

Indian economy continues to soar

Owing to the nation's strong democracy, its regional and global partnerships and the fast pace of reforms being undertaken, India has emerged as the fastest growing major economy in the world. With a continued positive stance on maintaining this upward trend, the nation is expected to be among the top three economic powers of the world over the next 10-15 years, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and India's own Central Statistics Office (CSO).

The country's economic progress is reflected in various indices including the gross domestic product (GDP) that grew by 6.3 percent in the July-September 2017 quarter as per statistics from the CSO. Meanwhile, Bloomberg reported that corporate earnings in India are expected to grow by over 20 percent in FY

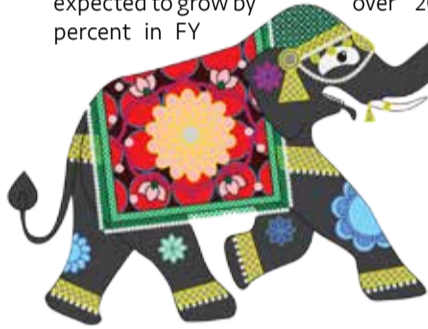
2017-18 supported by normalization of profits, especially in sectors like automobiles and banks.

India has retained its position as the third largest startup base in the world with over 4,750 technology startups, with about 1,400 new start-ups being founded in 2016, according to a report by The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM).

According to a study by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and India's Thought Arbitrage Research Institute, the country's labor force is expected to touch 160-170 million by 2020, based on rate of population growth, increased labor force participation, and higher education enrolment, among other factors.

Recent developments highlight the various investments in different sectors of the economy. Having received a net total of Foreign Direct Investments amounting to US\$17.4 billion between April-October 2017, and with the significant boost of \$ 24.96 billion by Indian companies through primary markets in the same year, there are strong indications of improvement in the business climate and economic scenario of the country.

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Message of H.E. K. Jeeva Sagar Ambassador of India to Kuwait on the occasion of the 69th Republic Day of India

On the happy occasion of India's 69th Republic Day, I convey my warm greetings and best wishes to all my compatriots, friends and well-wishers of India in Kuwait. I would specifically like to take this opportunity to express my great joy at the continued close and friendly relations between India and Kuwait, and renew Government of India's commitment and resolve to further deepening, strengthening and expanding this mutually enriching relationship in all its dimensions.

It is reassuring to note that this cordiality between the two nations is anchored in people-to-people relations, the evidence of which is loud and clear in the fact that



Indian nationals form the largest expatriate segment in this beautiful and respected nation of Kuwait. Bilateral relationship between any two countries, which is rooted in history and defined by the affinity between the peoples on both sides, is a mark of vibrancy and endurance.

The Republic Day of India signifies the coming into force of the Constitution of India on 26 January 1950. The India that we see today – a strong, vibrant, democratic, inclusive and secular nation of over 1.3 billion people, is not a miraculous overnight happening but an outcome of the sacrifices, commitment,

Continued from Page 12



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ASEAN leaders attend 69th Republic Day celebrations



As India celebrates its 69th Republic Day on 26 January, a main highlight of the event is the colorful and prestigious Republic Day Parade held each year along the Rajpath in New Delhi. The parade anchors the three-day celebration marking Republic Day and showcases the country's defense capabilities, as well as its cultural and social heritage.

One of the intriguing aspects of the Republic Day celebrations, besides it being a salute to the military, civil and cultural might of India, is the selection of the chief guest, which in recent years have included US president Barack Obama, UAE Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and President François Hollande of

France. An invitation to the event is a gesture of goodwill and acknowledgment of strong relations between India and other nations.

In a unique turn of events Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing the 15th ASEAN summit in Philippines last year, extended an invitation to all ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) leaders to attend this year's Republic Day celebrations as Chief Guests. The 69th Republic Day will be the first time ever that India has hosted so many leaders as chief guests at the parade.

The ten leaders of ASEAN countries attending this year's Republic Day celebrations as Chief Guests are: Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, the Sultan

of Brunei; Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia; President Joko Widodo of Indonesia; Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith of Laos; Prime Minister Najib Razak, of Malaysia; President Htin Kyaw of Myanmar; President Rodrigo Roa Duterte of Philippines; President Halima Yacob of Singapore; Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha of Thailand and Prime Minister Nguyen Xuân Phúc of Vietnam.

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the India-ASEAN partnership and to commemorate this occasion, the leaders will attend a commemorative summit in New Delhi on January 25 - where the government will showcase its Act East policy in its entire

splendor. The policy refers to new efforts aimed at strengthening India's trade and other relationships with ASEAN countries, and also developing North Eastern regions of India so as to facilitate transport and communication links with ASEAN countries.

According to the external affairs ministry, this year, India and ASEAN are marking 25 years of dialogue partnership, 15 years of summit-level interaction, and five years of strategic partnership, through a wide range of activities, both in India and through Indian missions in ASEAN member-states, including a commemorative summit on the theme, 'Shared Values, Common Destiny'.

