



# India alumni newsletter

October 2021

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Arun M. Kumar  
Chairman and CEO  
KPMG in India

## CEO's foreword

Hello, KPMG alumni family!

Huge thanks to all of you who joined us in August at our first ever **KPMG in India Alumni Week**. I hope you enjoyed the sessions as much as we did in organising them. We will continue to connect with you through this platform to deepen our bonds with you. For those who missed it, do read our cover story '**KPMG in India Alumni Week – a confluence of minds and hearts**' to know more and look out for the event next year.

Within the firm, we organised our **All India Townhall 2021** in September 2021 to bring our colleagues together virtually – focused on an agenda run by our people, for our people. We had an all-women line-up, from the hosts to those sharing their work and home experiences over the past two years. This was a first for us – and a gratifying indication that we are on the right track on our path of diversity and inclusion.

As we enter the last quarter of 2021, our vision of #jOSH, to be “the best firm to work for” for our people and “the best firm to work with” for our clients is gaining momentum. For instance, we launched our Returning Women Programme: our second cover story shows how we are weaving in this returning talent pool into the KPMG tapestry.

In this issue, get to know our alumni **Rohit Bajpai** and **Hersh Shah**. We are also happy to welcome back **Sanya Arora** to the KPMG family as she joins our **Forensics** team.

Our hope is for you to stay safe and well. And stay connected with the firm. Do let us know how we can make the Alumni experience better and more impactful for you.

Joshfully yours,

Arun





**Rohit Bajpai**  
Internal Control Manager  
Mobile Premier League

Rohit is an engineer in the electrical and electronics domain, with an MBA in marketing. He joined KPMG in India in 2014 and spent close to seven years with the firm working on a variety of projects in Risk Advisory for the Telecom and Mobile Financial Services. For the past year, he is working with Mobile Premier League as their Risk and Internal Control Manager at their head office in Bengaluru and is currently leading the company's efforts around enterprise risk management.

# Alumni speak

## Straight from the heart

### **What are the values from KPMG in India that have stayed with you and shaped you as the professional you are today?**

Having spent seven of my best professional years here, the firm's values are something I continue to abide by. If I had to pick, it would be **Integrity and Excellence** - doing the right thing even when no one is watching and always keep working on yourself to become a better version of you. Be it in your professional or personal life, both these values hold true.

### **What do you miss most about working at KPMG in India?**

Spending years at the firm, I have built some of my best relationships. The biggest thing that I miss is my group of friends here. While I am still in touch with all of them personally, working together was definitely a lot of fun. Also, I had the good fortune of having a performance manager who was more like a mentor and elder brother to me, and I have no qualms in saying that all that is good in my career, I owe a large part to him. Other

than that, another major aspect that I do miss is the travel. Had the good fortune of visiting close to 15 countries as part of my tenure at KPMG in India. Meeting new people and exploring new cultures was a tremendous learning experience.

### **What is your success mantra?**

My success mantra is to give it your best shot all the time, irrespective of how it turns out in the end. If I know that I gave a task my all, I will neither be too elated if it works out nor will I be too disappointed if it does not turn out the way it should have. I know it is easier said than done and am still working on it. Another very important aspect is continuous learning; the world is growing at a very rapid pace, and it is imperative to keep up with it.

### **How have you balanced the demands of your personal and professional life?**

It is very important to set boundaries for personal and professional lives. Equally important is to let your colleagues in office as well as your family and friends know

these boundaries. Further, something which I hold very important in my life is to have a hobby. My passion is cars. I have been reading a leading automobile magazine over the past 20 years and still love to learn new things about the sector as well as go out on drives with my friends and family. Your hobbies give you time to destress and rejuvenate and hence allow you to give you your best.

### **Message for alumni**

To my fellow alumni, all I have to say is that it is an honour to have been associated with a brand like KPMG in India in our professional lives. It was home to me for seven years of my life and took great care of me. I am confident that should the need arise, I know I will always have a home to go back to. As we see signs of the pandemic receding and things going back to normal, I wish everyone the best of health and happiness. Stay safe. Cheers!



**Hersh Shah,**  
Chief Executive Officer  
India Affiliate - Institute of  
Risk Management

Hersh has over 11 years of experience in assurance, risk management, consulting and corporate finance, including structuring strategic alliances and partnerships. Hersh was previously associated with KPMG in India's Risk Consulting function, where he worked on many enterprise risk consulting assignments across South Africa, U.S.A., the U.K., China and the Middle East. Post KPMG, he also helped in setting up an entrepreneurship business school and also managed a Microfinance NBFC.

