

BUSINESS

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Indo-American chamber created

By BECHETTA JACKSON
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

FORT WORTH — In an effort to foster better business relations between the Metroplex and India, a group of Indian-Americans recently created the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce.

Housed in a 2-story building in north Dallas, the chamber is the second of its kind in Texas, following the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston.

Both chambers aim to provide a network for Indian-American business owners, and to educate local businesses about the economic environment in India. They will also promote issues at the local, state and federal level.

"The time is right for an organization like this," said Ashwin Kalia, a Grapevine resident and board member of the Dallas chamber. "It's imperative that local businesses understand the business climate in India."

Commerce between India and Dallas has grown significantly in the past decade, to an estimated \$300 million annually, said A.K.

FYI

for your information

Contact the Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, 5477 Glen Lakes Drive, Suite 225, Dallas 75231, or call (214) 346-9559. Web address: www.gdiacc.org.

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Mago, the chamber's chairman.

Though the United States is India's largest trading partner, Kalia said the two nations should do more business together. Chamber board members said the perception of political instability in India has led to some trade problems.

"We're hoping to provide assistance in getting through those trade difficulties," said Kalia, who owns a small company in Grand Prairie.

About 50,000 people of Indian descent live in the Metroplex and 150,000 throughout Texas, said Rinzing Wangdi, the Indian counsel general who is based in Houston.

Despite last year's economic crises in parts of Asia, the busi-



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From left, Sushil Mathew, Raj Sharma and A.K. Mago are members of the recently created Greater Dallas Indo-American Chamber of Commerce. The chamber is the second of its kind in Texas.

ness climate in India has improved. The economy is the fourth-largest in the world in terms of buying power, Wangdi said.

"With the India economy growing by 7 percent a year, there are a lot of possibilities," Wangdi said.

One of the chamber's first steps was to hire an executive director: Sushil Mathew, who has worked in the Dallas department of economic development and its office of international affairs.

The board has 27 members, including Darin Narayana, presi-

dent of Bank One International; Krish Prabhu, chief executive of Alcatel U.S.A.; Pallab Chatterjee, chief information officer of Texas Instruments, and Ausaf Husain, senior vice president of TXU Generation Services.

The chamber's goal is to have 250 members by the end of the year, said Mago, a Dallas investment and business consultant. Membership dues range from \$250 for businesses with five employees or less to \$1,500 for employers who have more than 100 employees.

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