

INDIA AT 78: A Journey of Resilience, Progress, and Global Good

Message by Ambassador of India

Dear Fellow Citizens and Friends of India,

As we celebrate the 78th Independence Day of India, it is a moment of immense pride and joy for all Indians, both in our homeland and across the world, including here in the Sultanate of Oman. This day marks not just the birth of a free nation, but also the spirit of a democracy that has withstood the test of time and emerged stronger and more vibrant.

India's journey since 1947 has been nothing short of remarkable. From being a newly independent nation grappling with myriad challenges, India has transformed into the world's fifth-largest economy, a testament to the resilience and determination of its people. Our GDP has witnessed robust growth and we are on track to become a \$5 trillion economy in the near future. This economic dynamism is powered by diverse sectors, from information technology and pharmaceuticals to space exploration and renewable energy.

Today, India's prowess in digital inclusion, mobile banking and

Artificial Intelligence is setting global benchmarks, propelling us to the forefront of technological innovation and shaping the future of industries worldwide.

In healthcare, India stands tall as the 'Pharmacy of the World'. We supply affordable medicines to over 200 countries, a lifeline in times of need. Our commitment to global health shines through our leadership in vaccine production and healthcare solutions, where innovation meets compassion, ensuring that no one is left behind.

India boldly explores space, making audacious leaps in scientific discovery. From the successful Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) to lunar missions like Chandrayaan, our scientists push boundaries and inspire the world with their discoveries in space science. With each mission, India asserts its prowess in space exploration, pushing boundaries and inspiring future generations to reach for the stars. And beyond!

Sustainability isn't just a goal. For Bharat, it is a commitment.

With plans to achieve 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030, India is at the vanguard of



H.E. Amit Narang
Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman

renewable energy innovation and environmental stewardship. Our commitment to clean energy not only powers our homes and industries but also sets a global standard in combating climate change, safeguarding the planet for future generations.

Democracy beats at the heart of our nation, a symphony of voices resonating across the land. In the recent parliamentary elections, over 600 million citizens exercised their right to vote, a powerful testament to our enduring democratic

ethos. The successful conduct of the elections underscores our unwavering commitment to fairness and 'Jan Bhagidari' or people's participation, demonstrating the resilience of our democratic institutions and the strength of our collective voice. This event was truly a festival of democracy, celebrating our nation's dedication as the mother of democracy.

India's cultural tapestry weaves a mesmerizing tale that spans continents. Our films and music resonate across the world, bridging cultures and hearts. The popularity of our culture reinforces India's role as a global influencer and an ambassador of peace and harmony, where art transcends boundaries and celebrates the richness of human diversity.

Sports, a universal language, unite us in pride and passion. India's recent triumph in the T20 World Cup has ignited celebrations nationwide, showcasing our sporting prowess and determination. Our commitment to sports development nurtures talent and promotes a healthy lifestyle, inspiring generations to pursue their dreams on and off the field.

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate this historic occasion, I am delighted to reflect

upon the strong and enduring relationship between India and the Sultanate of Oman.

Our bilateral relationship has grown from strength to strength, marked by mutual trust and respect and propelled by shared objectives. The special year of 2023, highlighted by Oman's participation as our 'Special Guest' at the G20 Summit during India's presidency, and the successful State Visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to India in December 2023, has further cemented our bonds. This partnership is underpinned by a synergy in our developmental agendas under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

The cooperation between our nations spans various sectors, including trade, investment, defense, education and innovation, reflecting our shared commitment to progress and prosperity. Bilateral trade has surged, reaching over \$12 billion, and over 6000 India-Oman joint ventures in Oman with estimated investment of over US\$ 7.5 billion continue to contribute to Oman's economy and its march towards fulfillment of 'Oman Vision 2040'.

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"Triple the Strength, Triple the Speed: India's Vision for a Transformative Decade"

On June 9th, I was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India for the third consecutive term, and on that day, I made a commitment. I vowed that in my third term, I would work with triple the strength and triple the speed. It is also noteworthy that the number three features prominently in many of our government's goals. Our goals include making India the world's third-largest economy in this term, constructing three crore houses for the poor, and creating three crore 'Lakhpatis Didis'. Perhaps this term is new to you.

Women Self Help Groups are active in villages across India. We aim to empower them significantly, focusing on skill development and diversification. In my third term, our goal is for three crore (30 Million) sisters from impoverished rural areas to achieve prosperity—meaning their annual income should exceed one lakh rupees (Hundred Thousand), sustained indefinitely. This is a formidable target, yet with the support and blessings of Indians world over, even the loftiest goals become attainable. You are all aware that modern India consistently meets its objectives. India has achieved remarkable feats, such as sending Chandrayaan to the moon, leading in secure digital transactions globally, and implementing pioneering social sector policies. Moreover, India boasts the world's third-largest startup ecosystem today.

When you entrusted me with the opportunity to serve our nation in 2014, there were only a few hundred startups; today, there are lakhs. India is now breaking records in patent filings and research publications, showcasing the immense talent and strength of our youth—an achievement that has captivated the world.

Friends, The world is amazed at the pace of development India has achieved in the past decade. Visitors to India often remark on the country's transformation—recognizing new



H.E. Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

constructions and significant changes taking place. When India successfully hosts events like the G-20 summit, the world acknowledges India's evolving stature. The rapid doubling of India's airports in just ten years and the electrification of over 40,000 kilometers of railway lines further underscore India's capabilities, leaving a lasting impression globally of India's transformation.