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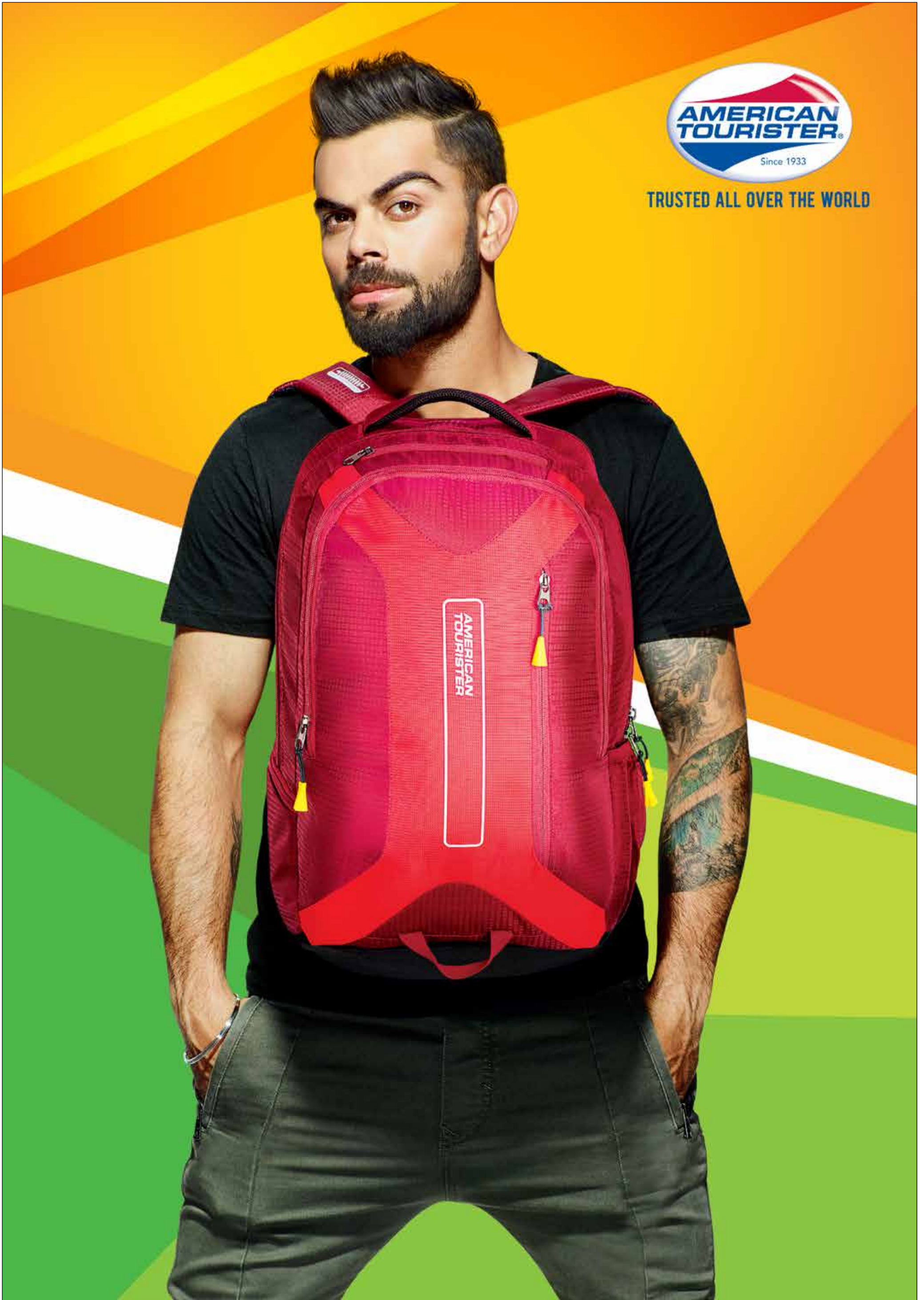
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India committed to remain a 'First Responder'

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The emerging concept of India as a 'first responder' reflects the country's growing capability and increasing willingness to assume the role of a leading power. By contributing its resources to prevent or mitigate regional and international crises, India is demonstrating its commitment as a responsible actor in the international order. Beyond narrow self-interest, such contributions help project India's soft power abroad and portray India in a positive light. They also reflect India's expanding sphere of influence and capacity to shape events abroad.

The international order is facing a variety of transnational challenges that occasionally erupt into acute crises. Whether it is a natural catastrophe, an Internet disruption, or a sudden financial shock, the repercussions are often massive, with regional and global implications. This is where individual states must take immediate action, to mitigate



the crisis impact and avoid further escalation. By taking the lead, they are providing a public good to the international order, supporting smaller or less capable states in dire need of assistance.

As the Indian economy surges on and the country emerges as one of the key actors in the international order, expectations are consequently growing about India's capacity to provide such support as a first responder to crises beyond its



borders. Commenting on this rising role, former Foreign Secretary Dr. S. Jaishankar emphasized that India's foreign policy dimension is "to aspire to be a leading power, rather than just a balancing power ... (and) a willingness to shoulder greater global responsibilities."

While the concept of 'first responder' has generally been interpreted quite narrowly, focusing on humanitarian disasters, a broader definition illustrates how India has played a crucial role in assuming these 'global responsibilities' by responding to a variety of crises in its neighborhood and beyond. This is particularly apparent in seven issue-areas.

Natural disasters

When the forces of nature unleash their fury on South Asia, the Indian government and military forces have played a critical role in supporting neighboring countries in relief operations. After the 2004 tsunami, India deployed 14 navy vessels, nearly 1,000 military personnel and several dozen helicopters and airplanes to Sri Lanka. In 2007, in the aftermath of cyclone Sidr, India was one of the few countries allowed to provide relief to Myanmar and provided critical rice supplies to address food emergencies there. In 2015, less than six hours after Nepal was rattled by a tragic earthquake taking almost 9,000 lives, the Indian Air Force flew in National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) rescue team. Over the next days, India led on the ground, landing 32 flights with 520 tonnes of relief and more than fifty medical, Army engineering and other rescue operation teams. In 2014, the Indian Navy was the first to arrive in the Maldives to provide fresh drinking water to more than 150,000 of its citizens facing an acute supply crisis. More recently, in response to Cyclone More (2017), India was the first to respond to the devastating floods in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. As reflected in relief provided to Pakistan in 2005 and 2010, Indian support transcends political considerations and is driven by a deep humanitarian drive.

Expatriate evacuation operations

When crises erupt abroad, India is often the first on the ground to protect the lives and assets of its nationals. By mobilizing its consular officers, New Delhi has also provided safe evacuation to citizens from other countries. In 2015, for example, India extricated almost 2,000 nationals from 48 different countries, including many from the European Union, the United States and neighboring countries. The Ministry of External Affairs, Air India, and the Navy and Air Force have emerged as key actors in conflict zones, especially in the Indian Ocean and Gulf region, normally operating as first responders coming to the rescue of thousands of foreign nationals in distress.

Non-traditional security challenges

The Indian Navy has emerged as the Indian Ocean's default first responder to non-traditional security challenges. To combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden since 2008, it deployed almost thirty warships that have escorted more than 1,500 ships and thwarted around thirty piracy attempts. India was a founder-member of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and has taken a lead role in coordination efforts among different naval forces in the region. When airplanes or ships go missing in its extended neighborhood, India has

often been among the first responders to participate in search and rescue missions. In 2014, the Indian Coast Guard deployed around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in initial efforts to locate the missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370.

Post-conflict relief and rehabilitation

India has often taken the lead in supporting countries going through post-conflict processes which require expert resources and significant funding. After the end of the armed conflict in Sri Lanka, in 2009, India provided more than US\$ one billion worth in lines of credit and grants for projects in education, health, transport connectivity, and training. Focusing on relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction, India's early efforts played a crucial role in facilitating Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan's return to normalcy years of violent conflict. As one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, India's 'blue helmets' have also served as first responders to mitigate dozens of conflicts around the world, leading efforts on the ground to facilitate stabilization and reconstruction.

Support to Governments

Whenever friendly governments face the risk of a coup or instability threatening regional security, India has often stepped in as a first support responder. In 1988, for example, in response to a request from the Maldives, India activated Operation Cactus to deploy its military and ensure regime continuity in Male. With its location in one of the world's most conflict-ridden regions, whenever requested by neighboring countries, India has also played a constructive role in offering its mediation services to ensure peaceful and inclusive settlements. New Delhi is also a democratic first responder, deploying expert technical support to assist transitioning democracies to design their new constitutions and hold free and fair elections.

