INDIA

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT - AUGUST 2016























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Ambassador's Message

69th Independence Day of India

On the occasion of 69th Independence Day Anniversary of India, it gives me immense pleasure to extend warm greetings and felicitations to all Indian's in Denmark. I also extend my good wishes to the people of Denmark.

The birth of modern and independent India on August 15, 1947 was a moment of historic exhilaration. It is, therefore, important to remember and pay homage to the people and leaders of India who realised the dream of a free India. We also need to remember the guardians of our frontiers and upholders of peace in the country. Our richly deserving tributes to the brave soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in defending India's territorial integrity and in upholding the Rule of Law.

The sagacious leaders of India gave the most precious gift to our country, a Constitution that launched India's march towards greatness and a vibrant democracy. Today, India is the largest functioning democracy in the world, which is strongly secular, multi-religious and multi-ethnic. India prides itself in its unity in diversity, and its pluralism is nourished with tolerance, equality and justice.



Relations between India and Denmark are historical and friendly. They date back to 17th century when a Danish explorer reached the east coast of India in Tranquebar which remained the centre of Danish activities until 1815 when it was transferred to the British. The foundation for a robust relationship between India and Denmark was laid in 1957 when then PM Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru visited Denmark. Since then, the bilateral ties have grown from strength to strength and have come a long way. The robust economic ties are characterised by a healthy US$ 3.5 billion bilateral trade engagement and presence of more than 125 Danish companies in India and 30 Indian companies in Denmark, primarily in the IT sector.

Denmark is engaging strongly with India in important flagship initiatives such as Make in India, Smart Cities, Digital India and Clean India. Interestingly, Denmark has also evinced a keen interest in having a strategic relationship with India which has been well articulated in a recent Danish Government Report. The Indian economy, which has performed well despite global economic sluggishness, has complementarities with the Danish Economy. This has led to highly successful Danish business ventures in India and many more win-win situations are likely to emerge in the future.

Once again, on this joyous and auspicious occasion of India's 69th Independence Anniversary, I reiterate my warm wishes and greetings to all.

Jai Hind!
Rajeev Shahare
Ambassador of India

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India-Denmark relations

Fostering mutually beneficial economic and cultural exchanges between our two countries.

Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Denmark in 1957 laid the foundation for a friendly relationship between India and Denmark. Bilateral relations have been cordial and friendly, based on synergies in political, economic, academic and research fields. Several high-level visits have since taken place between the two countries, which have further served to reinforce this relationship.

COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Though small in size, Denmark is a rich country with an open economy which relies heavily on foreign trade and investment.

Total volume of bilateral trade between India and Denmark was US$ 2838 million in 2015. Trade of goods between India and Denmark has more than doubled from US$ 530.9 million in 2003 to reach a level of US$ 1051 million in 2015. Balance of trade in 2015 was slightly in favour of Denmark; India's imports being US$ 1446 and exports US$ 1392.

Major Danish exports to India, include; medicinal/ pharmaceutical goods, power generating machinery, industrial machinery, metal waste and ore, organic chemicals, etc. Major Indian exports to Denmark, include; apparels/ ready-made garments, textiles/ fabrics/ yarns/ carpets, road vehicles and components, metal goods, iron and steel, footwear, travel goods including leather goods, industrial machinery and accessories, chemical material and products, etc.

As per Denmark statistics, direct investment inflows from Denmark to India during 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 were US$ 877, US$ 931, US$ 731 & US$ 854 million respectively. The investments have been made in sectors such as harbour/ port modernisation and expansion, beer breweries, wind turbine/ rotor blade manufacturing, agro-intermediates/ insecticides, and the engineering sector. There is scope for additional investments in renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, food processing, shipping, electronics and infrastructure sectors.

Indian investments to Denmark in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 were US$ 112, US$ 103, US$ 89 million and US$ 71 million respectively. A major investing company from Denmark is the Danish Shipping Giant, AP Moller Maersk Group which has made significant investments in the port infrastructure in India, acquiring a major equity stake in the Gujarat Pipavav Port and development of a bulk terminal at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port to a container terminal. Other notable companies include; Cheminova Agro, F. L. Smidth & Co., Danfoss, CHR Hansen, Danisco, LM Glasfiber, Lundbeck, Egmont International Holding, Novozymes, Novo Nordisk, Carlsberg, Ramboll and ISS.

The presence of Indian companies in Denmark is rather small. Among IT companies, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and L&T Infotech have their offices in Denmark since 1990 and 2000 respectively. In the last few years, other Indian IT majors, viz., Infosys Technologies, ITC Infotech, Mahindra Satyam and Ubique Systems have also started their operations in Denmark at a small level.

FIND A PIECE OF INDIA IN DENMARK

The size of the Indian community in Denmark is 8572 (6326-NRIs and 2246-PIOs) as of 1 January 2016. The PIOs came to Denmark in the 1970s and 80s from Punjab and neighbouring countries of Europe. There has been a steady increase in the number of NRIs due to the arrival of IT professionals, doctors, students and others from India in the recent times. There are several Indian Cultural Associations in Denmark who organise cultural programmes during festive seasons, as well as engage the expat community.

A famous Indian face, Mahatma Gandhi has even been recognised officially in Denmark. Gandhi Plaene (Gandhi Park) located at the junction of Borups Alle and Hvidkildevej in Copenhagen has a bronze statue of the man in a sitting posture.

BUSINESS TRAVEL BETWEEN DENMARK AND INDIA

For business persons interested in doing business in India, it is important to remember that holders of diplomatic and official passports do not require a visa for Denmark for a stay of up to three months, after which period a residence permit becomes necessary. Other visitors will require a visa. A visa may also be required to transit through other EU countries while travelling to Denmark. The details and types of visas issued to tourists, businessmen and students are available on the Indian Embassy's website (http://www.indian-embassy.dk/).

Efforts are underway to have a direct flight from Denmark to India by early 2017. Finnair operates a flight to India via Helsinki. Convenient links to get an Air India flight to India are from London, Paris and Frankfurt. Other connections are via Vienna, Moscow, Istanbul, Doha and Dubai.

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Make in India

Promoting India as a global manufacturing hub.

The Government of India's flagship initiative, Make in India, is an effort to boost India's economy and bring greater welfare and prosperity to its people. Yet what is often forgotten is that this plan for future growth and development builds on India's long history as a global manufacturing hub.

WHAT IS MAKE IN INDIA?

The initiative is designed to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skills development, protect intellectual property and build a strong manufacturing infrastructure in the country. The primary objective of this initiative is to attract investments from across the globe and strengthen India's manufacturing sector. It is being led by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The Make in India programme is very important for the economic growth of India as it aims at utilising the existing Indian talent base, creating additional employment opportunities and empowering the secondary and tertiary sectors.

The programme also aims at improving India's rank on the Ease of Doing Business index by eliminating unnecessary laws and regulations, making bureaucratic processes easier, and by making the government more transparent, responsive and accountable.

"I want to tell the people of the whole world: Come, make in India. Come and manufacture in India. Go and sell in any country of the world, but manufacture here. We have skill, talent, discipline and the desire to do something. We want to give the world an opportunity that come make in India," Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi said while introducing the programme in his maiden Independence Day speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort on August 15, 2014.

The initiative was formally introduced on September 25, 2014 by Prime Minister Modi at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, in the presence of business giants from India.

The focus of the Make in India programme is on 25 sectors. These include: automobiles, aviation, chemicals, IT & BPM, pharmaceuticals, construction, defence manufacturing, electrical machinery, food processing, textiles and garments, ports, leather, media and entertainment, wellness, mining, tourism and hospitality, railways, automobile components, renewable energy, biotechnology, space, thermal power, roads and highways and electronics systems.



For more information on the programme, visit the website: www.makeinindia.com, which not only showcases the 25 sectors, but also puts focus on the live projects like industrial corridors and policies in the area of foreign direct investment, national manufacturing, intellectual property and new initiatives.



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WE MEAN BUSINESS

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Making India a great place for investment



Extracts of PM's speech at the inauguration of Make in India Week, Mumbai, 2013.

I am delighted to be part of the celebrations of the "Make in India Week." I welcome you all to Mumbai, the commercial capital of India.

When I look back at the launch of the Make in India initiative over a year ago, I also recall the aspirations of our youth. 65 percent of the population of India is under the age of 35. This youthful energy is our greatest strength.

We launched the Make in India campaign to create employment and self-employment opportunities for our youth. We are working aggressively towards making India a Global Manufacturing Hub. We want the share of manufacturing in our GDP to go up to 25 percent in the near future.

We were also aware that under the pressure of this campaign, the government machinery will be required to make a number of corrections on the policy front.

We are committed to make India an easy place to do business.

We want to present to the world the enormous opportunities that India offers as a base for manufacturing, design, research and development.

Make in India week is an opportunity to take stock of how we have performed. And what could be the road ahead.

This event will show-case different aspects of the progress that we have made. This is the biggest multi-sectoral event and exhibition ever held in India. I encourage all of you to see for yourselves the direction that India is taking.

Let me take this opportunity to share my thoughts.

In a year's time, Make in India has become the biggest brand that India has ever created. Both within and outside the country, it has captured the imagination of people, institutions, industries, media and the political leadership.

I believe in Minimum Government and



Maximum Governance. Therefore, almost on a daily basis, we are trying to remove the bottlenecks that were affecting investments and growth.

It is good to see that changes and corrections are taking place not just at the level of the Federal Government but also at the state level. States are now in healthy competition to provide ease of business and infrastructure linkages.

The results have been encouraging.

India has become the fastest growing large economy in the world. We will end this fiscal year with well over seven percent growth in GDP. IMF, World Bank, OECD, ADB and other institutions have projected even better growth in the coming days.

In 2014-15, India contributed 12.5 percent of global growth. Its contribution to global growth is 68 percent higher than its share of the world economy.

The momentum of the Make in India campaign has given us confidence. It motivates us to make our policies and processes easier and friendlier.

With this background, I invite and encourage you to make India your work place; and also your home.
Friends!

We are particularly keen to scale up investments in next generation infrastructure. This includes roads, ports, railways, airports, telecom, digital networks and clean energy.
We are also investing in our social, industrial and agricultural infrastructure to give better income and quality of life to our people.

Another bottleneck was financing. To enhance financing, we are trying innovative ways. We are opening up our Greenfield and Brownfield projects for Public Private Partnership. With strong fiscal discipline, and by plugging leakages, we are trying to provide more resources for infrastructure.