# Alumni speak

## Up close and personal

- **If not your current profession, what would you be?** I would probably be running a global event management company.
- **If you could go back in time what would you do differently?** No regrets, really.
- **A gadget you cannot do without.** My phone
- **Your favorite food?** Mexican
- **Best Childhood Memory** When I was awarded by the local civic body for initiating the first-ever garbage segregation project.
- **In your free time, where can we find you?** At a karaoke session
- **Who is your role model?** My grandad. He enjoyed great repute for his principles, leadership style, progressive thinking and business acumen.
- **A habit you cannot live without.** Checklists
- **An ideal weekend for you would mean.** Working out, spending time with family and friends, music classes, listening to a podcast and some "me time" to refuel my energy for the week.
- **What is your success mantra?** Detailed execution. Irrespective of your role or title, you have got to execute and hit the ground running to succeed. Breaking information into continuous actionables, knowing what and when to delegate and executing with your team is exciting and rewarding.
- **Two qualities you look for in an individual.** Integrity and problem-solving capabilities/360-thinking
- **What according to you is jOSH, both personally and professionally?** jOSH for me stands for finding your purpose and then driving excellence with passion, speed, and commitment in achieving that purpose.



**Sanya Arora**  
Manager, Forensics  
KPMG in India

# Welcome back

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## **What brings you back to KPMG in India?**

The warmth and constant support, in combination with professional excellence you get at KPMG in India, is something which you don't get to experience everywhere. The feeling of belongingness, even when I was not part of the firm, brought me back here.

## **Tell us what you missed most about KPMG in India?**

Appreciations and recognitions for good work is something I missed the most because this is very much required to keep you motivated throughout. Besides this, I also missed the quality work and clients we get to deal with and, most importantly, the efforts made by the firm for our personal development by arranging trainings and webinars. The tea-time chit chats with colleagues who turn out to be your lifetime friends, was also an unforgettable part of my KPMG journey.

## **How do think KPMG in India has changed over the years?**

The processes have evolved over time to make the operations smoother and new services have been added which demonstrates a great growth path. Also, the firm has increased focus on employee wellbeing, for an instance our CEO has recently announced the 'pens down period' to give a much-needed break to the employees during this pandemic.

## **Do you have a message for our readers?**

KPMG in India is a perfect platform for achieving professional growth without compromising your personal development. The culture and working environment here are admired by people within and outside the organisation.



**Sunit Sinha**  
Head of People, Performance  
and Culture (PPC)  
KPMG in India.

# Know our leader

## **Describe your first day at KPMG in India.**

It was an interestingly new experience to have joined in remotely (due to the pandemic) as I was not even in the country at the time, being based in Singapore. Had a series of very warm and open virtual introductions and got started on a few work areas right away – which, in my mind, is the best way to start integrating. Much has happened since then. As I always tell people, after 24 years of working in the consulting/professional services industry, “there is never a dull day.”

## **What are your biggest takeaways from your journey at the firm?**

Based on my last eight months here, speaking to many people across levels (albeit mostly over virtual collaboration platforms) is the sheer diversity of skills and talent that we have. It just does not stop amazing me. The other big takeaway is the importance of investing in relationships and connecting with people – we work best when we put people first and have seen many occasions where that has happened. We have all the answers we need to solve for our clients and ourselves – connection is key.

## **KPMG’s biggest impact on you and your biggest impact on KPMG**

I was just three months into my role when the second wave of COVID-19 hit us in India – the way all our leaders and people came together voluntarily to help each other, that is a rare element of our culture we should always preserve and grow. That is the biggest impact of KPMG in India on me so far as an organisation. My own impact is a work in progress. I was happy to make some early gains on our thinking on rewards and investing in learning, with more to come in the near future.

## **If you had to describe yourself in three words, what would they be:**

Curious. Positive. Resilient.

## **One thing that nobody knows about you.**

That is a tough one, as I do tend to share a lot when I chat with people. Fact is that I never thought I would be doing this as a career choice – I had always thought of a career in academics or the foreign service – but here I am. I have no regrets. Also, discovering your career by serendipity can be a lot of fun.



**Sunit Sinha**  
Head of People, Performance  
and Culture (PPC)  
KPMG in India.

# Know our leader

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**Your favourite:**

**Holiday destination:** Scotland

**Cuisine:** Am not particular and fairly eclectic – all varieties of Indian, Japanese Yakitori grills, Szechuan Chinese (as spicy as it gets) and Thai probably top the list.

**Book:** Many to choose from but 'The Order of Time' by Carlo Rovelli has left a lasting impression recently.

**Movie:** A bit of a war and sci-fi movie buff – 'Saving Private Ryan' and 'Interstellar' would be right up there amongst what I have seen in the last couple of decades

**Sports:** Have not been much of a sportsperson myself – Cricket is what I watch usually.

**If you could go back in time, what would you tell your 25-year-old self?**

To chill a bit more and enjoy the scenery around as you travel. It is going to be ok.

**If you could trade lives with someone for a day, who would it be and why?**

Recently, I have thought a lot about our military servicemen and women who work 24/7 in the harshest conditions. Would love to trade lives just for a day to appreciate and respect all they do so we can sleep peacefully at night. My father was a doctor in the Army, and I always found his stories inspiring.

