# Indo-Dutch Innovators

Cybersecurity is becoming more and more important on our agenda. Therefore, this month we caught up with Michel Rademaker. He is Deputy Director at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies and the man behind the Indo – Dutch Cyber Security School.

1. **Could you tell us about the Indo-Dutch cybersecurity school and its highlights?**

Cybersecurity is increasingly important for our digital, but also our physical world. It is integrated in all parts of life. Therefore, we need to have a broad understanding of cyber. The Indo-Dutch cybersecurity school provides this angle. It's a very nice endeavor where we try to have students from an alpha, beta, and gamma background. The course does not only focus on technology, but also on cyber policy, legal aspects, social aspects, etc. That's an important part of the thinking: we need to work interdisciplinary.

This year we had 3000 students, which we are very proud of. We hosted 21 lectures from the world's leading experts in Cybersecurity, such as the former US Cyber Diplomat, Christopher Painter, CSIS Fellow Dr. Alexander Klimburg, GDPR and Cyber Law expert Benedetta Podesta and Dr Akash Thakar, Forensics expert.

## 2. Why is it so important to work on cyber security at the moment and what is the role of international cyber diplomacy in this?

The geopolitics of cyber is getting more harsh. We face autocracies, who organize their own digital world and set up their own internets. They thereby are closing off their people from the rest of the world.

We see malicious behavior - such as espionage, extortions, national attacks - in the virtual domain and it is becoming more and more sophisticated. Therefore, it is necessary to focus more on the cyber domain and its safety and security.

On the international approach, I believe multilateralism is the solution. While preparing cyber security strategies diplomacy should engage all stakeholders, not only government. If you forget certain angles, you will surely only come up with a partial solution.

# 3. What is the strength of India and NL working together in Cybersecurity?

In the Netherlands we invest substantially on an individual level and are strong at these type of solutions. India is all about scalability and affordability. I think India is strong on engineering and technology, and the Netherlands is looking also very much from a policy and ethical angle at cyber.

A practical example is the online school. We were overwhelmed with 3000 students and saw this as a major challenge. "How can we manage this? How do we judge all talent?" Then I spoke to Indian colleagues, and they came to a creative solution: we had everyone make a 3-minute video, put it on YouTube, and had everybody in the world judge the teams and their videos with likes and comments. An original solution, and one that deals with scale!

# 4. What are the opportunities for India in cybersecurity in the Netherlands?

The Netherlands is emerging as a hub for India in Europe. There are over 200 Indian companies present in the Netherlands, including all the major IT companies such as TCS, Wipro, Infosys, Tech Mahindra as well as Sun Pharmaceuticals and Tata Steel. Also, there are over 200 Dutch companies present in India, including major Dutch companies like Philips, Akzo Nobel, DSM, and Rabobank. These companies all need security that is comprehensive and inclusive, multistakeholder, multidisciplinary and internationally scoped.

India of course has great engineering education institutes and most of the students are very smart. The cybersecurity courses offered in the Netherlands are multidisciplinary and interconnected, which gives students from different verticals options to learn more and start understanding other aspects they might not be familiar with.

# 5. Do you have particular advice for students and young professionals in Cybersecurity?

As a student you need to be really passionate about what you do. Cybersecurity students should take up their work with a broad mindset and have a keen desire to learn from other disciplines as well.

This includes interacting internationally and trying to understand the challenges ahead, as well as the opportunities. The better students are in multistakeholder engagement and multidisciplinary understanding, the more successful they will be!

# Thank you!

*Feel free to share your ideas in the comments. Suggestions for future interviews are most welcome too.*