Financial assistance

India plays a little-known but crucial role as a first responder in the region to support friendly governments facing financial crises. Under a special currency swap mechanism instituted in 2012, the Reserve Bank of India has provided critical assistance to the governments of Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka whenever they face foreign currency liquidity shortages. By coming to the rescue of their respective monetary authorities, New Delhi has demonstrated its commitment to financial stability and economic growth in the region, strengthening governance to wither crises.

Refugee flows

Whenever people fear for their lives in South Asia, they often look up to India first. India has consistently provided an emergency safe haven for refugee and minority populations from across South Asia. Whether they are affected by violent conflict or any type of persecution, most displaced people's routes to safety pass through India, taking advantage of its default open doors policy. Since 1947, this includes people from Tibet, East Pakistan, Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, and Sri Lanka, leading the current UN Secretary General to speak of India's refugee policy as a model for other countries.

India's contribution as a first responder in these areas above will continue to increase as its economy grows in size and openness. In his message to the heads of Indian missions abroad, in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged them "to use this unique opportunity to help India position itself in a leading role, rather than just a balancing force, globally." As India expands its horizons, it will keep stepping up to take the lead where other countries are reluctant, unwilling or incapable to do so.

This first respondent tradition must be further studied and promoted, because it reflects India's deep commitment to assume a driving role in the international order. And it will also have to be endowed with adequate resources and capabilities for India to move even quicker and farther beyond its borders.

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India, a country that takes pride in its rich heritage, colorful traditions and customs, and an innervating history that can be traced back to one of the world's oldest civilizations, has a multifaceted culture that is both exceptional and unique.



INDIA CULTURE AND TRADITION

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India, a country that takes pride in its rich heritage, colorful traditions and customs, and an innervating history that can be traced back to one of the world's oldest civilizations, has a multifaceted culture that is both exceptional and unique.

Influenced by India's checkered history of several millennium, the country is a microcosm of several cultures that has evolved into a multiplicity of religions, languages, arts, architecture, dance, music, food, dress and customs that differ from place to place within the country's vast expanse.

In the land where civilization began nearly five millenniums ago, the people have contributed significantly to advancements in human knowledge in the fields of astronomy, architecture, mathematics and medicine among others.

Today, India retains this heritage of diversity with more than 1.3 billion people, thriving together under the Indian umbrella, while remaining proud of their own distinct languages, religions, cuisines, customs, and distinctive forms of art and expression.

Languages: India is a multilingual nation with speakers of more than 780 languages residing within its borders. With 29 states and 7 union territories, the vast population of the country speaks diverse dialects. Many of these dialects have significantly evolved over the years and today there are several that are similar but a large number continues to remain distinct. Hindi, which is widely spoken across a large region of the country, serves as the preferred language

of communication across much of North and Central India

Unsurprisingly, the country has no official national language and the Indian Constitution does not confer that status on any language, though for bureaucratic purposes and proceedings both Hindi and English are



widely used. The Indian Constitution lists 22 languages, referred to as scheduled languages, which are given recognition, status and official encouragement. In addition, the government has bestowed the distinction of classical languages to six languages — Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu.





Religions: India is home to people of all global religious denominations and is the birthplace of four major religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, with Zoroastrianism and Judaism also having significant historical links in India. Throughout the millennia of Indian history, religion has been an important part of the country's social and cultural fabric. Though India officially became a secular state through the 42nd amendment act of Constitution in 1976 and the Constitution grants the right to religion as a fundamental right, long before the legal status, tolerance and respect for diverse religions and protection of places of worship was an entrenched tradition in India.

Architecture and art: Home to a spectacle of ancient temples, forts and palaces, architecture is significant to the rich history and tradition of India. Although the Taj Mahal is one of the most prominent examples of the region's unique architectural style,

it is only one among the hundreds of distinctive monuments and edifices that dot the Indian architectural landscape. The diversity of architectural styles is also a reflection of the number of influences that have shaped the history of the nation, and includes elements from Islamic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish and Indian architectural styles.

Unique art forms have also stemmed from the Indian sub-continent region in the form of dance, music, theatre, painting, weaving, pottery and



others that trace their history back thousands of years. The major classical dance forms — Bharata Natyam, Kathak, Odissi, Manipuri, Kuchipudi, Mohiniattam and Kathakali — draws on themes from mythology and literature and is performed with rigidity and discipline in honor of the strong traditions of the region.

In modern India, Bollywood, the country's well known film industry has largely contributed in bringing global recognition to the artistic capacity of the country, and is popular for the elaborate styles of its singing and dancing.



Foods: India's exposure and interactions with other cultures over the centuries has resulted in a gastronomic cornucopia of cuisines that are distinct and often define the different regions of the country. In the north, cuisines reflect the strong influence on the region of exposure to foods from the Middle-East and Central Asia and accordingly incorporate a range of meat, nuts, fruits and spices in their dishes. In the south, especially along India's long coastline in the east and west, it is fish, vegetable and herbs that play a prominent role in cuisines.

Religion, tradition and cultural choices also play an important role in determining the type of cuisine prevailing in specific regions. Moreover, given the country's geographic diversity and varying soil and climatic conditions,



India produces a wide variety of grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, herb and spices that find their way into local cuisines.

Wheat, rice and pulses are important staples of the Indian diet. The food is rich with curries in which spices, including ginger, coriander, cardamom, turmeric, dried hot peppers, and cinnamon are profusely used. Chutneys — thick condiments and spreads made from assorted



fruits and vegetables such as tamarind and tomatoes and mint, cilantro and other herbs — are used generously in Indian cooking.

Indian cuisine continues to evolve, influenced by and influencing the food and flavors of many other countries. The profusion and diversity of Indian eateries opening up around the world is an attestation of the growing global popularity of Indian cuisines.

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North East India

Thrown across the farthest reaches of India, obscured from the greater world by the ageless forests and formidable mountain ranges, the Northeast States of India are one of Asia's last great natural and anthropological sanctuaries.



Sharing borders with Bhutan, Tibet, Myanmar (Burma) and Bangladesh, these remote frontiers are a region of rugged beauty, and a collision zone of tribal cultures, climates, landscapes and people. In this adventure wonderland, glacial Himalayan rivers spill onto Assam's vast floodplains, faith moves mountains on the perilous pilgrimage to Tawang, rhinos graze in Kaziranga's swampy grasslands and former headhunters slowly embrace modernity in their ancestral longhouses in Nagaland.

