



WORLD TRADE CENTRE™
MUMBAI

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M. Visvesvaraya Industrial Research and Development Centre

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ON TRADE

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WORLD TRADE EXPO 2017

November 16 -17, 2017 | Expo Center, World Trade Centre Mumbai

Exhibition | **Country Presentations** | **B2B Meetings** | **Export Workshop** | Panel Discussion



**A Platform
to Connect
Diplomatic Missions
with Representatives
and Business Leaders
from India and
Overseas**



Bharat Ratna Sir M. Visvesvaraya

(15 September, 1860 - 14 April, 1962)

MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai is the realisation of the vision of Sir M. Visvesvaraya. MVIRDC is the promoter of World Trade Centre Mumbai. MVIRDC WTC programmes are conducted to guide MSMEs with reliable information for business planning. Various research-based seminars, workshops and training programmes are conducted to sensitise MSME entrepreneurs on various aspects of trade and business and sharpen their skills. Thus, the objective of MVIRDC research is to enhance MSME competitiveness and promote their integration into global markets.



MVIRDC

M. Visvesvaraya Industrial Research and Development Centre

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MVIRDC, having spearheaded the movement of World Trade Centres in India with the establishment of WTCs at Bhubaneswar, Goa and Jaipur, is assisting MSMEs in these regions through Trade Research and Knowledge Programmes.

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Dear Readers,

International trade is at the forefront of the Indian economy creating vast opportunities across sectors, generating employment, creating livelihood, improving standard of living and promoting economic growth and development. World Trade Centre (WTC) Mumbai over the years has emerged as an active player in promoting India's international trade thereby significantly contributing to India's economic growth process.



WTC Mumbai made a pioneering initiative by organising the first-of-its-kind World Trade Expo 2017 with the aim of connecting India's micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and start-ups to global markets. The Cover Story of this issue is dedicated to World Trade Expo 2017.

World Trade Expo 2017 was well attended with representation from 37 countries and four Indian state governments. The overwhelming response to the event with 3000 delegates, 15000 Government-to-Business and Business-to-Business meetings amply demonstrated the willingness on the part of international participants to strengthen economic partnerships with India.

This edition of On Trade covers articles, interviews, analysis and features on a wide range of topics of contemporary interest. These include: Alternative Farming Technologies, Portall – A Logistics Management Application, India-China Economic Relations, Making BIMSTEC Work for Member Countries, Forging India-Russia Economic Linkages, to name a few.

World Trade Centre Institute commenced a Basic Chinese Mandarin Course to impart basic communication skills to Indian businessmen conducting business in China. Further, a new syllabus was introduced in the Certificate Course in Export-Import Business Batch Four which offers basics in export-import business.

World Trade Centre Mumbai participated in the World Trade Centers Association's 2017 Member Seminar. This year the Seminar focused on new ideas on utilising the WTCA network.

I am pleased to provide an update on the 7th Global Economic Summit on Global Value Chains: Accelerating MSME Growth, Development and Sustainability, which has shaped well over the months. We have put together a good line up of eminent speakers and experts, both from government and business to deliberate on the subject of Global Value Chains, from India and overseas. We look forward to truly enriching perspectives from discussions over the 3-day Summit to be held in February 2018.

In conclusion, I thank all our writers who have contributed to the issues of On Trade published during the year and I also thank all our readers for their support and interest. I look forward to a more vibrant activity and engagement throughout 2018.

Y. R. Warkerkar

Y. R. Warkerkar



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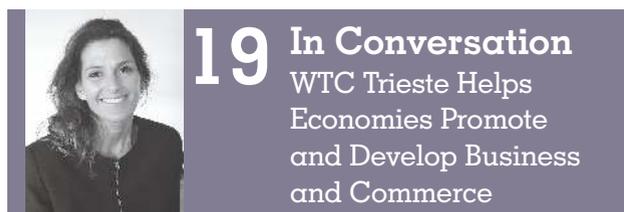
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Rural IDEA Takes to Alternative Farming Technologies

Mr. Vijay Yelmalle
Founder, CRAFT

Center for Research in Alternative Farming Technologies (CRAFT) was founded in 2014 with a view to bring alternative farming technologies to India, providing solutions to problems faced by Indian farmers. The biggest problem faced by the Indian farmer was non-viability of farming largely on account of small and fragmented land holdings coupled with problems of water scarcity, infertility of land, changing weather, unorganised agriculture produce market and use of present farming practices.

Traditional and organic farming were confirmed to be either not environmentally sustainable or economically unviable. Thereafter, alternative farming technologies was introduced by researching on adapting these technologies to the Indian environment by setting up research models and doing in-depth hands-on study of the techniques by mastering the art of hi-tech sustainable farming. Initially, farming operations commenced near Pen, a small town on the outskirts of Mumbai, to have a first-hand experience of farming. CRAFT supplied and provided consulting services to numerous hobby and small commercial (urban) farms throughout India.

Since 2014 awareness programmes

on these techniques were carried out. Farmers, entrepreneurs, students, etc. have also been trained on alternative farming technologies by organising seminars and conducting workshops.

Given the volatility of agriculture produce market, adaptation of these high-cost technologies is very limited hence, CRAFT is currently developing startups in Hydroponics and Aquaponics for the Indian market through relentless research

and implementation of business models based on them, on the ground. Rural Integrated and Digitalized Economical Aquaponics (Rural IDEA) is one such startup, with which, CRAFT is trying to make a change in the marginal farmer's life. An alternative farming technique called Aquaponics is used to make this business model sustainable for the poor farmer.

Aquaponics is a new farming technique where vegetables are





grown using water from fish tanks. The word Aquaponics is derived from Aquaculture (high density fish farming) and Hydroponics (growing vegetables without soil).

In Aquaculture, to avoid ammonia (produced by fish) and nitrate (generated by bio-filter after converting the ammonia using bacteria) buildup in the system, almost 10% of total water in the system is exchanged with fresh water every day. The release of a waste stream of water is an environmental issue and together with the fact that 10% of water change every day, makes the Aquaculture industry unsustainable business. Water is becoming a commodity that is in short supply. When combined, aquaculture with hydroponics help plant roots take up the nitrate from the aquaculture water as a source of nitrogen for its growth. All other nutrients required for plant growth are also provided through fish excreta. Aquaponics uses only 10% of water compared to soil-based farming and has no waste if the system is designed properly, making it one of the most environmentally sustainable farming methods.

The technical aspects of Aquaponics under Rural IDEA are designed for rural population where education is minimum and traditional knowledge is maximum. The technical aspects are taken care by

means of sensors and remote monitoring technology such as Internet of Things (IoT). The agronomy will be mostly cared by the farmer himself, but 24 hours help would be available for consultation with experts. An Integrated pest management program with proactive and organic measures would be implemented in all farms and followed up closely by area supervisors. Aquaponics is inherently intolerant to chemical pesticides as fish are first to die with use of harmful substances in Aquaponic setups.

The economical sustainability is achieved by fish component. Live fresh water fish always has a good retail market all over India. According to a CRAFT Study, almost all parts of India, people do not mind travelling 4 to 5 kilometers on motorbikes or bicycles to buy live fish at retail rates. A standard Rural IDEA farm of 500 sq. mtrs. produces around 50 to 60 kg of fish per week. Fish such as Mono Tilapia is sold at 200 to 400 INR./kg in different parts of India. This gives almost INR 6 to 10 Lakh income to the farmer per year from the fish alone. Vegetable produce such as very nutritional spinach and tomato would be bought back by the startup to setup a supply chain to the market which is very safe with nutritious vegetables transported to the urban consumer base.

The capital cost of the farm of 500 sq. mtrs. setup is around INR 7 to 8 Lakh. This is only possible with low cost hybrid greenhouse and plastic liners to be used for making fish ponds and growing beds in the ground. The whole setup is designed with locally available inputs in India. Various stakeholders such as farmer groups are invited to set up the farms, government agencies for subsidy of these farms, financial institutes for loan to the farmers, etc.

