

# We live **asia**

MORE THAN 35 YEARS OF PR SUCCESS IN THE FASTEST GROWING REGION IN THE WORLD.

# From the Board

2023 promises to be a year of rationalisation across countries, sectors and organisations. The strategies implemented hurriedly at the start of 2020 to cope with the pandemic are now being reassessed for relevance and efficiencies in the new post-pandemic world, as new challenges and also opportunities arise.



It is no different for us here in the Priority Consultants Group. Our immediate focus, with China's post-Covid re-opening, is to extend our footprint and onboard new staff in the major business hubs of Shanghai and Beijing. This will further differentiate us in the market and confirm our position as a premier Asian communication consulting firm.

In 2023 we will continue the focus on our people. Talent woes have attracted considerable media attention over the past twelve months in every market and sector. It is no different here in Asia although personal priorities may differ from those of individuals in the West. Supporting this commitment, Learning@Priority is a talent development initiative we formalised during the pandemic and as we extend this further, there is definite potential to offer our professional media relations training to trainees and institutions beyond Priority Consultants Group. Core to this is our commitment to deliver the consistency that our clients require, but as importantly, to equip and skill our team members for a long-term and rewarding career in the communications profession.

The lessons learned from the pandemic not only reinforce how important it is for people to actively communicate and interact, but also underline the role that a strong communications programme plays in supporting enterprises of every size. For the Priority Consultants Group, the long term direction is to extend our client services from high level strategic consulting engagements to tactical programme support and through to training in communications best practices. We are excited about the prospects and as we move into 2023, we are committed to investing in this diversification as confirmation of our belief in the essential role of communications

Jane Prior

# Message from the CEO



A year buffeted by the ongoing remnants and recovery from the global pandemic, the Ukraine conflict and a supply chain crisis, 2022 was a banner year for the Priority Consultants Group. Building on a solid financial base from 2021, we exceeded both our financial and headcount projections.

Our financial goals were aggressive and yet through unwavering focus on customerservicing and intellectual rigour, we proved that “doing things right and doing the right things” are crucial in building strong and steady growth that benefits all stakeholders. To support our business and geographical needs, we increased our headcount by 40% and with that improved not only the onboarding but the training and retention of our talent across the region.

Taking a leaf out of the crisis rulebook, we invested heavily in training our people to adapt to the changing work culture. As hybrid work practices were already our established modus operandi, Covid-19 and regional lockdowns meant very little change except in terms of client interaction and actual delivery of services.

As a specialist business to business communications firm, we formalised our ancillary/complementary communications services organisation **Change Mandate** to support our international clients in the region through an omni communications channel approach.

Our “cando,will do” attitude was rewarded with strong on-going partnerships with clients reaffirming the value we bring to their fundamental business operations in the region. We have always been proud of the long-term relationships we have with our clients and although 2023 is again predicted to be a difficult year as companies rationalise their post-pandemic business focus, we are confident that we are well placed to meet all expectations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

Kunalan Chakravarthy

# About US

Priority Consultants Group consists of an international Public Relations firm – Priority Consultants - specialising in the business to business (B2B) technology and professional services sectors and a content marketing and digital communications firm, Change Mandate.

Headquartered in Singapore we cover Southeast Asia, India and Hong Kong, notably some of the world's fastest growing and youngest economies.

With 38 years of experience, our strength lies in the deep local knowledge and domain business and technology expertise that we bring to deliver outstanding results.

We identify as consultants delivering strategic counsel. This partnership approach keeps most of our clients with us for more than five years - a good indication of the pragmatic and results- driven approach we bring.



# Where We Are Located

Bangalore

Chennai

Hyderabad

Kolkata

Mumbai

New Delhi

Hong Kong

Bangkok

Manila

Kuala Lumpur

Hanoi

Ho Chi Minh

**Singapore**

Our main office is in Singapore, the business hub of Southeast Asia.