Despite the slow pace, development in these regions has enabled interested travelers in overcoming obstacles and exploring Northeastern India for its raw, untainted natural wonder and beauty, ultimately making for an unforgettable tourist venture.



Assam

Sprawled like a prehistoric leviathan along the length of the Brahmaputra valley, Assam (also known as Ahom) is the biggest and most accessible of the Northeast States. A hospitable population, a cuisine with its own distinctive aromas and flavors, a vibrant artistic heritage marked by exotic dance forms, and a string of elegant Hindu temples top its list of innumerable attractions.

The archetypal Assamese landscape is a picturesque golden-green vista of rice fields and manicured tea estates, framed by the blue mountains of Arunachal in the north and the highlands of Meghalaya and Nagaland to the south.

It is in Assam where one of India's best known wildlife mascots, the famed one-horned rhinoceros, calls the expansive grasslands of the Kaziranga National Park home. The park consists of western, central and eastern ranges, with the central range doubling as the venue for early-morning elephant safaris, an exploration unique to this region and definitely one that cannot be missed.

Arunachal Pradesh

One of the least explored states in India, Arunachal (literally the 'land of dawn-lit mountains') rises abruptly from the Assam plains as a mass of densely forested and impossibly steep hills, culminating in snowcapped peaks along the Tibetan border. Wild and unblemished Arunachal Pradesh is a giant patch of green on the country's map, home to 26 indigenous tribes and is perhaps the last sanctuary for India's natural and anthropological heritage.





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A mighty gash in the earth fringed by hulking mountains, Tawang Valley in Arunachal works a special magic on the minds of travelers. The valley is a gorgeous patchwork of mountain ridges, vast fields and clusters of Buddhist monasteries and Monpa villages. A picturesque setting that includes murals of auspicious

that has been whittled into hidden gorges, wormhole caverns and plunging cliffs as a result of millions of years of rainfall, that provide for unique natural wonder just waiting to be explored.

Popularly known as the wettest place in the world, Cherrapunji in Meghalaya is best known for its



waterfalls, which surge dramatically over towering cliffs all around the town. The most impressive plunge is the Nohkalikai Falls, which emerges from a forested gully and drops 340m

over a sheer rock wall. It is the 'living root' bridges, predominantly found in Cherrapunji that piques the interest of visitors in the region. Woven from the aerial roots of giant jungle fig trees by generations of local villagers are these astonishing natural wonders, including a famous double-decker with two stacked tiers, a phenomenon that goes back hundreds of years and to be found only in these regions of India.

unique insight into their traditional and exotic lifestyles.

Kohima, capital city to Nagaland is filled with a bounty for nature enthusiasts. The Dzukou Valley is a popular spot for trekking, and is especially worth visiting during the spring, when the valley blooms with natural wonder.

Providing for touristic venture, the city is filled with religious monuments and museums, and also includes sights such as the War Cemetery, Cathedrals and Zoological Parks. Another popular attraction in the region is the Hornbill Festival that is annually held here every winter, usually during the first week of December, drawing in a number of tourists interested in experiencing the cultural explosion of the various tribal groups in Nagaland.

Buddhist emblems and colorful prayer wheels add interest to the central Old Market area. The prayer wheels are turned by stream of Monpa pilgrims, many of whom wear traditional black yak-wool gurdam (skullcaps that look like giant Rastafarian spiders).



Meghalaya

Meghalaya is gaining the reputation of a natural playground fit for the adventurous, a prime destination for treks, cave and canyon exploring and tribal encounters. It is the Garo, Khasi and Jaintia hills, with soft limestone

Nagaland

Rich in primeval beauty, Nagaland's dazzling hills and valleys – right on the edge of border of India and Myanmar – is an ethereal and inviting destination for travelers from all walks of life. The warm and hospitable tribal folk welcome tourism and make visitors feel right at home, while providing a

It was by unity despite our diversity that we achieved our independence; it is only through affirming this diversity that we can hope to maintain it...

We Salute the People and Government of **INDIA** on the Country's Glorious **Republic Day**





Indian Embassy celebrates country's 69th Republic Day



Indian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. K. Jeeva Sagar hosted a reception on 24 January at The Palms Beach Hotel. Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah was the chief guest at the gathering, which was attended

by members of the diplomatic corps, Indian nationals, special invitees and media personnel.

In his address to the Indian community Ambassador Sagar praised the positive role

played by the Indian community in Kuwait which was well appreciated by the Kuwaiti authorities.

He also pointed at the age-old historical ties between the two nations that have stood

the test of time. Ambassador Sagar also spoke about the India's success in the last 68 years since becoming a republic. A cultural program showcasing Indian dance and music added color to the festivities.





Saffron, White and Green for 26 Jan

India, a land of exciting diversity in every sphere, offers a multiplicity of cuisines that differ in ingredients, taste, texture and cooking style across the vast expanse of the land. National celebrations, such as the Republic Day, are excellent occasions to sample the country's culinary diversity by preparing or partaking dishes from the four of our land. Here are a few tricolor recipes that you can try out this Republic Day.



Trianga Kulfi

Ingredients:
1.5 liter full cream milk
5 grams green cardamom powder
0.5 gram Saffron
2 tablespoon khus syrup
1 tablespoon pista (slivered)
3 tablespoon cream

Method: Pour the milk into a wide, thick-bottom pan and bring to boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Now lower the heat and cook the milk, stirring constantly, until it has thickened and reduced to about 40 percent. Stir the sides of the pan constantly to avoid scalding. Add almonds and cardamom seeds, stir well and divide into three portions.

To one part add saffron strands, to other part add khus syrup and cream to the third part. Let it cool down till it attains the desired color. Pour the mixture into kulfi moulds so that it resembles the tri-color. Cover and freeze for about six hours.



Tricolor Sandwich Recipe

Ingredients:
6 bread slices
Butter for spreading
For The Green Layer
2 tablespoon mint chutney
1/2 cup grated paneer (cottage cheese)
Salt to taste
For The Orange Layer
1 medium sized carrot
2 tablespoon mayonnaise
Salt to taste
Method: Grate carrot and set aside. Butter the bread slices and set aside. For the green layer, mix mint chutney, paneer, and salt in a bowl well and set aside. For the orange layer, mix carrot, mayonnaise, and salt in a separate bowl well and set aside. On a buttered slice of bread, spread the green

mixture and top with another slice of bread. After that, layer with the carrot mixture and another slice of bread and serve.



Three layer Mousse

Ingredients:
150 ml whipped cream
20 grams white chocolate
1 tablespoon milk
20 grams orange puree
20 grams kiwi puree
Method: Divide the whipped cream into three portions. Melt the white chocolate and melt it in a double boiler along with the milk. Mix one part of the whipped cream with the kiwi puree and the other portion with orange puree and the remaining whipped cream with melted white chocolate. Now pipe it out in a short glass to resemble the Indian flag. Refrigerate for two hours. Serve it cold.

