



AZADI KA AMRIT KAAL: TOWARDS A NEW INDIA

The Golden Era Begins

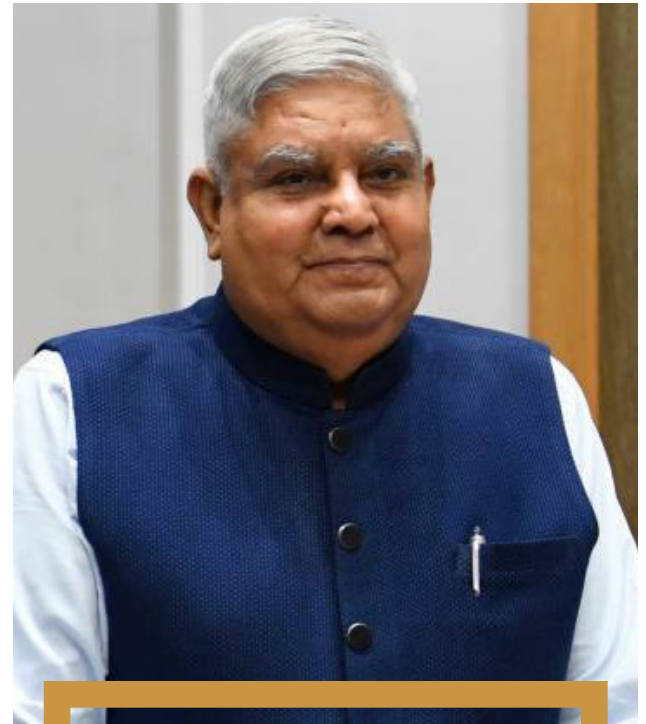
IN THE 76TH YEAR OF ITS INDEPENDENCE, INDIA STANDS PROUDLY AS THE FIFTH BIGGEST ECONOMY OF THE WORLD AND THE MOST PROMISING ECONOMY SET TO GROW FOR YEARS. THE COUNTRY THAT ACCOUNTED FOR ABOUT A QUARTER OF THE GLOBAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN THE 18TH CENTURY HAS BECOME ONE OF THE DRIVERS OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE 21ST CENTURY, UNDERLINING THE IMMENSE POTENTIAL IT HOLDS. THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA, SHRI NARENDRA MODI ENVISIONS THE NEXT 25 CRUCIAL YEARS – TILL THE 100 YEARS OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE FROM THE COLONIAL RULE – TO BE A GOLDEN PERIOD OF INDIA'S GROWTH, AND WHEN IT SHOULD AIM TO BECOME A DEVELOPED NATION. HE HAS NAMED THIS PERIOD AMRIT KAAL, A TERM FROM VEDIC ASTROLOGY THAT DESCRIBES THE CRITICAL TIME SLOT AVAILABLE TO ALL FOR ACHIEVING THE HIGHEST HUMAN POTENTIAL. TO PRIME MINISTER MODI, THIS ERA OF GROWTH NOT ONLY PROMISES INNUMERABLE OPPORTUNITIES OF DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT TO 1.3 BILLION INDIANS, BUT ALSO TO EVERY HUMAN WORLDWIDE

BY JYOTI VERMA AND RICHA SANG

The Prime Minister, in his address on India's 75th Independence Day on August 15, 2021, unveiled a national blueprint for Amrit Kaal. The plan focuses on limited State interference in the everyday life of citizens; empowering small farmers and rural economy; energy independence with programmes such as National Hydrogen Mission; a boost to manufacturing, technology, infrastructure and start-ups; employment generation for the youth with a Rs.100 lakh crore PM GatiShakti National Master Plan; equality for women and vulnerable sections of society; and balanced local development with a focus on Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and the Northeast.

Shri Narendra Modi believes that all of the said objectives are possible with citizens' resolve and strength with which the country accomplished freedom in 1947, and crossed the milestones of becoming open defecation free and accomplishing 200 crore COVID-19 vaccinations in recent years. In the third article in our series on India's glorious 75 years of independence, we move on from Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to enter the Amrit Kaal – ushering in of a new era of prosperity and equity by lowering social barriers and transforming lives with knowledge, competence, technology, inclusion, infrastructure and sustainability. With the first year of the Amrit Kaal also being the time when India stands as the only economic oasis amid global slowdown, year 2023 is when the world will observe the key moves of the country and tap the many opportunities these moves open for the nations across the globe

"IN RECENT DAYS, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY HAS SUCCESSFULLY ADVANCED INDIA'S FOOD SAFETY NET TO 800 MILLION INDIANS. MORE THAN \$300 BILLION OF BENEFITS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED DIGITALLY; 400 MILLION PEOPLE GET FOOD REGULARLY"



SHRI JAGDEEP DHANKHAR,
VICE PRESIDENT
OF INDIA

"A few months back our country completed 75 years of Independence and entered the Amrit Kaal, the period of golden centenary of Independence and making of a developed India. In the last nine years of the government's term, people witnessed many positive changes. The country is on the rise, and it is when the citizens, especially the youth should rightfully take pride in its technological achievements, economic development and welfare initiatives. They should practise and follow Fundamental Duties, while exercising their Fundamental Rights. India has become the fifth largest economy, and will be the third largest economy before the end of the decade. India looks up to its citizens, depends on them and wants them to become the catalyst of change in the journey towards a developed India"

An incredible story of human civilisation, growth, and potential for centuries, India, in the 18th century, accounted for about a quarter of the global GDP. It took India 60 years since its Independence to become a one trillion-dollar economy, but the country added the next trillion dollars in seven years only. The third trillion was added in the next five years in 2019. The growing momentum could help India add on average \$1 trillion to its economy every two years for the next 14-15 years. According to a report by British consultancy, Centre for Economics and Business Research, India will become a \$10 trillion economy by 2035.