**What is jOSH for you, both personally and professionally?**

For me it is all about bringing passion to your purpose and always showing up with your best self in whatever you do. It is about the 'art of the possible'.

# Cover story

## KPMG in India Alumni Week – A confluence of minds and hearts/ A virtual mélange of friends and colleagues

Our first ever virtual Alumni Week, themed **Confluence**, during 23-27 August 2021, sparked a cascade of nostalgia, as several of our alumni joined in to remember their roots and celebrate their connection with KPMG in India.

Here's what transpired.



Reliving the KPMG experience



The evening kickstarted with **Sunit Sinha**, Head – People, Performance and Culture, KPMG in India, welcoming all alumni and marking the 28th year of KPMG’s presence in India. Our Chairman and CEO, **Arun M. Kumar** addressed the audience on how they are part of a legacy, built over the years. Moving to the firm’s progress, he went on to share where we are now as a firm, our strategy for growth in the ‘new normal’ and what the future looks like.



**Harsha Razdan**, Head – Business Consulting and Consumer Markets, and **Amit Wagh**, Partner, Transformation, talked about how the firm has raised its game in Digital Transformation to be at the forefront of everything from business transformation to cybersecurity, in conversation with **Atul Gupta**, Partner and Head, Digital Trust; India Cyber Security Lead.



As we look forward towards the next few years, we see the opportunity to be consequential, to make a difference, and help our clients raise their game, not incrementally, but transformatively. **Sanjay Doshi**, Head – Financial Services, **Anish De**, Head, Energy and Natural Resources and **Chintan Patel**, Head – Building, Construction and Real Estate delved into how our sectors programme is evolving into a strong gamechanger and what to look out for.

## Putting people first

A key element of our new strategy is our emphasis on making KPMG in India the best firm to work with for clients and the best place to work at for our people. The India firm is a safe and caring place to work at and an 'employer of choice', especially for women.



Touching on her 19 years long journey at the firm, **Shalini Pillay**, Office Managing Partner – Bengaluru, and India Leader for Global Capability Centre, spoke about the diversity and richness of her experience at a firm that is more of a second home to her. **Vivek Gupta**, Partner and Head, M&A Tax, shared his outlook on what it means to be a part of the KPMG family and why he finds it to be most exciting.

## Shenanigans @KPMGinIndia

The next few days was all play and no work, as the families of our alumni joined in the fun.

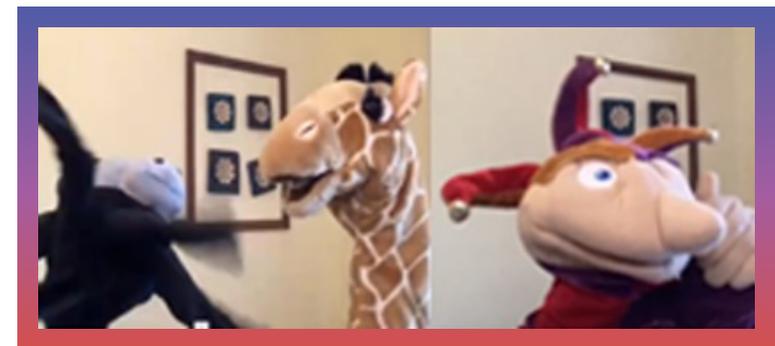
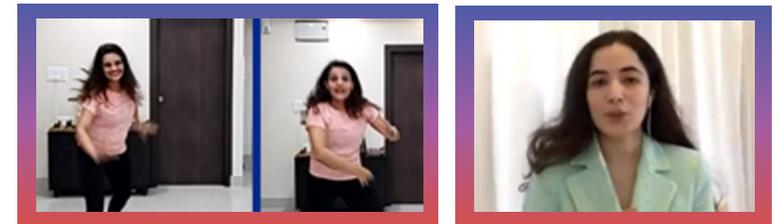
Clinical nutritionist and health educator, **Karena Adnani**, guided our alums through the method behind mindful eating to beat binge eating or cravings to improve quality of life.

**Shreedevi Sunil** – educator and Founder of Talking Turtles Storytellers – hosted a fun and interactive session on 'Storytelling with puppets' for the young ones.

**Aakansha Dave**, Zumba Jammer, choreographer and dance engineer kept everyone on their toes in a power-packed dance session on peppy Bollywood songs.

With this, we closed our Alumni Week on a high, albeit sweaty, note. We look forward to seeing you at next year's event to reimagine, reconnect and rediscover the bond we share.

Till then, stay safe, stay connected!



## Returning Women Programme – Engage, Enable and Empower

At KPMG in India, we strongly believe in fostering a work environment where women can flourish and implementing initiatives that support, advance, retain and reward them. This belief stems from our Values – Integrity, Excellence, Courage, Together, For Better – as not only is it the right thing to do, it is also a smart and strategic business imperative to be a more inclusive and diverse firm.