Tricolor dhoklaa

Divide your dhokla batter into three separate bowls



For the saffron layer- Add carrot and tomato puree to one bowl and whisk until smooth.
For the white layer- Finely grate coconut and whisk in to the second bowl of batter.
For the green layer- Make a green chutney using coriander leaves and a few spinach leaves and whisk in this paste into the third bowl.



Tricolor Pulav

Just add carrots and green peas to the basic pulav recipe. Make sure that you do not add turmeric powder or any other food color to the rice, as you need to keep the white color of the rice intact.

Indian economy continues to soar

Continued from Page 1

India also received the highest ever inflow of equity in the form of foreign direct investments (FDI) worth \$43.4 billion in 2016-17 and has become one of the most open global economies by ushering in liberalization measures, as per the mid-year economic survey of India.

On the World Bank's ranking in 'Ease of Doing Business', India has improved its standing by 30 spots over its 2017 ranking and is now ranked 100 among 190 countries in 2018 edition of the report.

The World Bank has now stated that private investments in India is expected to grow by 8.8 percent in FY 2018-19 and overtake private consumption growth of 7.4 percent, thereby driving the growth in India's gross domestic product (GDP) in FY 2018-19.



India leads the world in its corporate responsibility reporting in financial statements, with 98 percent of the top 100 companies in India disclosing their spending on corporate responsibility, according to a 49-country study by global consultancy giant, KPMG.

The Government of India has also saved over \$10 billion in subsidies through direct benefit transfers with the use of technology such as Aadhaar and digital bank accounts. The Niti Aayog has predicted that rapid adoption of green mobility solutions like public transport, electric vehicles and car-pooling could likely help India save around Rs 3.9 trillion (US\$ 60 billion) by 2030. Government Initiatives: In the Union Budget 2017-18, the Finance Minister of India, Arun Jaitley, verified that the major push of the budget proposals is on growth stimulation, providing relief to the middle class, providing affordable

housing, curbing black money, digitalization of the economy, enhancing transparency in political funding and simplifying the tax administration in the country.

India's unemployment rate has declined to 4.8 percent in February 2017 compared to 9.5 percent in August 2016, as a result of the Government's increased focus towards rural jobs and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme.

Numerous foreign companies are setting up their facilities in India on account of various government initiatives like Make in India and Digital India. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the Make in India initiative with the aim of boosting the manufacturing sector of Indian economy, to increase the purchasing power of an average Indian consumer, which would further boost demand, and hence spur development, in addition to benefiting investors.

The Government of India, under the Make in India initiative, is trying to give boost to the contribution made by the manufacturing sector and aims to take it up to 25 percent of the GDP from the current 17 percent. Besides, the Government has also come up with Digital India initiative, which focuses on three core components: creation of digital infrastructure, delivering services digitally and increasing digital literacy.

Road Ahead: India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to reach \$6 trillion by fiscal year 2027 and achieve upper-middle income status on the back of digitization, globalization, favorable demographics and reforms.

India is also focusing on renewable sources to generate energy. It is planning to achieve 40 percent of its energy from non-fossil sources by 2030 from the current 30 percent and also plans to increase its renewable energy capacity from 57 GW to 175 GW by 2022.

India is expected to be the third largest consumer economy as its consumption may triple to \$4 trillion by 2025, owing to shift in consumer behavior and expenditure pattern, according to a Boston Consulting Group (BCG) report; and is estimated to surpass USA to become the second largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) by the year 2040, according to a report by PricewaterhouseCoopers.



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Message of
H.E. K. Jeeva Sagar
Ambassador of India to Kuwait
on the occasion of the 69th Republic Day of India

Continued from Page 1

self-confidence and a strong will to succeed on the part of the resilient people of this great nation and various governments from time to time, and their efforts towards good and responsible governance and steadily progressive reforms for the last seventy years since independence. It is no exaggeration to state that the principles and the foundations of this amazing story of hope and success are defined and encapsulated in the Constitution of India, and it is a matter of pride for every Indian to be part of this continuing saga. The Preamble of the Constitution of India begins with the words "We the people", and over the years since the inception of the Constitution, India faced many challenges but always emerged triumphant deriving inspiration from the values laid down by the Constitution. A vibrant democracy has been India's most enduring identity ever since we adopted the Constitution that made it a democratic republic with universal adult suffrage. India is a pluralistic and inclusive society that takes pride in its unity in diversity, the diversity reflected in political ideology, ethnicity, language, religion, cuisine and geography. We are a nation which is home to all major world religions, while our people communicate in sixteen major languages and hundreds of dialects.

At the time of India's independence in 1947, we were left an impoverished and distraught nation, with the economy in total shambles. It is a matter of immense satisfaction for us that today's India is the third largest economy in the world on purchasing power parity, and is a member of the G20 group of large and powerful economies. Major global economies have recognized and acknowledged that India was a factor of stability amidst the financial turbulence not many years ago without whose resilience the crisis could have been worse and the recovery would have been much slower. Presently Indian economy is undergoing massive structural transformation.

Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Government of India has taken various initiatives including towards ease of doing business, transparency in governance and regulatory reforms. India remains among the fastest growing large economies with an open investment climate, and has launched substantive economic and investment programs such as Make in India, Digital India, Smart Cities, Model Villages etc. which offer huge investment opportunities for the global industry and business. Most significantly, the uniform Goods and Services Tax (GST) came into force on 1st July 2017, which simplifies and rationalizes the tax structure of India, and its significance for the foreign investors and businesses was even acknowledged by IMF. The Indian Parliament had earlier passed the constitutional amendment for Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2016. GST provides a single tax framework

across the country for all goods and services thereby mitigating double taxation and creating one window for market operations. More recently, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limits were increased making it competitive for the foreign investors to invest 100 percent in arms production industry and in civil aviation with a limit of 49 percent in the national carrier Air India.

The outcome of these initiatives is visible from India's improved global rankings on diverse indicators. India's rank has gone up in World Bank's Doing Business Report. Last month the World Bank lauded the efforts made by India and predicted that India would be fast closing the gap between business practices in India and the best in the world. India is now ranked third in the list of top prospective economies for 2016-2018 in the World Investment Report released by UNCTAD. Our rank improved by 32 positions in World Economic Forum's 'Global Competitiveness Report 2016-17.