However, the glorious journey of India cannot only be mapped in trillions of dollars. It must be mapped in terms of lives impacted and empowered during this journey. The country's development rests on an expansive digital public infrastructure designed to promote that no one is left behind. From the success of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana – which completed eight years in 2022 and made a material difference to financial inclusion, from covering 17.9 crore households in August 2015 to 46.25 crore households in August 2022 – to the recent COVID-19 vaccinations, India has proved that technology can not only be a stabilising factor in a changing world, but also a great equaliser.

“In recent days, digital technology has successfully advanced India's food safety net to 800 million Indians. More than \$300 billion of benefits have been distributed digitally; 400 million people get food regularly; and the country has administered over 2 billion vaccinations,” shared Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in his speech at India@75 Showcasing India-UN Partnership in Action in New York on September 24, 2022.

With landmarks like these, India aims to move ahead on a journey of transformation not only for its people and economy, but for the whole world. By 2047, the country dreams of digitising its remotest villages and landing on the moon, perhaps even digitising it, added the External Affairs Minister.

PANCH PRAN

In his 76th Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister spelt out the five pledges for Amrit Kaal. Called *Panch Pran*, these are a resolution for *Viksit Bharat* (Developed India). The goals are to accomplish the dream of Developed India, remove any trace of colonial mindset, take pride in our legacy, stay united, and fulfill the duties of citizens.

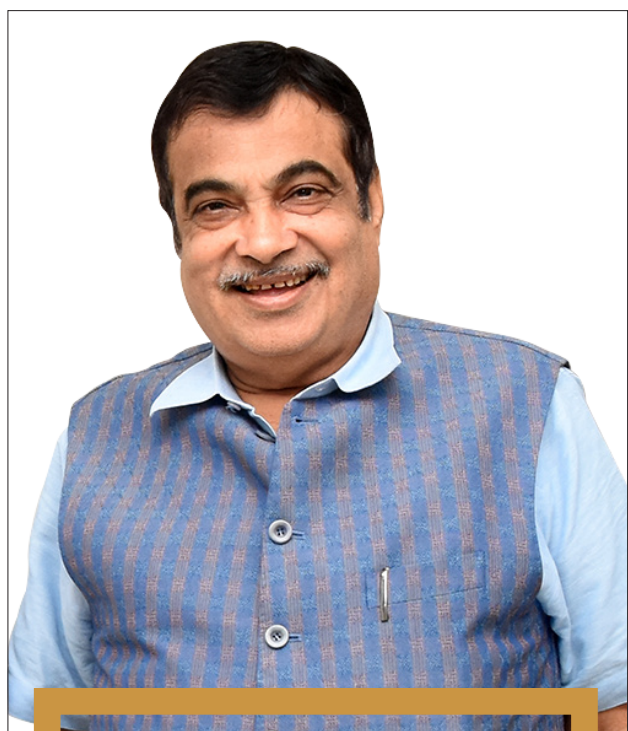
Primarily, the Government of India plans to improve the lives of Indian citizens, lessen the rural-urban divide, reduce its interference in people's lives, and welcome the latest technologies in the run up to 2047. Delivering the first budget of the Amrit Kaal, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1, 2023, shared the seven guiding priorities for the government during the period. Named *Saptarishi*, the seven priorities — inclusive development, reaching the last mile, infrastructure and investment, unleashing the potential, green growth, youth power, and financial sector — complement each other, she said.

The Union Finance Minister highlighted that the Centre's vision for the Amrit Kaal includes a technology-driven and knowledge-based economy with strong public finances and a robust financial sector, and to achieve this, *Jan Bhagidari* (people's participation) through *Sabka Saath Sabka Prayas* is essential. The economic agenda for achieving this vision would focus on three priorities: facilitating ample opportunities for citizens, especially the youth, to fulfil their aspirations; providing strong impetus to growth and job creation; and strengthening macro-economic stability.

JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

The first objective of Amrit Kaal is to build a self-reliant India. The Government plans to focus on optimum utilisation of India's capacity resources to serve more at home and globally, and achieve self-sufficiency in every sector.

The Centre has been driving the idea of Make in India since 2014. The scheme is an open invitation to potential investors and partners across the globe to participate in the growth story of 'New India'. The scheme, in



SHRI NITIN GADKARI,
UNION MINISTER OF ROAD
TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

“I congratulate AsiaOne Magazine for publishing a trilogy on India's 75 years of independence. The Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is based on five pillars of freedom struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievements at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolve at 75. The Mahotsav is dedicated to the people of India who have been instrumental in transforming the country into a global force. We have now entered into Amrit Kaal. The next 25 years are when India will move forward on the path of becoming a developed economy and sustainable and inclusive society.

This government, with better coordination and synergies among various Union ministries and state governments, aims the country to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25. An important need for this is building world-class infrastructure and we are working dedicatedly in this direction”



SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL,
HON'BLE MINISTER FOR
COMMERCE & INDUSTRY,
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
& PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
AND TEXTILES,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

“I am delighted to learn that AsiaOne Media Group is publishing a magazine with a theme of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’. Under the dynamic leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India exudes a strong sense of confidence and pride. The economy is now on the path of self-reliance through the Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The Government of India is already working towards development of quality infrastructure, paving the way for India to emerge as the fastest growing major economy and soon to become a \$5 trillion economy. I urge all citizens to think big and set accelerated targets, with a vision to achieve transformative changes in the Amrit Kaal.”

the last eight years, has shown good results. The foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows in India increased from \$45.15 billion in 2014-2015 to the highest ever at \$83.6 billion in the year 2021-22, and are on track to attract \$100 billion in the financial year 2022-23.