We have also set up the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund. We have come up with the mechanism of Tax Free Infrastructure Bonds for projects in rail, road and irrigation sectors. We are working with a number of countries, financial markets and funds on these financial instruments.

India is a land of immense opportunities. Fifty of our cities are ready for setting up Metro Rail Systems. We have to build fifty million houses. The requirement of road, rail and waterways is enormous. There is no time for incremental changes. We want a quantum jump.

We have also decided to do this in a cleaner and greener way. That is why, we have made a commitment to the world community at the recent COP-21 meeting in Paris. Hence, we are going for renewable energy in a big way – 175 Gigawatts.

India is blessed with three Ds. These are: Democracy, Demography and Demand. To this, we have added the fourth D that is Deregulation. Today's India is this four dimensional India.

Our judicial systems are independent and time tested.

You will not find all these elements in any other country.

With these strengths, India offers you a solid platform to test and launch your making and designing capabilities. In addition, our maritime location makes it easy to market products in several other continents.

We are trying to further enable and harness this vast potential with path-breaking initiatives. Campaigns like Digital India and Skill India have been designed to prepare people to take part in this process. We have launched financing schemes which are dedicated to promote entrepreneurship. We are giving loans through MUDRA Bank without any collateral. I have also impressed upon the Banks to particularly finance young entrepreneurs belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes as well as women entrepreneurs.

Only this will realise the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi who wanted industries to be run in Villages and Cottages.

Only this will realize the dreams of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who advocated the need to move surplus labour from agriculture to other occupations.



When we started the Make in India campaign, manufacturing growth in the country was 1.7 percent. This year it has improved substantially. In the current quarter, manufacturing growth is expected be around 12.6 percent.

- The composite PMI output index has climbed to an eleven month high of 53.3 percent in January 2016.
- The total number of investment proposals during the last eight months is higher by 27 percent.
- We have recorded the highest ever production of motor vehicles in 2015.
- As many as fifty new mobile phone factories were set up in the country during past ten months.
- Electronic manufacturing has grown six-fold to 18 million.
- 159 Electronic System Design and Manufacturing units, popularly known as ESDM units were established in India in 2015.
- As per estimates of certain agencies, the Indian job market is now on a strong footing. For example, the Monster Employ ment Index for India stood at 229 in January 2016 which is up by 52 percent over January of last year.
- India's highest ever software exports were recorded in 2015.
- Also in 2015, our major ports handled the highest ever quantity of cargo.

These are very good signs. I would like to give our industry some friendly advice. Don't wait. Don't Relax. There are immense opportunities in India. You should take advantage of the renewed interest of Global Players to work in India.

Narendra Damodardas Modi
Prime Minister of India







Innovative India

Science and technology is a cornerstone of Indian culture.

Science and technology has always been an integral part of Indian culture. Natural philosophy, as it was termed in those ancient times, was pursued vigorously at institutions of higher learning. The Indian Renaissance, which coincided with the country's independence struggle, at the dawn of 1900s witnessed great strides made by Indian scientists. This innate ability to perform creatively in science came to be backed with an institutional setup and strong state support after the country's independence in 1947. Since then, the Government of India has spared no effort to establish a modern S&T infrastructure in the country.

A KEY SECTOR FOR NATIONAL GROWTH

A key element in India's growth story over the past three decades has been that of science and technology. India created a strong base for this sector of the economy, and once this was done, the country took off on 7-8% growth trajectory starting in the 1990s.

The emergence in India of a cadre of great innovators in science and technology, endowed also with entrepreneurial capabilities, is essential for India's future growth and development globally. Today, India has an army of able scientists and engineers and many scientific achievements to boast, and plans to become a great innovator of new products and services, both locally and around the globe.

THE HISTORY OF INNOVATION

Being an ancient civilisation, India has a history of achievements in fields such as mathematics, logic, astronomy and medicine handed down over generations. However, India's great science leap came in the late 1940's, largely inspired by Mahatma Ghandi's peaceful revolution. Gandhi's non-violent freedom struggle took its own parallel path and India finally became independent in 1947. Gandhi's trusted man in the freedom struggle was Cambridge-trained Jawaharlal Nehru who believed that poverty could only be banished through science.

Soon after Nehru became Prime Minister, he made science the cornerstone of economic development in India. The country was lacking the basic essentials such as food grains, milk, communication facilities, education facilities and so on. It was unable to produce anything by itself, whether steel or heavy power equipment, and there was hardly any banking system outside the big cities.

Over the years, with an educated populace, India raised itself into a self-reliant economy. Application of science and technology through its numerous national research laboratories and the spread of higher technical education led by the ICTs, and setting up steel and power generation equipment companies, have made the country self-sufficient in milk, food grains, and key industrial goods.

USING SCIENCE TO BUILD A BETTER SOCIETY

With 30-40% of the population living below the poverty line, the Government of India has identified science and technology as the cornerstone for a better life for all its people. By investing wisely in its human capital to develop a skilled workforce through tertiary education (ranging from vocational education to higher degrees) better growth can be achieved.

According to Indian-born MA Pai, an emeritus professor in electrical and computing engineering at the University of Illinois, infrastructure must be a top priority. "The power sector is a classic example where the country must move the same way as the IT sector developed. This requires a change in mind set and a will to take bold decisions. Water and health sectors similarly require vision and better use of technology. Rural sector development has received increased attention from state governments in recent years and use of IT for education and agriculture must be given increased attention," he said in an article.

The Indian experience in adapting science and technology to development has been unique and can hold a model for other countries. It also offers skilled personnel and an established market for multinational companies to benefit from its innovative spirit.

Sources: https://india.gov.in/topics/science-technology; http://www.universityworldnews.com/; http://www.innovationbyindiaforindia.com/

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India is a 'bright spot' in the Asian market

Growth prospects for India remain favourable despite a slowdown in the global economy, as record foreign investment pours in.

At a time when the global economy is experiencing a slowdown, India is being hailed as a "bright spot" due to its growth trajectory. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the UN World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) are optimistic about India's growth prospects.

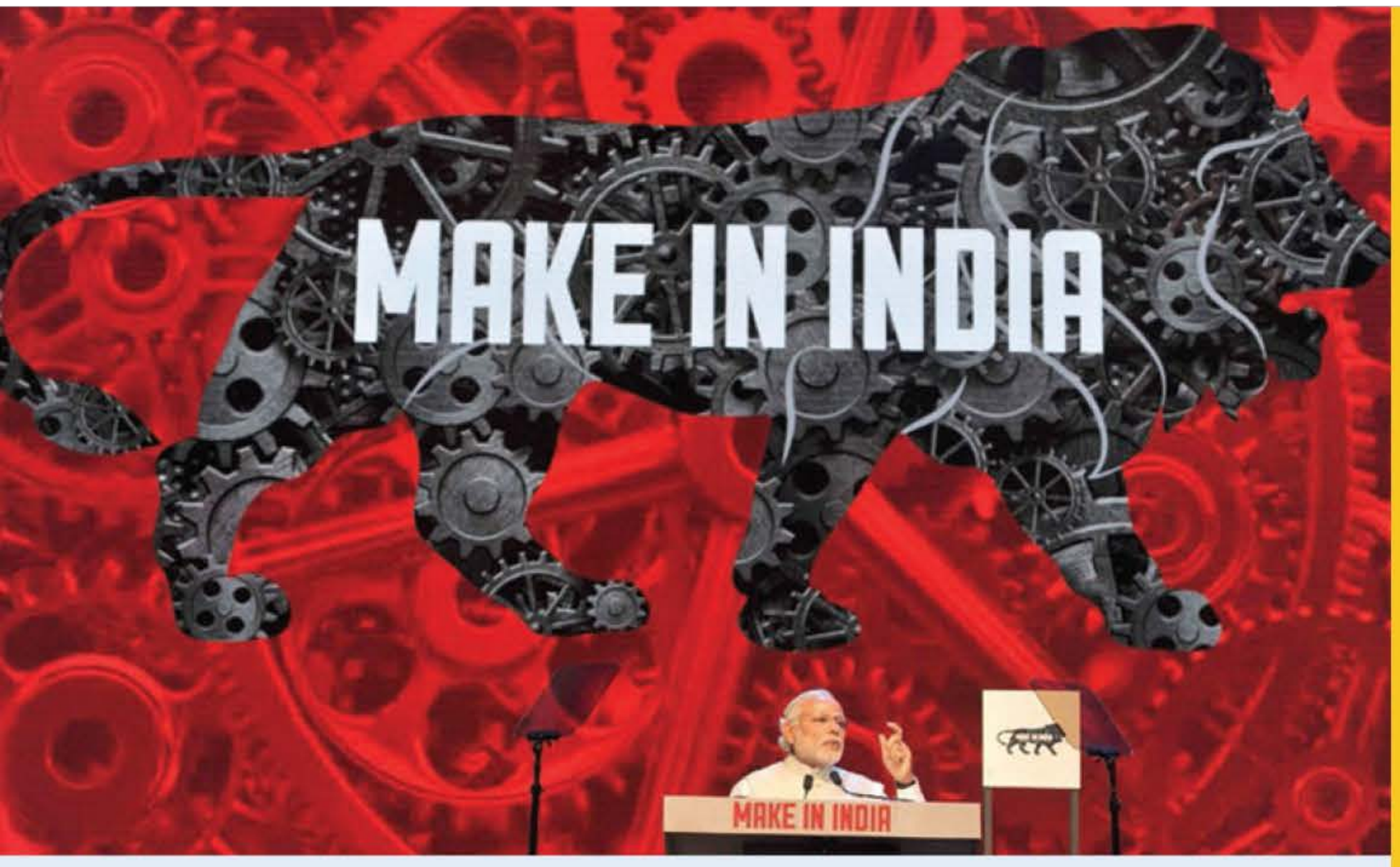
INDIA'S GROWTH CLIMBS ON BACK OF NATIONAL REFORMS

Despite two back-to-back years of drought and unseasonal monsoons, India's economic growth is projected to surpass that of China, with the GDP expected to zoom by 7.7 percent in 2016. In contrast, Asia's economic giant, China, which grew by seven percent in 2015, is likely to witness a 6.8 percent growth this year. Against the backdrop of muted growth in Europe and USA, and economic slowdown in China, India is the preferred destination for foreign investors.