Today, as India sets new benchmarks in digital payments, accomplishes the orbit of the sun from the L-1 point, builds the world's tallest railway bridge, and erects the world's

tallest statue, it is evident to all observers that India is truly changing. This change is driven by India's belief in the strength of its 140 crore citizens, both at home and abroad. India is proud of its people and their collective aspiration to transform into a developed nation. This commitment is visible in the diligent efforts of every farmer, every youth, and every underprivileged individual across the nation.

Today, my fellow Indians reside in various corners of the globe. Each of you carries immense pride in your homeland's

accomplishments, holding your heads high. When discussing India with your foreign friends, you enthusiastically enumerate the country's achievements, and they listen attentively.

My friends, our nation does not evade its challenges. Today, all 140 crore Indians are tirelessly preparing to excel in every domain. You have witnessed how we not only revived our economy from the Covid crisis but also positioned it among the strongest globally. We are not merely addressing infrastructure deficiencies; we are setting global benchmarks. It's not just about enhancing healthcare services; we're ensuring free treatment for every underprivileged person through the world's largest health assurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat. This scheme is the largest of its kind worldwide. How is all of this possible, friends? Who is driving this change? Once again I reiterate, it is the tireless efforts, dedication, and devotion of our 140 crore citizens and their dreams, resolutions, and diligent endeavours for success.

Friends, The transformation in India extends beyond its systems and infrastructure; it is also evident in the self-assurance of every citizen, particularly the youth. As you know, self-confidence is the crucial first step toward success. Before 2014, we were engulfed in despair; frustration had taken hold. Today, however, the nation is brimming with self-confidence. Consider two patients with the same illness in a hospital, attended

by equally competent doctors. One patient exudes confidence while the other is consumed by despair. It's often observed that the confident patient recovers swiftly and leaves the hospital within weeks, whereas the patient in despair requires assistance. Present-day India exemplifies this self-assurance, which stands as our greatest asset.

You recently celebrated our victory in the T-20 World Cup. The tale of triumph in the World Cup reflects a journey of resilience. Today's youth in India refuses to accept defeat until the final ball, embodying the spirit where victory crowns those unwilling to yield. This attitude resonates not only in cricket but across all sports.

Friends, During the elections, I often remarked that the development achieved by India in the past decade is merely a trailer. The next decade promises even faster growth. From semiconductors to electronics manufacturing, green hydrogen to electric vehicles, and world-class infrastructure, India's accelerated pace will script a new chapter in global development. Currently, India contributes 15% to global economic growth, a figure set to increase significantly in the years ahead. India will also lead the charge on global poverty and climate change challenges.

[Excerpts from PM Shri Narendra Modi's address to the Indian community in Moscow on July 9, 2024]

Greetings to the Government and People of India on the occasion of 78th Independence Day



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'Vishwa Bandhu': How India is making friends and influencing the world

-by EAM, Dr. S. Jaishankar



one crucial facet will be the international environment and its ability to throw up both opportunities and challenges for Viksit Bharat.

Ideally, countries formulate their foreign policy as best leveraging the world with a view to promote their national development. The targets are often increasing access to resources, markets, technologies and best practices. Those who have posted impressive growth performance in the last many decades are the ones who have clarity in this regard. In our case, that focus has been sharp since 2014, but for ideological reasons, was more diffused in the first four decades of our Independence. Swayed by imported prescriptions, we sometimes subordinated our own goals to the benefit of others. The big change now is a strong sense of “Bharat First”, where we have both the confidence to think through the pathway and using our national interest as the primary metric of judgement. This has encouraged us to pursue a multi-vector diplomacy that would maximise our partners and minimise our problems. Where we have to take a stand, we do not hesitate or come under pressure. At the same time, there is a constant assertion of our relevance. This is Vishwa Bandhu Bharat.

If India is to emerge as a leading power, it must develop deep national

strengths. Much of that will emanate from expanding manufacturing as that serves as the foundation for technology. To overcome the neglect of the past, it is essential that we plan to leapfrog, especially in regard to critical and emerging technologies. This is best achieved through strong international collaboration built on trust and comfort. In a polarised and suspicious world, those doors can only be opened by effective diplomacy. The international economy is right now in the midst of rebuilding its supply chains and ensuring more reliable manufacturing. This is most starkly evident in competitive domains like semiconductors, electric mobility and green technologies. It is only a Vishwa Bandhu that can ensure that India is fully embedded in these networks.

In the post-Covid world, all significant nations are in the quest for strategic autonomy. Even the most developed are concerned about the hollowing out of their capabilities and dependence on over-concentration elsewhere. In a world where everything is being weaponised, India too has to ensure that its basic needs and critical infrastructure are nationally developed. That is why ‘Make in India’ is so vital, not just for our economy but even for national security. As we are already seeing in challenging domains like defence, it can open up possibilities of exports as well. India is also today increasingly positioned to emerge as one of the global hubs of research, design and innovation. It is only by a more intensive engagement with international partners that we can hasten our journey towards Viksit Bharat.

The growing realisation of the value of Indian skills and talent is also one of the welcome realities of our times. It is

enhanced by the premium put on trust and transparency in the digital domain. Drastic demographic changes in the world are also creating new demands in various professions. Taking advantage of such prospects requires massively expanding our own education and training capacities. But they can be best harnessed only when our partners fully appreciate their compatibility with Indian values and practices. And when we can credibly assure our own citizens of their security, wherever they may be. Ensuring these today is a major goal for India's foreign policy. We have already seen the conclusion, recently, of mobility agreements with European nations, Australia, Japan and others. The creation of a global workplace for Indians will not only widen personal opportunities but contribute to broader national capacities.

