

FEBRUARY 2019

VOL 5 ISSUE 2 PANAJI GOA

RNI No.: GOAENG/2015/59955

POSTAL LICENSE No.: G-2/RNP/Monthly/Goa-19/2018-20

# BUSINESS GOA

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INDUSTRY DOSSIER

## WAH! TAJ

Indian Hotels Company Ltd will take over the management of Cidade de Goa which will form a part of the Selections portfolio – a collection of hotels and resorts with a distinct character. An additional 299 rooms which are under construction, will be added to the same complex under the Taj brand scheduled to open by the end of this year.

**Adcity**  
ENTREPRENEUR

**Prahlad Kakar**  
INTERVIEW

**Sunil Dias**  
PROFESSIONAL

**American Classic**  
GOAN BRAND

NEWS VIEWS ARTICLES INTERVIEWS PROFILES FOCUS ANALYSIS OPINIONS EVENTS FEATURES



SUNIL DIAS

## The Business Family Man

An experienced business advisor, **Sunil Dias** founded Iv Advisors, a boutique advisory firm anchored in finding strategic solutions for family businesses

By ANNA FERNANDES

In an era of volatile financial markets, businesses are in need of qualified unbiased professionals to assist them in achieving their short term and long term investment goals. For Sunil Dias, the ability to make a conscious difference to a client's life was enough reason to jump off his corporate treadmill and establish Iv Advisors. Positioned as a boutique advisory firm, Iv Advisors was founded on the principles of independence, transparency and client advocacy. Headquartered in Panjim, Iv Advisors serves clients nationally through a network of nine offices dotted across the map of India.

Starting his career with a degree in Mechanical Engineering from NIT Nagpur followed by an MBA from IIM Bangalore, Sunil's resume is dotted with major stints at big corporations such as Marico, Coca-Cola and KPMG.

From a director at KPMG supervising the gamut of activities relating to strategy and operations and handling a wide variety of national and international clients, Sunil's move to launch his own firm can only be described as a calculated leap into the ocean of opportunity. "In my previous role, a lot of my bandwidth was taken by administration, internal conference calls and meetings. And navigating office politics! I figured my time was better spent on delivering meaningful work to clients. That fulfils me," he says.

He continues, "I had worked

with several family businesses while at KPMG. It's difficult to find the passion and character of a family business in other businesses. And developing clear business strategies is exciting. So, I married them both and started Iv Advisors." Iv Advisors' services are anchored in finding clear solutions for family businesses, that centre around strategy development and enablement. This includes strategic planning, business planning, marketing strategy / planning and process improvement. "For companies growing super-fast or not-at-all, we help in organisational transformation. For transitioning management from one generation

to another, we offer succession planning services,"

he says. In addition, Iv Advisors has collaborated with boutique tax, regulatory and business advisory firm Transaction

Square to offer businesses tax and transaction-related services as well.

"A family business often evokes the image of a small neighbourhood business. However, 'family business' doesn't equate to 'small business'. At least not exclusively. Many of the largest companies across the world are family controlled. And guess what? They perform better than other businesses," says Sunil.

Theirs is a philosophy to always put the client's needs first. "We never rush into a commercial relationship. While we do many meetings with interesting people across businesses, we are not in a hurry to 'sell' our work. Only

when we identify a problem that needs solving and we can help the client solve, do we discuss a commercial relationship. That makes for a sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship. Our focus is high-quality,