Since Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi swept to power, India has carved out a success story in a short time despite inheriting weak finances. When growth fell to around five percent, inflation peaked at 10 percent and the current account deficit was at an unmanageable high, the turnaround by the Modi's Government was remarkable. In less than two years, the Government has not only succeeded in arresting inflation at around five percent, it has brought the current account deficit to around 1-1.5 percent of GDP and kept the rupee stable against the dollar. There was a sense of despair in decision-making when the new Government took over a couple of years back. India needed to take corrective measures to send out a strong signal to the world that the reforms are here to stay. The Government should be credited for unleashing a slew of reforms to win back the confidence of foreign investors.

Today, the country's foreign exchange reserves have risen to more than US$ 350 billion, helped by a robust rise in foreign currency assets. The surge has been largely due to foreign investors who have been buying Indian bonds and shares since the Government undertook the big



GREAT CHEMISTRY

INDIA IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S LEADING PRODUCERS OF DYES, AGRO-CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS.



#MAKEINDIA

ticket reforms. Strong exchange reserves are also a big deterrent against any potential volatility in global currency markets.

The Reserve Bank of India, which has been buying US dollars heavily, is keen to improve its defences in view of the worst rupee performance back in 2013. It is heartening that the currency reserves now provide more than nine months of import cover as against six months of cushion back in 2013.

MAKING IT EASIER FOR INVESTORS

The change came about after the Government eased FDI norms in 15 sectors including defence, construction, and retail trade, thus signalling its reforms intent. The decision to lift overseas investment ceilings for banking, defence and construction sectors made it easy for foreign investors to invest in India.

The Government also doubled the proportion of foreign investment in the US$ 60 billion insurance business to 49 percent. Life insurance penetration in the country remains poor as it is little over three percent of GDP as against 10 percent in Japan and about six percent in Australia.

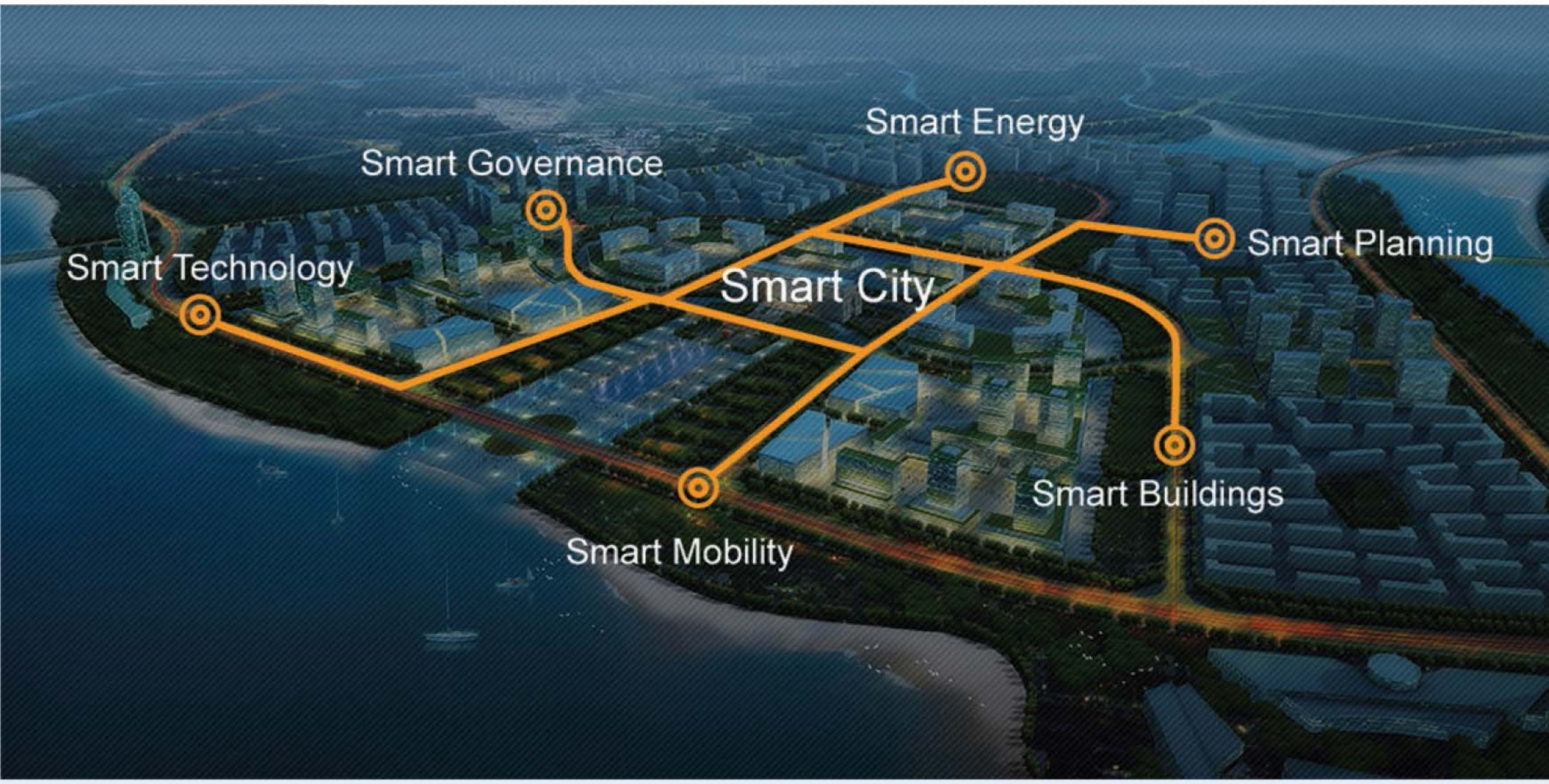
In order to give a push to the Government's flagship Make in India initiative, companies have been allowed to raise foreign ownership up to 49 percent in defence production. Similarly, the Government has allowed 100 percent FDI to multi-brand retailers via the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) route in the marketing of food products produced and manufactured in India. Now, foreign retailers can set up marketing outlets in India to sell food products manufactured by Indian producers. Until now, foreign food firms could set up shops in India to produce and sell their products. The move will not only provide Indian farmers greater access to the markets but better returns as well.

The Government also eased FDI norms in the US$ 7 billion medical device sector as foreigners wanting to buy 100 percent of device makers will no longer be required to get prior approval.

According to a World Bank report, India has jumped 12 places in ease of doing business. The changing business environment has led to a sharp increase in FDI which is a major monetary source for economic development. According to a leading national daily, India overtook China and USA as the top destination for FDI in 2015 which hit a high of US$ 34.9 billion in 2015, a 61.6 percent increase from the previous fiscal. According to Japanese brokerage company, Nomura, the inflows now represent 1.7 percent of GDP, up from 1.1 percent in the previous year.

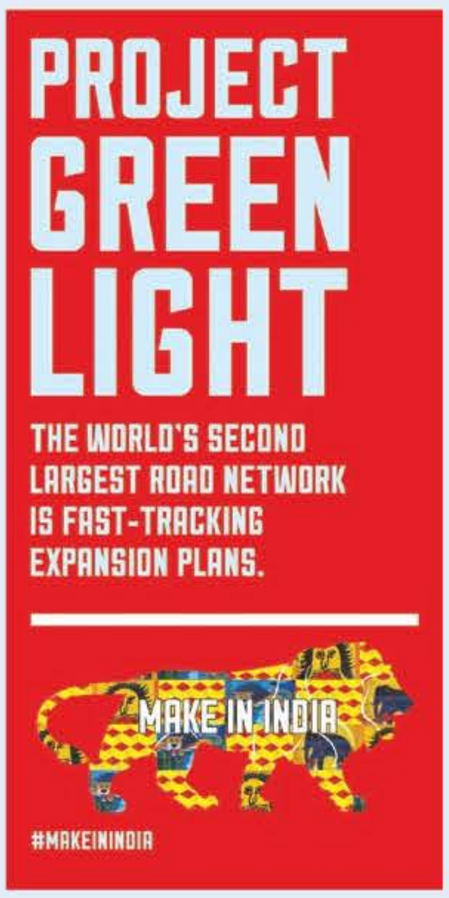
Massive public spending in agriculture and infrastructure proposed by the Government in this year's budget coupled with reforms have been aimed at sustaining growth against a grim global backdrop. And if the Government is able to get the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill passed in the Parliament, it will add up to two percentage points to the country's growth and double-digit growth will be well within the reach.





India's fantastic smart cities

The growing potential to build India the smart way.





Smart Cities India is set to become the most-populous country in the world by 2030, making it the home to the biggest and the most under-penetrated market for global manufacturers and service providers. Unlike its preceding generations, this growing population is also shifting to top tier cities of the country giving rise to new megacities estimated to generate 80% of economic growth, with potential to apply modern technologies and infrastructure, promoting better use of scarce resources.

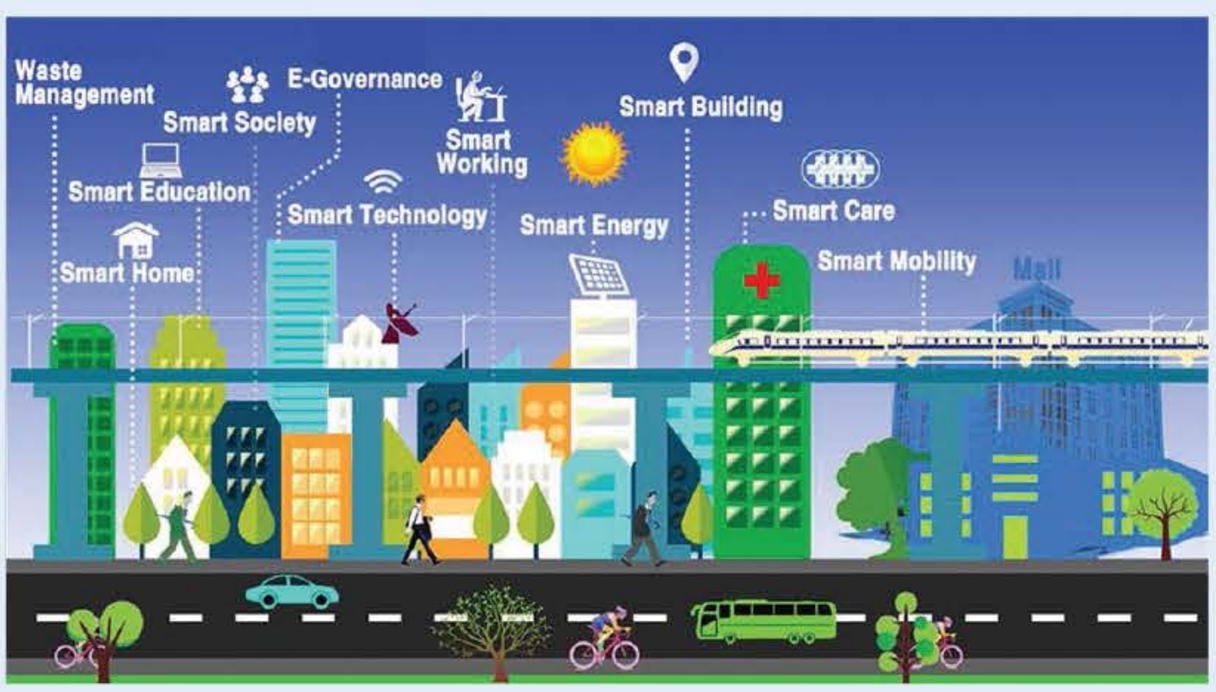
As per estimates, about 25–30 people will migrate every minute to major Indian cities from rural areas in search of better livelihoods and lifestyles. With this momentum, about 843 million people are expected to live in urban areas by 2050. To accommodate this massive urbanisation, India needs to find smarter ways to manage complexities, reduce expenses, increase efficiency and improve the quality of life.