The overall impact of Aquaponics on the environment is very little. The system design with minimum power requirement makes sure that electricity is consumed at low rates coupled with integration to solar energy which could be a very possible alternative.

All these aspects of Rural IDEA make the system very sustainable ecologically, technically and economically. The startup was featured and appreciated at World Trade Expo 2017 organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai and at the 37th India International Trade Fair 2017 (Delhi). CRAFT is currently setting up the prototype to standardise the project inputs, farm inputs and outputs. All enquiries about setting up personal farms, franchise, corporate social responsibility and investment are welcomed.

World Trade Expo 2017

World Trade Centre Mumbai organised World Trade Expo 2017 in Mumbai, a first-of-its kind initiative in association with All India Association of Industries, with a view to connect India's Khadi and Village Industries, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and start-up companies to global markets. The Expo was held from November 16-17, 2017 which earned global recognition for entrepreneurial excellence of India's rural industries, start-up enterprises, women-owned businesses and industry clusters. Trade representatives from 37 countries and officials from four state governments, namely, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Telangana participated in the event.

The participating countries and bilateral chambers included Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Russia, Botswana,



From (L-R): Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. B.H. Anil Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India; Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Dr. Sonia Sethi, IAS, Additional Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Mumbai; Mr. Vinai Kumar Saxena, Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC); Dr. Arun Kumar Panda, Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India, Mumbai and Dr. Norbert Révai-Bere, Consul General of Hungary in Mumbai.



From (L-R) H.E. Ernest Rwamucyo, High Commissioner of Rwanda to India; Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Vinai Kumar Saxena, Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC); Dr. Sonia Sethi, IAS, Additional Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Mumbai; Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Dr. Arun Kumar Panda, Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India, Mumbai; Dr. Norbert Révai-Bere, Consul General of Hungary in Mumbai; Mr. B. H. Anil Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India and Mr. Mohd. Lutfur Rahman, Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Mumbai.

Brazil, Congo, Gabon, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Fiji, Indonesia, Hungary, Jordan, Indo-French Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Malaysia, Uzbekistan, Norway, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Rwanda, The Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Basque Region of Spain, Lesotho and South Korea, among others.

World Trade Expo 2017 discussed partnerships not only in trade and investment, but in other areas of mutual interest such as tourism, education, technology collaboration etc. The Expo served the purpose of assisting MSMEs to forge collaborations with rural industries, start-up enterprises in these countries in areas such as livelihood projects, skill development, infrastructure, climate change etc.

More than a dozen start-up companies participated in this event to explore collaborative opportunities with participating countries. World Trade Expo 2017 hosted business incubators, financial institutions and District Industries Centres (DICs) who are key enablers of start-up enterprises and MSMEs.

The key objective of the event was to enhance the global footprint of India's women-owned enterprises by helping them access potential business partners in these countries through the mobile and web application

SheTrades. World Trade Centre Mumbai is a verifier of Shetrades which is a unique digital platform launched by International Trade Centre Geneva to enable women entrepreneurs connect to potential buyers across the world. Currently, Shetrades seeks to connect one million entrepreneurs to markets by 2020.

The event also featured a highly impactful panel discussion on 'Women: Evolving Business'. Women achievers in business, law, media and education participated in the panel discussion and shared their perspectives on women's empowerment in business and society.

Ambassadors and Consul Generals of the participating countries expressed optimism on the evolving economic partnership with India. Diplomats from Peru, Bangladesh, Rwanda, Bolivia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia showcased various investment opportunities and tourism potential in their regions.

The event attracted more than 3,000 delegates and facilitated at least 15,000 Government-to-Business (G2B) and Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings, which resulted in win-win collaborations between business delegates in India and the participating countries.

Course of Events at World Trade Expo

World Trade Expo 2017 opened with the lamp lighting ceremony and Ganesh Vandana. Dignitaries who participated at the ceremony included Dr. Arun Kumar Panda, Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India; Mr. B. H. Anil Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India; Dr. Sonia Sethi, IAS, Additional Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Mumbai; Mr. Vinai Kumar Saxena, Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and Dr. Norbert Révai-Bere, Consul General of Hungary in Mumbai.



During the inaugural session, World Trade Centre Mumbai played the video message of **Mr. Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry**. Minister Prabhu said, "World Trade Expo will bring in new benefits to trade and industry. We are currently USD 2.5 trillion economy and in the next few

years, we will be the third largest economy in the world with a GDP of USD 5 trillion. We already have USD 150 billion industry in information technology. We have a large tourism market and a large telecommunication market. We are also a leader in financial services."



Dr. Arun Kumar Panda, Secretary, Ministry of MSME, Government of India in his special address at the inaugural session said, "World Trade Expo 2017 is a unique platform to integrate India's Khadi and Village Industries and MSMEs in global value chain. Events such as World Trade Expo will help in providing MSMEs a platform to scale up their operations to global levels".

Dr. Sonia Sethi, IAS, Additional Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Mumbai said, "DGFT conducts several outreach



programmes such as Niryat Bandhu to handhold new and prospective exporters in the country. World Trade Expo 2017 is a relevant intervention to promote India's exports. I hope this event will set the pace for export fueled growth in the country."

Dr. Norbert Révai-Bere, Dean, Consular Corps in Mumbai and Consul General of Hungary in Mumbai

in his special address said, "The Expo offers best opportunity for Hungary to build network and establish sustainable partnership with Indian business. In this Expo, we are showcasing Hungary's potential areas of partnership with India in areas such as water management, trade, education, technology transfer etc."



Mr. Vinai Kumar Saxena, Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in his address explained how Khadi and Village Industries Commission transforms Indian economy through rural productivity and employment. Mr. Saxena said, "World Trade Expo 2017 will create a platform

for interaction to engage and enhance trade of respective countries and regions. Needless to mention, KVIC is a repository of this inherent desire of our culture and governance. And it is thus a conscience keeper of the nation in our collective desire and necessity to retain our unique way of life".



Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai

said, "World Trade Expo will be made an annual event with an aim to connect India's MSMEs, women-owned businesses and start-up enterprises to the world market. This Expo aims to improve India's international

trade by supporting MSMEs, industry clusters, khadi and village industries and start-up companies. The event also promotes India's ambitious policies such as Start-up India, Digital India, Make in India etc."

Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai

in his vote of thanks said, "Presently, the share of the participating countries in the total Foreign Direct Investment into India is 5%. I hope this event will stimulate further investment between India and these countries"



Country Presentations

A key highlight of World Trade Expo 2017 was the country presentation by the trade representatives of participating countries. Trade representatives from Bangladesh, Peru, Indonesia, Rwanda and Sri Lanka shared glimpses of their economies, government policies, investment climate, tourism, culture and cuisine.

Bangladesh

Mr. Mohd. Lutfor Rahman, Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Mumbai delivered a presentation on his country. Excerpts:

Bangladesh has been cited as one of next eleven countries that are likely to follow BRICS. Bangladesh and India are members of WTO, SARRC, BIMSTEC and other important bilateral and multilateral trade organisations. The two-way trade between the countries stood at USD 6834 in 2016-17.

The USP of Bangladesh include - strengths in Ready-Made Garments (RMGs), largest cotton T-shirt exporter in the world; second largest knitwear exporter of the world and third largest apparel exporter in the world.



Sri Lanka

Ms. Vireshika Bandara, Consul (Commercial), Consulate General of Sri Lanka, Mumbai gave a presentation on the economy of Sri Lanka. Excerpts:



Sri Lanka in 1977 was the first country to liberalise its economy in South Asia. It is the best performing country with regard to the quality of national infrastructure in South Asia. As of 2016, Sri Lanka had adult literacy rate of 93.2%. The country ranks 111 out of 190 countries in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Survey 2018. Under the existing India-Sri Lanka FTA, Sri Lankan companies enjoy 100% duty-free access to the Indian market for 4232 products.



Indonesia

Mr. Yadi Suriahadi, Consul (Economics), Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia delivered a presentation on the economy, government policies, ease of doing business and tourism

potential in Indonesia. Excerpts:

Indonesia is the second largest mega-biodiversity country in the world. Indonesia is gearing up to become the 5th largest economy in the world by 2030 in terms of purchasing power parity. According to The Economist (January 2017), Indonesia is the 3rd leading destination for investment in Asia after China and India. The economy improved 19 positions in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Survey 2018 with a rank of 72.