The era of conflict and climate change that we have entered has powerful implications for connectivity. Just as supply chains are seeking to become more resilient and redundant, so too are logistics. We have witnessed the consequences of tension in the Red Sea or the blocking of the Suez Canal. De-risking is only possible when enough countries come together for their shared enterprise to become serious. Interestingly, many of the recent endeavours are focused on India. The IMEC corridor connects us to Europe and the Atlantic through the Arabian Peninsula. The INSTC one traverses Iran and Russia with the same objective. To our East, the Trilateral Highway can take us all the way to the Pacific.

The same logic applies to ensuring security and political balances in a changing world as well. Whether it is Quad or BRICS, I2U2, SCO or East Asia Summit, India's interests have been at the core of its calculations. These initiatives involve a range of partners, often at odds with each other. It requires a Vishwa Bandhu to carry them all.

The pathway to reaching the goal of Viksit Bharat in the next 25 years will have many requirements. To begin with, it needs a vision for the nation and equally, the ability to deliver it on the ground. We can develop confidence in that through sustaining a track record. Steady advancement and continuing reform are also possible only in a climate of political stability. That alone would enable policy prescriptions of a long-term nature to be conceptualised and implemented. But



Independence Day Greetings to the People and the Government of India

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All Roads Lead to India



Mr. Anand Mahindra
Chairman, Mahindra Group



The goal of achieving international respect resonates today. Obtaining a seat at the global high table for India is a major priority for the Prime Minister and the Ministry of External Affairs as well.

What is that thing or those things that create global influence or antarrashtriya samman?

Can we create a three-pronged approach – combining military power, economic power and soft power - that is uniquely Indian and will earn us antarrashtriya samman or international respect?

From his actions, it's clear that Prime Minister Modi has understood the importance of all three prongs and he's working feverishly on all fronts. Viksit Bharat founded or Atmanirbharta is central to the prime minister's vision of a successful and prosperous India on the global stage.

And let's take military power to begin with. The development of the military industrial complex in America was the pivotal factor in building the might of its armed forces. Similarly, there is a huge opportunity for an Indian version of a military industrial partnership to emerge.

We welcome the lists of defense hardware that have been put out by the defense ministry and which ensure that

certain products can only be sourced from Indian supplies. A step that speaks of confidence in Indian industry. And that's a promise we will fulfill.

I hope to see a flood of innovation in the next few years, particularly from the IT sector. Innovative Indian companies are going to have a vital role to play. And India has one historical advantage that attracts companies like mine.

It makes me very proud that in spite of having the fourth largest military budget in the world, independent India has never fought a major war of aggression. Even in international conflicts, we've always been part of the UN peacekeeping forces. And that tradition of using military might only for defense and deterrence, that's what earns us the moral high ground. That's the moral high ground combined with military strength, which earns us respect and which will continue to do so.

What about the role of business in soft power? India hasn't done badly when it comes to culture. Our films are enjoyed across the world in countries as far apart as Egypt and Japan. American college

students formed Bhangra clubs. Indian music has influenced world music from Jazz to the Beatles. And going out for Indian is now a weekly mealtime call for many around the world. RRR, as we all know, was able to get the world dancing to its tune.

But I think we need to imagine things on a much larger scale. The superheroes of our epic and folktales are more than a match for the Marvel universe. But even superheroes need help. We need larger scale corporations in media which can digest the upfront financial risk required to turn this heritage into new IP and content.

On the education front, under Prime Minister Modi, the proliferation of new IITs, IIMs and AIIMS has been mind boggling. But if innovation is to flourish, we need the private sector to chip in and double or even triple that number. Autonomous institutions endowed, nurtured, and supported by the wealth of Indian corporations could make India a driving force of soft power.

And now to the third prong, let's talk about economic power and influence.

How does business emulate the prowess and the scale and global dominance of American companies? And as I said, it's ironic that some of the most notable American transnationals and new age businesses are headed by CEOs of Indian origin, Satya Nadella, Revathi Advaiti, Sundar Pichai and the list goes on and on. But they are enabling the continuing dominance of US businesses, not the creation of Indian ones. And in order to gain global influence, very large Indian corporations or very innovative Indian corporations must find a seat at the high table.

I believe there are two important preconditions for Indian industry to get a seat at the global high table. And that has nothing to do with the government or anyone else they're about to do, they're about our mindset. There are two things we need to make it big, lofty aspirations and strong self-belief. And I claim that we were robbed by the shackles of our colonial past of both those attributes.

To my mind, the real cost of colonialism is what I called post-colonial subservience disorder, or to coin an acronym PCSD. The most prestigious legacy for them and but the most pernicious for us was the colonization of our minds, impeding us from believing that India could be the best. Please do indulge me as I go into some flashbacks and share some personal memories of PCSD.

I went to a high school in South India from where I gave the Indian school certificate examination in 1970. Until 1970 all the examination papers save for Indian languages were set in England and shipped to us from there. They were placed in a very large iron safe and it was locked. After the allotted time was up, our answer papers were collected. They were placed back in that safe for onward shipment to England for correction. And it's almost inconceivable to imagine that this was happening even 23 years after independence.

The second assault of colonialism on our psyche was on our aspirations. We were fed the story that we were second grade. And as a result, even today, much of Indian business tends to stick to the safety of the shore. Prime Minister Modi fully understands this. When I met

him almost two years ago, the PM was extraordinarily frank in his response. He said Indian industry is not ambitious enough. We aren't daring to think at a global scale.

His words were undoubtedly accurate.

The private sector is lagging when it comes to risk and investment. PCSD, post-colonial subservience disorder shackles us with invisible handcuffs that we don't even realize are there. It shakes our self-belief. It waters down our aspirations and it business, it makes us risk averse, sticking to the tried and true rather than blazing new paths. It makes us fear failure.