With this context, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision "Digital India", has set an ambitious plan to build 100 smart cities across the country. Modi in his speech quoted, "Cities in the past were built on riverbanks. They are now built along highways. But in the future, they will be built based on availability of optical fiber networks and next-generation infrastructure."

The Government of India allocated US$ 1.2 billion for Smart Cities in the Union Budget 2014–15. Given the sheer scale of the development plan, the public resources would largely be insufficient and the Government is working on envisaging new financing routes to boost the programme.

The Government machinery is working on putting together the standards for executing this mega plan, and identifying the cities to be developed in consultation with states. A few smart cities are already coming up across the country, including Kochi Smart City, Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Ahmedabad, Naya Raipur in Chhattisgarh, Lavasa in Maharashtra and Wave Infratech's 4,500-acre smart city near New Delhi.





India has also been inviting foreign partnership in developing the smart cities and has signed deals to build eight cities — three with Germany, three with the USA, and one each with Spain and Singapore.

India's Smart City plan is part of a larger agenda of creating Industrial Corridors between India's big metropolitan cities. These include the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, the Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor and the Bangalore-Mumbai Economic Corridor. It is hoped that many industrial and commercial centres will be recreated as "Smart Cities" along these corridors. The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC), which is spread across six states, seeks to create seven new smart cities as the nodes of the corridor in its first phase.



THE 8 CRITICAL PILLARS OF THE PROGRAMME

#1 Smart Governance: Investments of about US$ 1.2 trillion will be required over the next 20 years across areas such as transportation, energy and public security to build smart cities in India.

#2 Smart Energy: Three crucial dimensions of smart energy systems include; Smart Grid, Energy Storage and Smart Meters.

#3 Smart Environment: Three crucial dimensions of ensuring sustainable development are: Renewable Energy, Water and Waste Water Management and Sanitation.

#4 Smart Transportation: The Government of India has set ambitious targets of developing a public transportation system to support the ever growing urban populace.

#5 Smart IT & Communications: Under the flagship "Safe City" project, the Union Ministry proposes US$ 333 million to make seven big cities (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Hyderabad) to focus on technological advancement rather than manpower Disaster Management. In addition, within the ICT market, cloud computing will evolve into a US$ 4.5 billion market in India by 2016, and broadband connections to 175 million users by 2017.

#6 Smart Buildings: India is expected to emerge as the world's 3rd largest construction market by 2020, by adding 11.5 million homes every year. The Intelligent Building Management Systems market is around US$ 621 million and is expected to reach US$ 1,891 million by 2016. Smart Buildings will save up to 30% of water usage, 40% of energy usage and reduction of building maintenance costs by 10 to 30%.

#7 Smart Health Hospitals: An accessible, affordable and effective healthcare system for 1.2+ billion citizens. The FDI limit in the insurance sector will increase to 49% from 26%, and the insurance industry has the potential to reach US$ 1 trillion by 2020. The Indian wellness industry is expected to reach around US$ 16.65 billion by 2015.

#8 Smart Education: The Government of India has allocated US$ 13.95 billion in the Union Budget 2014-15 for the education sector, up by 12.3% from the previous year. 100% FDI is allowed in the education sector, and India's online education market size is expected to be US$ 40 billion by 2017.

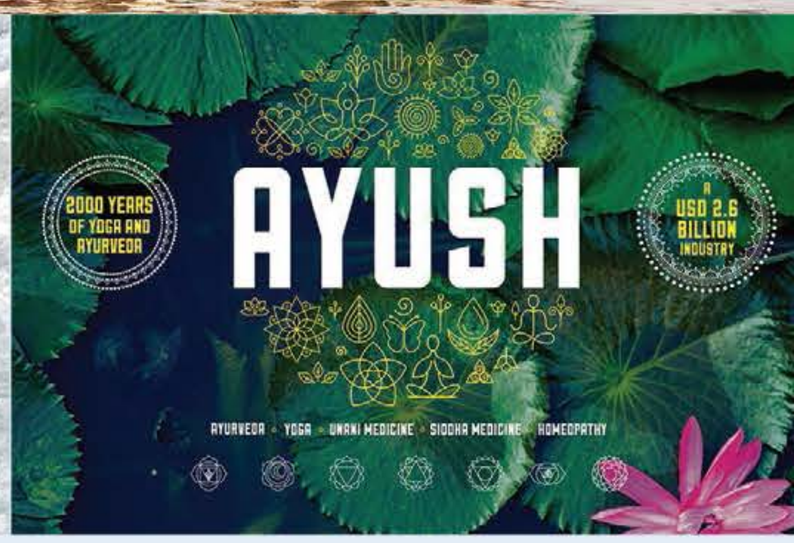
So be smart, and invest in the future of India's smart cities.


Kerala Backwaters









Discover incredible India!

A kaleidoscope of traditions, culture and vibrant geographies, India speaks for itself as a soul-stirring journey.



From its dusty snow trenches, frolic coasts, gripping natural green to the mystic ravines of spirituality and clusters of cultural shades defining the raw beauty, India captures the heart of every tourist. It is no wonder that during 2015, the number of foreign tourist visits to the country was 23.3 million as compared to 22.3 million in 2014, registering a growth of 4.4% over 2014. This is also likely due to the increase of tourists entering Indian boarders on an e-Tourist visa, registering a 137.7% growth in June 2016 over the same period in 2015.

We discover the different facets of this multi-coloured country, and with the country's tourism branched into several forms, India has a chunk for every kind of a traveller…

INDIA'S NATURAL ROOTS

The Muziris Project is the largest conservation project in India and the first green project of Kerala. Launched in 2007, the excavations under the Muziris Project have been instrumental in opening tourist's eyes to a past of glory and intercommunal harmony in India. The project was launched through a collaboration of various government units along with UNESCO, and has gained international acclaim, thanks to its unique intercultural linkages.

Without disturbing the local ecosystem, local tourism is expected to fuel economic development as the project aims at streamlining tourism routes and opening up new destinations. The project plans to preserve and promote archaeological


Temple in Kedarnath


Mumbai, Urban Skyline


Rafting in Rishikesh


Yoga in Rishikesh


Ross Island, Andamans


Mountains in the Northern part of India


Mountains in the Northern part of India

monuments in Ernakulam and Thrissur districts.

India is famed for its rich and abundant wilderness and wildlife. The country is blessed with green environs which are home to blessed wildlife. Ferocious Tigers, roaring Lions, majestic elephants, snow Leopards, one-horned rhinoceros, hordes of deer, chirping birds and other species, call it home. To take a glimpse of this haven is a cherished experience. Wildlife tours in India are exciting at Jim Corbett, Ranthambore, Bandhavgarh, Kaziranga, Sunderbans, Kanha, Tadoba and Kerala.

OUTDOORS IN UTTARAKHAND

Himalayan ranges, sacred rivers, dense forests and geographical diversity make the northern state a dream destination for adventure sports-lovers.

The Himalayan ranges of Garhwal and Kumaon in Uttarakhand are blessed with flora, fauna, architecture, myths and legends. From the subtropical forests of the Terai in the south to high Himalayan peaks and glaciers in the north, Uttarakhand's hills are wonderful places for adventure activities, extreme sports and wildlife tours.

Relatively easy to access from the big cities of northern India, a number of adventure tourism destinations have developed in Uttarakhand with tourists flocking to Auli for skiing in winter and Rishikesh for rafting in summer. During these months, many destinations open up possibilities for adventure activities like mountain biking, trekking, mountaineering, wildlife and elephant safaris, paragliding and river rafting.