Rwanda

H. E. Ernest Rwamucyo, High Commissioner of Rwanda to India presented highlights on the investment attractiveness of his country. Excerpts:



Rwanda is ranked 2nd easiest place to do business in Africa – World Bank's Doing Business Report 2017. Rwanda ranks 1st in promotion of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) – Global Technology Report 2015. In order to promote ease of doing business in the country, the Government of Rwanda has introduced online services for registration of companies at zero cost. Rwanda has a special economic zone in Kigali with fully serviced land and ready infrastructure.

Panel Discussion on 'Women: Evolving Business'

A highly impactful panel session on 'Women: Evolving Business' was held on the second day of the Expo. Women achievers from business, law, media and education participated in the discussion and shared their perspectives on women's empowerment in business and society.

Moderator **Ms. Neha Kare Kanabar, Founder of world's largest mommy community 'Unimo Universe of Moms' and a business incubator for moms named 'MumIncubator'** said, "Through initiatives like MumIncubator, we shall ensure that this awareness of women entrepreneurship is not just restricted to big cities, but it is imperative that these success and support stories reach households in smaller cities and villages as well.



Other women should feel inspired and thereby have the courage to step out of the ordinary and do something different."

Ms. Smita Deshmukh, Editor and Communications Expert said, "I suggest women to believe in themselves. I also advise budding women entrepreneurs to receive recommendations and suggestions from experienced business consultants, instead of taking advice from family members. In the media industry, women have broken the glass ceiling and stereotypes. Women must overcome gender bias at workplace through their professional attitude and assert their rights to be judged based on their performance".





Ms. Preetha Dave, Advocate said, "However, many a times, these women serve as titular heads as the actual management and control of the business lies with men. Women must come out of the shell of their male family members such as father, husband and son. Women in family-owned businesses must take equal responsibility in running their business organisations".

Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai pointed out, "Women in India have enormous zeal and they are undeterred. Government and banks must encourage women entrepreneurs by offering them collateral free loans and other supporting



programmes. I suggest every organisation to support women entrepreneurs by making a certain share of their annual procurement from women-owned enterprises. The International Trade Centre, Geneva has introduced a mobile app 'SheTrades' that aims to connect one million women entrepreneurs to markets by 2020. The app also helps business organisations to include more women entrepreneurs in their supply chains. I suggest all women-owned enterprises to register themselves with the app to increase their visibility and expand their networks".

Business Talk 10X

World Trade Centre Mumbai also organised a session to promote leadership skills and management excellence.

Dr. Arunaagiri Mudaaliar, Author, World Class Trainer, International Sportsman and Successful Industrialist

delivered a motivational talk highlighting the importance of personal qualities such as leadership, self-belief, positive attitude, courage and risk taking. Dr. Mudaaliar pointed out that 85% of our success depends on our attitude. Dr. Mudaaliar gave some personal grooming tips to overcome the challenges in the current world condition, which is popularly characterised as VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous).



In his hour-long speech, Dr. Mudaaliar suggested everyone to develop self-esteem and be proud of being Indians. Dr. Mudaaliar advised the audience to develop belief in oneself.

Dr. Mudaaliar shared the ingredients of success by explaining the concept of the Success Pyramid. The elements of this pyramid are essential ingredients of success. These elements are common for both individuals and organisations. The base of this pyramid is mastery, which means one must develop a mindset for

mastery to deliver extraordinary results. The next level of the pyramid is niche, where one must learn to focus on a particular task and aim to master it.

The third level of the pyramid is leverage. One must leverage one's network or contacts, which include friends, relatives, neighbours, customers or clients and other acquaintances. By optimally leveraging ones contacts or networks, one can attain success. The next level of the pyramid is system. There has to be a system or standard in ones activity. For a business organisation, systems and standards are very important as they lead to predictability and help in building reputation in the market.

The next level of the pyramid is team. One must learn to work in a team because an individual cannot achieve anything in isolation. Team building and team spirit are the key ingredients for the success of individuals and organisations.

The topmost block of the success pyramid is synergy. Synergy is produced by combining the strengths of two different organisations or individuals. Synergy is closely related to team building or team work. Synergy is produced when two or more organisations or individuals work together. Such a co-ordinated effort of two or more organisations or individuals produce effect, which is larger than the sum of the effect produced when these organisations work in isolation.

Networking Session

The key objective of World Trade Expo 2017 was to facilitate G2B (Government-to-Business) meetings and B2B (Business-to-Business) meetings among participating delegates.

The event attracted around 3,000 delegates, including ambassadors, consul generals and other functionaries of foreign trade missions, representatives of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and corporate houses. These delegates held 15,000 G2B and B2B meetings during the two-day event.

In G2B meetings, diplomats and trade representatives from around 37 countries briefed Indian delegates about investment opportunities, government policies, regulations and infrastructure facilities available in their countries.

Representatives from Khadi and Village Industries and women-owned businesses held discussions on promoting their products and services abroad with representatives of foreign trade missions.

Diplomats of participating countries also discussed evolving bilateral relationship with officials from Government of India's Ministry of MSMEs and Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

Delegates from India's education institutions and students met officials of embassies to discuss visa norms for study tours and education programmes.

Representatives from Industrial Extension Bureau (Government of Gujarat) and Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) held meetings with business delegates to attract investment in their states.

Women entrepreneurs held discussions with representatives of SheTrades about the advantages of the mobile platform and the procedure to enroll in it.

Representatives from start-up enterprises and industry clusters also actively participated in B2B and G2B meetings. Officials from commercial banks, venture capital funds and other financial institutions met start-up companies to discuss potential funding deals.



Exhibition

The exhibition at World Trade Expo 2017 was well represented by 37 countries, four state governments, a dozen start-up enterprises, industry clusters, Khadi and Village Industries and women-owned businesses. Embassies and trade missions from these countries showcased trade and investment opportunities in their economies to Indian delegates. Tourism Authority of Thailand, Botswana Investment & Trade Centre, Jordan Investment Commission highlighted business climate in their countries to delegates.

Officials from the Consulate Office and Embassies displayed promotional and publicity material highlighting business opportunities in areas such as investment, technology, tourism & culture, information technology,



education, manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture and food processing, smart cities etc. Trade representatives also distributed catalogues, publications, trade journals and other knowledge material that can help delegates identify suitable commercial opportunities in the respective countries.

Trade representatives also circulated information about important exhibitions, trade fairs, road shows and other promotional events that are scheduled in future to promote bilateral trade and investment.

More than 3,000 delegates participated in the exhibition and held B2B meetings with potential business partners.



Cultural Events

World Trade Centre Mumbai organised a cultural programme to showcase art and music of some of the participating countries. The programme comprised two cultural performances.

Musical Performance with Angklung

Representatives from the Republic of Indonesia staged a cultural performance with their traditional musical instrument 'Angklung'.



Musical Performance with Angklung

Capoeira - Martial Art of Brazil

The other performance was an energetic performance of Capoeira, a martial art from the Latin American country of Brazil. The martial art was performed by Mr. Rezza Baba and his troupe.

Capoeira - Martial Art of Brazil



South Africa – A Destination for all Genres of Travelers

Ms. Hanneli Slabber
Country Manager of India,
South African Tourism

OVERVIEW

The only country in the world with 3 official capitals and one of the world's 17 mega diverse destinations (as declared in 1998 Conservation International), South Africa stands apart on the world map with distinctive tourism offerings. Majestic wildlife, pristine beaches, vibrant culture, delectable food, thrilling adventure activities - all come together in the picturesque locales of South Africa to ensure a memorable holiday.

Pleasant year-round weather further strengthens the Rainbow Nation's position as a much sought-after destination for all genres of travelers.

