

# TIMES SME ICONS

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

## APPLAUSE FOR SOME SUCCESS STORIES

RECOGNITION OF THE INTRINSIC ROLE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IS AN INSPIRATION FOR THE ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS.

Uttara Jindal

Celebrating India's spirit of self-sustained industries, The Times Group recently recognised the path-breaking efforts of 25 successful and well-established small and medium enterprises in India. This is the first in the series of Times SME Icons, a special initiative of The Times Group.

The Times SME Icons 2019, powered by SSM-BUSINESS/OSME Pvt. Ltd., has carefully chosen stalwarts in their respective fields of business and acknowledged their effort through a heartfelt compilation of their tales of struggle and win in a coffee table book as well.

The felicitation function in the capital opened with a magic show by well-known illusionist Mohit, who has his credit performances at the world stage and various reality shows in India. Felicitating the SMEs that evening were eminent and distinguished people, including Dr Mahesh Y Reddy, Secretary General, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Dr Sanjiv Lavak, Executive Secretary, India for World Association for Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME); and Vijay Kumar, Director, MSME Development Institute, New Delhi. The Times of India acknowledged how SMEs



are changing the face of the country and this is evident in the way the government is giving immense support to them. We are gradually moving away from being an agrarian economy to being a manufacturing-driven one. So, SMEs are a huge contributor to this paradigm shift India is looking at. TOI's endeavour is to be a part of this transformation and support the country's growth plan. The acknowledgements covered a wide range of categories within the small and medium enterprises. These included businesses from the fields of sanitary-

ware, uniform, prefabricated building, acoustic equipment, prosthetic limb and much more. Acknowledging the intrinsic role that SMEs play in the Indian economic framework, the consensus was that today SMEs are the backbone of the Indian economy, wherein more than 40 million SMEs in India are accounting for more than 90 per cent of India's industrial output. They employ more than 40 per cent of India's workforce, contribute more than six per cent to India's manufacturing GDP and more than 40 per cent of manu-

facturing output. They also comprise about 25 per cent of India's services GDP and 40 per cent of exports as well. No wonder, currently, the SMEs are exhibiting a growth rate in double digits. Applauding the role of SMEs in India, the guest of honour, Vijay Kumar, acknowledged how "times are changing and everything is moving towards modernisation and innovation. That is why the Ministry of SME is supporting new entrepreneurial endeavours."

As these stalwarts in their fields of work were recognised for their contributions, some noteworthy statements left the crowd inspired. Pradeep Choudhary, the brainchild behind Multi Decor India Pvt. Ltd., shared his journey of quitting a white-collared job and stepping into the world of pre-fabricated buildings. "It was a difficult decision to make, but belonging to a business background, I could give myself a chance. The transition has been truly satisfying. I have been able to bring my software know-how and create a new vision to the products we deal in," Choudhary is proud of being instrumen-

tal in becoming a job-giver from a job-seeker. Girish Kumar of Sai Electricals has been an epitome of innovation in the transformer industry. "It is simply not an idea, but the passion and perseverance to chase one's dreams that is important. A future leader should have his goals clear. He should be able to inspire others to work towards the same goals he has," said Kumar. Another noteworthy entrepreneurial journey is that of Lyaapur Uniforms. A business idea lives when someone has the vision to make it a reality. "We

stepped into ready uniforms at a time when no one had ever dreamt of it. This was in 1965. Since then we have been working on a clear mission — to make school going fun for children," say Gurmeet Singh and K D Chugh, while receiving the felicitation. Lyaapur Uniforms became the first one in India to start the business of ready-made uniforms. Also noteworthy is the story of Sitar International, a leading agro food processing plants manufacturer. Conceptualised and run by 72-year-old S C Sharma, the company is

proud of "never having used any external financial resources till date." Speaking on the occasion, Sharma said, "Despite having thoughts of failure, I never stopped and kept moving ahead bit by bit. Today, I feel the perseverance and grit has paid back." Amarjit Singh Kalra of Five Core Electronics Ltd, a pioneer in acoustic equipment, was another entrepreneur who appreciated the underlying thought at the function that SMEs create a context for any businessman to grow bigger than his dream. "It is important to dream and then work towards making it a reality, think of innovative ways at moments of crisis, test your abilities and never give up," was his advice to the listeners.

The ceremony closed on a positive thought of future leadership. We are living in times when the youth are willing to take risks and want to do something on their own. The time is right to start off on your own. Entrepreneurial streak needs risk-taking and great determination. It is time to learn from those who have walked the path and write a new chapter for the 'Make in India' dream of our country. It is the youth who can take this game to the next level.

For editorial queries: [BSManu.Kan@timesgroup.com](mailto:BSManu.Kan@timesgroup.com)



Times SME ICON, Transformers: Girish Kumar, Ayush Kumar, Sai Electricals | Times SME ICON, Soya food products: Amit Bajaj, Vezlay Foods Pvt Ltd | Times SME ICON, Precision components manufacturers: Ravi Sawhney, Sawhney Engineering Co | Times SME ICON, Hospitality: Varsha Jain and Sagar Sethi, Levante Hospitality | Times SME ICON, Plastic pipes: Dr Ashok Kumar Garg and Abhishek Garg, AKS Plastics Pvt Ltd



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