DISCOVER INNER PEACE IN INDIA WITH YOGA

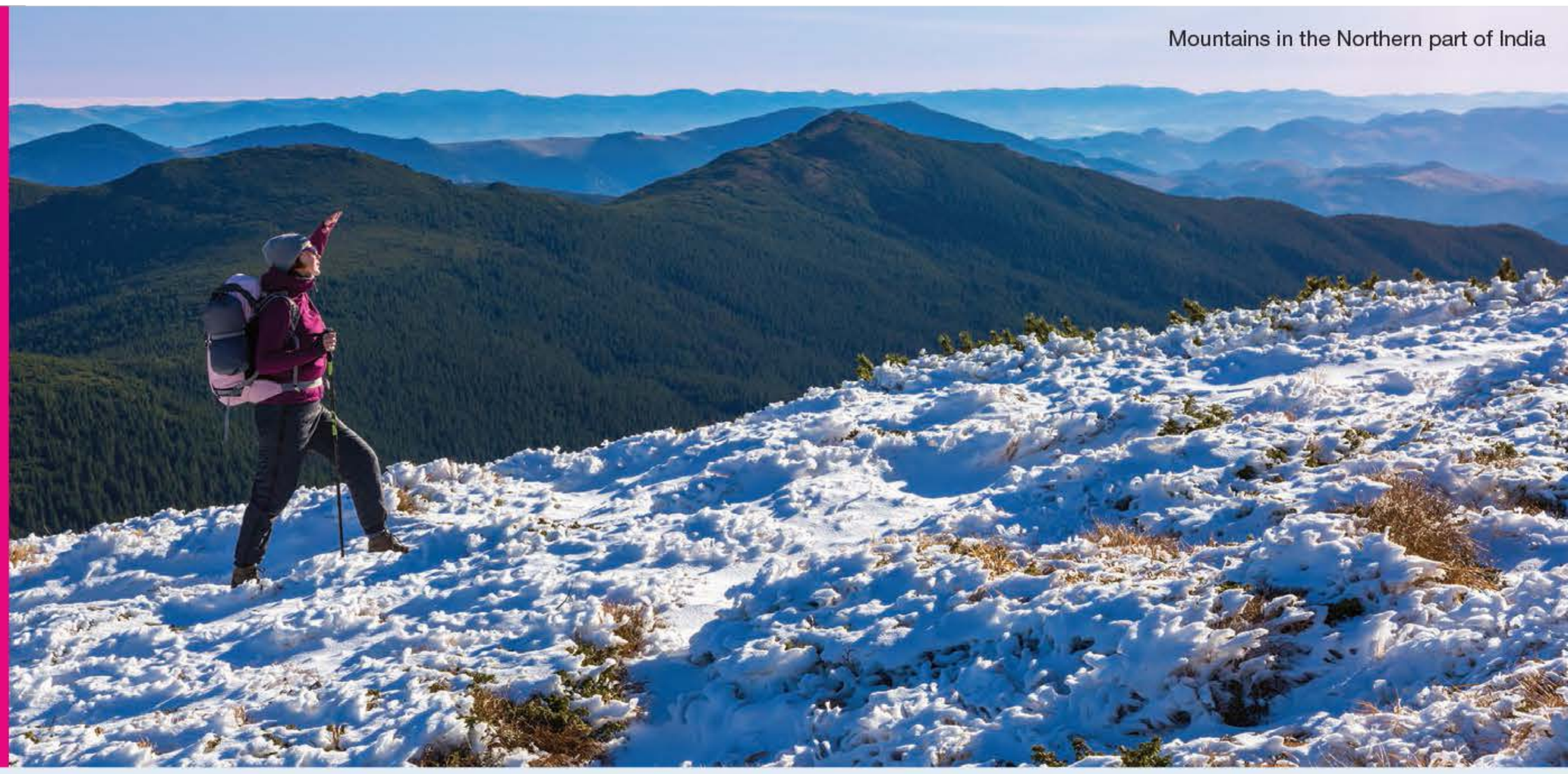
Ayurveda, which is defined as the science of life by the vedas, is the main essence of holistic healing in India. Spa tours in India often involve ayurvedic resorts that are scattered all across the length and breadth of the country. They have their location on the hills, riverbeds, beaches and cities. Ayurveda when teamed up with yoga offers the best of holistic experiences, which are both trademarks of ancient India.

CAN DO

WITH 199 MILLION CULTIVATED HECTARES AND 42 MEGA FOOD PARKS IN THE MAKING, INDIA IS THE FUTURE OF FOOD PROCESSING.

MAKE IN INDIA

#MAKEININDIA



Mountains in the Northern part of India

Rishikesh is the capital of yoga in India, and is considered one of the holiest and most spiritual places in north India.

CITY SPLENDOUR

If the buzz of the Indian city excites you, then a visit to one, if not all four of the following cities is a must on your next trip to the sub-continent:

⇢ New Delhi

The Indian capital is a striking modern metropolis. A gracious contrast to Old Delhi's winding streets, the grand avenues and stately buildings of New Delhi are rich with history and culture, from Mahatma Gandhi's Delhi home (and the site of his assassination) to the tomb of Humayun, a complex of Mughal buildings reminiscent of the Taj Mahal.

⇢ Mumbai

The city is famous for its chaotic streets, for bargains, people-watching and outdoor bazaars. Popular waterfront destinations are Marine Drive, where visitors go to watch the sun set over the Arabian Sea, and the carnival-like Juhu Beach. More sightseeing options include the Gandhi Museum, in the leader's former home, and the cave temples of Elephanta Island. For tranquillity, Mumbai has many religious sites, lakes and parks.

⇢ Jiapur

If you take one look at the glorious stucco buildings that line Jaipur's wide streets, you'll understand why this is nicknamed "The Pink City. Spend your days exploring City Palace, Hawa Mahal, and Amber and Jaigarh forts. And if you're looking for a unique souvenir, head to one of the bazaars, where you can pick up a pair of camel-leather slippers.

⇢ Jaisalmer

An exotic city in Rajasthan's great Thar Desert. Also known as "The Golden City", Jaisalmer rose to prominence as a result of its position on camel trade routes. It's now most famous for the 12th-century fort and ornate "Havelis", fine merchant-built houses and pavilions in the city's mediaeval lanes. The surrounding Desert National Park offers opportunities to observe blackbucks, desert foxes and chinkaras amid the rolling dunes, rugged crags and waterholes.

BEAUTIFUL BEACHES

Summer vacation in India is a lot of fun with a whole lot of activities in which one can indulge. You can take a stroll along the serene beaches of Goa, Kerala or Andamans. India has a coastline of 7,517 kilometres bounded by the Indian Ocean and the three great depths of the Arabian Sea at southwest, Bay of Bengal at southeast and the Laccadive Sea to the south. The coastline of Indian states are home to some of the best beaches in the world. The sandy shorelines are complete with adventure water sports include surfing, parasailing, canoeing, catamaran & yatch rides, scuba diving and snorkelling.

Sources: http://trip-advisor.com; www.incredibleindia.org; http://www.india-tourism.net/; http://www.tourism-of-india.com/



Camel riding in Jaisalmer, India



Tree top adventures in the India rain forests



India's research and development ecosystem

R&D in India presents a significant opportunity for multinational corporations due the vast intellectual capital available in the country.



Many Indian professionals working across the globe cite the highly trained manpower available at competitive costs in India, as being appealing to foreign companies when it comes to shifting their research and development (R&D) base. These R&D bases either develop products to serve the local market or help the parent company overseas deliver new innovative generations of products more timeously to markets across the world.

Adobe System Inc. expects India to contribute significantly to the overall growth of the company as a substantial portion of Adobe's core Research and Development (R&D) is being done in the country.

A GROWING MARKET

Overall, the India-based R&D globalisation and R&D services markets reached US$ 20 billion in 2015, up 9.9 percent from 2014. The R&D services market stood at US$ 7.76 billion and R&D globalisation market (Captives) stood at US$ 12.25 billion. India's R&D globalisation and services market is set to almost double by 2020 to US$ 38 billion! India accounted for 40 percent (US$ 12.3 billion) of the total US$ 31 billion of globalised engineering and R&D in 2015.

According to a study by consulting firm Zinnov, India-based R&D services companies, which account for almost 22 percent of the global addressed market, grew much faster at 12.67 percent. The market for Engineering R&D (ER&D) companies in India is mainly structured across pure play PES companies such as Cyient, QuEST, eInfochips and the larger IT companies with a PES play such as Wipro, TCS and HCL. India's R&D services market is expected to reach US$ 15-17 billion by 2020 and North America continues to be the largest market contributing to 55 percent of revenues.

INDUSTRY INVESTMENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS

India has put into motion several projects sand partnerships within the R&D industry which have seen the industry grow exponentially, including;

In recent years, the Governments of India and the United Kingdom have signed an agreement to work together in the fields of Solar Energy and Nano Material Research, which is expected to yield high quality and high impact research outputs having industrial relevance, targeted towards addressing societal needs.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched 20 satellites and injected them into the required orbit, launching the maximum number of satellites in a single mission ever. The launch took place aboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C32) at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

Boston Scientific Corporation plans to develop devices such as stents, catheters and pacemakers at its Gurgaon facility in India for the Asia Pacific, Middle East and African markets, which will make India its biggest R&D hub outside the USA.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

The Government of India has taken several steps to promote the R&D sector in India. In the Union Budget 2015-16, the Government announced plans to establish the National Institution to Transforming India (NITI) to increase involvement of entrepreneurs, researchers to foster scientific innovations.

India and Japan are exploring ways to strengthen their collaboration in various fields of science and technology, such as artificial intelligence, energy, ocean sciences, marine instrumentation, high skill development and analysis of Big Data, Research & Development and bio information, while many projects are in the planning process.

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) aims to lower the time taken to clear pending Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) applications to 18 months by March 2018 and those of trademarks to one month by March 2017, which is expected to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

The Union Cabinet has given an "in principle" clearance for the location of a Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) facility in India which will be the third in the world and will be set up and managed by the IndIGO Consortium (Indian Initiative in Gravitational-wave Observations).

India's steel minister, Narendra Singh Tomar, has announced creating a fund of Rs 100 crore (US$ 14.67 million) to help setting up R&D units with the participation from industries and the government to overcome the technological gaps. Tomar said "It is under the active consideration of the government to infuse more funds in this initiative to utilise locally available cheap raw material, to remain competitive in the world market."

Source: http://www.ibef.org/





It is wiser to be in India, now!

An economy on the right track.

India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage. It is the seventh-largest country by area, the second-most populous country with over 1.2 billion people, and the most populous democracy in the world.

In the present scenario, India's economy is the fourth largest by purchasing power parity (PPP) and 10th largest by nominal gross domestic product (GDP), globally. India has seen a systematic transition from being a closed-door economy to an open economy since the beginning of economic reforms in the country in 1991. These reforms have had a far-reaching impact and have helped India unleash its enormous growth potential.

Today, India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and has emerged as a key destination for foreign investors in recent years. According to UNCTAD's *World Investment Prospects Survey 2012–2014*, India is the third-most attractive destination for FDI (after China and the USA) in the world. India's GDP has also grown at around 7.9 percent between 2003 and 2012. This trend, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is likely to continue for the next five years with an average GDP growth rate of 7.7 percent per annum until 2017. India's GDP for 2015, valued at US$ 2.183 trillion at current prices is the 10th largest in the world.

8 REASONS WHY INDIA IS THE PLACE TO BE

Given the economic strides that India has made over the years, it is no wonder why countries and individuals are seeking new opportunities in this booming economy. Here are just eight reasons why you too should be wise to an Indian investment in 2016.

#1 India has been successful in containing the Current Account Deficit (CAD) to 1.3% of GDP at US$ 7.1 Billion during the first three quarters of fiscal following contraction in trade deficit from US$ 38.6 Billion to US$ 34 Billion. This is attributed by low commodity prices lowering the volume of global trade and also a fall in Indian exports.

#2 The Indian rupee climbed 0.2% to 67.39 against the US$, echoing the euphoria in the debt and equity market post budget.

#3 Fiscal Maths 2015-16 indicates that the target of 3.9% GDP or Rs 5.55 Lac Crore will not be breached, which enables the Indian Government with a more relaxed Fiscal target of 3.5% GDP for 2016-17. The nation has excelled both on the grounds of 'earning more' with 30% of full year target of receipts being met by August 2015, a 9% hike over the previous year, and 'spending more' by meeting 41.2% of target by August 2015, a 3.7% rise on a y-o-y basis.