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme that was launched across 14 key manufacturing sectors in 2020-21 gave a big boost to the Make in India initiative in the pandemic years.

In addition, the Centre launched various other initiatives to support smooth sailing of its Make in India vision. It soft launched the National Single Window System (NSWS) in September 2021 to improve the Ease of Doing Business by providing a single digital platform to investors for approvals and clearances. The next month, on 13th October 2021, the Prime Minister launched the GatiShakti programme for multimodal connectivity to manufacturing zones in the country, to ensure logistical efficiency in business operations. Another important programme has been One District One Product (ODOP), which aims at facilitating the promotion and production of indigenous products from each district of the country and providing a global platform to the artisans and manufacturers of handloom, handicrafts, textiles, agricultural and processed products, thereby encouraging the socio-economic growth of various regions of the country.

A terrific example of the success of Make in India is the toy industry. The import of toys in the financial year 2021-22 was reduced by 70% to \$110 million (Rs. 877.8 crore), while the export of toys registered tremendous growth of 636% in April-August 2022 over the same period in 2013. The toy industry in India has historically been import-dependent due to lack of raw-material, technology, design capability and other reasons, leading to huge imports of toys and its components. The Centre with some key, focused initiatives such as increasing the Basic Custom Duty from 20% to 60%, implementing Quality Control Order, mandatory sample testing of

imported toys, granting more than 850 BIS licenses to domestic toy manufacturers, and developing toy clusters has changed the story.

THE GOAL OF “SATURATION”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 15 August 2021 independence speech called the nation to re-dedicate itself to unfinished tasks. He said there is a need to “hand-hold” sections that are lagging, and set a goal of “saturation” or 100% coverage of beneficiaries of schemes such as bank accounts for the poor, health cover under Ayushman Bharat, and clean fuel under Ujjwala Yojana.

Speaking to District Magistrates (DMs) of various districts in January 2023, the Prime Minister again reiterated the need for 100% saturation of services and facilities in every district of the country. He told the DMs to take every government welfare scheme to each doorstep and implement it in a time-bound manner. He called for a two-year vision for every district, and suggested that every district can identify 10 tasks to be completed in the next three months to improve ease-of-living for common people. He said that no district should be left behind in the digital revolution, as it can become a means of door-step delivery of services and facilities.

With the saturation level accomplished in all the welfare schemes, the poor and the socially excluded will no longer need elaborate and complex safety nets in terms of sops and subsidies. They will only need a state that ensures that their human and social capital is steadily and consistently expanded over long periods of time to eventually help them participate in wealth creation. With steady budget support to ongoing schemes, monitoring the implementation of these schemes and performance standards of the executives, and engaging citizens in the process of their own development, the State and the Centre can together work as a team to achieve minimum acceptable level of social progress.

MISSION KARMAYOGI

In the Amrit Kaal, among the many areas to be benefitted from transformative

digital technologies are governance and social justice. Technology will help governance become transparent and accountable, and welcoming to every Indian national, whether living in a big city or in a remote village. With data being the cornerstone of creating new knowledge and insights, technology will also help policy-makers build localised digital solutions.

Two noteworthy programmes launched under Centre's good governance vision are Mission Karmayogi and Jan Vishwas Bill.

The Government launched the National Programme for Civil Services and Capacity Building (NPCSCB) - Mission Karmayogi in September 2020. It aims at building a future-ready civil service with the right attitude, skills and knowledge, aligned to the vision of New India. Under the programme, sessions and modules are being created for government departments to not just respond to grievances in the most efficient and effective way, but also give a human touch to the interface with the public.

Presenting the Union Budget 2023, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told Lok Sabha that for furthering trust-based governance, the government has introduced the Jan Vishwas Bill to amend 42 Central Acts for enhancing the ease of doing business. In this, more than 39,000 compliances have been reduced and more than 3,400 legal provisions have been decriminalised.

The other key initiatives announced under good governance in the latest budget include property tax governance reforms and ring-fencing user charges on urban infrastructure, to help cities with incentives to improve their creditworthiness for municipal bonds. Amendments to the

Banking Regulation Act, the Banking Companies Act and the Reserve Bank of India Act have been proposed to improve bank governance and enhance investors' protection.

The Government will also launch a National Data Governance Policy to unleash innovation and research by start-ups and academia. This will enable access to anonymised data, which will preserve private or confidential information by deleting or encoding identifiers that link individuals to the stored data.

THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The Amrit Kaal will witness a boost in the adoption of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), blockchain, drones, Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, 3D printing and virtual reality (VR) in everyday life and governance.

"India has been focusing much on acquiring, developing and expanding these technologies, which can well be understood by the increasing use of drones, big data analysis, AI, block-chain and other innovative technologies in all sectors," said Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology in September 2022. The government wants the private sector to be part of this vision, he added.

