

Indian investments grow in London despite downturn

Indian companies continued to invest in London in the 2008-09 financial year despite the global recession and are set to emulate the strong growth registered in the previous year, according to new data.

Results for the financial year confirm that 14 Indian companies have either set up or expanded their operations in London, according to new data from Think London, the foreign direct investment agency for the British capital.

'Encouragingly the outlook for the full year suggests that the growth seen in 2008-09 will be sustained through this year,' the agency said.

India is already the second largest investor in London and projects from the country helped create over 4,000 jobs worth 461 million pounds to the London economy, making it the second highest source of jobs after the US.

'The strength of the Indian community in London and their commitment to this city never fails to impress me. Indian-owned businesses in the capital generate over 14.4 billion pounds and represent five percent of London's economy,' London Mayor Boris Johnson told a reception last week.

'With the continued support of Indian owned businesses we can make sure that London is, and continues to be, the most enjoyed and competitive city in the world,' he told the reception to launch the research.

The reception that also celebrated London's strong links to the Indian business community was hosted by leading City law firm Berwin Leighton Paisner, whose Indian clients include TCS/Diligenta, DQ Entertainment, Kingfisher Airlines and L and amp;T Infotech.

Think London Chief Executive Michael Charlton added: 'Our results to date clearly demonstrate that Indian companies are showing a high degree of resilience against the current economic climate, especially as the Indian economy registered an impressive 6.2 percent growth this year. Investment from growth markets such as India is key for London to continue to grow and maintain its position as a global hub for business.'

Anil Kalra, Chief Executive Officer at IL and amp;FS Global Financial Services, which launched its British operations last week, said the economic downturn 'has created a unique opportunity for us'.

'With unrivalled access to markets, lower commercial property costs and an impressive talent pool that is now more readily available, London was the best choice for us to locate our European Headquarters,' Kalra added.

Major Indian companies that have set up in London in recent years include Haldiram, ICICI Bank and Kingfisher Airlines. Wipro and IL and amp;FS have made London their European headquarters.

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