It makes us settle for jugaad when we are capable of Jhakaas. Jhakaas is a Maharashtrian colloquial word, which means wow. For too long have we carried this imputed sense of inferiority? It's time to change.

I have no doubt that we have the capability to harness our innovative capabilities to build truly transnational corporations and take our place at that global high table. All we have to lose is our shackles.

I told the story of my school, but I didn't share the ending of that story. I saved the best for last. The story of Indian examination answer papers being sent to England for correction. And I first told that story to an audience of Indian entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley over a decade ago. And very coincidentally in the audience was a schoolmate of mine, someone from the same batch who had given the same exam at the same time. Six months later, he mailed me jubilantly, mailed me a news article from a UK newspaper. And in that article it was announced that the AQA, which is an autonomous body that sets and assesses over 50% of school leaving answer papers in England, was now outsourcing the correction of those answer papers to India.

The tables indeed had turned.

Ladies and gentlemen, it appears that today all roads lead to India!

[Excerpts from Address by Mr. Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group at the fourth Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture]

*A Celebration of
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Best wishes to the
People of India on the occasion of
their 78th Independence Day.

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Happy
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Day**
August 15



India Sails to Global Maritime Prominence

Looking at diverse aspects of India’s Maritime vision set to pivot its rise globally

- Daniel Stein



At the Global Maritime India Summit in Mumbai, in October 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a visionary blueprint for India’s blue economy. This comprehensive strategy, aligned with the development of the India Middle-East

Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), could create a viable alternative to the Suez Canal and improve the global trade ecosystem. And years ago, a blockade in the Suez Canal disrupted global trade for weeks, highlighting the critical need for a robust

port system and alternative maritime routes to reduce reliance on the precarious Suez Canal, ensuring India and other nations have safer, more dependable trade channels. This initiative comes timely amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and neighbouring

sea regions and the urgent need for resilient trade channels.

The work on this blueprint and the IMEEC corridor will remove a lot of friction in trade and transportation between India, the Middle East, and Europe. The complexity of the economic aspect of maritime trade arises from the recognition that even though India’s production is high, a significant part of it needs to go towards supporting the Indian population and economy. Therefore, as a rising exporting nation, India must identify which products it can export without affecting its domestic supply. Ports’ infrastructure and shortening routes will streamline transportation processes, especially for food products. However, as a rising exporter, India will need to find an economical balance between keeping enough stock of goods for itself and exporting.

A notable aspect of the blueprint is its commitment to sustainability. Much like for the electric vehicle transition, charging stations need to be developed simultaneously with the rolling out of electric vehicles, for creating sustainable maritime infrastructure, a support system for transitioning ships needs to be developed in conjunction with the development of these ports. Since the International Maritime Organisation has been working on ensuring that each port has appropriate support systems for ships, India, looking to expand its role in the international shipping space, could look to IMO.

A bigger challenge for India would be transforming hundreds of thousands of smaller fishing vessels. For good reasons, economic and social, fishers receive subsidies on the diesel required to run their fishing vessels which provides them with food and livelihood. Scaling up initiatives like Kerala’s programme to outfit older fishing vessels with newer engines that were sustainable alternatives could be a good starting point. Upgrading small fishing vessels, right from small coastal communities, is required and it will pay off significant environmental dividends for India.

Having lived in Delhi, I have observed that a large Indian population lives in landlocked areas. Relying solely on the ports of Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta, and Vishakhapatnam is no longer a feasible option for advancing Indian cities like Delhi, Gurgaon, and Noida, and states like Uttar Pradesh that are far from these ports. The Gujarat port can be a potential solution. Connecting Haryana, UP, Delhi manufacturing, and production industry with Gujarat instead of the further port of Calcutta could be a huge benefit. The development of a deep draft all-weather terminal at the Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat will increase its capacity to become an international gateway for North India’s industrial capacity. Utilising a town’s potential and willingness to build will help India become an economy dealing with foreign products and foreign markets, and it would also take a lot of pressure off Indian metro cities. The Indian government’s plan to create the development around trade and ports is a smart bet.

The inclusion of inland water transportation can significantly shape a new and exciting maritime commerce in India. It could also help to get trucks off the roads, reducing carbon emissions, and improving road safety and traffic. The Rhine River in Europe is a good example of how river transportation

can bring prosperity to cities. Many cities across the world that are located along rivers have increased their capacity through river-based industries, trade, and transport. If India can ensure minimal emissions while moving up and down its extensive inland waterways system, it can have a big impact on traffic and emission numbers. Even if India can develop its inland waterways from 6 to 12% by 2047, as mentioned in the blueprint, it will make a significant impact on the domestic transport system.

Until the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, shipbreaking and shipbuilding were essentially the same process. However, when they were decoupled, it became possible to do shipbreaking at a cheaper rate in India and other South Asian nations. Gujarat already has 12 kilometres of shipbreaking yards and is planning to expand it.

Since the shipbreaking ports in India already have the engineering capacity to deal with the ships and their parts, they could very well repurpose parts from shipbreaking for shipbuilding, as was done earlier. When a ship’s life ends at 30, 40, or 50 years, many materials, like steel, could be repurposed to build a new ship, as they do not go bad. By building on the already present resources and space, India has the potential to become one of the top five nations in shipbuilding.