#4 Moody's predicts that the budget matrix could be favourable to India with expectations of higher indirect and direct tax receipts, while low crude and commodity prices will also crowd out the subsidy burden on the exchequer for fuel and fertiliser.

#5 The buoyant Stock Market is expected to register 20% growth over the next fiscal, parading towards 30,000 by the end of 2017. This is on the back of improving consumer sentiment towards a growing economy, with an increase in global liquidity, lower commodity prices, government's effort to boost consumption and strong operating margins.

#6 Make in India and Start Up Policy initiatives of the current Indian Government will provide the much required big push to the manufacturing sector. This will grow the sector to 1 Trillion US$ by 2025, creating 90 million domestic jobs, enjoying 25% of GDP.

#7 Consumer Price inflation (CPI) or retail inflation is greasing the wheels of growth and reached 5.69% in January and 5.6% in February. This is as a result of a slow rise in food prices, just below the RBI target of 6%, with a plan by the bank to set a new inflation target of 5% by March 2017. The tightening of Fiscal Policy and cooling off of inflation provides for more headroom for the RBI to cut rates in April.

#8 Interest rates are to soften, boosting the flagging growth. The RBI had cut its rate 125 basis points, and is likely to cut it by 25 basis points to bring down the repo rate to 6.5%. This is in light of boosting economic growth, disinflation and Government initiative to boost consumer demand and tight fiscal policy as unveiled in the national budget.



ADVERTORIAL

The ROCKWOOL Group is poised to support India in its efforts to reduce CO2 emissions

In the run-up to the Paris COP 21 summit, India had in October 2015 committed to cut the rate of emissions relative to GDP by 33% to 35 % by 2030 from 2005 levels. India plans to boost its energy production from renewable sources to 40 % by 2030. In order to achieve this target, the government has set a five-fold increase in renewable energy capacity over the next five years.

The ROCKWOOL Group, as the world's largest producer of stone wool and more than 75 years of expertise and experience in industrial and building insulation, is in an excellent position to support India in its efforts to cut CO2 emissions. In early 2010, the ROCKWOOL Group established a factory in Gujarat, which was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister of Gujarat and now the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi.

ROXUL ROCKWOOL Insulation India Pvt Ltd, as part of the ROCKWOOL Group, has since then continued to build on its strong presence in India through its trusted and recognised ROCKWOOL brand, "the ORIGINAL ROCKWOOL insulation in India". ROXUL ROCKWOOL aims to provide solutions that improve the quality of life for millions of people. Its world class insulation products help create a pleasant indoor environment by keeping out the cold or heat, protecting people from noise while improving fire resilience.

Today, ROXUL ROCKWOOL is proud to count corporations such as Reliance, Michelin, Thermal Power Corporation of India Limited, Bosch, Chennai Metro Rails, Mars Chocolate, Mahagenco Thermal Power as well as airport facilities in Cochin and Goa amongst its clientele.

ROXUL ROCKWOOL is also actively involved in various exhibitions, seminars and B2B meetings. In collaboration with the Royal Danish Embassy, ROXUL ROCKWOOL was able to work with major key accounts like Engineers India Limited, Airport Authority of India and National Thermal Power Corporation to provide insulation solutions to improve energy efficiency.

In 2015, ROXUL ROCKWOOL organised a Distributor Meeting in Goa which brought together distributors from across India. The event was honoured by the presence of the then Danish Ambassador to India, Mr. Freddy Svane. Through such events, ROXUL ROCKWOOL hopes to further strengthen its distribution network and to make its insulation solutions more widely available in India.

Advertisement

Invest in India

Invest in India with ease, and reap the rewards of this fast-growing economy.

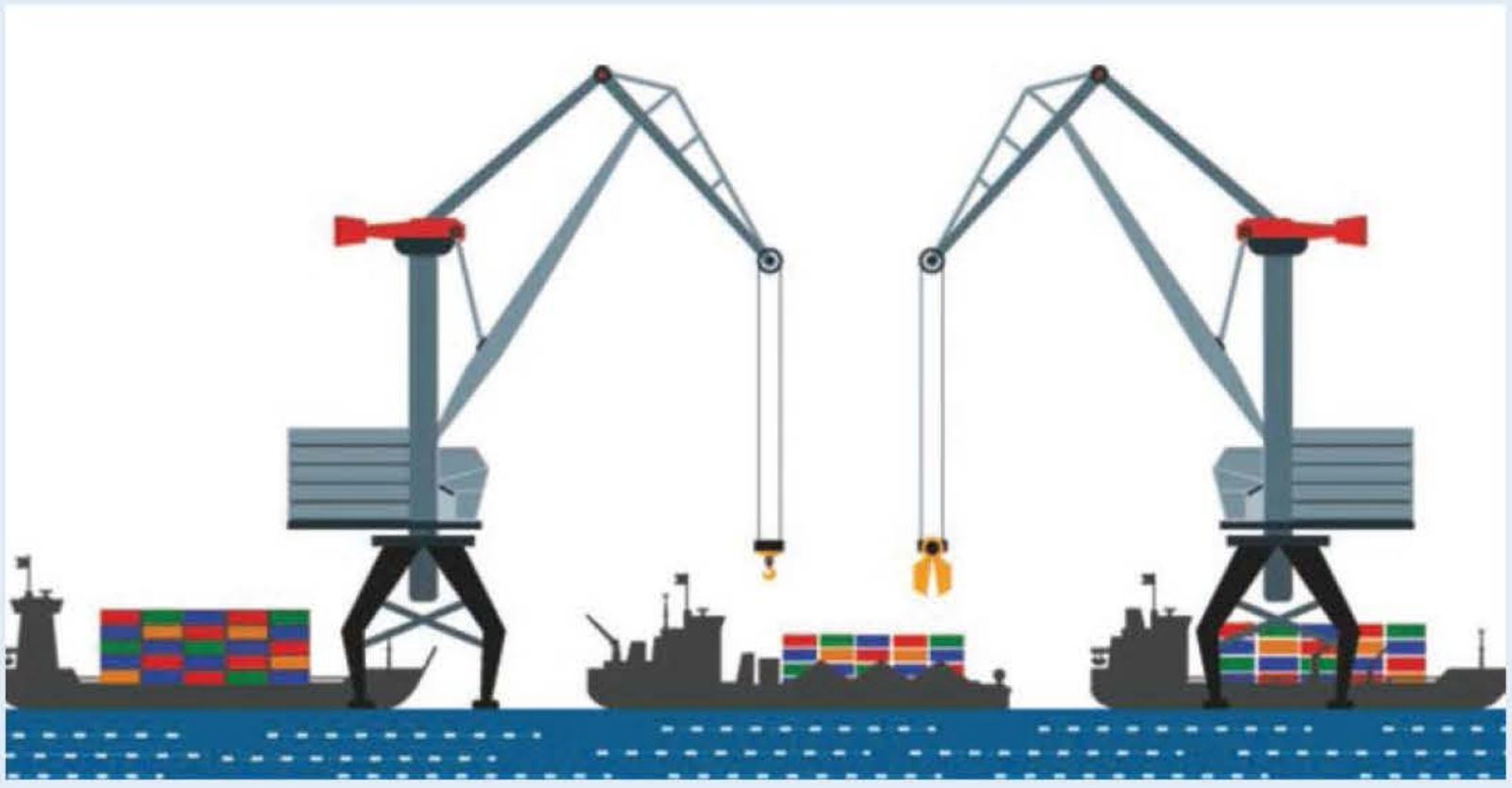
According to The World Bank, India's economic growth is expected to rise to 7.5 percent in 2015-16, followed by further acceleration to 7.9 percent in 2016-17 and eight percent in 2017. This is on account of India's attempt to implement reforms to unlock the country's investment potential to improve the business environment, liberalised Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policies, quick solution to the corporate disputes, simplified tax structure, and a boost in both public and private expenditure.

SOARING FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

According to Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), the total FDI inflows soared by 24.5 percent to US$ 44.9 billion during 2015, as compared to US$ 36.0 billion in 2014. FDI into India through the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) route shot up by 26 per cent to US$ 31.9 billion in the year 2015 as against US$ 25.3 billion in the previous year, indicating that Government's effort to improve ease of doing business and relaxation in FDI norms is yielding results.

Data for 2015 indicates that the increase in the FDI inflows was primarily driven by investments in infrastructure and services sector. The Infrastructure, Oil & Gas, Mining and Telecoms sectors witnessed higher FDI inflows, whereas IT services and trading (wholesale, cash & carry) drove the services inflows. During 2015, India received the maximum FDI equity inflows from Mauritius at US$ 9.03 billion, followed by Singapore (US$ 6.74 billion), Netherlands (US$ 3.43 billion), Japan (US$ 2.08 billion) and the USA (US$ 1.82 billion). Healthy inflow of foreign investments into the country helped India's balance of payments (BoP) situation and stabilised the value of rupee.

According to the data released by Grant Thornton India, the total merger and acquisitions (M&A) and private equity (PE) deals in the month of August 2015 were valued at US$ 2.6 billion (151 deals), which is 62 percent higher in volume as compared to August 2014.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

India has the most liberal and transparent policies on foreign direct investment (FDI) among major economies of the world. Here are some important investment procedures to consider, courtesy of the DIPP, if you are thinking of investing in India:

- 100% FDI is allowed under the automatic route in all sectors/activities except in a few areas, which require prior approval of the Government.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has raised the threshold for foreign direct investment requiring its approval to Rs 5,000 crore (around US$ 750 million) from the present Rs 3,000 crore (around US$ 450 million). This decision is expected to expedite the approval process and result in increased foreign investment inflow.
- Under the automatic route, investors are required to only notify the Reserve Bank of India within 30 days of receipt of inward remittances.

SECTOR-WISE PROHIBITION OF FDI

FDI is prohibited under the Government Route as well as the Automatic Route in the following sectors:

- Atomic Energy
- Lottery Business including Government / Private lottery, online lotteries etc.
- Gambling and Betting including casinos
- Business of Chit Fund
- Nidhi Company
- Real Estate Business or Construction of Farm Houses
- Trading in Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)
- Manufacture of cigars, cheroots, cigarillos and cigarettes, of tobacco or of tobacco substitutes
- Railway Operations other than the areas mentioned earlier

India was the fourth-largest recipient of FDI in terms of projects started in 2012, and in terms of value, it accounted for 5.5% of global FDI. Although the number of jobs declined slightly in 2012, India still accounts for 9.4% of jobs created by FDI around the world.