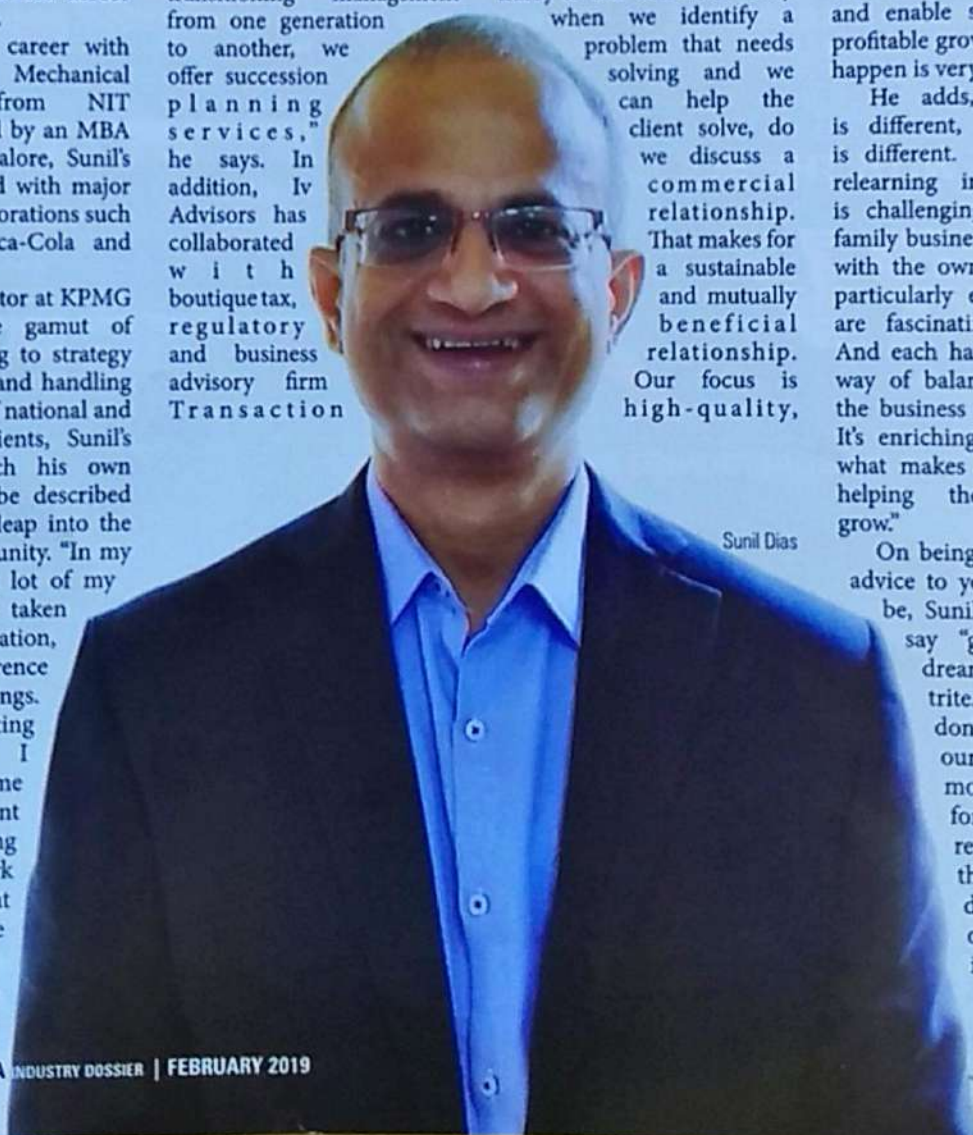
customised services rather than high-quantity, templatised deliverables."

Taking the leap into entrepreneurship can be quite daunting, and rightly so. Sunil says, "The biggest challenge was taking the decision to leave a well-paying job at a large company and leap into the unknown. It was a scary moment. And the journey continues to have its scary moments! But it's been the most fulfilling period of my work life. There's something new to learn and enjoy every day. Also, not hiding behind a designation given by a large company, is quite satisfying."

Truly, Sunil has no regrets. "Ultimately, our job is to bring clarity for a client and enable sustainable and profitable growth. Seeing that happen is very fulfilling."

He adds, "Each client is different, each industry is different. Learning and relearning in equal parts is challenging and fun. In family businesses, interacting with the owner-managers is particularly exciting. Most are fascinating individuals! And each have their unique way of balancing managing the business and the family. It's enriching understanding what makes them tick, and helping their companies grow."

On being asked what his advice to youngsters would be, Sunil says, "I would say 'go follow your dream', but that's trite. Many of us don't know what our dream is! It's more important for youngsters to recognise what they don't want to do. Circumstances often put us into jobs and professions which we don't



Sunil Dias



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like. And once you stay there for some time, you tend to get stuck. So, it's important to have courage and take the leap. If you leap into something you still don't like, leap again. I'm told that the biggest regret older people have before they die is not about things that they have

done. It's about things that they haven't done. So, have courage and confidence, work hard - and stay humble."

He also advises youngsters to invest in their personal brand. "That means building relevant skills independent from those your employer requires. We are in the gig-economy and the days where you can hide behind someone else's brand are numbered," he says, adding "Finally, I would like to advise youngsters to read. Reading opens up worlds we don't know about. And educates you holistically like nothing else."

Looking ahead, he says, "We are in the process of a rapid ramp-up of our Goa team and are moving into our new bigger office by mid-February. Going national has changed the game for us. We plan to grow to around 15-20 employees by the end of this year" ✦

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