Beginning 2022, the government has been promoting digital economy, fintech and technology-enabled development to achieve goals during Amrit Kaal, where digital and hi-tech services will be delivered to farmers involving public sector research and extension institutions along with private agri-tech players and other stakeholders through public-private partnerships. 'Kisan drones' are being



SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI,
HON'BLE MINISTER
FOR PARLIAMENTARY
AFFAIRS, COAL AND MINES,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

"People across the Country joined in the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to commemorate the accomplishments of our motherland, our people and our heritage in the last 75 years. Now, our Country will witness the Golden phase over the next 25 years in Amrit Kaal. Under the visionary leadership of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a new path has been laid to make India one of the strongest and most Developed Nations in the world in Amrit Kaal. The platform for achieving this ambitious vision was sown nearly a decade ago and people are reaping the benefits of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The signs are ominous with India now becoming the 5th largest economy in the world. We must all come together to play our part in ushering the most glorious and productive phase in India's history"

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED THE JAN VISHWAS BILL TO AMEND 42 CENTRAL ACTS FOR ENHANCING THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS, REDUCING MORE THAN 39,000 COMPLIANCES AND DECRIMINALISING MORE THAN 3,400 LEGAL PROVISIONS"



DR. SANJEEV BALYAN,
HON'BLE MINISTER OF STATE
FOR FISHERIES, ANIMAL
HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING

"I happy to state that as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahostav,' the MOFAHD signed an MoU with Ministry of Food Processing Industry (MoFPI) for extension of benefits to dairy entrepreneurs or industries through convergence of various schemes of Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), MOFAHD. The DAHD and MoFPI will work together to achieve the goal for income generation for sustainable development of the rural poor through extension of benefits of various schemes to the beneficiaries whenever they require credit support for establishment/extension/strengthening of quality control, dairy processing and other objectives. I congratulate AsiaOne Magazine and Mr. Rajat Shukal for coming up with a magazine and coffee table book to celebrate "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav"

used for crop assessment, digitisation of land records, and administering insecticides and other nutrients for healthy crop management and growth. The Centre is also promoting 'Drone Shakti' through start-ups and Drone as a Service (DrAAS) to scale up the use of drones in several application areas.

The Budget 2023 has added more programmes to the government's vision of Digital India. An important area of work is using data to serve citizens better.

The Centre will set up 100 labs for developing applications using 5G services in engineering institutions to realise a new range of opportunities, business models, and employment potential. "The labs will cover, among others, applications such as smart classrooms, precision farming, intelligent transport systems, and health care applications," said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget 2023 speech.

There has been a strong emphasis on the development of AI, Machine Learning, and the Internet of Things. The Union Finance Minister in the 2023 Budget announced the establishment of three centres of excellence for AI to promote the creation and use of AI in India. The focus on AI is aimed at encouraging the growth of the technology and ensuring that it benefits the country, i.e., 'Make AI for India' and 'Make AI work for India'.

To promote financial inclusion, introduction of a new digital payment system and the expansion of digital financial services to rural areas have been done. The goal is to tap into the potential for new business models and job opportunities that 5G technology can bring. The creation of a national e-commerce policy and the development of a digital industrial policy will encourage the growth of digital economy. The eCourt project will be launched with a budget of Rs.7,000 crore (\$854 million) to modernise the delivery of judicial services and provide a more streamlined and accessible system for citizens. The initiative is aimed at improving the efficiency of the administration of justice through technology.

JAI ANUSANDHAN

Adding the term *Jai Anusandhan* to the earlier slogan of *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan* – given by former Prime Ministers Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee – Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for a push in the areas of research and innovation, to support self-reliance among private entities and grassroots' small and medium businesses, and farmers.

While the Prime Minister gave the term *Jai Anusandhan* in his 76th Independence Day speech, the spirit has long been there. Research and innovation led to over 75,000 DPIIT-recognised start-ups in existence across 653 districts of India as of August 3, 2022. The country has seen a massive jump in its global ranking at the Global Innovation Index (GII) from 81st in the year 2015 to 46th in 2021 among 130 economies of the world. India ranked 2nd among 34 lower middle-income economies and 1st among 10 Central and Southern Asian economies in terms of GII. The consistent improvement in the GII ranking is owing to the immense knowledge capital, the vibrant start-up ecosystem, and some outstanding work done by the public and private research organisations.

An important contribution of these start-ups has been job creation, a reason enough for the government to support it through dedicated programmes, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. "The Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH) program was carved out in a record time by the Department of Science and Technology just when Covid hit to support startups working on Covid products and solutions," said Dr Jitendra Singh, adding, "Overall, the impact and outcome of DST's program on innovation and entrepreneurship has been significant: promoting 160 incubators, nurturing 12,000 start-ups, including 1,627 women-led start-ups, generating 1,31,648 jobs."

The pursuit of innovation is leading to the rise of disruptive technology and bringing about greater and qualitative socio-economic changes in the lives of people. Ground-breaking technologies

such as big data analysis, AI, block chain, and communication-related technologies have become norms of the day. A number of technological innovations have been brought into picture for agriculture, healthcare and disaster management, helping the government in facing grave challenges of drought, rain, pest, cyclone, and waste, among others.

Going forward, innovation would be the strongest pillar that would help build a developed India in the Amrit Kaal, said Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, as the country climbed to 40th rank in the Global Innovation Index of World Intellectual Property Organization in 2022, jumping six places from a year before and 81 places seven years ago. Describing innovation to be a catalytic force for both economy and social and public good, the union minister called for the creation of an international network of mentors, investors and entrepreneurs to strengthen the global start-up ecosystem.

A game-changer, innovation can also lead the way in solving global problems, from climate change to poverty and inequality, as the success of digital public goods such as CoWin, Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) shows. While tackling problems and ensuring inclusive growth by redefining social innovation, these digital services have witnessed growing participation from tier 2 and 3 markets that are swiftly embracing latest technology and pushing the envelope for local start-ups with new ideas to succeed.

The Government has been nurturing the innovation spirit right from the school level onwards through Atal Innovation Mission. Addressing the inaugural session of the Inception Meeting of the Startup 20 Engagement Group of G20 in Hyderabad on January 28, 2023, Piyush Goyal said that India also has an active programme for supporting start-ups with many nations around the world. "Some of the prime examples are the Indo-US, Indo-UK, Indo-Australia partnerships where we explore supporting deep tech start-ups that contribute to the

circular economy, and address basic needs like health, water, agriculture, education, financial inclusion, etc," he added.