### A hybrid world calls for an inclusive approach

Considering the current state of the economy and the adverse impact the pandemic has had on the employment of women worldwide, it is our imperative to facilitate their return to the working world, especially if they had been on a career break. We plan to accomplish this by providing opportunities akin to the skills and experiential learning of women returnees, supported by a robust ecosystem of enablers.

**Our Returning Women Programme** is, hence, designed to help women make a meaningful second career comeback, keeping in mind the agility factor. Through the programme, we envision to facilitate the absorption and empowerment of returning women professionals with a holistic approach to **Engage** by reshaping talent acquisition practices, **Enable** through targeted learning and development, and **Empower** by way of access to coaching, mentoring, or sponsorship.

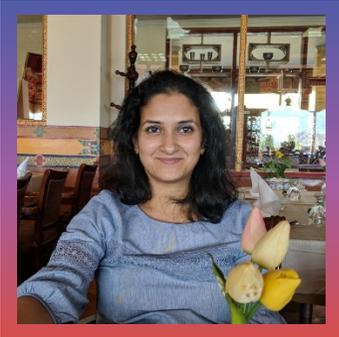
### Inclusion begins with awareness

As a dedicated programme to tap into, retain and engage this returning talent pool, our efforts entail orientation to our firm and the industry, leader-led sessions and forums on integrating work and life, apart from a myriad other capability interventions.

At present, our campaign addressing the programme has brought forth unique yet widely resonant experiences from women colleagues who made career comebacks after taking a break. Here are a few accounts.

### Our accolades

- Certified as **Great Place to Work™** and named amongst the **Top 100 companies to Work for Women** for 2020
- Named amongst **Top 10 Working Mother & Avtar 'Best Company for Women in India'** for 2019 and 2020; Coveted '**Champion of Inclusion**' in the **Working Mother & Avtar Most Inclusive Companies Index**
- Won the **Stevie Awards for Great Employers 2020** as the **Employer of the Year for Business and Professional Services**
- Featured as one of the **Best 50 Companies for 2019** by **People Capital Index**
- **Great Indian Workplace Award** for 2018 and 2019.



### Making a fresh start with #jOSH

**Shilpa Rastogi (Digital Trust, Bengaluru)** spent seven years with the firm before she moved on to work in the social development sector, an area she was truly passionate about. She feels humbled to have worked closely with the underprivileged, learning about their challenges related to health, education and nutrition, among many other basic survival snags. However, personal circumstances led her to move to another city where she did not find an appropriate role to continue her work in the sector.

**Always have faith in your abilities:** During this time, Shilpa was approached by her erstwhile Partner at the Firm who offered her to join back on account of her good work in the past. Overwhelmed with the opportunity and her urge to be financially independent, she made a comeback. Despite being on a career break for 18 months, she was confident that she would come up to speed in no time with the help of a tailored learning and development curriculum that the Firm provides.

**Persevere till the very end:** Having some known colleagues and friends at the Firm further ensured Shilpa's smooth transition and handholding as she settled in. Her husband also supported her decision and took over some of her responsibilities so she could focus on work, better. At the Firm, her determination to learn, reskill and upskill along with support from her team members, made her journey seamless.

**It's never too late to make a fresh start:** Shilpa recently completed her six months with the Firm. She feels that one's determination to give their best, along with a supportive environment both at home and work, can lead you to discover the best version of yourself. She also believes that every individual's personal and professional journey is different, and women should not overthink about where they could have been if it were not for the break. Instead, she advises, 'Dream about where you would want to be when you come back.'



### The strongest people make time to help others

**Gagandeep Kaur (Managed Services, Gurugram)** had taken a break in 2015 after she had her first child. She recalls how two and a half years of break were hardly that, as she barely got time to focus on herself. Even though every new milestone with her daughter brought in a sense of pride and fulfillment, at the back of her mind it also reminded her that the break had begun to overshadow her career aspirations. So, she gathered herself and began applying for jobs.

**Taking a leap of faith:** Although interviews kicked off with great enthusiasm, not hearing back from recruiters or not being shortlisted soon became harsh demotivators for Gagandeep. There were days when she remembered breaking down, other days she held onto some semblance of hope. Not giving up, she began rigorous preparations to be hire-ready. Whether it was learning from videos or updating her skills and capabilities, she did everything to make her career comeback look more favourable to employers. It was when she interviewed at the India firm, things worked out at a pace where she felt confident of rejoining the workforce.

**Onwards and upwards:** After joining the India firm as a Consultant, Gagandeep realised that her previous work experience as a business analyst meant she was on the other side of the work spectrum. Initially, she doubted her responses and decisions almost every day, but never left the chance to stay involved in discussions, so she could upgrade her knowledge and understanding. Soon, she got the chance to be at the client side for trainings and even earned herself a promotion.