Jakarta



Asia is our home – notably, Southeast Asia and India – and no-one knows it better than we do. We started out in Singapore more than 30 years ago, and since then we have grown in support of our clients expanding across geographies and market sectors.

Our main office is in Singapore, one of the region's major business hubs. Today we have people in some of the fastest growing, most exciting cities in the region, including Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Jakarta, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Kolkata and Hong Kong.

Outside Asia, we work with partners who are like us - independent specialists - right around the world from London to Tokyo, from Silicon Valley to Sydney.

## Our Offer

Our reputation as a premier Asian communications firm depends on the lasting relationships we build with clients and the media. In turn, those relationships would not endure so long if we did not provide our clients with the guidance and counsel that delivers the results they need. For 35 years we have delivered outstanding results, built on three core pillars – Local Knowledge, Domain Expertise and Proven Methodology.

We have always worked with B2B companies, and our growth has paralleled the development of the technology sector. We are recognised for pioneering a host of breakthrough digital technologies, in support of the innovative enterprises that offer the deep technology which runs the business world today.

We implemented a distributed, multi-location, work-from-home model long before Covid made it necessary. Our staff are “locals” and “at home” in their countries. They speak the local languages, follow the politics and are obviously members of their cultural communities. They read between the lines and interpret the nuances of what is happening in their markets.

We have developed, test-driven and proven a way of working that consistently delivers results, while saving our clients time and money. This flexible approach means most clients have one contract to cover the work across as many countries as needed and a single point of contact to provide the counsel in developing the programmes. From there, we cascade the plans to our in-country teams making sure valuable client time is not spent reinventing the wheel.

We know our region inside out so we will guide and support our clients as they develop campaigns and strategies for Southeast Asia and India.

At the same time, our approach which is always being “on the front foot” means we do not wait for the news releases to come from a distant client HQ, but instead look outwards to the market activities to create news. In this way, we deliver consistent and sustained results for clients enabling media relations to be a valuable key pillar in our clients’ field marketing strategies.

# Global Capabilities

During the past year we collaborated successfully with partners from the United States, UK, and Europe on such projects as “World Diabetes Day” and “Food from Finland” to provide on the ground support across our

region. These long term and valuable

partnerships, established with similarly-

minded organisations, are a critical

component in our services offering

as they enable us to seamlessly

support clients from anywhere

in the world. While the world

is looking towards Asia we are

here living it every day, but as

Asian enterprises mature and

continue to grow, they are

looking beyond our region and

this is where we can help.



## Our Values and our People - Diversity and Inclusion

Well defined and articulated core values help align the behaviour within any organisation. They set the expectation on what is acceptable and also what is not in the team spirit which means everyone is able to build and work from a unified platform of expectations.

Here at Priority, we look for Empathy and Courage, Respect and Integrity and take a zero- tolerance approach to any behaviour that undermines these.

All members of the Priority team are employed based on merit and potential, and from our youngest interns to the senior consultants, everyone regardless of age, gender, cultural and religious beliefs should find this a safe environment in which to work and grow.

As we look to another year, the lessons learned, relationships built and strengthened are the fundamental building blocks that make sure Priority Consultants is agile, resilient and responsive; able to embrace the challenges and seize the opportunities that Asia brings to the world today.

# Living Asia - Market Overview

2022 was in many ways a volatile year for Asia. The ASEAN countries and India gradually emerged from the restrictions of the Covid pandemic, and national economies typically saw an economic bounce as businesses began to recover. Democratic norms prevailed as the Philippines and Malaysia elected new leaders, although political protests roiled Thailand, ahead of elections due next year. The ASEAN summit took place in Cambodia in November; a dominant theme of the leaders' discussions was relations with China and the US.

Ahead of the meeting, Cambodia's Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kung Phoak, told CNBC: "ASEAN remains neutral in this competition and we don't want to choose sides. ASEAN wants to work closely with both countries."