As an environmentalist, my primary concern for ocean security lies in the issue of overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. When foreign fleets come into the Indian Ocean and engage in activities such as overfishing, lying about their catch, and performing transshipments, it becomes a national security concern. This problem largely went unnoticed until a Chinese ship got caught in a storm and had to dock at an Indian port, which opened India’s eyes to this rising issue. In recent years, India has partnered with the Navies of the United States and Australia to reduce IUU fishing. Addressing this problem helps to maintain a healthy ocean ecosystem, which is beneficial not just for the environment but also for the fishers of resident nations. A High Seas Treaty has been ratified and is currently waiting for enough signatures to come into force. It will establish rules and regulations around economic and research activities on the high seas, which will transform the way we use the ocean and be critical in preserving the ocean’s ecosystem and its resources for future generations.

India has taken an active role in maritime national security, particularly in defence over the last decade. At the G20 summit hosted by India in 2023, the nation prioritised becoming a leader for the global south and seeking collaboration with Eastern African countries and smaller Pacific island nations to enhance maritime security. India’s foreign policies and geography make it a crucial part of the Indian Ocean region. India’s ability to offer capacity building for other nations in the region, its first-hand understanding of the area’s concerns, and the trust it receives from other nations has positioned it well to lead and transform maritime security in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific.

Daniel Stein is an Assistant Professor at O.P. Jindal Global University and a Maritime Law expert.

Ambassador’s Message

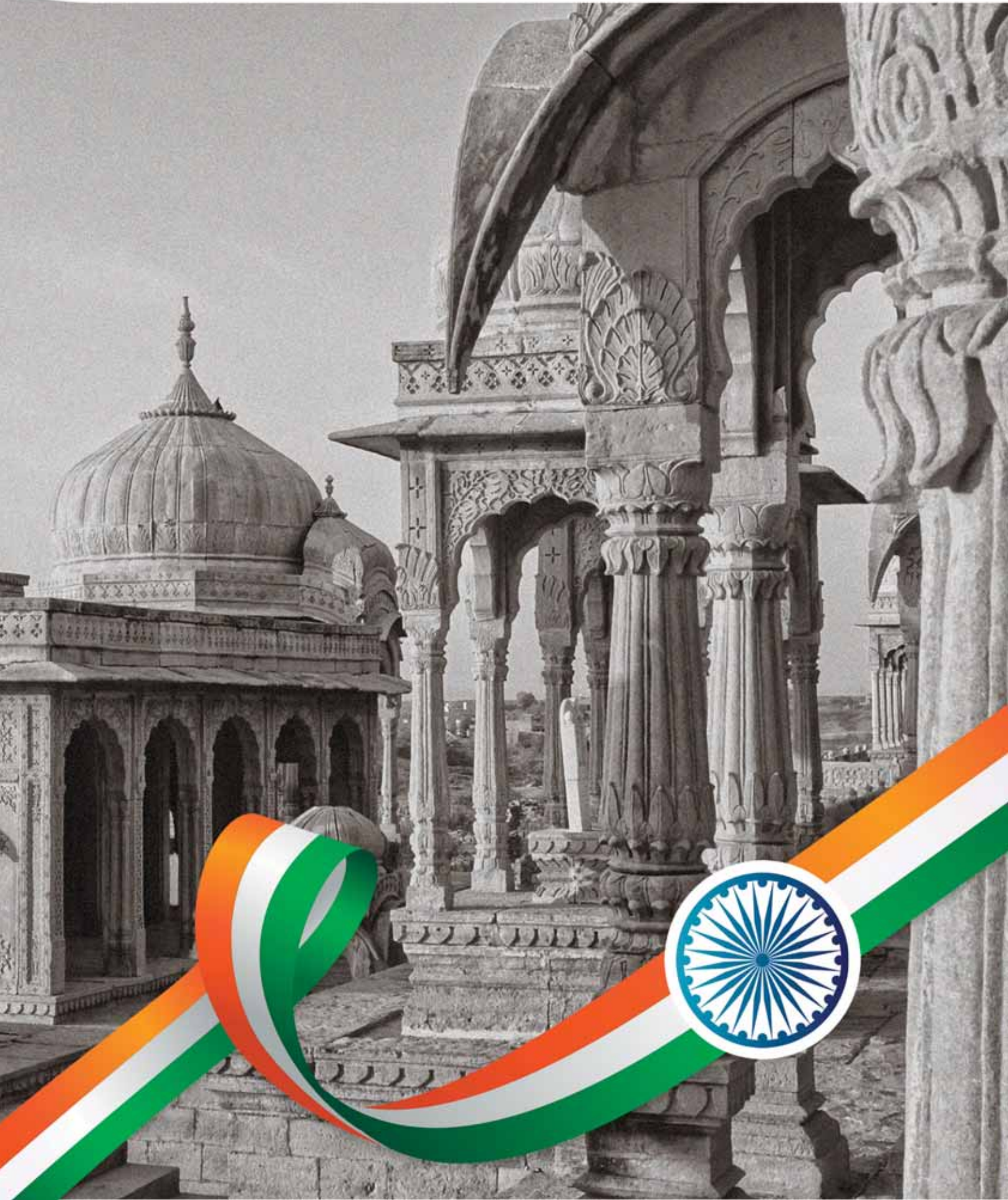
From P1 At the heart of this robust relationship are the centuries old people-to-people ties. The Indian community in Oman, known for its law-abiding and peaceful nature, has contributed significantly to Oman’s development and continues to be a living bridge between our two great nations. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his unwavering support and care for the large Indian diaspora in Oman.

As we look ahead, the future of India-Oman relations appears even more promising. Our shared vision and collaborative efforts

will continue to drive growth, innovation, and prosperity for our people. We anticipate a future where our partnership will contribute significantly to regional stability and global progress. Let us continue to work together to build a brighter, more inclusive, and prosperous future for all.