The 'Make in India' initiative, aimed at making India a global hub of manufacturing, design and innovation has now made our country the 6th largest manufacturing country in the world. It is already a strong center for R&D and innovation as well as technology start-ups. The India start-up industry has over 20,000 companies, creating over US\$80 billion of value and employing nearly 325,000 people. A large number of young Indians are employed in the Indian IT industry, which itself is generating revenues of over US\$170 billion and exports of over US\$110 billion annually. In the past two years alone, the number of mobile phone units manufactured in India has seen exponential growth. Many small manufacturers of mobile phones are producing top quality products and making them available to the common man at a reasonable price, competing confidently with other established global brands. India is now focusing on marching towards a digital economy with minimum use of cash currency. India also launched an Aadhaar-based mobile payment application called BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money). Aadhaar is a digitally captured identity of Indian citizens.

For the benefit of foreign investors, an Investor Facilitation Cell has been created to guide and assist the investors. We are making it easier for companies to restructure and exit. The enactment and implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code is a crucial step towards ease of exit in India. New Commercial Courts are being set up to fast track cases involving commercial disputes. Arbitration laws have also been amended to expedite the proceedings.

We have set up the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund in collaboration with foreign funds to finance various development projects in infrastructure sector viz. up-gradation of roads, railways, ports and developing of industrial corridors across the country. With this, the average time for pending IPR application has been reduced to 18 months from earlier 5-7 years. It now

takes just 1 month for completing Trade Mark registration — down from earlier 13-14 months. Similarly, environmental clearances for projects are put on fast-track and it takes not more than 180 days to get the necessary clearance. The aim is to further reduce this to just within 100 days. We want the world to 'Make in India', to be a 'Make for India' and 'Make for the World'.

Through the 'Skill India' initiative, we are trying to synergize the skills to the market requirements. Many small towns are now imparting training in various skills to young Indians. It is the endeavor of the government of India that the workers departing for working in foreign countries learn the skills and be safe — 'Prashikshit Baniye, Surakshit Rahiye'.

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices and spice-related products. India's horticulture output — comprising fruits, vegetables and spices — crossed US\$290 million in 2016-17. India now ranks third in farm and agriculture outputs, while agricultural export constitutes 10 percent of the country's exports. India is the largest producer of milk, accounting for 18.5 percent of the total world production. It also has the largest bovine population. India is the second-largest producer and the sixth-largest exporter of sugar. India is a leading country in coconut production and productivity in the world.

The government is committed to creating and maintaining a robust countrywide network of road infrastructure. To this end, road projects of 10,000 km were awarded in FY 2015-16 and by the end of FY 2017, more than 6000 km of roads have been constructed. The ports and shipping sector had also witnessed tremendous growth in the last three years. The capacity of Indian ports has increased by 50 million tonnes in the last six months as a result of successful completion of ongoing projects.

India has made remarkable progress in the field of Science and Technology. This is evident from a range of achievements from the building of super computers to the development of indigenous space program. Notable successes under the Space program include — Mars Mission, Lunar Mission (Chandrayaan), and Antarctic mission. After the success of India's Mars Orbiter Mission 'Mangalyaan', the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) successfully launched a record 102 satellites in a single mission last year. ISRO had also launched SCATSAT-1 for weather related studies and seven co-passenger satellites, including three from Algeria, one each from Canada and USA. Oceanographic research has also made huge strides. India has always believed in technology with a human face.

India has always conducted its international relations with mutual respect and aimed at creating an environment of peace and security in which the world can be a better place for entire humanity to live with dignity and in prosperity. Our foreign policy is focused on a broad

range of global issues that serve the broader interests of humanity. We work with other countries to tackle issues of common concerns such as international terrorism, climate change, energy security, food security, and the reform of multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council. The significance of the Gulf and Middle East regions in the ambit of our foreign policy cannot be overemphasized. We are each other's extended neighborhood and peace, security and stability of countries in this region is imperative for prosperity and economic development in India. GCC is one of our largest trading blocs, meeting a significant percentage of India's crude oil and LPG requirements and hosts about 8.5 million Indians. In the fiscal year gone by, India-GCC trade was nearly US\$100 billion and accounted for about 15 percent of our global trade.

As regards India-Kuwait bilateral relations, as India's Ambassador, it is heartening for me to note that they have been growing from strength to strength, steadily maintaining an upward trajectory. India's relations with Kuwait are historical and encompass political, cultural, trade, economic and human resource fields. The traditional warmth and friendship was evident even when I had paid a visit to Kuwait's Embassy in New Delhi before setting upon my journey here, and during my initial interactions with Kuwaiti authorities in the last few days after reaching here. And on 22nd January, within two weeks of my arrival in Kuwait, I have had the honor of having an audience with His Highness the Amir of Kuwait and presented my Letter of Credentials from the Honorable President of India. I must admit, I was touched by the genuine warmth and friendship displayed by His Highness the Amir towards the Indian community in Kuwait.

Kuwait is a major and reliable crude oil and LPG supplier to India. It is important that both countries endeavor to maintain the crucial position Kuwait enjoys in India's energy security. We have consistently been among Kuwait's top trading partners and the total bilateral trade during the fiscal year had crossed US\$6.2 billion. Large Indian companies, including Larsen & Toubro, Shapoorji Pallonji, Punj Lloyd, Essar, Simplex Project Ltd., Kalpataru Transmission Ltd., Tata Services India Ltd., Life Insurance Corporation of India, among others, have been actively present in Kuwait. Kuwait is a major investing nation while India is highly rated profitable investment destination; this synergy, given the level of confidence in the relationship, needs to be explored further for mutual benefit.

Regular high level visits and other exchanges at ministerial level between our two countries have helped in further strengthening and deepening of our bilateral ties. The visits of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait to India in June 2006 followed by the visit of His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait in November 2013 have provided impetus to our growing bilateral

relations. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait also paid a private visit to New Delhi in July 2017. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs M.J. Akbar led the Indian delegation for the 3rd Joint Ministerial Commission Meeting in September 2017, while Minister of State Gen. (Dr.) V.K. Singh, paid a one-day visit as recently as the 10th and 11th January of this year. The latter had an extensive interaction with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kuwait on various bilateral and regional issues, and also met with the Acting Labor Minister.

As I underlined at the outset of this message, people-to-people dimension is a very important pillar of India-Kuwait relations. According to figures from official sources, Indian nationals working in Kuwait at present are over 900,000, and constitute the largest of the expatriate communities based here. This is not a mere statistic but a statement of trust and confidence demonstrated by the Kuwaiti government and the people in the peace-loving and law-abiding nature of Indian people, and is reflective of Kuwait's respect for India's cultural and civilizational ethos. I would be amiss if I do not pay tribute also to the Indian community in Kuwait, which is present in almost all segments of Kuwaiti society, for its extensive contribution to the socio-economic development and prosperity of the friendly country of Kuwait and its people, and for playing its part in making India-Kuwait relations as vibrant as they are today. It would be my endeavor as India's envoy to Kuwait to work closely with the government of Kuwait to ensure that this human resource and people-defined dimension becomes an important and positive instrument towards furthering our already blossoming bilateral relationship.