With the support of independent bodies that control quality at every price point, the country is able to cater to accommodation and service demands of different segments of travelers. Also, the easy availability of diverse cuisine for various pocket sizes across Michelin-star restaurants, small eateries and food trucks alike makes South Africa attractive to both budget and luxury travelers.

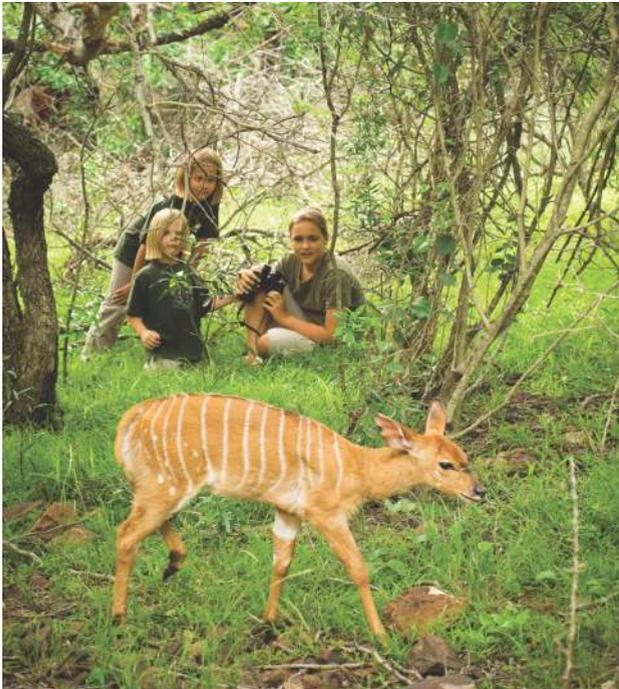
WILDLIFE

South Africa boasts of deep pockets of wildlife regions and game parks encircling every possible landscape from deserts to forests, mountains to coast, teeming with wildlife species. South Africa's savannah regions are home to large numbers of mammals universally associated with Africa - including Africa's Big 5: leopard, lion, buffalo, elephant and rhinoceros.



Family-friendly Safaris

A safari through the wilderness in South Africa is a life-changing experience for travelers across age groups – be it kids, parents or even grandparents. Not only are safaris adventurous, they help families bond and make for an interesting educational experience for the little ones. South Africa is among the few countries that are very inclusive when it comes to children and safety which is given top priority.



Travellers can choose from a number of family-friendly safari options available across national parks and game reserves such as Pilanesberg National Park, Shamwari Game Reserve, Addo Elephant National Park, Kruger National Park and Madikwe Game Reserve among others.

A majority of game lodges have found ways to cater to children in fun and interesting ways with a variety of programmes like junior ranger training, butterfly/fish/insect catch and release and more.

Diversity of Experiences

South Africa is also the only place in the world where wildlife lovers can see not just the Big 5 but also the Big 7 that include the Southern Right Whale and Great White Shark (in Port Elizabeth / Nelson Mandela Bay).

Indian travelers are also charmed by South Africa's general wealth of wildlife including giraffe, zebra,

impbala, kudu, ostrich and baboon which can be spotted in abundance all over the lush forest landscape. Additionally, one can see the Marine 5 (sharks, dolphins, seals, whales and penguins), Shy 5 (meerkat, armadillo, porcupine, armadillo and bat-eared fox) and Little 5 (elephant shrew, buffalo weaver, leopard tortoise, antlion and rhino beetle).

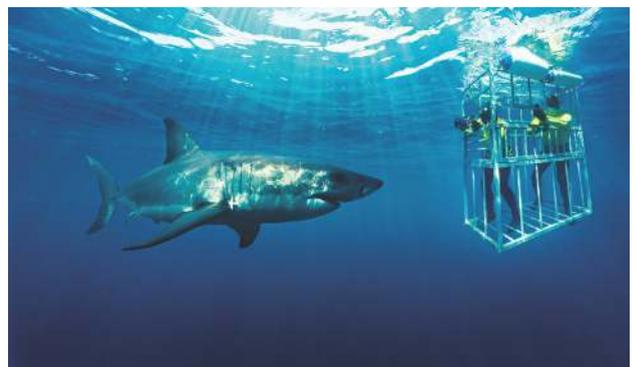
Conservation and Protection

Along with travelers and holiday makers, South Africa also lays great emphasis on the safety and wellbeing of wildlife. Stringent measures are undertaken to ensure that profits do not take precedence over sustainability and a humane approach toward wild animals. For example, in the much sought-after shark cage diving,



the sharks are free to roam in their natural habitat while humans are lowered in a safety cage. Steering away from what is a trend in many destinations that boast of an elephant population, South Africa does not permit elephant rides instead encouraging visitors to embark on a safari to catch sight of the majestic African Elephant in its natural habitat. The same is true for most wild animals where animal encounters, animal petting and animal photo ops as a whole are discouraged in the interest of wildlife.

Recently, the South African Cabinet has approved a coastal and marine tourism implementation plan which

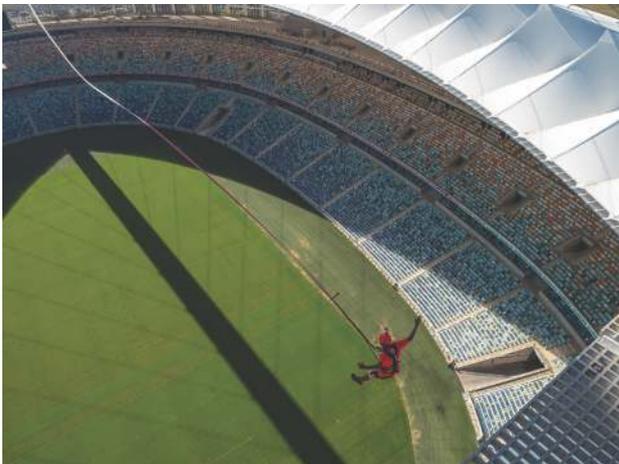


will be spearheaded by the Department of Tourism. Tourism Minister Tokozile Xasa highlighted that the aim of the plan is to grow a world class and sustainable coastal and marine tourism destination that leverages South Africa's competitive advantage in nature, culture and heritage.

ADVENTURE

With over 300 adventure activities and counting, South Africa is undoubtedly the adventure capital of the world. The country has options across world-class climbing, surfing, diving, hiking, horseback safaris, mountain biking, river rafting – and just about any other extreme sport you can name, and all supported by dedicated and authorised operators.

South Africa's diverse terrain, together with an ideal climate for outdoor activities, makes it a treat for adventure sports enthusiasts. The Rainbow Nation offers a mix of varied soft and hard-core adventure activities.



There is something for everyone right from mountain walks to shark cage-diving to the Big Rush Big Swing. It has been officially named the world's tallest swing by the Guinness Book of Records since May 2011. Not the average swing, the aptly named Big Swing allows one to take the thrilling leap swinging out into a massive 220 metres arc where one soars into the centre of the stadium.

South Africa also has the highest commercial bridge bungee jump in the world at the Bloukrans Bridge which is 216 metres above the Bloukrans River. It is one of the ultimate activities to feature on any adrenaline seeker's bucketlist while visiting South Africa. The growing popularity is evident by the fact that 5000 Indians attempted the Bloukrans bungee in 2016.



In fact, Indians are the top 2nd nationality to bungee jump off the Bloukrans Bridge and the top 3rd nationality to undertake Shark-cage diving in South Africa.

Some of the other must-do adventure activities when in South Africa are abseiling from Table Mountain in Cape Town, monster scooter adventure, mountain boarding and snorkeling with seahorses on the Garden Route.

South Africa also offers amazing value-for-money, especially for adventure activities. For example, while a bungee jump across the globe costs anywhere between INR 6000 – 13000, Bloukrans Bridge in South Africa – one of the most popular bungee jumping destinations in the world – offers it for INR 4700. (Source: Thrillopedia).