Gagandeep believes that the strongest people are those who help others become strong. She feels happy to work with people who supported her journey, helped her cope professionally and kept telling her that she has come a long way.

We aspire for our 'Returning Women Programme' to become a key enabler in helping us achieve our broader vision of creating a future pipeline of women leaders and becoming the 'Employer of Choice' for all, rife with equal opportunities. So, if you are a woman professional looking to kickstart your second innings and live your ambitions, visit our [Returning Women Programme portal](#) to know more.

# Partner notes



Anindya Basu  
National Managing Partner  
Head – Advisory and Clients  
& Markets  
KPMG in India

## KPMG 2021 India CEO Outlook

CEOs in India have had to work and cope with extraordinary demands. They are aware that the challenge confronting them is monumental and a stern test of leadership mettle. The latest edition of the **KPMG 2021 India CEO Outlook** offers a unique perspective into the issues and concerns that have made business leaders shift their strategies and priorities over the lifetime of the COVID-19 pandemic and are now looking forward to post-pandemic recovery. Drawing on the perspectives of 125 chief executives from across the country our survey brings out pertinent viewpoints on the future from 125 CEOs in the country.

Some of the key developments are focused on how today's connected CEOs in India are ready for a recovery that is digitally driven, and purpose-led, so as to build better and stronger organisations than ever before. Overall, three key themes emerged from this year's survey: **A solid roadmap to recovery** wherein leaders are optimistic about the path to growth, **digital edge** with CEOs in India focusing on building digital resilience along with agility and the importance of following through on a **trusted purpose** by increasingly focusing on meeting Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals.

Firstly, though CEOs in India are confident about the growth prospects of the global economy, their confidence in organisational and sector growth has seen a considerable dip. But that has not stopped them from having a high appetite for Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As) and investing more in developing their workforce's skills and capabilities. Having identified operational risk as the biggest threat to organisational growth, they are ready with aggressive growth strategies to recover stronger.



**Anindya Basu**  
National Managing Partner  
Head – Advisory and Clients  
& Markets  
KPMG in India

# Partner notes

## KPMG 2021 India CEO Outlook

Secondly, business leaders in India are focused on giving further impetus to their digital programme which overnight became a key priority during the pandemic, due to the sudden overnight transference to a virtual working environment for most or the entire workforce. Being agile and building resilience has taken precedence as most CEOs are planning to continue with their rapid digital transformation plans. As the India leaders continue to invest in digital tools, they are also geared for the hybrid work era and are looking at investing in shared office spaces to allow employees to work more flexibly. To this effect, they are also working towards ensuring that their aggressive technology investments are matched by investment in human capabilities and skills.

Thirdly, CEOs are increasingly looking at embedding purpose in the fabric of their organisations today, along with focusing on meeting their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals. They believe that government stimulus will be required to turbo charge climate investments being made by the business community. Though customers and employees, are not pushing Indian business leaders yet on climate change, we do see a large majority of CEOs in India viewing corporate purpose as having its greatest impact on building brand reputation. This is quite contrary to CEOs globally who see their corporate purpose having its greatest impact on driving financial performance.

As the world continues to train itself to live with the virus, CEOs in India have used the pandemic as a tipping point to prepare for all kinds of uncertainties that the future may throw at them and more importantly, for the future of work.

# Corporate citizenship

## 1. Celebrating World Environment Day

We recently celebrated World Environment Day with the students at our partner NGO schools. Our people volunteered to conduct these eco-awareness sessions by discussing topics that were related to the theme this year i.e. **ecosystem restoration**. This included explaining our local ecosystems, what is ailing them and how we can do our bit to help preserve and protect the environment. This was followed by a fun quiz and sharing of simple steps that students could follow at home.



The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting slide with a video thumbnail of a man in the top right corner. The slide content is as follows:

### World Environment Day 2021 : Ecosystem Restoration

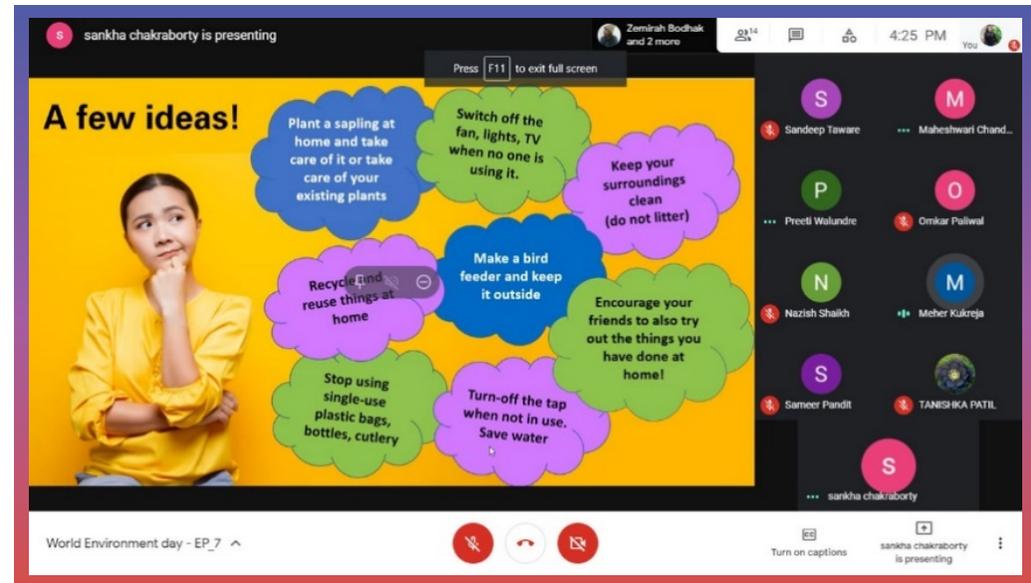
Ecosystem restoration is about helping in the conservation of ecosystems and the recovery of those that have been destroyed or degraded.

It covers measures such as the greening of cities, growing trees, changing diets and cleaning of rivers among other things.

### World Environment Day 2021 host country

Pakistan is the host country this year. The country's government is planning to increase the forest cover and restore mangroves over five years through its '10 Billion Tree Tsunami' campaign.

This would also involve the planting of trees in urban areas such as public parks, schools and colleges.



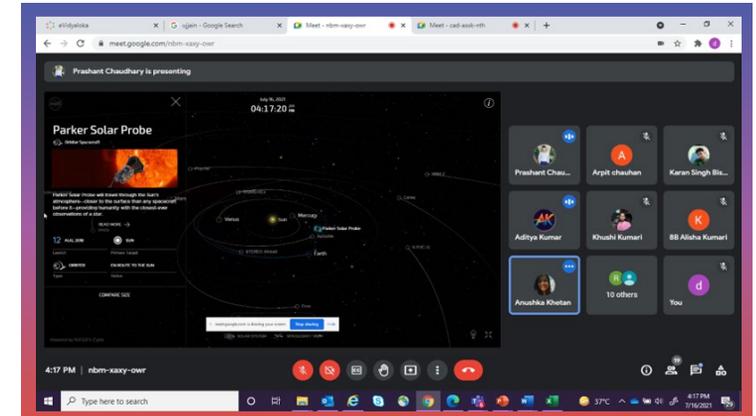
The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting slide with a video thumbnail of a woman in the bottom left corner. The slide content is as follows:

### A few ideas!

- Plant a sapling at home and take care of it or take care of your existing plants
- Switch off the fan, lights, TV when no one is using it.
- Keep your surroundings clean (do not litter)
- Recycle and reuse things at home
- Make a bird feeder and keep it outside
- Encourage your friends to also try out the things you have done at home!
- Stop using single-use plastic bags, bottles, cutlery
- Turn-off the tap when not in use. Save water

## 2. Exploring Space with students

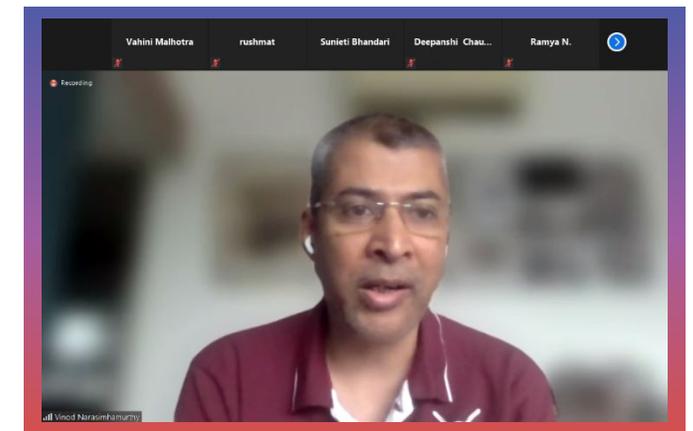
Volunteers recently conducted an online session on exploring space for over 320 students from eight of our partner NGO schools. The objective of this activity was to help students learn more about astronomy, particularly our solar system and the Milky Way. They also took the students on a short virtual out-of-the-world adventure by taking them through some of the interactive resources available online.



## 3. Career counselling sessions for Aspire students

In continuation to our commitment to empowering the next generation leaders to advance in their education and career, we organised career counselling sessions for the students of our Aspire programme. This was attended by the students in grade 11 and above to help them make informed decisions about their career. The first two sessions were on career prospects in the government sector and Indian armed forces.

These sessions focused on providing students an insight on topics such as the eligibility criteria, job opportunities for women, guidance on preparing for the entrance exams, etc. The students gained knowledge about various aspects which they were not aware of earlier. It also helped instill a sense of confidence in students who are committed to working towards achieving their goals and making their families proud.