BOOST TO MSMEs

Amrit Kaal is the period that will see focused planning and action for the empowerment of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The MSMEs account for 30% of the country's GDP, 48% of overall exports, 95% of industrial units, and 40% of employment. "During the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal', our MSMEs are a great means of achieving India's colossal goal of self-reliance," said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 30, 2022.

To ensure that India's exports increase continuously and the products reach newer markets, the government is trying to create a local supply chain for Make in India, which can reduce India's dependence on foreign countries. Unprecedented emphasis is being laid upon the expansion of the MSME sector. In July 2022, the Government launched a World Bank supported Central Sector Scheme called Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) worth about Rs. 6,000 crore. The scheme aims at strengthening institutions and governance at the Centre and State levels, improving Centre-State linkages and partnerships and improving access of MSMEs to market and credit, technology upgradation, and addressing issues of delayed payments and greening of MSMEs.

Another government scheme is to encourage first-time exporters and a decision to expand the scope of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, which has provided employment to more than 40 lakh people through MSMEs in the past few years.

More importantly, in the budget of the first year of the Amrit Kaal, the Finance Minister has announced that the revamped credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs, proposed in the Budget 2022, will take effect from 1st April 2023 through infusion of Rs. 9,000 crore in the corpus. "This will enable additional collateral-free guaranteed



SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT,
HON'BLE MINISTER FOR
JAL SHAKTI, GOVERNMENT
OF INDIA

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations to AsiaOne Media Network and Shri Rajat Shukal for commemorating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, an endeavour to celebrate and highlight all major achievements of India since independence. At the same time, we aim to showcase our accolades and strength of the last 8 years, on the global level, under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Capitalising on the strength of 140 crore Indians, we aim to create an environment which will take us towards the Amrit Kaal.

Under the aegis of Jal Shakti Ministry, the Jal Jeevan Mission has successfully installed tap water connections in over 10 crore Indian households. Looking at the current pace, we are slated to reach our goal before 2024 and promote sustainable development"



**DR. MAHENDRA
NATH PANDEY,**
UNION MINISTER OF HEAVY
INDUSTRIES

“I congratulate AsiaOne Media Group for bringing out a series of features dedicated to the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Ministry of Heavy Industries is focused on developing a globally competitive, green and technology-driven manufacturing sector, which propels growth and job creation. The Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has said that environment security has the same importance as national security, and that India is making all efforts towards becoming energy independent. Under our FAME-1 scheme, the nation is building a network of Solar-based Electric Vehicle Charging stations that will prove to be an important step in this direction. My best wishes to AsiaOne Magazine for promoting the stories of Indian growth and excellence and our greatest business leaders and entrepreneurs across the world”

credit of Rs. 2 lakh crore. Further, the cost of credit will be reduced by about 1%,” she said.

In the Budget 2023, the MSMEs have been given relief under Vivad Se Vishwas I and II schemes in cases of failure to execute contracts during the COVID period. A voluntary settlement scheme with standardised terms will be introduced to settle contractual disputes of government and government undertakings. An Entity DigiLocker will also be set up for the MSMEs, large businesses and charitable trusts to store and share documents online securely, whenever needed, with many authorities, regulators, banks and other entities.

HIGHWAY TO SUCCESS

Investments in infrastructure and productive capacity have a large multiplier impact on growth and employment. The Centre under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been boldly pushing for capex investments and creating the much-needed mobility infrastructure in roads, rail, airports and heliports. It is expected that these will not only enhance the participation of the private sector and distribute the gains across all sections of society, but also provide much-required connectivity for movement of people, goods and services.

The Budget 2023 has allocated 16.6% of the total expenditure and 2.5% of GDP to infrastructure. The allocation is higher than Budget 2022, which allocated 14.1% of total expenditure and 2.15% of GDP to the infrastructure sector.

Urbanisation will be the biggest driver of India’s growth story in the next 25 years. The latest budget has announced an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund, and plans to build sustainable cities. The Centre has proposed to launch ‘100 critical sustainable infrastructure projects’ to boost last-mile connectivity and play a crucial role in improving the delivery of food, fertilisers, coal, and others.

To create sustainable cities of tomorrow, states and cities will be encouraged to undertake urban planning reforms and actions. This will include efficient use of land resources, adequate raw material for

urban infrastructure, transit-oriented development, enhanced availability and affordability of urban land, and opportunities for all.

The budget has also allocated Railways Rs 2.40 lakh crore under infrastructure growth – the highest ever capital outlay for railways. The government has launched the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, which envisages the development of railway stations on a continuous basis with a long-term vision. The scheme aims at preparation of Master Plans of the railway stations and implementation of these plans in phases to enhance the facilities. The government will reform 1,275 railway stations under this scheme.

WATER VISION 2047

The Centre’s water vision towards 2047 will be a big contribution to Amrit Kaal, believes the Prime Minister.

The Government of India launched the Jal Jeevan Mission on August 15, 2019 to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections to all rural households by 2024. On April 24, 2022, the government launched Mission Amrit Sarovar with the resolve to build 75 Amrit Sarovars in every district of the country to overcome the water crisis in rural areas. To date, the Jal Jeevan Mission has provided tap water connections to 49.22% rural households, and Mission Amrit Sarovar has constructed 25,000 Amrit Sarovars across the country.

The Prime Minister emphasised on the need for awareness, public participation and use of technologies in water conservation to make the vision a reality forever. He called for a new chapter of *Jan Bhagidari* to begin with multiple stakeholders from all sections of society, from common people to social organisations and civil society, and start-ups. An important component in the area of water conservation will be technologies like geo-mapping and geo-sensing that are already playing an important role.