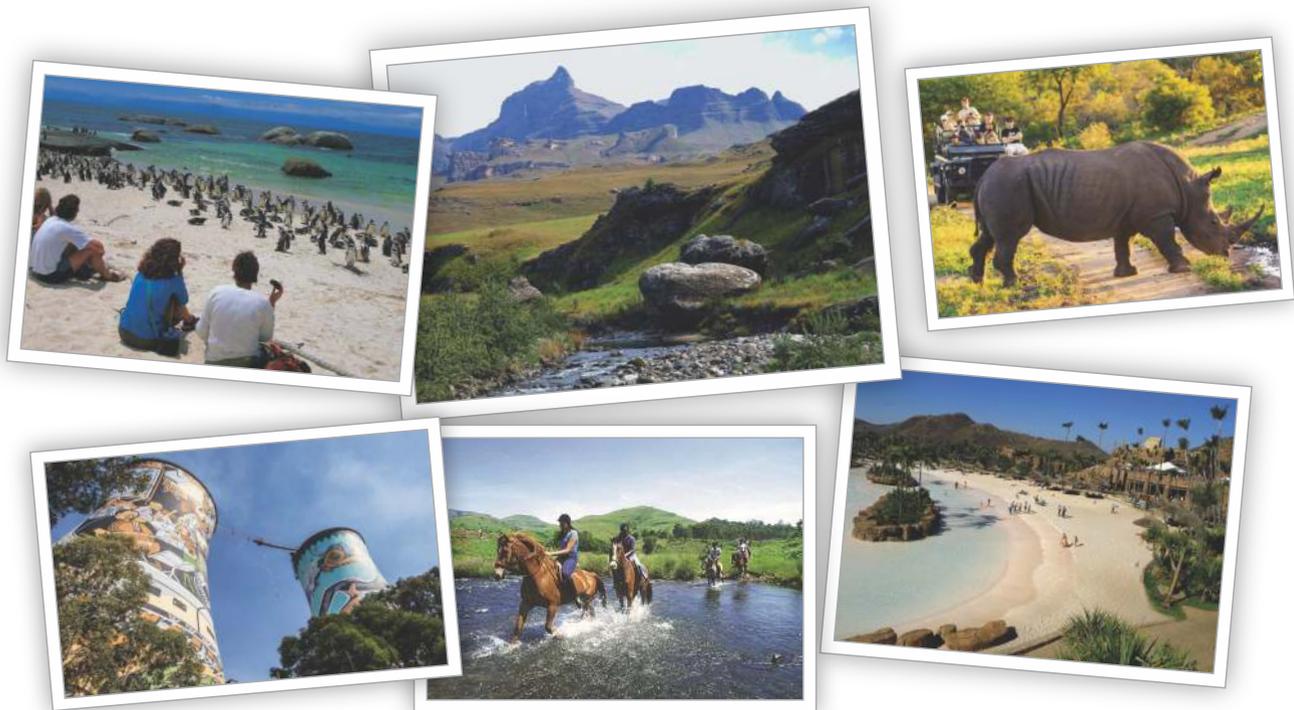
HIDDEN GEMS

With South Africa witnessing a marked shift toward 'experiencing', the unexplored gems of the country are fast making their way to holiday wish lists. Knysna is already on a lot of Indian itineraries due to its proximity to the Bloukrans Bridge. About an hour self-drive from Cape Town is Franschhoek, famous for its scenic beauty, vineyards, cuisine and art.

In Eastern Cape, the Drakensberg region offers a relaxing break with lots of options for outdoor activities such as hiking, biking and horseback riding trips into the mountains.

Northern Cape is South Africa's largest province and





blessed with vast, open spaces, unique vegetation and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, which is renowned for its lions. It is also home to the Namaqualand Flower Route and lies roughly five hours north of Cape Town. In full bloom during July to October, the riot of flowers is a stunning and colourful visual to take in. They can be viewed while driving through the region. There are also numerous hiking and cycling routes that allow for a closer experience of the indigenous flora of the land.

CULTURE AND HISTORY

A big part of what makes South Africa special is its empowering history and unique cultures and traditions. South Africa is alive with historic and cultural depth and it really is the foundation of this nation’s beauty.

Located at about an hour’s drive from Durban, the Valley of 1000 Hills is home to one of the largest and oldest ethnic groups in South Africa – Zulu Tribes! The traditional dancing, cultural shows, local craft markets and a dramatic landscape, all come together to weave a culturally immersive experience. Lesedi Cultural Village in North-West Province and Maboneng Precinct in Johannesburg are also thriving examples of the cultural melting pot that is South Africa.

Historic landmarks like Robben Island and Satyagraha House transport visitors back in time to experience the turning point of South African and Indian history. Standing in the jail cell that housed Nelson Mandela or getting a touch-and-feel experience of Mahatma Gandhi’s struggle evokes nostalgia and gratitude for the freedom the world enjoys today.

Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa says of Robben Island, “Follow Nelson Mandela to the prison cell he occupied for over two decades on Robben Island. A short ferry ride from Cape Town takes you to the island’s small harbour. A tour of the prison conveys the hardship its occupants were subjected to.

Standing in the cell that held Mandela captive is an extraordinary, life-changing experience. You cannot stop thinking about how someone who was confined to the brutality of this place can emerge with such humanity, even toward his captors.”



WTC Trieste Helps Economies Promote and Develop Business and Commerce



World Trade Center Trieste is located in the strategic Port City of Trieste. The Center has successfully merged the customs free port with the industrial zone thereby creating an industrial innovation hub called Freeway Trieste under the leadership of **Ms. Andrea Wood Garwood, WTC Trieste Vice President and WTCA Board Director.** With an illustrious career, spanning almost a decade work in various aspects of international trade and real estate, Ms. Garwood has helped build WTC Trieste to what it is today, specializing in warehousing and logistic services for importers and exporters world over. Excerpts of an interview:

How is World Trade Center Trieste serving the needs of the trading and business community in the City of Trieste? What are some of the best practices that you have adopted in promoting trade and business?

The main role of WTC Trieste is to attract foreign business investors by providing a landing pad to begin trade at an international level. WTC Trieste provides our business community with a historic commercial real estate location with offices that are available for rent. There are various rental options to suit all business models. Market analyses, marketing strategy, customer identification, networking business events are all trade services that WTC Trieste provides in collaboration with the local chamber of commerce and other professional associations in the region. Another element of our trade services package is our Business Academy, where courses are offered to our members that are very specific to our European reality. For example, workshops providing assistance

with European innovation and research frameworks or business etiquette courses. Inversely, WTC Trieste acts as a showcase for foreign businesses who are interested in investing in our city, in particular and in our port.

The trade service we offer is a Business-to-Business web portal

“There's no reason why Freeway Mumbai cannot come to fruition and WTC Trieste will gladly provide the information and know-how to make it happen.”



focused only on Italian food and wine products. Its success is due to a warehouse management system which is capable of storing, managing, and delivering more than 13,000 different food and beverage products.

In your opinion how have the free port and free zone, enabled trade and business of your City and in turn the country? Further, how has it helped WTC Trieste in promotion of business and commerce?

Firstly, it's important to understand why Trieste is significant as a port. It is all due to its positioning on the map as the gateway to Europe for goods coming in through the sea route, particularly, the goods coming from the Far East through the Suez Canal. Empress of Austria, Maria Theresa was the creator of the free trade zone in the port of Trieste, dating back to 1719. You can say, we have the experience! Historically, traffic has always passed through Trieste on its way to northern Europe. It's natural that the industrial zones and high quality logistic services

have come about from this dynamic City. In fact, Samer & Co Shipping SpA is the sole owner of the WTC Trieste license and is the most important shipping agent in Trieste with various companies located directly in the port.

WTC Trieste has merged our customs free port with our industrial zone to create an industrial innovation hub called Freeway Trieste. A key element to its success is the creative input on behalf of the most important science park in all of Italy, Area Science Park, which is located in Trieste. The goal of the Freeway Trieste is to vitalise our port and industrial zones by attracting new and innovative businesses through the applied industrial research coming out of the science park. Being located in the customs free zone provides advantages such as delayed customs duty payment, no customs formalities, exempt tax



“ WTC Trieste can organise matchmaking in many sectors ranging from wine exports to architectural design studios to supply chain logistic companies. ”



“My message to Indian businessmen and women is: Now is the moment. Come and visit us in Trieste.”

status, unlimited foreign status for goods, and much more. Freeway Trieste is our vehicle to promote and develop business and commerce.