In India, political events were dominated by the ruling BJP party's moves to transform the country into a majoritarian Hindu state leading to clashes with the Muslim minority. There were also clashes between Indian and Chinese forces at the disputed border between the two countries but even against this uneasy background the country continued its steady recovery from the Covid pandemic.

On a happier note, the eyes of the world focused on Indonesia in November, when the annual G20 meeting took place on the island of Bali. This was the culmination of Indonesia's year-long G20 Presidency, and the international spotlight the summit provided allowed Indonesia to demonstrate all it has done to help restore post-pandemic confidence in the domestic and international economy. India has now assumed the G20 Presidency for the next year, so worldwide focus will continue to be on our home region centered on two vast and young economies.

Looking ahead, the Indo-Pacific markets in 2023 will offer better prospects for international marketers than Western economies. Overall, the International Monetary Fund projects that ASEAN's economy will grow 5.6% in 2022 and 6.0% in 2023, outpacing the projected growth of global GDP. Looking at the region's major markets, Credit Suisse expects that in the face of the US and global downturn the growth of Asean-6 economies – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – will decline slightly to 4.4 per cent in 2023, from a projected 5.6 per cent this year, as the post-Covid reopening boost fades.



According to the OECD, India is anticipated to be the second-fastest growing economy in the G20 in FY2022-2023, despite slowing global demand and the steps taken by the government to moderate inflationary pressures. GDP growth will come in at 5.7 percent in FY2023-2024.

The market sectors driving growth in Southeast Asia and India range from e-commerce to healthcare, finance to supply chain, and from renewable energy to ICT. The latter category embraces artificial intelligence, data analytics, cloud and edge computing, cybersecurity and 5G – all of which are key factors in the overall growth of the national economies and drivers of the Smart City concept.

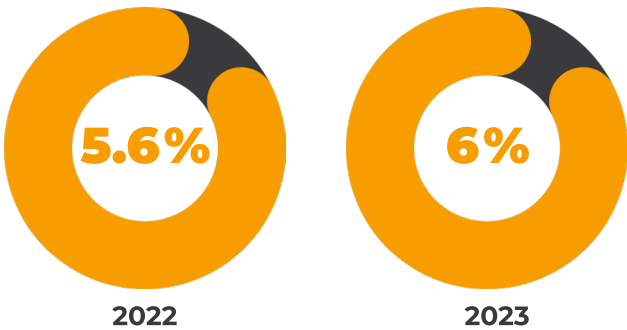
The ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) was set up in 2018 as a collaborative platform where cities across the region work towards the common goal of smart and sustainable urban development. India has its Smart Cities Mission with a similar objective.

Even the traditional agriculture and fishery sectors across the region are looking to technological solutions for their development.

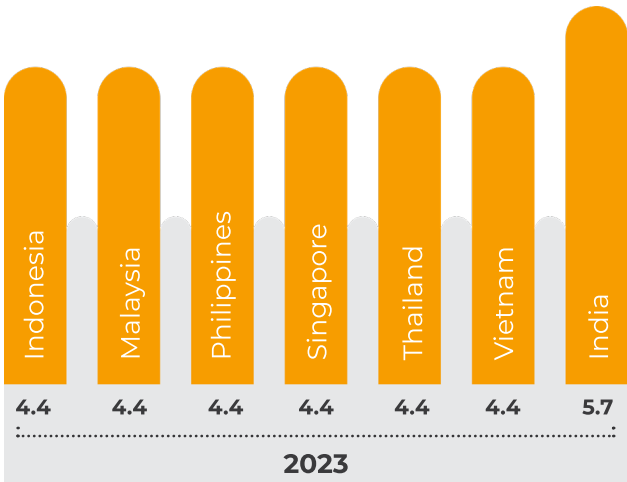
Thus, the opportunities for innovative solution providers to win market share in Southeast Asia and India continue to outpace other regions of the world and savvy operators should turn their focus in this direction.

International Monetary Fund projections

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**India** despite the slowing global demand and the steps taken by the government to moderate inflationary pressures. GDP growth will come in at **5.7 percent**





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