I take this opportunity to wish, on behalf of the Government and people of India, greetings and best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the kind people of Oman for continued peace, progress and prosperity.

Jai Hind!





Nalanda: Revival of the Earliest-known University



Prof. Benoy K Behl
Art Historian, Filmmaker
and Photographer

The honourable Prime Minister of India inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University, an international university, close to the site of the ancient ruins of Nalanda, in Bihar, on the 19th of June, 2024.

The modern Nalanda University was established as an “international institution for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical and spiritual studies”. The impetus to setting up this institution came under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, when a major push was given from 2014 onwards, to establishing the University as an international center of learning and scholarship, reminding the world of the 21st century of the eminence of ancient Nalanda.

This international university, apart from India, has participation of 17 other nations: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Mauritius,

Myanmar, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

The University has 137 scholarships for international students. It offers Post Graduate and Doctoral research courses and short-term certificate courses. It has 6 schools, the School of Buddhist Studies, Philosophy & Comparative Religions; the School of Historical Studies; the School of Ecology and Environmental Studies; the School of Sustainable Development and Management; the School of Languages and Literature; and the School of International Relations and Peace Studies which is yet to commence.

A Library with a capacity to hold 3,00,000 Books and serving up to 3000 users is scheduled to be completed by September 2024. This would be in keeping with the glorious tradition of the original Nalanda University.

An ancient seat of learning

The first known, great university of the world, Nalanda was at the apex of a consortium of universities which developed in ancient and early medieval times in South and South East Asia. It was from these ancient universities that concepts of rigorous and logical study finally spread to other parts of the world, leading to the founding of universities in Europe. The consortium of universities with Nalanda at its apex, included: Vikramshila, Odantapuri, Somavihara Paharpur, Sumatra Indonesia, Takshashila, Palkh (now in Afghanistan).

Nalanda was the earliest-known University in the world and this was the first consortium.

It is quite amazing to see that such study and sharing of universal knowledge took place in the First Millennium.

At the ancient university of Nalanda, there was a spirit of vibrant intellectual thought, a climate of discussion and debate. The many ‘acharyas’, or learned professors, at Nalanda authored hundreds of works on philosophy, metaphysics, psychology, logic, medicine, astrology, arts, literature and other subjects.

The study at Nalanda was of life itself and what is reality. It was based not upon faith but on unshakable logic and pursuit of the truth. The study was of our minds, our perceptions and what is knowledge itself. The intellectuals here analysed the qualities which

led to Enlightenment through knowledge and sought to create a logical path which could lead us to true and lasting awareness. A path which would work for all.

Nalanda was visited by the Buddha himself. In the 3rd century BCE, Emperor Ashoka is believed to have made offerings to the chaitya of Sariputra and erected a temple here. However, the origins of the university itself are obscured in the mists of time. The medieval Tibetan historian Taranatha mentions that the great Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna who was born in the middle of the 2nd century CE taught here.

Excavations at the Nalanda site have revealed numerous stupas, monasteries, hostels, staircases, meditation halls and

other structures. These speak of the splendour of the university which was also famed for its three magnificent libraries.

The Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang of the 7th century writes that, of the myriad Buddhist establishments of India, Nalanda “is the most remarkable for its grandeur”. The priests and other residents “always reach to the number of ten thousand”.

Another Chinese traveller I-Tsing travelled in India at the end of the 7th century. He reported that in these monasteries Buddhist sutras were taught as well as Sanskrit grammar, Indian Logic and Metaphysics, fine arts and medicine.

There was a rigorous oral entry examination and only the best

students were given admission. It was a residential university where the staff and students had free board and lodging. No tuition fees were charged. Xuanzang records that there were students here from Tibet, China, Korea, Japan, Sumatra, Java and Sri Lanka. It was truly an international university.

The Government of India is making a notable effort to revive the real legacy of Nalanda, so that people can see the value of this tradition and how it enriches the tapestry of global knowledge. What is more, the comparative study of the Nalanda tradition and modern science can definitely uplift our civilisation. This ancient tradition is a science of life which can help us so much.



**Greetings to the Government
& People of India
on the Occasion of the 78th Independence Day**





Bharat on the Move: A Decade of Change and Progress

- Dhruv C. Katoch

Has Bharat changed in the last ten years? Many would view the question as rhetorical, as Bharat has not only changed in a myriad of ways over the last decade, but the extent of change has been colossal. Let us examine the changes that have taken place in a few select sectors.

Over the last decade, Bharat's economy has seen tremendous growth, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which adversely impacted Bharat and the world during the two-year period from 2019 to 2021. According to the

World GDP Ranking 2024 list, Bharat, with a GDP of USD 4.1 trillion, is now the fifth largest economy in the world, up from the tenth position in 2014, where Bharat's GDP stood at USD 2.04 trillion. The inflation rate was also kept in check for the 2014-2024 decade, with inflation below 5 percent for most of the period. The per capita income also saw a significant rise from USD 1560 in 2014 to USD 2847 in 2024, an increase of 82.5 percent. This, in conjunction with low inflation rates, has substantially raised the

standard of living of a vast segment of the population.

Defence preparedness is yet another success story. While Bharat is still heavily dependent on imports for a variety of upper-end defence equipment and is at present the largest arms importer in the world, concerted efforts have been made over the last decade to increase indigenous defence production and reduce dependence on imports through initiatives like the "Make in India" campaign and reforms in defence procurement policies. There is





HAPPY INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

On the joyous occasion of Indian Independence Day, we extend our gratitude to the visionary leaders who played a pivotal role in fostering a sense of friendship, unity, and prosperity among us.