What are the possible synergetic activities you foresee between WTC Mumbai and WTC Trieste? Which are the sectors you would like to promote, thereby improving the export competitiveness of the City and how would you go about it?

WTC Mumbai and WTC Trieste have quite a few things in common. Both rent office spaces and both provide trade services. Obviously, Mumbai's sheer size commands a different dynamic, but I am confident there is a future for collaboration in store. Freeway Trieste can be duplicated anywhere in the world where there is a port, a free trade zone, and a science park. There's no reason why Freeway Mumbai cannot come to fruition and WTC Trieste will gladly provide the information and know-how to make it happen. WTC Mumbai is strong with trade missions and WTC Trieste welcomes delegations in all sectors. WTC Trieste can organise matchmaking in many sectors ranging from wine exports to architectural design studios to supply chain logistic companies. The sky is the limit.

What is the mandate of WTC Trieste to promote small businesses and start-ups?

WTC Trieste is extremely proud to have organised together with WTC Las Vegas a group of 50 Italian start-up companies that headed to the CES trade show this January 2018. Once again, because of the unique collaboration between WTC Trieste, Area Science Park, and their

incubator, Innovation Factory, these young companies will have a tangible and pivotal experience.

How has the network of WTCA New York helped build WTC Trieste's network across the world?

The WTCA network has been fundamental to the success of WTC Trieste for so many reasons. WTC Trieste is 100% private, so we have to be constantly creating new ways to generate revenue. The network has provided successful connections with clients around the globe, thanks to the fantastic rapport with other WTCs. Whether it is wine export or online digital platforms for Italian food products, the network has provided us with reliable partners that we consider family. Twente, Indianapolis, Gibraltar, are to name just a few of the trusted partner WTCs that came forth from the network.

For two years in a row, WTC Trieste has hosted the European Meeting, where not just Europeans but WTCA members from all over the globe have participated, due to the high interest in the logistic hub in Trieste and the Free Trade Zone.

How is WTC Trieste partnering in India's ambitious initiatives such as Make in India, Digital India, Start-up India?

Currently, WTC Trieste does not partner with Make in India, Digital India, and Start-up India but I sincerely hope this will change. Our



lines of communication are always open.

What is your message to the Indian businessman looking to do business in Trieste?

My message to Indian businessmen and women is: Now is the moment. Come and visit us in Trieste. If your business can benefit from customs free zone (for example, exporting goods to Europe), WTC Trieste will 'hold your hand' and explain from A to Z the whole picture. Foreign investment like Indian manufacturers opening a warehouse in the free trade zone of Trieste will be beneficial to everyone. It's important to stress here is that no business is too small. We welcome everyone, and from all sectors. Instead, for the Indian businessmen and women looking for Italian products to import back home, we have a large, verified, pool of clients waiting to meet you.





India-China Economic Relations: A Primer

Ravi Bhoothalingam

Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi

As the second and fourth-largest economies in the world respectively, it would be logical for China and India to infer that greater and mutual economic engagement between them — by way of trade, investment, tourism, financial and technological flows — would be in the national interest of both nations. However, for various reasons, this has not happened. Though China is India's largest bilateral trade partner in absolute terms (US\$70 billion in 2016, having grown hugely from a mere US\$ 2 billion in 2002), the Sino-Indian trade relationship is still just one-third of that of China-Korea (US\$218 billion), and even lower than China-Vietnam (US\$97 billion).

Investments by China and India in each other's economies are still minimal, even though there is increasing interest now among the Chinese to invest in India, especially in brownfield projects. Indian tourists to China number about 700,000 per year, while Chinese tourists to India are only about 200,000. These minuscule numbers tell a dismal story, as they represent a mere fraction of China's 84 million outbound tourists, or of India's 18 million. Overall, the India-China canvas of engagement is narrow.

Further, over the years, India has persistently run a bilateral trade deficit with China, which amounts to US\$ 46 billion in 2016. This has caused political worry in India; (rationally, it is difficult to understand why — for trade balances should be looked at not in bilateral terms, but in the overall picture.) However be that as it may, since the deficit is a reality — and a worry — we need to figure out how to deal with it.

Logic tells us that since the merchandise trade balance is the net figure of exports and imports, increasing exports to China is an obvious solution. So is attracting tourists from China: tourism being an invisible export, an inflow of tourists from China would reduce the overall adverse trade balance (merchandise plus invisibles). Reducing imports from China — all other things being equal — would also achieve the same result. Finally, inward investment from China would help, since it would counteract the deficit on the revenue account through a positive infusion on the capital account.

However, theoretical solutions are useful only as far as they are feasible and timely. So, how should we evaluate these four options: (i)

increase exports to China (ii) increase tourism from China (iii) decrease imports from China and (iv) increase inward investment from China? What are the priorities among these alternatives? Let us consider each, briefly in turn.

① Indian exports to China are predominantly of commodities and raw materials such as iron ore. This is one of the reasons for the trade imbalance - India is not competitive in many value-added exports. However, there are areas such as information technology and pharmaceuticals where we do have advantages. Indian information technology produces some excellent products, and — combined with the Indian story of Aadhar, Jan Dhan and Mobile linkage (JAM) — many applications are possible in India as well as other countries in and around the theme of financial inclusion. In pharmaceuticals, the price of Indian generic drugs is well below what the Chinese pay for their medicines. A compelling case can be made that Indian generic exports to China can help that country provide more inexpensive healthcare to its people. Since India imports a lot of Chinese drug intermediates Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs)

for its formulations, the Chinese API business can be a natural ally in supporting the growth of India's generic business. Strange, is it not?

Our real problem in penetrating the Chinese market is one of insufficient and granular knowledge of its nature and working methods. To start with something as simple and obvious as the language gap: India has a lack of translators and interpreters skilled in Mandarin. Indian industry and our government need to work together in a much more purposeful manner to build the knowledge and skills that can drive Indian exports into China's huge and expanding market. However, this will take time, and so this option can only be a medium-term target.

② On the other hand, stimulating inbound tourism from China is a relatively low-hanging fruit. What is required to be done is well-known: simplified visa procedures, a good stock of Mandarin-speaking tour guides, some imaginative tourism offers and products drawing on India's strengths and specially created for different segments of the Chinese outbound tourism market. And above all, a creative communication strategy in China's social, print and TV media presenting India as a novel and engaging destination for the Chinese traveler. The problem here—within India—is: no single company is willing to invest money to develop the Chinese tourism market as above, lest competitors steal a march on them. To overcome this 'free rider' issue, the Indian tourism industry and our Government need to get together and produce a plan. Understanding the complex Chinese market will



require time, talent and resources, and can only be accomplished through strategic cooperation by all players on the Indian side. Such action will yield immediate results.

③ Reducing imports from China — through bans or additional duties — is a bad idea, other than for particularly egregious cases of 'dumping'. The reason is that when imports take place legally, they represent genuine demand from Indian citizens for those products in preference to others. Interfering with these market forces will only mean redistributing the pleasure and pain differently, but still among Indian citizens: namely, those who deprived from buying the cheaper Chinese goods (like cell phones) will suffer, while those now able to sell the more expensive local variant will prosper. Such protectionist moves will also not help India expand her entry into larger plurilateral trade groupings, like Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) or the newly-revived Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and therefore are not in our long-term interest.

④ The last option - to increase Chinese investment into India - seems not only the fastest and most productive way to bridge the trade deficit, but also brings great benefits

on its own standing. China has over US\$ 3 trillion as reserves in foreign currency. It is looking for good investment opportunities where its investment can earn a return better than the very low yields on US Treasury bonds. India has a huge need for investment in infrastructure facilities such as railway modernisation, port development, innovative industrial parks, energy projects

etc., all areas where China has both strength and experience. Further, India presents a safe and stable investment destination, with a favourable demography. Indeed, Chinese investment can accelerate 'Make in India' and create enormous employment opportunities in its wake, particularly in relatively low-skill areas like apparel, garments, leather, toys etc. These are areas where China is vacating the manufacturing space due to high labour costs.