Over the years, India has been considered a strong service destination. Recently, the Indian Government has supported investment in service industries as it seeks to reap the benefits of the underlying pool of educated workers. But it is important to note that heavy machinery sectors (industrial, automotive, infrastructure, chemicals, metals and mining, aerospace, energy and cleantech) have also accounted for 43.7% of the total FDI projects between 2007 and 2012.

Tourist Visa

https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html

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www.incredibleindia.org

www.indiatourismamsterdam.com

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Going the extra mile

Innovative solutions from business startups to bridge the last-mile gap.



Science and technology institutes, especially the Indian Institutes of Technology, have been responsible, for the most part, of creating a technology ecosystem in the country for decades now. The official website of the Government of India's 12th Five Year Plan states, "the country is ranked ninth globally in the number of scientific publications and 12th in the number of patents filed."

These rankings reiterate India's academic prowess in science, even as in-practice indigenous innovations such as HiWEL resolve the country's challenges through the revolutionary application of technology. Startup accelerators such as the Startup Village, TLabs, and 10,000 Startups aim at nourishing ideas and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit within the ecommerce sector, providing learning to innovators, and connecting them to mentors and venture capital firms. With such knowledge infrastructure in place, India is steadily emerging as a leader in technology innovation.

THE INNOVATION OF THINGS

In the past few years, thanks to the rise of a digital India, technological innovations are playing an important role in facilitating faster and accurate delivery of improved services, be it healthcare, products, infrastructure, etc., to both urban and rural customers, thus bridging the last-mile gap. Making this happen on a daily basis are organisations such as iKure Techsoft (which uses cloud computing to deliver healthcare facilities to the underprivileged), Sickle Innovations (which designs easy-to-use farming equipment), and Vortex Engineering (which develops special solar ATMs for rural regions).

A Goldman Sachs study projects that global ecommerce sales will touch US$ 300 billion by 2030, and *Future of e-commerce: Uncovering Innovation*, a report by Deloitte and ASSOCHAM India, which analyses the growth of this industry in India, states, "the greater adoption of Internet and smartphones is the biggest driver of ecommerce in India... The success rate of some of the technologies is directly connected to the success of ecommerce."

The report goes on to list new age technologies that have enabled India's transformation, in terms of communication, data sharing, purchase patterns, marketing, and doing business. At the top of this list is cloud computing. Its features such as flexibility, resource pooling, on-demand services, real-time marketing, and pay-as-per-usage allow ecommerce companies to engage with customers more effectively. However, a big risk here is that of cybercrime. Thankfully, technology can beat technology and act as a protector too. *Turnaround and Transformation in cyber security–India update*, a 2015 report by PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited, states that cloud-based security systems and big data analytics, tools trusted by a high percentage of companies, are most effective for protection from cyber threats.

DELIVERING THE GOODS

Despite the above technologies having arrived, the biggest hurdle faced by ecommerce companies is a disorganised last-mile delivery system. What begins effortlessly at the click of a button gets stuck somewhere in a far-off warehouse or in the traffic on the streets of the country. This is why logistics startups have mushroomed bountifully in recent years. A December 2015 article in *Live Mint* states, "according to Tracxn, which provides data on start-ups, nearly 183 logistics start-ups have raised close to US$ 40 million since January." Quite a few of these companies are hiring innovation managers to keep updating their technologies and strategies along the way.

The success of ecommerce eventually depends on customer satisfaction. *UPS Pulse of the Online Shopper - A customer experience study*, a March 2015 UPS White Paper (Asia Study), suggests that 90% of customers review a retailer's return policy, while 52% think free shipping of returns is imperative to consider a return experience positive. This deep understanding of consumer behaviour and attitudes is what drove Delhivery to focus on establishing a unified technology platform that comprises omni-channel creation (mobile store, social media, in-store, web), customer management (SEO, email marketing, campaign management), demand analytics (returns management, fraud detection, etc.), order fulfilment, shipping, special services (reverse logistics, after-sales support, replacements), and more.

ECOMMERCE DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES

On the other hand, doing away with doorstep delivery and bringing the 'click and collect' model to India is Smartbox, "India's first network of automated parcel delivery terminals", which is currently operational in Delhi. All a customer needs to do while shopping with this company's ecommerce partners is to select 'Smartbox' as the delivery location and pick up the package at a convenient time from the designated terminal using the one-time password sent via SMS. Meanwhile, Gurgaon-based Grey Orange is using their 'Butler System' to make deliveries faster, flawless, and more efficient. A fleet of 'Butlers' (mobile, robotic drive units) speeds up and streamlines warehouse operations, making the most of the growing automation and digitisation trends.

In the meantime, ecommerce companies are hoping to soon realise their dreams of sending out drones to deliver parcels to customers in India. Although we may have to wait and watch what kind of challenges this new technology may bring with it!



Mandeep Singh Rathour
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India in space, a low-cost high-value destination

ISRO dreams big, delivers big!

India's success story in space technology seems to defy gravity, big time, since the Indian space agency the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has met with a string of spectacular achievements. From completing India's very own satellite-based navigation system to launching the country's pioneering mini space shuttle to making history by putting twenty satellites in orbit in a single launch. Coming soon, a revisit to the moon is among the romantic outings India has on its anvil.

On a hot and humid partly cloudy Wednesday morning on June 22, 2016, exactly at 9:26am an Indian rocket lifted off from the island of Sriharikota on the coast of the Bay of Bengal in Andhra Pradesh, and in 26 minutes created history for the Indian space agency. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) in 26 minutes put in orbit 20 satellites. This is no mean achievement. It is like dropping school children from a school bus that is travelling at a phenomenal velocity in space. ISRO chairman Dr. A.S. Kiran Kumar, simply described the successful mission "A job done".

The PSLV in its 36th launch weighed 320 tonnes, and was as tall as 44.4 metres, which is the average height of a 15 storey

building. With this launch, ISRO achieved 35 consecutively successful launches of India's smaller rocket.

In 2008 ISRO had launched 10 satellites in a single mission, using the PSLV, creating a world record. Today, the world record for successfully launching maximum number of satellites in a single mission is held by Russia, which in 2014, put in space 37 satellites.

In this record breaking mission ISRO lofted 17 satellites from foreign vendors which included, Germany, Indonesia, Canada and of these 17 birds, 13 satellites belonged to the United States of America. According to Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office and in-charge of space affairs "through launch of these 17 foreign satellites, Antrix Corporation Ltd. has earned revenue of 10.24 Million Euros and 4.54 Million USD."

This was the single largest number of satellites to be launched by an Indian rocket for America. Interestingly, for the first time India orbited a Google owned satellite. Terra Bella, a Californian company part of the global behemoth Google launched a 110kg high-tech Earth viewing satellite SkySat Gen-2. This Google-owned satellite, the company says will be used for mapping inventories. It should be noted that the launch contract for the Google-owned satellite was negotiated with ISRO's commercial arm the Antrix Corporation by a Bengaluru based start-up company, Earth2Orbit, for an undisclosed amount.

Increasingly foreign vendors are opting to launch their smaller satellites using Indian launchers, this is not surprising since it is estimated that it costs up to 50% less to launch satellites through ISRO. The PSLV has become a reliable, bankable and precision launcher which makes India an attractive destination for countries looking for a cheap and reliable option to launch satellite. Till date, ISRO has launched a total of 113 satellites in space of which 74 have come from 20 different countries. In the bargain ISRO has earned over US$120 million in revenue for the country.

ISRO FINALLY GROWS WINGS!

The calm of a hot and sultry morning at Sriharikota was shattered exactly at 7 am on May 23, 2016 when India's brand new rocket that carried India's mini space shuttle into space, blasted off from India's rocket port.

For the very time in its history ISRO actually grew wings as it embarked on a never before space flight that made history. The Indian space agency undertook the maiden launch of its very own indigenously made version of a `Space Shuttle', a fully made in India effort.

Congratulating the scientist, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said "the dynamism & dedication with which our scientists at ISRO have worked over the years is exceptional and very inspiring".

Yes, the big powers abandoned the idea of a winged reusable launch vehicle, but India's frugal engineers believe the solution to reducing cost of launching satellites into orbit is to recycle the rocket or make it re-usable. Scientists at ISRO believe that they could reduce the cost of launching stuff into space by as much as ten times if re-usable technology succeeds, bringing it down to US$ 2000 per kilogram.

Re-usable Launch Vehicle – Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD), was the first time ISRO launched a space craft, which had delta wings, and after launch, it was glided back onto a virtual runway in the Bay of Bengal after its nearly 13 minute flight.

The only countries that have attempted operational flights of a space shuttle are America, which flew its Space Shuttle 135 times and then retired it in 2011 and since then it lost its capacity to send astronauts into space on American made rockets. The Russians made only a single space shuttle and called it Buran flying into space just once in 1989. After that The French and Japanese have made some experimental flights, from available literature it seems the Chinese have never attempted a space shuttle.

Maybe sooner than later the RLV should now be named the `Kalamyaan' after India's legendary former President APJ Abdul Kalam an aeronautics engineer par excellence who made top class rockets and dreamt big of India being propelled to become a developed country. For ISRO, no dream is too big as it carefully forged ahead to have a fully `swadeshi space shuttle'.

SIGNALLING SUCCESS

Recently ISRO made a very special dash to complete India's NAVIC – "Navigation with Indian Constellation" when the last of the seven satellites was successfully placed in orbit by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle on April 28, 2016. The Indian satellite constellation is already providing day and night coverage of the navigation signal throughout the Indian region. This is a unique achievement by ISRO.

Modi took forward a germ of an idea from former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure when during the Kargil conflict with Pakistan, New Delhi was denied access to the best quality satellite based navigation system signals it desperately sought to annihilate with pinpoint accuracy the reinforced bunkers on the high hills made by the Pakistanis. The first round of the National Democratic Alliance government laid the foundation for the swadeshi GPS which Modi has fulfilled.

Other than India, globally, satellite-based navigational signals over South Asia are provided only by the American constellation of the Global Positioning System (GPS) and the Russian constellation that uses a system called GLONASS. It is ISRO's claim that the Indian navigation system is superior to both these systems for the South-Asian region. Moreover, the American and Russian systems use four times as many satellites for their systems, making NAVIC (like a lot of ISRO's technology) very frugal, operating with just seven satellites. It must of course, be clarified that the Indian NAVIC provides a regional signal while the American and Russian systems have global footprints. When required India's footprint can also be made global by augmenting the number of satellites.