#### 4. Enactus India National Competition 2021 14 to 21 August

Over **4,000** students from more than **80 colleges** across the country participated in the **Enactus India National Competition 2021**, to showcase their social entrepreneurship projects and participate in a series of 33-minute Industry-Academia-Social Impact dialogues. **Over 120 Partners and volunteers** from the firm helped facilitate the event as judges, speakers and score verifiers.

Enactus teams from across the country presented their projects before 200+ esteemed CEOs and senior executives from the corporate and social entrepreneurship world serving as judges. **Arun M. Kumar, Chairman and CEO, KPMG in India and Chairman, Enactus India National Advisory Board** and other eminent leaders also interacted with the participating students on topics such as the future of leadership, entrepreneurship, talent development and recruitment. The firm was the official score verifiers of the competition and also made an announcement of continuing the **Business Ethics Grant** for Enactus India teams this year as well. **IIT Delhi** was announced the winner of the competition and will be representing India at the **Enactus World Cup** in October 2021.



**Arun M. Kumar** (Chairman and CEO, KPMG in India and Chairman, Enactus India National Advisory Board) announcing the national champion



**Sunit Sinha** (Head PPC, KPMG in India) in a panel discussion on skills and competencies for sustained success



**Sachin Arora** (Partner and Head – Digital Lighthouse (Analytics, AI and Data)) in a panel discussion on the role of technology in innovation and entrepreneurship



The Enactus team from IIT Delhi presented their social impact through their two projects **Arth** and **Jhabua**.

# KPMG in focus

## Global Tech Innovator Challenge (GTIC) 2021 – India Finale

KPMG in India launched its marquee property titled Global Tech Innovator Challenge (GTIC) 2021 – India this year. We had a large number of startups that applied to the competition. Basis multiple rounds of evaluation, we arrived at our top 15 finalists who battled it out on 7 August 2021 at the India Finale of the GTIC competition. The finalists were representatives of major segments such as SaaS, Fintech, AgriTech, EdTech, Deep Tech and platform services.

The competition was judged by a stellar panel of investors and key KPMG in India's partners and leaders. We had Manoj Kohli (Country Head, Softbank India), Rajan Anandan (Managing Director, Sequoia Capital India) and Nimesh Kampani (Co-founder and CEO, Trica) as the external judges for the competition. From KPMG in India, we had Pradeep Udhas (Senior Partner), Sachin Arora (Partner and Head of Digital Lighthouse) and Mritunjay Kapur (EMA head of Telecom Media and Technology (TMT) sector and India Board Member) as the judges.

The winner for the competition was **Worxogo Solutions Private Limited**, an AI+ Behaviour Science product company which converts individual awareness and intentions to actions at workplace. The winner will now be mentored by KPMG in India and have access to a global platform of clients and investors. We will also be taking the winners to Web Summit 2021, to be held in Lisbon later in the year. The winner of the India finals will compete with technology entrepreneurs across 17 other countries in most major regions of the world.

## Tax assessments in India – recent trends

While the Government of India has always expressed its keen views on making the process of tax litigation in India faceless, the progress on this approach was laboured. However, with the spread of COVID-19 and social distancing norms, this system was given a major boost in recent times. As a result, the Direct Tax litigation system in India saw significant changes over the last few months. The key developments in this phase was the introduction of Faceless Assessments Scheme and Faceless Appeals

Scheme, through which almost the entire process of return filing and litigation has been provided to be done solely in electronic mode. This aims to limit the interface between the tax authorities and taxpayers.

With these changes, many new challenges and uncertainties are being faced by taxpayers, particularly with foreign companies. The Japan corridor team at KPMG in India recently addressed this issue via an online webinar targeted at Japanese clients held on 9 August 2021. The webinar aimed to apprise these foreign companies having operations in India about key changes implemented and the impact of such changes to various taxpayers. Further, it also provided targeted solutions to overcome the challenges regularly faced by many taxpayers, with special consideration to issues commonly faced in making online submissions.

The webinar was hosted by Japan Corridor Tax team and was attended by the Indian colleagues of Japanese companies in India. It saw a participation of over 50 professionals and has received positive feedback.



## People first, with CARE

On 27 September, the All India Townhall 2021 brought together our colleagues across the India Firm to witness how we put our People First, with CARE. The event was hosted by two women colleagues, and was an entertaining afternoon with fun polls, creative video backgrounds, great ideas for the 'All Ideas Matter' contest and the leadership team answering the live Q&A.

Here is a quick look at the event!

The event kickstarted with some of our women colleagues sharing challenges faced during the pandemic and how the Firm supported them to overcome these along with a collaborative approach towards business sustainability.