India and China have some serious problems between them, the border issue being the most important. However, we should try and separate these legacy issues from the conduct of rational economic relations between the two countries. While the geo-political matters might well take time to resolve, seizing economic opportunities through greater engagement could yield quick and visible returns for both countries. Indeed, by addressing economic issues seriously (and separately), we might produce mutual and significant economic welfare, thus mobilising public opinion toward an equitable solution to the hitherto intractable border problem.

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2017 Member Seminar - A Report



The annually held Member Seminar of World Trade Centers Association, New York (WTCA, NY) was held from October 15-17, 2017 at Convene in New York. The key event of the Association was designed for new-member orientation and education, training and learning for the WTCA community. This year the seminar drew more than 140 participants, representing over 65 World Trade Centers (WTCs) across the world, making the event one of the most highly participated ones in recent years. The objective of the event was to present new ideas on ways of better utilising the WTCA network and to make meaningful business connections with fellow colleagues, in a different format.

The primary objectives of Member Seminar are:

- Share and examine best practices from across WTCA network and through its diverse membership facilitate, interactive workshops and round tables, in different tracks which will help select and explore common challenges and possible new, collaborative approaches on breakthrough solutions
 - Host experts from outside the network, to discuss issues faced in businesses, and provide a platform to interact with speakers
 - Foster stronger, more meaningful business relations among members
- 2017 Member Seminar commenced with a Welcome Reception on October 15, 2017 at the Robert Restaurant in the Museum of Art and Design, presenting an opportunity for World Trade Center representatives to network with each other.
- October 16, 2017 was dedicated, to collaborative workshops and round tables led by the innovation experts. The course of the day was as follows:
- WTCA Briefing which was led by Mr. Scott Ferguson, Chief Executive Officer, WTCA, NY
 - Keynote presentation made by Mr. Elmar Mock, Founder, Creaholic
 - Global Best Practices Workshop moderated by Phillips & Co. The workshop enabled delegates to explore a range of best practices while also sharing their own expertise in pre-selected tracks, collaborating with fellow members who share similar interests and challenges
 - New Member Orientation was presented by WTCA, NY staff. The programme was designed specifically for new WTCA members who have joined the Association within the past two years and/or new staff of existing members. The orientation threw up opportunities to familiarise oneself with trade tools, trademarks and operations of WTCA, NY
 - WTCA, NY breakthrough roundtables were moder-

ated by Phillips & Co. The round tables helped in developing innovative solutions to actual challenges faced during work. With the help of innovative tools one can learn how to leverage the WTCA, NY network in new ways and create post-seminar action plans

- Member Spotlight Flash Session enabled delegates to acquaint themselves with WTCA network in a quick and flash-session format

The Day ended with ample opportunity to reflect on the sessions held with WTCA colleagues.

October 17, 2017 was packed with interesting sessions and presentations by eminent speakers and panelists who shared their perspectives on the challenges faced in trade and business and allowed members to interact with experts. The course of the day was as follows:

- Keynote presentation made by Mr. Russell Dubner, President and Chief Executive Officer, Edelman US
- Thought-provoking Panel Discussion on 'Surviving Retrenchment: How to Thrive In An Age Of Exits'
- 2018 General Assembly at WTC Leeuwarden was a formal invitation to all WTC members to come, explore and discover the opportunities for trade and investment available in the City of Leeuwarden
- An introduction to Member Advisory Councils which provides an additional forum to connect with others who have similar interests and to create deeper bonds among members

- Member-to-Member Connect – This prime opportunity helped explore effective and instrumental ways to better run WTC operations and collaborate with the network

Mr. Y. R. Warekar, Executive Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai presented an overview on the Centre's forthcoming Global Economic Summit (GES)



which is now in its 7th edition on the theme 'Accelerating MSME Growth, Development and Sustainability' in February 22-24, 2018. Thereafter, a film on GES 2018 was screened.



Seminar Based on Gandhian Vision of Rural India

A seminar on 'Realisation of Mahatma Gandhi's Vision of Rural Industrialisation under the leadership of Hon'ble Minister Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi' was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with Federation of Association of Small Industries of India and All India Association of Industries. The seminar was inaugurated by General (Dr.) V. K. Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India and Mr. Anand Rao Adsul, Member of Parliament, Government of India.

General Singh presented an award to Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai for her exemplary work in promoting MSMEs of Maharashtra and for her leadership in executing various initiatives for Cluster Development in the State.

The seminar was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on October 11, 2017 at WTC Mumbai.



General (Dr.) V. K. Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India (third left) presenting an award to Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai. Also present (L-R): Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Anand Rao Adsul, Member of Parliament, Government of India and Ms. Ministhy S., IAS, District Magistrate Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh.

Workshop for Start-ups Focuses on IITF and Much More

An orientation workshop for startups was organised by Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation (MSSIDC) in association with World Trade Centre Mumbai and All India Association of Industries. The objective of the workshop was to introduce India International Trade Fair (IITF) and accelerate startup participation for the

event. The workshop was conducted by Mr. Shivaji R. Daund, IAS, Managing Director, MSSIDC, where more than 100 startups across Maharashtra participated in the workshop.

Held from November 14-27, 2017 in New Delhi. Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation (MSSIDC) represented the Government of Maharashtra, and organised the Maharashtra Pavilion at the event. World Trade Centre Mumbai and All India Association of Industries were partners of the IITF.

This year the theme chosen was 'Startups' since they make a sizable contribution to the overall economic growth. It was an excellent opportunity for startups to showcase and market their products and services to various state governments, overseas investors and all attendees of the event. MSSIDC offered free of cost stalls and assisted in travel and accommodation of shortlisted startups.



From (L-R): Mr. Shivaji R. Daund, IAS, Managing Director, Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Development Corporation (MSSIDC) and Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.

The workshop was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on October 12, 2017.

Brazil to Step Up Strategic Technological Partnership with India in Agribusiness

An interactive meeting with a high-level business Brazilian delegation representing agro and food technology industry was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with All India Association of Industries. Mr. Marcelo Eduardo Lüders, President, IBRAFE (Brazilian Institute of Beans and Pulses) said, "We should look at ways to improve Brazil-India strategic partnership and jointly explore real possibilities to increase the existing trade basket between our countries by holding periodic discussions. There still exist big possibilities of supplying more agro products to India.

So let us work together in creating a conducive environment toward increasing bilateral trade between our countries".

Ms. Rosimar Da Silva Suzano, Consul General, Consulate General of Brazil in Mumbai said, "The Brazilian Delegation is here to explore possibilities of increasing trade between our countries in food and agro products as a result of the talks held at the high-level meetings during the BRICS Summit in Goa. Agriculture and food security was high on the agenda. India has a growing urban population and there is a growing need for food. Brazil can help ensure India's food security in a sustainable manner through the exchange of latest food processing and agriculture technology. Since Brazil and India are signatories to the strategic partnership, we must share our expertise, improve quality standards and technological know-how". Ms. Suzano added that Brazil is strong in pulse production and India requires pulse imports, so both countries can work together in achieving their individual targets.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai said, "Brazil can help India in acquiring the latest agri technology in order to increase its agro production. India can learn a lot from Brazil so that it could foster fruitful collaborations with the private



From (L-R): Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Ms. Rosimar Da Silva Suzano, Consul General, Consulate General of Brazil in Mumbai; Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Mr. Marcelo Eduardo Lüders, President, IBRAFE (Brazilian Institute of Beans and Pulses).

sector in agriculture, which is currently only with the public sector. 40 per cent of the agriculture produce perishes even before it reaches the markets, Brazil can share its expertise in averting such post-harvest waste.