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also a renewed focus on defence exports, which have touched USD 2.63 billion in the financial year 2023-2024. This represents a 32 percent increase over the previous year and is set to further increase in the coming years. The private sector is also contributing to Bharat's growth story in the defence sector, and in conjunction with the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), is playing a crucial role in modernising and strengthening India's defence capabilities. The last decade has also seen increased focus on the creation of defence infrastructure on India's Northern and Eastern borders, with a large number of projects being completed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). Among these are the Sela Tunnel, constructed at an altitude of 13,000 feet; the Darbuk-Shyok-DBO Road, an all-weather strategic road in eastern Ladakh right up to the border; and the construction of the Zojila Tunnel at an altitude of 11,500 feet, which is part of the broader effort to improve connectivity to the border and correct the infrastructure imbalance with China.

Bharat's foreign policy has also become more assertive, with a heightened focus on the country's national interest, as seen by its stance on the Ukraine war, the Hamas-Israeli conflict, and its engagement in strategic partnerships with various countries, including the United States, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN. These partnerships are aimed at enhancing Bharat's strategic and economic interests and promoting stability in the region.

A feature of Bharat's nuanced change in its foreign policy is the role it seeks for itself on the global stage. This includes seeking membership in international forums such as the United Nations Security Council and actively participating in global initiatives on climate change, peacekeeping, and other issues.

Another visible change in foreign policy is Bharat's engagement with its diaspora, which it views as a strategic asset, contributing to economic growth, cultural exchange, and fostering closer ties with countries around the world. This has contributed greatly to India's soft power and enhanced its image in the world, where Bharat is increasingly being viewed as the voice of the Global South.

Significant progress in the last decade has also been made in reforming the education sector, imparting skills to the population, digitalisation, focusing on upper-end technology, food and energy security, and also in many other fields.

But perhaps the most profound change that has occurred is a mindset change that has imbued a new-found confidence and spirit among all sections and strata of society. This self-view of increasingly large segments of the population, as well as of their role in society and in nation-building, is reflected in a burgeoning start-up ecosystem, fuelled by a growing entrepreneurial spirit, supportive government policies, and increased venture capital investment. Young Bharatiyas are increasingly willing to take risks, innovate, and pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

There is a growing realisation, especially among the youth, that while the role of the government as a facilitator is essential for their economic progress and well being, it is their effort and struggle that will ultimately bear fruit. There is also an attitudinal change, where the people of Bharat are becoming increasingly conscious of their culture and heritage and are now proudly attached to their roots.

Bharat is today on the march, walking confidently on its unstoppable path to progress.

[Maj. Gen. Dhruv C. Katoch is Editor, India Foundation Journal and Director, India Foundation.



The Dawn of India's Semiconductor Era

By Sitakanta Mishra and Nisarg Jani

India is not a passive onlooker in the unfolding global geopolitics of semiconductor production. As both one of the largest markets for electronics and a major source of technical talent, India has the advantage of being a predominant player in the global technology drive.

Realizing the economic potential and geostrategic importance of the technology over the decades to come, India has embarked on a quest to build a robust semiconductor ecosystem. Drawing lessons from the upheaval in the global semiconductor value chain during the COVID-19 pandemic, India in the post-pandemic phase is venturing into the entire ecosystem – research and development, fabless chipmaking, design, and fabrication along with equipment supply, besides incubating a talent pool – rather than just focusing on a single aspect of the industry.

Since 2021, with the unveiling of the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) along with the provision of unprecedented subsidies and a conducive business environment to the major industrial players, the Indian semiconductor era seems to have dawned. India is likely to establish itself as a reliable supply chain hub, taking advantage of geopolitical turbulence between major powers.

The semiconductor value chain – including the design,

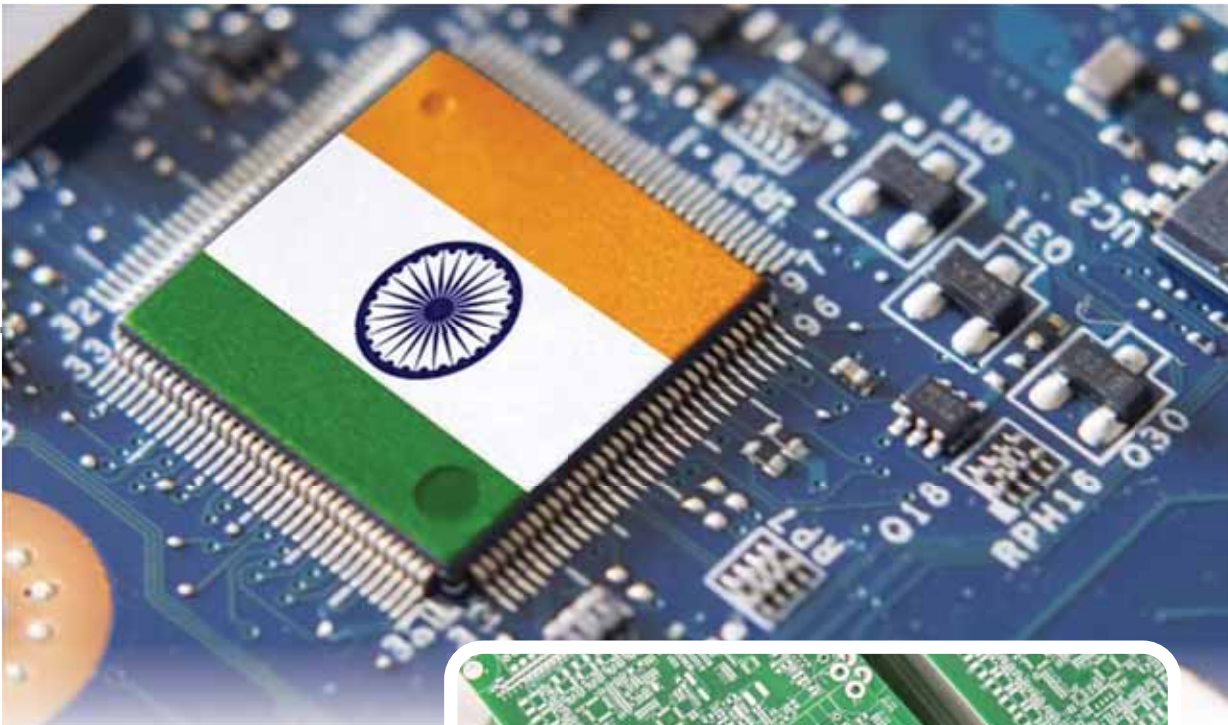
manufacturing, and sale of final products – is a complex global network, traditionally concentrated in the United States, its allies (South Korea, the Netherlands, Japan, and Taiwan), and China. Owing to pandemic-related disruptions and subsequent rise in labor costs, most global producers decided to diversify supply chains away from China, at least in part. In addition, the geopolitical uncertainties involving the China-U.S. trade war, followed by the Biden administration's de-risking measures, have compelled companies to seek alternative production bases or sourcing locations outside China.