The welfare and well-being of the Indian community in Kuwait has always been and will continue to be among the highest priorities of the embassy. Measures such as 24x7 emergency access and the daily 'Consular Open House' will continue to be effective. It will be this mission's endeavor, in cooperation with the Kuwaiti authorities, community associations, and well-wishers and volunteers of the community, to address all issues and ensure the welfare of the Indian community in Kuwait so that it can continue to provide a strong impetus to India-Kuwait relations.

Once again, on this profoundly meaningful and important occasion of the Republic Day of India, I wish every Indian in Kuwait good health and happiness. I also take this opportunity to convey the best wishes from the Indian leadership for the continued good health and well-being of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the friendly people of the State of Kuwait.



India's Urban Awakening



Ejaz Ghani
 Lead Economist at the World Bank

When the United Kingdom became the first country in the world to undergo large-scale urbanization in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the process transformed its economy and society. Today, India is facing a similar transformation, only it is happening at 100 times the pace. By 2030, India's urban population will reach 600 million people, twice the size of America's.

For India, rapid urbanization is particularly vital to enable the country to take full advantage of the demographic dividend afforded by its young population. With 12 million more people joining the country's labor force every year, the potential of that dividend is huge. As the urbanization process continues, connectivity, proximity, and diversity will accelerate knowledge diffusion, spark further innovation, and enhance productivity and employment growth.

For all of its benefits, however, rapid urbanization also poses enormous challenges, from managing congestion and pollution to ensuring that growth is inclusive and equitable. As a latecomer to urbanization, India will benefit from technological innovations — including digital technologies, cleaner energy,

innovative construction materials, and new modes of transport — that will enable it to leapfrog some of its more developed counterparts. But taking advantage of those technologies will require effective policies, including smart infrastructure investments and measures to make cities more competitive, particularly in modern industries. Making its cities more competitive will require India to decide whether to emphasize specialization (with an industry concentrated in a particular city) or diversification (with each city home to a range of industries, roughly in line with the national average). This is no easy choice: the debate over which approach is better has been raging for nearly a century.

In 1991, around the time India's economic liberalization began, the country's cities tended toward specialization. But, in recent years, there has been a notable shift toward diversification, with some major urban centers, like Mumbai and Bangalore, experiencing the largest and fastest shifts away from specialization.

Specialization tends to be much higher in traditional industries than in modern industries. Though some modern industries — like office accounting and computing machinery, and radio, television, and communication equipment — tend to be located in more specialized districts, roughly three-quarters of Indian districts with higher specialization levels rely on traditional industries. Of India's 600 districts, those that remain the most specialized are Kavaratti (water transport), Darjeeling (paper products), Panchkula (office accounting and computing machinery), and Wokha (wood products).



Though India's specialization levels were much higher than those in the United States in the early 1990s, the two countries have converged over time. All of this suggests that, as technology continues to advance, so will diversification — a trend that will shape future urbanization patterns in India.

This bodes well for employment, because more diversified cities and districts tend to experience greater job growth. Initial clusters of modern services have also experienced abnormally high employment growth since 2000.

And there's more good news: the strongest job gains due to diversification are occurring in rural areas and among small enterprises, suggesting that India's urbanization can bring inclusive growth and prosperity. Evidence also shows that high growth rates, which support poverty

reduction, are concentrated in the rural areas of particular districts.

Taking full advantage of these positive trends, however, will require India to boost infrastructure investment. Despite a slowdown in the manufacturing sector's growth — a trend mirrored in much of the rest of the world — urbanization has continued to accelerate in India, especially in districts with access to better infrastructure.

In the developing world, a billion people lack access to electricity and roads, and more than a half-billion lack reliable access to safe drinking water. Addressing these deficiencies is critical to development — and India is no exception. Access to better infrastructure will enable millions more entrepreneurs, especially women, to benefit from the country's urban awakening. The key to success will be to

improve the efficiency of public spending, while attracting more private investment.

There is certainly an economic incentive for private actors to channel their money toward developing-country infrastructure. After all, high-income countries, where populations are aging rapidly, often have an excess of savings ready to be allocated to high-yield investments. Lower-income countries, with their younger populations and large infrastructure needs, provide just such opportunities.

As it stands, however, less than 1 percent of the \$68 trillion managed by pension funds, life insurance companies, and others are channeled toward infrastructure projects. And, given the low risk appetite among investors, not to mention the small size of city-level projects, municipal governments will struggle to raise that share.

But it is not impossible. What is needed is visionary leadership at the local level, with municipal governments identifying infrastructure projects that promote entrepreneurship, increase their cities' competitiveness, and promote regional development by strengthening urban-rural connectivity. Those governments should also leverage their assets, including land; mobilize user revenue; and modify financial regulations and incentives to increase investors' risk appetite. Add to that greater technical and financial capacity, and it would become much easier to attract the needed private funds and build partnerships benefiting India's urban transformation.

India has all of the tools it needs to advance its urbanization process in a way that promotes inclusive and sustainable growth. It must use them wisely.



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Reaching for the stars, India's quest from **MANGALYAAN**

Pallava Bagla

India has a rich tradition of using outer space as a tool for national development. The poorest of the poor have always been the beneficiaries of India's space technologies, from farmers to fisher folk Indian satellites touch the lives of almost the entire 1.3 billion population.

As India celebrates its seventieth birthday it has already entered the golden era of space technology; sectors like satellite television, banking, smart city development, weather forecasting, smart phones, e-governance, satellite aided navigation are all catering to India's unending appetite to deploy high technology to ease the life of the common man.

India's quest for space has been pioneered by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) set up in 1969 and today has an annual budget of about US\$1.4 billion. The country has a constellation of 44 satellites in orbit and can now on its own launch up to four tons of communication satellites into orbit. This gives India end to end capabilities in space technology from making its own satellites to launching its own rockets and has even sent an Indian-made satellite Mangalyaan or the Mars Orbiter Mission all the way to the Mars traveling a distance of over 200 million kilometres.

The journey for ISRO began from the humble fishing village of Thumba on the coast of the Arabian Sea where the scientists used the premises of a church to set up the first rocket launch facilities and the first rockets were carried on bicycles and first satellites pulled in on bullock carts. Today India's heaviest rocket the Geo-synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk III (GSLV MK III) also lovingly named 'Bahubaali' weighs a whopping 640 tons or the weight of more than 200 fully grown elephants. This elegant rocket had its maiden launch on June, 2017 when it launched a communications satellite GSAT-19 into orbit and promises to become the mainstay for all heavy lifts.