The Prime Minister envisions that once the system of water conservation is in place, the Gram Panchayats should lead the Jal Jeevan Mission. Every Gram Panchayat can submit

a periodic report online stating the number of houses that are getting tap water in the village. He also insisted on a system of periodic water testing to be developed to ensure water quality.

AMRIT PEEDHI

According to Reliance Industries Limited's Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani, India can become a \$40 trillion economy by 2047 in a sustainable and stable manner.

"This goal (\$40 trillion economy) is realistic and achievable because India is blessed with the power of young demography, mature democracy and the newly acquired power of technology," Ambani said while speaking at the Reliance Family Day Function in December 2022.

With a young population, India is strongly placed to become a talent powerhouse and the largest contributor to the global workforce. The extraordinary opportunity is extremely crucial during the Amrit Kaal, making the young of the country, *Amrit Peedhi* or 'youth power'. According to a CII report, if India's demographic dividend is efficiently employed, growth prospects will brighten, helping it to take ahead its GDP from the current \$3 trillion to \$9 trillion by 2030 and \$40 trillion by 2047.

Demographic dividend in India brings better economic growth and a rapid increase in economic activities due to this large working-age population. It contributes to an increase in the labour force that increases the economy's overall productivity. Investing in the country's young population and keeping their interests in mind, building future-looking skill development centres, supporting start-ups and policy moves like Jan Vishwas will boost their participation.

The Union Budget 2023 has responded to this call of the industry and experts by unveiling a youth-inclusive and youth-empowering budget. The Budget 2023-24 focuses on Amrit Peedhi, who would be supported through courses in the areas of AI, robotics, 3D printing, IoT, and drones, among others. It focuses on

revamping India's education system to make it more practical and industry-oriented, besides emphasising on vocational and skill training. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 will be launched to skill lakhs of youth within the next three years. On-the-job training, industry partnership, and alignment of courses with needs of the industry will be emphasised. The scheme will also cover new-age courses for Industry 4.0 such as coding, AI, robotics, mechatronics, IOT, 3D printing, drones, and soft skills.

To skill the youth for international opportunities, 30 Skill India International Centres will be set up across the country.

A Unified Skill India Digital Platform will also be launched to further expand the digital ecosystem for skilling. This platform will enable demand-based formal skilling, linking with employers, including MSMEs, and facilitating access to entrepreneurship schemes. To provide stipend support to 47 lakh youth in three years, Direct Benefit Transfer under a pan-India National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme will be rolled out.

The allocation of Rs 3,000 crore for the National Recruitment Agency to streamline the recruitment process for government jobs will aid employment opportunities for the youth.

The focus is also on upskilling programmes for 3.5 lakh tribal students. Additionally, 38,800 youth will be recruited for 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools. The commitment to recruit teachers over the next three years is a major boost for tribal students who will now have access to quality education and opportunity.

SURPLUS ENERGY, STEADY GROWTH

Shri Narendra Modi on the country's 75th Independence Day announced to make India an energy-independent nation by 2047 through a mix of electric mobility, gas-based economy, doping ethanol in petrol, and making the country a hub for hydrogen production. Under his leadership, the country achieved the target of 100 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity ahead of the target. His



SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL,

HON'BLE MINISTER FOR
PORTS, SHIPPING &
WATERWAYS AND AYUSH
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

"Greetings and congratulations to the entire AsiaOne family for bringing out a magazine and coffee table book commemorating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. In 2047, we will mark 100 years of Independence. As we enter the nation's Amrit Kaal, we have been presented with a unique opportunity to become the Vishwaguru under the leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi ji. Led by his vision, we are striving towards energising our vast network of inland waterways to unlock the huge potential of growth and economic prosperity of India. Our Amrit Kaal will be driven by PM GatiShakti, a mission that will transform the economy and open unprecedented avenues of employment for youth. I am certain that together we will fulfill all our dreams"



SHRI ARJUN MUNDA,
HON'BLE MINISTER FOR
TRIBAL AFFAIRS

"India today has been able to make a mark in the World platform as a country that is leading in all spheres of economy and has put in place effective measures to ensure welfare of its citizens. The giant strides being made under the dynamic leadership of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji in sectors like Science, Technology and promotion of "Vocal for Local" ethos has put our nation firmly on path to reaching a milestone of \$5 trillion economy in few years.

The current year of G20 Presidency by India embracing the principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* or "World is One" further reinforces our belief of welfare for entire humanity. The AsiaOne Magazine has strived to be at the forefront of putting across all relevant issues and creating public opinion. I convey my best wishes for its endeavours"

A HYDROGEN-POWER

The Amrit Kaal will be the era when India will take giant steps towards cleaner, greener fuels, the foremost being hydrogen.

The fuel of the future, hydrogen is the lightest and most abundant element of the universe, which holds the potential to change our dependency on fossil fuels. A game-changer here is the green hydrogen, which is hydrogen extracted without generating any net carbon emissions. Produced through the electrolysis of water, using renewable energy sources, green hydrogen is an essentially limitless and clean source of energy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Hydrogen Mission on India's 75th Independence Day, i.e. 15 August 2021. The Union Cabinet on January 4, 2023, approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission with an initial outlay of Rs. 19,744 crore.

The outlay of the mission includes Rs.17,490 crore for SIGHT programme, Rs.1,466 crore for pilot projects, Rs.400 crore for R&D, and Rs.388 crore towards other mission components. The expected mission outcomes are development of green hydrogen production capacity of at least 5 MMT (million metric tonne) per annum, renewable energy capacity addition of about 125 GW in the country, over Rs. 8 lakh crore in total investments, creation of over 6 lakh jobs, over Rs. 1 lakh crore cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports, and abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gas emissions.

