office, Dubai. Ms Fatima Ghanem AlHajri, Director of Investment and Talent



Attraction received the delegation and explained the role of CII partnership with Dubai Government. She also highlighted the support from Dubai Government for startup promotion and development in UAE. <https://www.economy.ae/>

The delegation members had an exclusive meeting with Mr Chetan Mehta, AUM Ventures, <https://aumvc.com/> and Mr Yahia Mageed from FinTech and Innovation @ Dubai International Financial Centre located at DIFC Innovation Hub on 19th Oct. The discussion provided the insights about venture funds and DIFC support available for startups in UAE <https://innovationhub.difc.ae/introducing>





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Kunal Bahl

Chairman - CII National Startup
Council & Co-founder & Chairman
AceVector

Abhiraj Singh Bhal

Chairman, Unicorn Forum &
Co-Founder & CEO
Urban Company

Rahul Garg

Co-Chairman, Unicorn Forum &
Founder & CEO, Moglix

Vaibhav Mahajan

CEO
AbracaDabra Software Solutions Pvt
Ltd

Rajnish Wahi

Senior Vice President - Corporate
Affairs and Communication
AceVector

Sundeep Singh Luthra

Founder & CEO
Application Uni Pvt Ltd

Pankaj Kalra

Co-founder & COO
Application Uni Pvt Ltd

Sibasish Mishra

Founder & CEO
Bookingjini

Pritam Onsker

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Brunchbites Pvt Ltd

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Sreelal Sasidharan

Director & CEO
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Abhishek Garg

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Uday Bhaskar

Founder & CEO
Instapredict Technologies Pvt Ltd

Prashant Mathur

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Madhu Vasanthi

Senior Director
Confederation of Indian Industry

C S Raghavan

Chief Representative - Gulf
Confederation of Indian Industry

Hariharan T

Executive Officer
Confederation of Indian Industry



Centre of Excellence for Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Startups

CII set up its Centre of Excellence for Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Start-ups (CII-CIES) on the 11th of July 2020 to create a strong ecosystem for entrepreneurship in the country. Being an industry-led initiative, CII-CIES has the reach, resources and perspective to design programmes and interventions that increase the odds of entrepreneurial success in India.

The Government of Telangana is supporting the Centre by way of space at T-Hub technology startup incubator in the city. CII-CIES is also supported by Pratiksha, a charitable trust founded by Kris Gopalakrishnan, who also co-founded Infosys.

Vision

To be a world-class, state-of-the-art, corporate-driven, Start-up Resource Platform that enables growth of successful start-ups in India.

Mission

To evolve and leverage corporate partnership in development and growth of India's start-up ecosystem with end-to-end support at a single platform aiming to faster transformation of business ideas to successful ventures impacting social and economic development through employment generation and wealth creation.



Confederation of Indian Industry

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering Industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization, with around 9,000 members from the private as well as public sectors, including SMEs and MNCs, and an indirect membership of over 300,000 enterprises from 286 national and regional sectoral industry bodies.

For more than 125 years, CII has been engaged in shaping India's development journey and works proactively on transforming Indian Industry's engagement in national development. CII charts change by working closely with Government on policy issues, interfacing with thought leaders, and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for industry through a range of specialized services and strategic global linkages. It also provides a platform for consensus-building and networking on key issues.

Extending its agenda beyond business, CII assists industry to identify and execute corporate citizenship programmes. Partnerships with civil society organizations carry forward corporate initiatives for integrated and inclusive development across diverse domains including affirmative action, livelihoods, diversity management, skill development, empowerment of women, and sustainable development, to name a few.

As India strategizes for the next 25 years to India@100, Indian industry must scale the competitiveness ladder to drive growth. It must also internalize the tenets of sustainability and climate action and accelerate its globalisation journey for leadership in a changing world. The role played by Indian industry will be central to the country's progress and success as a nation. CII, with the Theme for 2023-24 as 'Towards a Competitive and Sustainable India@100: Growth, Inclusiveness, Globalisation, Building Trust' has prioritized 6 action themes that will catalyze the journey of the country towards the vision of India@100.

With 65 offices, including 10 Centres of Excellence, in India, and 8 overseas offices in Australia, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Singapore, UAE, UK, and USA, as well as institutional partnerships with 350 counterpart organizations in 133 countries, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.

Confederation of Indian Industry

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