The first satellite to be launched by India was way back in 1972 when the 360 kilogram Aryabhata satellite named after India's legendary mathematician was lifted into orbit from the erstwhile USSR. This space science satellite paved the way for ISRO to reach for the stars. In the next few months this year India hopes to launch its heaviest ever satellite GSAT-11 that will weigh about 5725 kilograms.

By launching 'Bahubaali' the Indian space agency entered into a bold new world muscling its way to make its mark in the world's heavy weight multi-billion dollar launch market. ISRO chairman Dr. A.S. Kiran Kumar a man of modest words said 'we pushed ourselves to the limits to ensure that this new fully self-reliant Indian rocket succeeds in its maiden launch'.

This heavy lift rocket is capable

of placing up to 8 tons in a low Earth orbit, enough to carry India's crew module. Incidentally the launch was an entirely 'Made in India' venture.

ISRO has already prepared plans of hoisting a 2-3 member human crew into space as soon as the government gives it a sanction of about 3-4 billion dollars. When implemented, India would become only the fourth country after Russia, USA and China to have a human space flight program. Incidentally ISRO asserts the first Indian to go into space could well be a woman. Kumar confirms 'in principle it will be the GSLV Mk-3 or its variant that will be human rated in future'.

India already has two operational rockets, the workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) that can hoist satellites of 1.5 tons into space and was the preferred vehicle for India's maiden mission to Moon and Mars. The second the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark II can hoist 2 ton class of satellites. Between them, ISRO has done fifty launches and recently even earned a world record by successfully placing 104 satellites in orbit, beating an old Russian record of hoisting 39 satellites in a single mission.

In 2017, India embarked on space diplomacy like never before. For the first time New Delhi flexed its prowess of space technology by embarking on an unprecedented and un-chartered 'stratospheric diplomacy' through a special Rs4.5 billion gift for south Asians. India carved a very unique place in the universe, when New Delhi 'gifted' a heavy weight bird in the sky to its neighbors through the 'South Asia Satellite'. India opened its heart out by extending its neighborhood first policy beyond the stratosphere. This 'gift' of a communications satellite for use by neighbors at no cost has no parallels in the space fairing world, all other current regional consortia are commercial for-profit enterprises.

The 'South Asia Satellite' is a 2230 kilogram satellite is purely a communications satellite costing Rs2.35 billion. The uniqueness of this satellite is that it has a footprint that extends all over South Asia and India gifted this heavenly messenger to its neighbors.

The South Asia Satellite has 12 Ku band transponders which India's neighbors can now utilize to increase communications. Each country will get access to at least one transponder through which they could beam their own programming and there could be common 'south Asian programming' as well. Each country is developing its own ground infra-structure though India is willing to extend assistance and know-how. According to the government the satellite will 'enable a full range of applications and services to our neighbors in the areas of telecommunication and broadcasting applications viz. television, direct-to-home (DTH), very small aperture terminals (VSATs), tele-education,



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telemedicine and disaster management support.' The satellite also has the capability to provide secure hot lines among the participating nations in addition since the region is highly prone to earthquakes, cyclones, floods, tsunami's it may help in providing critical communication links in times of disasters.

In this unusual message of peace, India's most hostile neighbor Pakistan has fully opted out. Rest of the seven countries part of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) namely Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are part of this mission. Experts say 'Pakistan has missed an opportunity' since its own space program is currently in a primitive stage as compared to India's. Hopefully friendly skies can result in reduced hostilities on Earth.

In 2013 India launched the Mangalyaan, the country's first mission to Mars and it hit Bulls Eye when on 4 September, 2014 it entered the orbit of Mars and India created global history by becoming the first country to reach the orbit of Mars on its maiden attempt a fact that eluded global giants like USA and Russia. Made for a nominal

mission life of 180 days, this year the Mangalyaan completed 1000 days in orbit and continues to beam back data and some its images like those of the full disc of Mars are so good that they featured on the cover of the venerated National Geographic magazine.

Early next year India plans to hoist its second mission to the Moon, Chandrayaan-2 which will include landing its flag on the lunar surface on an indigenous rover. Continuing with inter-planetary exploration missions, plans are also afoot for voyages to Venus and a re-visit to Mars.

Human space flight is also in the offing, India's latest rocket the GSLV Mk III could be India's vehicle of choice to launch 'Indians into space, from Indian soil using Indian rockets'. This is only the beginning, reaching for the stars and exploring the wonders of the universe are all on the horizon but whatever it does India's common person will continue to reap the maximum benefits of India's capabilities in space.

Pallava Bagla is a globally recognised Indian science journalist and author of book 'Reaching for the Stars: India's Journey to Mars and Beyond'.

Indian Flag symbol of pride and unity

Mahatma Gandhi said, 'A flag is a necessity for all nations. Millions have died for it. It is no doubt a kind of idolatry which would be a sin to destroy. For, a flag represents an Ideal.' The national flag is the banner that imparts a nation its own unique identity, proclaims to world of its sovereignty, and announces the principles on which lies the country's foundation.

The National flag of India is rectangular in shape and consists of three colors – saffron, white and green. The present form of the flag was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 22 July, 1947 - 24 days prior to the formal declaration of Independence.

The rectangular tricolor flag consists of three equal horizontal segments, with saffron on top, white in the middle and green at the bottom. At the center of the white stripe is a depiction of Ashok Chakra in navy blue. It is round hollow wheel and has 24 spokes radiating from the center.

The version of the flag closest to the current one came into existence in 1923. It was designed by Pingali Venkayya and had the saffron, white and green stripes with the spinning wheel placed in the white section. It was hoisted on 13 April, 1923 in Nagpur during an event commemorating the Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre. It was named the Swaraj Flag and became the symbol of India's demand for Self-rule led by the Indian National Congress.

The resolution to adopt the tricolor as the National Flag of India was passed in 1931. On

July 22, 1947, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Swaraj Flag as the National Flag of Sovereign India with the Ashok Chakra replacing the spinning wheel.

The colors and symbols of the Indian National flag hold deep philosophical meaning. Each color represents a specific aspect of Indian culture that resonates deeply within the hearts of the citizens. The saffron stands for sacrifice and renunciation, the



white stands for peace and the green stands for courage and immortality. The Ashok Chakra is a depiction of Dharma Chakra and represents righteousness, justice and forwardness. The symbolism of wheel is that of constant movement that heralds progress and repels stagnation.

The flag as a whole represents a confluence of all religious principles, and an underlying symbolism of the three colors – saffron representing Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, the white for Christianity and the green for Islam – is based on the secular principles of India.

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