NAVIC's assured signal coverage extends over the country and about 1500 kilometres beyond Indian borders, and experts explain the rationale for this as being based on the current threat perception that exists for the country.

Later this year ISRO is all set to test India's monster rocket the Geo-synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle - Mark III capable of putting up to eight tons in low earth orbit. Next year if all goes as per plan the country's second mission to the moon Chandrayaan-2 will lift off which will among other things soft land India's tricolour on the lunar surface, India reaching for the stars!

When the sky is the limit...

Dr Tessy Thomas has sky-rocketed to unparalleled success in the field of missile technology.





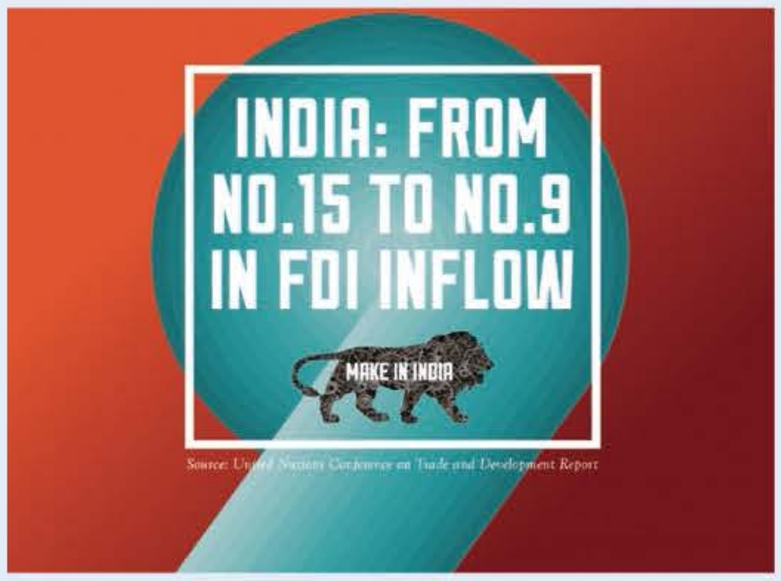
She gets up at 6am, goes for a walk, watches TV serials and cooks. In her spare time, she plays badminton and chess and one of her favourite hobbies is gardening. Sounds like the life of any ordinary Indian woman? But Dr Tessy Thomas is definitely extraordinary. She spends 10-12 hours in the office, working on some of the most powerful weapons of mass destruction. Popularly known as agniputri (daughter of fire), she was the project director for 5,000km range Agni V in 2009, based at the Advanced Systems Laboratory, Hyderabad. Dr Thomas was associate project director for the 3,000 km range Agni III missile and project director for Agni IV.

Her childhood fascination for maths and science charted her future course of action with a school trip to Thumba Rocket Launching Station in Thiruvananthapuram serving as the perfect inspiration. She completed B Tech in Electrical Engineering and followed it up with M Tech in Guided Missiles and a course sponsored by Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO). In 1988, she joined DRDO and was posted at Hyderabad-based DRDO Lab, working with the navigation and guidance groups. "Then on, it has been a career of inspiration, opportunity and scientific support from colleagues and senior. As a result, I became a designer for long-range missile systems," she says.

At present, Dr Thomas is director, Advanced Systems Laboratory, DRDO. As part of the Agni missile team, she was involved in modelling and simulation of missile systems. "During the initial phase of my career, I participated in all technical reviews which helped me understand the system better," says Dr Thomas who has been with DRDO for the past 27 years. "I have had moments of agony and ecstasy. Working with DRDO has given me both opportunities and courage to handle any problem," she says. Inspired by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's and goal-oriented approach, she keeps a firm hold on life, taking both successes and failures in her stride. "He introduced openness and teamwork and has been a role model for all of us at DRDO," says Dr Thomas.

Despite her demanding career, she has managed to find the right worklife balance. "In life comes a phase where one needs to strike a balance between career and home. Once we overcome it successfully, life gets easier and happier," shares Dr Thomas. While family support has played a major role in her success, she admits facing difficult times on personal front when her son was in school and husband posted out of station. "But we all managed. Tejas, my son, has been understanding and cooperative. He completed his engineering recently," she says.

Among other recognitions, she recently won the Y Nayudamma Memorial Award 2014 for her contribution in the field of missile technology.



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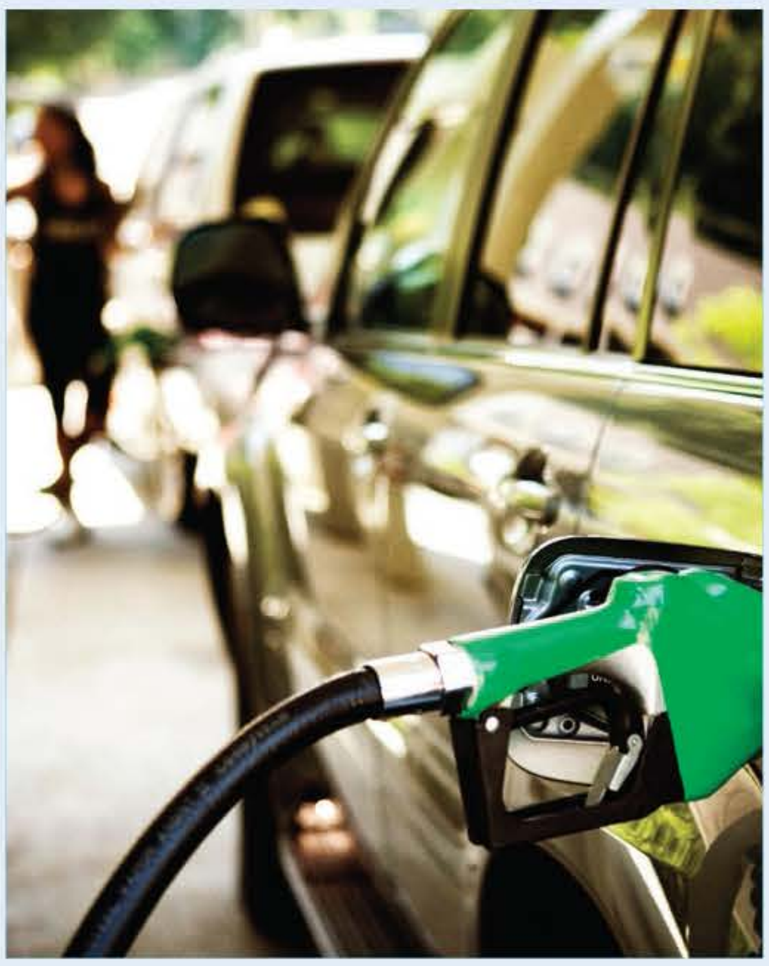


When plastic turns to diesel

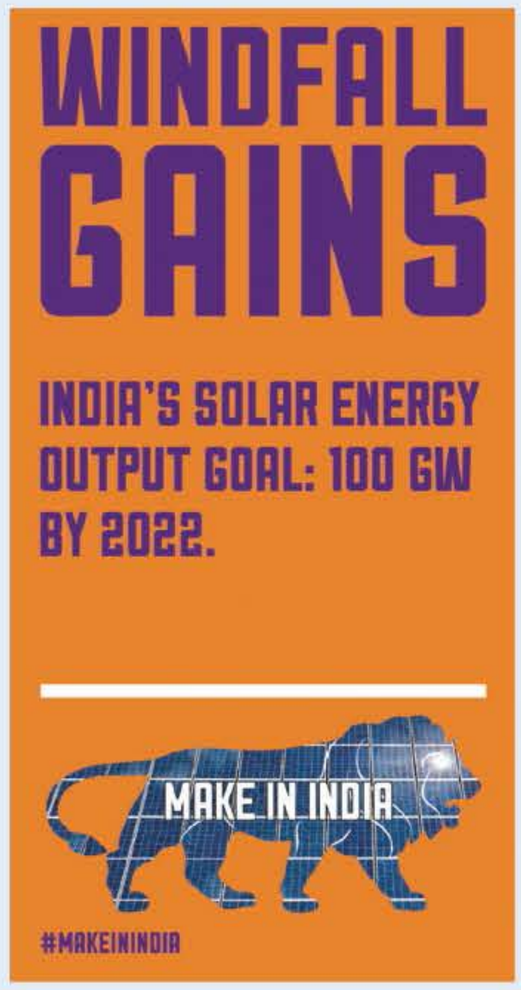
By innovating conversion of plastic into clean diesel, Indian scientists take a big step towards fulfilling PM Narendra Modi's Make in India dream.

Tonnes of plastic buckets, mugs, toothpaste caps and other waste material is guzzled up by a giant machine which, in turn, produces the cleanest grade of diesel. Researchers at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research - Indian Institute of Petroleum (CSIR-IIP), a part of the CSIR, have achieved this significant success in reducing national dependence on fossil fuels by converting plastic into diesel. And the Indian Railways will use it as fuel for its trains soon.

In fact, Indian Railways plans to set up plants to manufacture diesel for mechanical traction with technology patented by CSIRIIP scientists in Dehradun. On a visit to CSIR-IIP, Union Minister for Science and Technology and vice president, CSIR, Dr Harsh Vardhan said the plant will be available to convert one tonne of plastic into 850 litres of cleanest grade of diesel. "Indian Railways uses almost 2.7 billion litres of diesel every year which it procures through open bids from state-run oil marketing companies and private players. The new plant, apart from producing clean energy, will be the first step for the Indian Railways to attain self-sufficiency to meet its own energy requirements," he said. The green technology is available in the US, Germany and Japan and could produce LPG as a byproduct. Apart from this, CSIR-IIP has announced a breakthrough in technology to make low carbon jet fuel from inedible droughtresistant jatropha plant. The plant is being seen as a big step forward in Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi's Make In India initiative which aims to transform the country into a global manufacturing hub. The programme also aims to increase the share of manufacturing in the country's gross domestic product from 16 percent to 25 percent by 2022. The major aim of the programme is to ensure sustainable growth where the expansion of the manufacturing sector is not at the cost of the environment.



The new plant built by Indian Railways aims to score big on three counts: innovation, as it uses a technology that CSIR-IIP will hold the patent for; domestic manufacturing and sustainability for producing cleaner diesel. The technology that turns plastic waste from a nuisance into a clean energy resource and continuing research and innovation showcases India's commitment to fight climate change effectively. Moreover, the Government's decision to support clean energy innovations is crucial ahead of the international climate change discussions in Paris in December and in meeting Mr Modi's target of consisting 20 percent of its total energy build of renewable energy by 2022.



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