Amid this relocation in the industry, India and Southeast Asian nations like Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia have been preferred for back-end assembly and testing operations, with new promises of front-end manufacturing in the future. India's entry into this ecosystem is not only timely but also strategically important for diversifying the global supply chain. In the technology sector, companies prioritize political stability as well as a large domestic market for greenfield expansion projects. Consequently, India's relatively stable political environment and huge domestic demand make it an attractive destination for strategic semiconductor manufacturing.

The ISM policy framework has

been instrumental in attracting companies and investments for chip assembly and fabrication. The central government's offer of 50 percent capital support to new entrants in the fields of compound semiconductors, fabrication, assembly, outsourced semiconductor assembly and test, and photonics, coupled with additional incentives for setting up peripheral infrastructure within industrial clusters, has spurred significant global interest. Gujarat has become the first state to complement this initiative by providing an extra 25 percent capital expenditure support, further enhancing the attractiveness of India's semiconductor policy landscape.

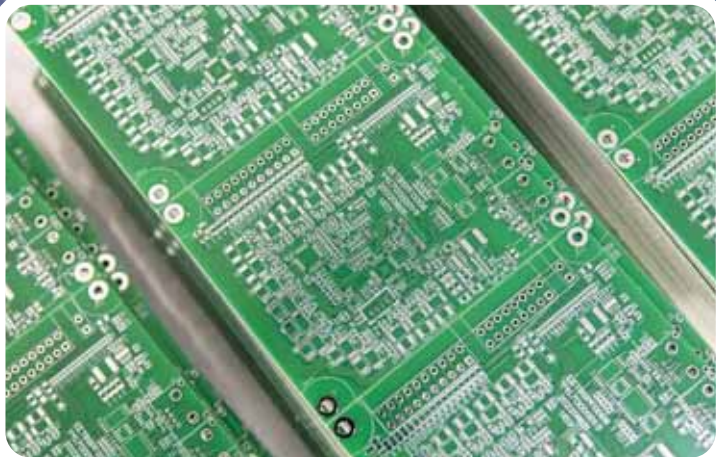
Recent cabinet approvals have paved the way for major developments in the sector. Tata Electronics Private Limited, in partnership with Taiwan's PowerChip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC), received approval for a greenfield venture. This collaboration marks PSMC's fourth 12-inch fabrication plant, focusing on manufacturing the 28-nanometre chips used in power management integrated circuits, display drivers, microcontrollers, and high-performance computing logic. The initial goal is to manufacture 50,000 wafers per month, with the first chips to begin coming off the production line in 2026, according to PSMC chair Frank Huang.



Huang called the project “the beginning of India’s serious acceleration in the manufacturing and chip space.” He added, “Semiconductors are an expensive business and once you have one fab, you can get two and three. That’s the future that India can look to.”

At the same time, CG Power, Renesas Electronics Corporation and Stars Microelectronics will be setting up an assembly, testing, marking, and packaging unit with a greenfield investment of 76 billion rupees (\$917 million). The chips assembled – up to 15 million per day – will be used for consumer, industrial, automotive, and power applications.

In addition, Micron was the first chipmaker to establish an assembly facility in Sanand, Gujarat, for its NAND and DRAM chips. By the end of 2024 the company has promised to manufacture the first “Made in India” memory chips. Meanwhile, Samsung Semiconductors India Research has announced the



expansion of its existing base in India.

These developments reflect the growing confidence in India's semiconductor program and plans. Moreover, partnerships with Cadence and Synopsys, two major electronic design automation (EDA) toolmakers, have been established under the Design Linked Incentive scheme for fabless startups to provide access to proprietary software for Centers of Excellence and universities in India. This initiative aims to enhance the training of design engineers and bolster the talent pool in the semiconductor industry.

Keeping in mind all these initiatives and future plans, within a decade we can expect India to be a hub of the global semiconductor ecosystem. Currently, India's semiconductor ecosystem is on an upward trajectory, bolstered by strategic government policies, international partnerships, and a focus on talent development. These concerted efforts will make India a reliable and strategic player in the global semiconductor industry.

15 August Happy Independence Day

Greetings to the Government and People of India on the occasion of 78th Independence Day

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