### **Suman Mendiratta, Office Managing Partner (OMP)**

Two months into my new role and the pandemic hits. It made the situation more challenging as I had to manage both my work and home. Then the firm introduced the lunch hour block, Pride initiatives, meditation and heartfulness, personal health care tips and fun fitness Fridays.



### **Rekha Joy, Government & Public Services (G&PS)**

I work for government clients in Kerala and the initial lockdown days was a challenge not because I had to manage work along with a toddler but for convincing my client that we were working at home and not doing anything else. With our solid ecosystem, we were able to deliver excellence and was one of the few teams who didn't default on any payments which was very uncommon for a government client.



### **A, Caroline, Digital Trust**

In particular, the team I am part of saw a lot of change of faces, we had a lot of colleagues move on and a lot more join us. We met on multiple 'chai pe charcha' sessions, activity sessions and made up for the face to face interaction. Now that most of us are vaccinated... thanks to the initiative of the firm, we will soon be back in office to finally meet the voices we have been interacting with.



### **Simi Mohan Kumar, Government & Public Services (G&PS)**

I joined the Firm in August last year, when the pandemic was at its peak. A buddy assigned to help me through, and all onboarding activities were facilitated online. I made a seamless transition into the Firm and hit the ground running on my project tasks without making even one visit to the office.



### **Poonam Pareek, Governance, Risk and Compliance Services –Financial Services**

Back in May 2020, one of our clients decided to return to office and the employees were not very happy about that decision. The client also expected us to visit their office every day, undertake periodic branch and field visits. Kudos to our leadership who put their foot down to ensure we are safe while convincing the client to trust us with the work and boy how did we deliver. The work was appreciated in all meetings all the way up to the Board Meetings which is a testament of our Firm's resilience.

After the motivating stories, it was time to open the forum and welcome questions for the Executive committee. Our Chairman and CEO, **Arun M. Kumar** was joined by leaders including **Arjun Vaidyanathan**; Chief Operating Officer, **Nitin Atroley**; Partner and Head of People, Strategy & Corporate Affairs, **Anindya Basu**; National Managing Partner & Head – Advisory and Clients & Markets and **Sunit Sinha**; Partner and Head – People, Performance and Culture

The All Ideas Matter contest was a hit with over 200 entries. The top 10 ideas were polled to select the two winning ideas. The event concluded with the leadership team addressing questions asked by our people and giving responses that offered clarity on what the future holds for our people!



# Publication



Startup Success Guide



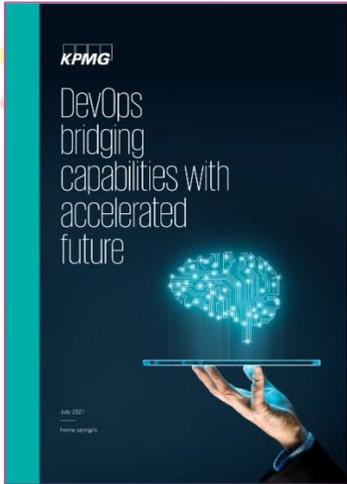
Need for Inventor Remuneration law in India



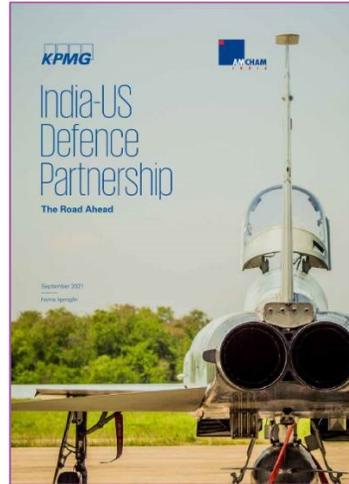
CEO Outlook report



# Publication



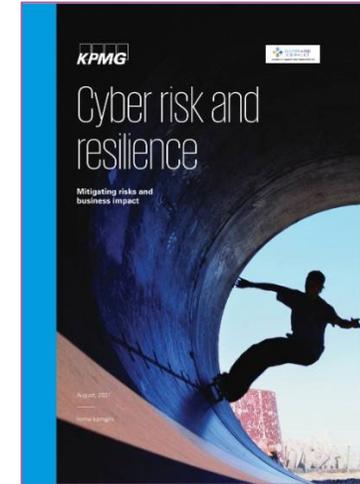
DevOps: Bridging capabilities with accelerated future



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**#KPMGjosh**

# Join KPMG in India's alumni network

## Our Alumni website

Registrations continue to pour in for our alumni website - a forum for ex-KPMG employees to connect with each other and the firm!



Our flourishing alumni network not only helps you in establishing contact with your former colleagues, friends and KPMG in India, but also keeps you abreast of our alumni programmes, news and events, as well as latest services and offerings.

By registering with the network on our [Alumni portal](#), you can also actively participate and contribute to our [Citizenship programme](#) and other initiatives of the firm, wherever you are based.

### Follow us on:

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