The mission will provide benefits such as creation of export opportunities for Green Hydrogen and its derivatives; decarbonisation of industrial, mobility and energy sectors; reduction in the dependence on imported fossil fuels and feedstock; development of indigenous manufacturing capabilities; creation of employment opportunities; and development of cutting-edge technologies.

GREEN HYDROGEN/GREEN AMMONIA POLICY

Another important emerging fuel is ammonia, a chemical used mainly in the manufacture of nitrogenous fertilisers such as urea and ammonium nitrate, but can be put to other uses too, such as to run engines.

Hydrogen and ammonia are envisaged to be the future fuels to replace fossil fuels. Production of these fuels by using power from renewable energy, termed as green hydrogen and green ammonia, is one of the major requirements towards environmentally sustainable energy security of the nation.

The Government of India is taking various measures to facilitate the transition from fossil fuel or fossil fuel based feedstocks to green hydrogen or green ammonia. The notification of this policy is one of the major steps in this endeavour.

The policy provides as follows:

- Green Hydrogen/Ammonia manufacturers may purchase renewable power from the power exchange or set up renewable energy capacity themselves or through any other developer, anywhere.
- Open access will be granted within 15 days of receipt of application.
- The Green Hydrogen/Ammonia manufacturer can bank his

RED FUTURE

unconsumed renewable power, up to 30 days, with a distribution company and take it back when required.

- Distribution licensees can also procure and supply renewable energy to the manufacturers of Green Hydrogen or Green Ammonia in their States at concessional prices, which will only include the cost of procurement, wheeling charges and a small margin as determined by the State Commission.

- Waiver of inter-state transmission charges for a period of 25 years will be allowed to the manufacturers of Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia for the projects commissioned before 30 June 2025.

- The manufacturers of Green Hydrogen or Ammonia and the renewable energy plant shall be given connectivity to the grid on priority basis to avoid any procedural delays.

- The benefit of Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) will be granted incentive to the hydrogen/ammonia manufacturer and the distribution licensee for consumption of renewable power.

- To ensure ease of doing business, a single portal for carrying out all the activities, including statutory clearances in a time-bound manner will be set up by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

- Connectivity, at the generation end and the Green Hydrogen or Ammonia manufacturing end, to the Inter-State Transmission System for renewable energy capacity set up for the purpose of manufacturing Green Hydrogen or Ammonia shall be granted on priority.

- Manufacturers of Green Hydrogen or Green Ammonia shall be allowed to set up bunkers near ports for storage of Green Ammonia for export or use by shipping. The land for the storage for this purpose shall be provided by the respective port Authorities at applicable charges.

The implementation of this policy will provide clean fuel to the common people of the country. This will reduce dependence on fossil fuel and crude oil imports. The objective also is for India to emerge as an export hub for Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia.

The policy promotes renewable energy generation, as it will be the basic ingredient in making green hydrogen. This, in turn, will help in meeting the international commitments for clean energy.

Green hydrogen energy is vital for India to meet its nationally determined contribution (NDC) targets and ensure regional and national energy security, access and availability. It can act as an energy storage option, which would be essential to meet intermittencies (of RE) in the future. It can be used in railways, large ships, buses or trucks, etc. Hydrogen has the potential to be the key renewable target in supporting infrastructure as well.

With most countries globally looking for ways to achieve their net zero goals, alternate sources of energy such as wind and solar have picked up steam. Companies are building the biggest wind turbines ever and increasing the size of solar farms rapidly, but both of the energy forms do not always generate power continuously or on demand, making the world again turn to fossil fuels for energy security. Until RE scales up to meet demand, a carbon-free fuel could be used to fill the gap or act as a backup when renewables do not deliver. Hydrogen can fill this gap.



SHRI KIREN RIJJU,
HON'BLE MINISTER FOR LAW
AND JUSTICE, GOVERNMENT
OF INDIA

“It gives me immense pleasure to learn that AsiaOne Magazine is coming up with a Republic Day Special edition of its magazine to commemorate “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.” The Mahotsav is an initiative to commemorate 75 glorious years of progressive India. It is dedicated to the people of India who have not only been instrumental in bringing India thus far in its evolutionary journey, but also hold within them the power and potential to enable Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. I congratulate and express my sincere appreciation to the AsiaOne Group for their initiative and efforts in the publication of this highly informative and useful book. I am sure the book will motivate the youth to dedicate their lives to the cause of nation-building and Atmanirbhar Bharat”



**HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. NAGESH SINGH,**
AMBASSADOR
AND PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE TO ESCAP,
EMBASSY OF INDIA, BANGKOK

"I extend my greetings and good wishes to the AsiaOne family for bringing out the special issue on India's 74th Republic Day.

The celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav under various themes including 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' has inspired and motivated us to work towards building a stronger and evermore confident India. The nation assumed the G20 Presidency in December 2022, under the theme 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakum' or 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. In this context, our country will play an increasingly important role in addressing global challenges. I am confident that the people of India will continue working collectively in this golden phase of Amrit Kaal"

Cabinet in January 2023 announced the National Hydrogen Mission to increase the use of Green Hydrogen as a cleaner alternative fuel and make India a global hydrogen hub.

Global experts also see India's transition to clean energy as a once in a lifetime economic opportunity. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), India has the potential to become a world leader in renewable batteries and green hydrogen; that, along with other low-carbon technologies, could create a market worth \$80 billion by 2030. The IEA also estimates that \$160 billion investment will be required every year between now and 2030, which is three times today's investment levels, in order to achieve 'net zero' by 2070. Going down this path will be rewarding as India's GDP can get a boost of 4.7 per cent by 2036 and 15 million jobs can be created by 2047.

