

UOB's new country head for India to prioritize local corporates' expansion in SEAsia

"The expansion journey of India corporations is only just beginning," says Mr Ananthakrishnan.



Mr. P.V. Ananthakrishnan

Country Head for India
United Overseas Bank

Mr P.V. Ananthakrishnan has been appointed as United Overseas Bank's new Country Head for its India operations. Mr Ananthakrishnan replaces Mr Lourdes Premkumar Sinnappan, who has taken up a new role as General Manager of UOB Labuan Branch in Malaysia.

Mr Ananthakrishnan will draw on his more than 30 years of experience to develop and expand UOB's Corporate Banking, Trade and Treasury businesses in India. On his appointment, Mr Ananthakrishnan said, "With UOB's extensive network across Asia and its deep understanding of the local business landscape, the Bank is in a strong position to partner with Indian corporations aspiring to grow domestically or into the region."

Before taking on his new role at UOB, Mr Ananthakrishnan was the Country Head and Chief Executive Officer of Mashreq Bank India. Prior to Mashreq Bank, he held various senior roles with HDFC Bank, BNP Paribas, Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank in India.

UOB opened its maiden branch in Mumbai, India in 2009. UOB Mumbai Branch currently provides wholesale banking services, includ-

ing lending, treasury and trade finance products, to corporates and financial institutions.

Asian Banking and Finance interviewed Mr Ananthakrishnan to learn more about his plans following his appointment.

ABF: What makes you excited about your new position?

This is an exciting time to be part of UOB. With UOB's strong franchise and network of more than 500 branches across the region, the bank is well positioned to help Indian companies access opportunities in Southeast Asia through cross-border banking solutions, such as trade financing, cross-border loans, investments and deposits.

ABF: What three goals are you focused on?

As India prepares to sign an enhanced Free Trade Agreement in services and investments with ASEAN, there will inevitably be more business flows between India and Southeast Asia.

My top priorities are to help Indian corporates, MNCs, and government enterprises expand in Southeast Asia as well as to support more Southeast Asian companies' expansion plans in India. This goal is aligned with UOB's regional strategy of facilitating cross-border investment and trade flows.

In October 2011, UOB became the first Singaporean bank to set up a Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Advisory Unit to facilitate investment and trade flows within the region.

The FDI Advisory Unit provides assistance ranging from company incorporation, access to UOB's full suite of corporate and personal banking products for borderless financial services through the Bank's long established regional network.

I am looking forward to ensuring our local companies take advantage of the services the FDI Advisory Unit offers.

ABF: What changes are you planning for?

What are your key business philosophies?

UOB has built long term relationships with its customers over many generations, supporting them through the good and bad times. This commitment to customers is a business philosophy I strongly believe in and will strive to demonstrate to my customers.

The expansion journey of India corporations is only just beginning. With the balance of power shifting to Asia, there are many growth opportunities in the region for Indian companies looking to expand beyond their home market.

I want UOB to be there for our customers, right from the start of their business expansion and regionalisation journey. I see our role as supporting customers with financial solutions and access to funding, as well as helping them navigate business challenges.

To be successful in expanding into Southeast Asia, it's important for Indian businesses to understand the region's diverse cultures, regulatory landscape, and to have the right connections. UOB will be able to help through its regional network in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

ABF: What previous positions prepared you for this one and how?

I will draw on my more than 30 years of banking experience to develop and expand UOB's Corporate Banking, Trade and Treasury businesses in India. Before taking on this new role at UOB, I was the Country Head and Chief Executive Officer of Mashreq Bank India. Prior to Mashreq Bank, I held various senior roles with HDFC Bank, BNP Paribas, Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank in India.

Having gone through several market cycles, I understand deeply the financial and business needs of Indian corporations, state-owned companies and MNCs. I will be working closely with the UOB team in the region to bring the capabilities, knowledge and experience of UOB to Indian businesses.



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