Industry champions are also sure about India's success. RIL Chairman Mukesh D. Ambani has said that three game-changing revolutions will govern India's growth in the decades ahead – the Clean Energy Revolution, the Bio-Energy Revolution and the Digital Revolution. "Together, they will transform lives in ways unimagined. While the Clean Energy Revolution and the Bio-Energy Revolution will produce energy sustainably, the Digital Revolution will enable us to consume energy efficiently," he said.

The Union Budget 2022-23 highlights the Centre's focus on energy transition, which is expected to fuel "green growth" in the country in the coming years. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman listed "green growth" among four opportunities that can be transformative for India in the run up to 2047. The other three are economic empowerment of women, integrating traditional artisans with the MSME sector, and tourism. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has been allocated Rs. 10,222 crore, a 48% hike from the previous budget of Rs 7,033 crore.

The Budget 2023 provides Rs. 35,000 crore for priority capital investments towards net zero transition and energy security by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, she said.

India formally updated its nationally determined contribution (NDC) to fight climate change, confirming to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in August 2022 that it will reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% from 2005 levels by 2030, and source about 50% of its energy requirement from non-fossil fuel-based sources the same deadline. The country also underlined that its NDC would help achieve the long-term goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2070.

Compared to the previous years, various projects within the MNRE received a huge boost. Among them is the increase in the money allocated towards off-grid solar projects. Green bonds is another focus area.

"As a part of the government's overall market borrowings in 2022-23, Sovereign Green Bonds will be issued for mobilising resources for green infrastructure," Sitharaman said in last year's budget.

From 2017 to September 2022, 15 Indian corporates issued green bonds worth Rs 4,539 crore, says SEBI's data on green debt securities. Most of these are related to renewable energy generation, the Economic Survey 2022-23 said. The Reserve Bank of India conducted two auctions on January 25 and February 9, 2023, for Rs 8,000 crore each, the survey added.

TOWARDS A SHARED FUTURE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that an important component of the Amrit Kaal of India's independence will not only be a period of national development and glory, but also an occasion when the country will play an important role in giving direction to the world.

India stands as the way forward for the world stuck in the disruption of global supply chains due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation in China. With global supply chains looking to move out of China, India has emerged as a natural destination of choice.

To deliver on this opportunity, in September 2022, the country introduced the National Logistics Policy to further bolster the supply chain and add fresh impetus to India's manufacturing sector. The policy will

help reduce the logistics cost in India and improve the competitiveness of Indian goods both in domestic as well as export markets. Reduced logistics cost will also improve efficiency across sectors of the economy, encouraging value addition and enterprise.

India's foreign trade with countries across the globe would become a truly defining feature in the years to come, believes Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. "The world wants Free Trade Agreements with us. It wants to expand trading relationships and friendship with India, looking at the potential in terms of a large market and the potential we have to help their economies survive and grow," he said.

India will also take forward the legacy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – the World Is One Family – as India's foundational belief is that its own development is inseparable from that of the rest of the world. The country believes that development is a public good, open sourcing is the best way forward, and the UN can be an even bigger force multiplier in advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by pooling global knowledge. Multilateralism is important to the shared goals of the world.

India also recognises that its progress and growth have benefitted from its interface with the United Nations and its agencies, and so aims to strengthen initiatives such as the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, which is the first-ever single country South-South Initiative at the UN. The Fund was established by the Government of India in June 2017 to work with fellow developing countries in a spirit of South-South cooperation by providing support to projects that aim to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, as per their request. It currently extends to 66 development projects in 51 countries, informed External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

India has also enabled two major initiatives for global climate action: International Solar Alliance, which India pioneered with France in 2015 on the sidelines of COP 21, and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure founded at the COP-26, in which India is the founder member. India then helped to launch further

initiatives under the two platforms, namely the Green Grids Initiative – One Sun, One World, One Grid, and the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States initiative.

India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has also been quick to respond to global challenges. The country, during the COVID-19 pandemic, responded first with vaccines for countries in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and South Asia.

In the light of the conflict in Ukraine and resulting food and energy inflation, India responded by supplying food grains. In recent years, the country has given grant assistance to Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Yemen, and several countries in Africa.

In February 2023, under "Operation Dost," India sent a field hospital, medicines, materials, and search and rescue teams to earthquake-hit Turkey and Syria that suffered massive losses of life and property.

The year 2023 is important in India's journey as a global leader. The country has the presidency of the G20 and the rotating presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. India on 12–13 January 2023 convened a virtual summit of developing countries, Voice of the Global South Summit, where 125 nations participated.

During its G20 Presidency, India aims to amplify the voice of the global south. The nation has chosen the theme of One Earth, One Family, One Future. "We believe the path to realising 'oneness' is through human-centric development. People of the Global South should no longer be excluded from the fruits of development. Together, we must attempt to redesign global political and financial governance. This can remove inequities, enlarge opportunities, support growth and spread progress, and prosperity," said the Prime Minister in his address at the opening session of Voice of Global South Summit 2023.

Through its various global alliances, India is working towards promoting the universal sense of one-ness. In the era of Amrit Kaal, the country is proudly forging new definitions and creating new order.



**HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. SUNJAY SUDHIR,**
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO
THE UAE

"My heartiest greetings to all, in India and abroad, on the 74th Republic Day! It was on this day in 1950, India was established as the largest democratic republic and 'we the people' put into effect a constitution that is an inspired document of our collective vision. As we celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, commemorating 75 glorious years of Independence, I am confident that India and Indians will only go on from strength to strength in Amrit Kaal. It is time to reinforce the future with our collective resolve and efforts. It is only befitting that India has taken over the G20 Presidency at a critical juncture. "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: One World, One Family, One Future" has never been more relevant and at this Republic Day, we are at the forefront of making the world a better place for coming generations"