Mr. Kalantri added that India-Brazil bilateral trade stands at USD 6.5 billion and trade is in Brazil's favour which can be improved through cooperation in sectors such as IT, crude oil, pharmaceuticals, automobiles and auto components. Brazil can take advantage of the opportunities in India through its ambitious programmes such as Make in India, Digital India, Startup India etc. The World Bank in its Ease of Doing Business Rankings 2018 declared that India had jumped 30 notches which is a positive move for Brazil to take stock and foster collaborations in areas such as mining, energy and biofuels, Mr. Kalantri opined.

The event concluded with our 100 pre-arranged business-to-business meetings between the high-level business delegation and trade and industry representatives.

The interactive meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on November 1, 2017.

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Expo Indonesia 2017 Business Fair Inauguration

Expo Indonesia 2017, a business fair was inaugurated by Mr. Jaykumar Rawal, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Government of Maharashtra. The Expo was represented by 100 delegates from Indonesia across all sectors of the economy and had the participation of approximately 70 companies at the exhibition.

The Expo was held at the Expo Center, World Trade Centre Mumbai on November 3, 2017.



Mr. Jaykumar Rawal, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Government of Maharashtra (second right) inaugurating Expo Indonesia 2017. Others (L-R): Dr. Révai-Bere Norbert, Consul General of Hungary, Hungarian Consulate General in Mumbai; Mr. Saut Siringoringo, Consul General of Indonesia, Indonesian Consulate General in Mumbai and Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.

India-Uzbekistan Target USD 1 billion Trade in Next 2 Years, says Avaz

An interactive session on 'Investment Climate and Tourism Potential' was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with All India Association of Industries. Mr. Avaz D. Khodjiev, Counselor (Trade & Economic), Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan said, "Uzbekistan is setting up seven new Free Economic Zones (FEZ) to attract foreign and domestic investment. We welcome Indian companies to set up their businesses in these zones. We are willing to dedicate one of these zones exclusively for Indian companies. Further, Indian companies can also explore the great tourism potential that Uzbekistan has to offer in ecological tourism, health tourism, sport tourism and business tourism".

"I am confident that by exploring cooperation in the above areas, the existing bilateral trade of US\$ 370 million can reach US\$1 billion projected in the joint road map set out by our two countries in the coming years", Mr. Khodjiev opined.

Mr. Khodjiev suggested Indian companies to consider Uzbekistan as gateway to the CIS countries and Georgia, with whom it has signed a free trade agreement. Uzbekistan also has a Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status with 45 countries including India.

In his presentation on 'Free Economic Zones in

Uzbekistan and Tourism Potential', Mr. Khodjiev spoke of the macroeconomic stability of his country citing that the GDP has risen at the rate of about 8 per cent in the last few years; total external debt does not exceed 18.5 per cent; Internal public debt fell from 18 per cent in 2000 to 0% in 2014; export grew by more than 30 times between 1990 and 2016; and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) of US\$ 1014 million in 2007 to US\$ 4000 million in 2016. Uzbekistan has made substantial progress in terms of ease of doing business on parameters such as contract enforcement, purchasing power parity, starting a business, resolving insolvency and getting credit. Further, Uzbekistan is in the top 5 fastest growing economies in the world. It is rich in raw materials such as ferrous, non-ferrous metals and oil and natural gas resources.

Mr. Khodjiev further spoke of the 3 active FEZs namely FIEZ NAVOI, FEZ DJIZAK and FEZ ANGREN which are exempt from most taxes and offer privileges and incentives. The new upcoming 7 free economic zones are Nukus Pharm FEZ, Zomin Pharm FEZ, Kosonsoy Pharm FEZ, Syrdaryo Pharm FEZ, Boysun Pharm FEZ, Bustanlik and Parkent Pharm FEZ and Gijduvan, a New Industrial Free Economic Zone. Kokand FEZ was recently announced on September 5, 2017. All FEZs were offering scope for activities in the areas of fruits and vegetables and deep processing of agricultural



Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai (left) felicitating Mr. Avaz D. Khodjiev, Counselor (Trade & Economic), Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan (right). Also seen is Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Uzbekistan in India and Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.

products, storage and packaging industry; textile industry; carpet industry; footwear and leather industry; environmentally safe, chemical and petrochemical industry; pharmaceutical industry; food industry; electrical industry; mechanical engineering; motor-car construction; production of building materials industry etc.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Uzbekistan in India and Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai said, "With improvement in the ease of doing business and India's ambitious initiatives such as Make in India, there are innumerable opportunities between Uzbekistan and India which can be explored. The bilateral trade of 370 million is meager and there are much more opportunities in minerals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, chemicals, oil and gas, automotive, agriculture, construction material, tourism etc. Uzbekistan is an independent and dynamic country and both countries can work together in trade-related and trade promotion areas and thereby foster fruitful collaborations."

Mr. Kalantri suggested that both countries can explore possibilities of direct flights between Uzbekistan and Mumbai. He also said that multiple entry visas of 5-10 years can be granted as is given in Europe, US and Canada, in order to provide a fillip to business and tourism.

The interactive session was held at World Centre Mumbai on November 4, 2017.

Participation in Smart Asia 2017

World Trade Centre Mumbai participated in SMART ASIA 2017 at the invitation of Taipei World Trade Center (TWTC), the organiser of the event. SMART ASIA 2017 focused on smart technology and smart city solutions. Mr. Anil Velde, Joint Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai represented the Centre at the event.

Government of India has embarked on its mission to create 100 smart cities in next 5 years to create citizen friendly and sustainable living solutions. The Urban Development Ministry, Government of India further aims to partner with various countries and global leaders to bring in best practices to this mission. SMART ASIA 2017 featured three main categories: Smart City Solutions, Smart Technology Applications, and City Development Products / Services highlighting Smart Transportation, Smart Water Management,



Smart Energy and IoT Solutions and Services. With more than 40 Taiwanese organisations, this exhibition provided sizable platform for industry professionals and government organisations from India and Taiwan to exchange insights and an opportunity for collaboration between Taiwanese expertise and the available opportunities on the Indian side to forge new partnerships.

The event was held in Bengaluru from November 23-25, 2017.

Donation to Maharashtra Chief Minister's Relief Fund

As part of World Trade Centre Mumbai's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities toward social welfare projects for the benefit of the local communities and weaker sections of society, Mr. Kamal Morarka, Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai presented a cheque of Rs. 31 lakh to Maharashtra Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

"The token amount is a humble contribution made by World Trade Centre Mumbai to the Government of Maharashtra's welfare scheme, which I am sure will be used for various activities benefiting the poorest sections of society that the Government initiates from time to time", said Mr. Morarka. On the occasion Mr. Morarka was accompanied by Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.



From (L-R): Ms. Sangeeta Kalantri Jain; Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Devendra Fadnavis, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Maharashtra; Mr. Kamal Morarka, Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.

Mr. Devendra Fadnavis, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Maharashtra thanked World Trade Centre Mumbai for donating generously toward the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

The meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on November 7, 2017.

Peru-India to Sign Trade Agreement Soon, says Mr. Cabello

A panel discussion on 'Business Opportunities in Peru' was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with All India Association of Industries and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, Peru. Mr. Clever Pantoja, Country Head, AJ Group India said, "By introduction of Goods & Services Tax (GST), the government really means 'Ease of Doing Business'. Introduction of 'one tax one nation' will lure foreign investors like us to invest in India which offers huge opportunities to foreign companies and investors. I believe that success in India ensures success in the world".

Mr. Pantoja, the producer of 'Big Cola' – a carbonated caffeine-free soft drink further added, "I already have a presence in India and with my innovative product, range, competition and pricing, it's a great opportunity for Doing Business in India, and many others from Peru and Latin American countries will take up the existing opportunities to invest in India and do business".

"Peru is the 3rd largest country in Latin America with the fastest growing GDP. With rapidly rising economy, it is becoming one of the most important markets for investments in Latin America. It is an attractive business destination for Indian companies in manufacturing, hydrocarbon, mining, agri and agro-processing sectors with low custom tariffs and open investment regime. It is one of very few countries in the world with positive trade balance," said Mr. Luis Cabello, Commercial Counsellor from the Embassy of Peru in India.

Mr. Cabello further added that in September 2016, Peru and India concluded the joint feasibility study for an agreement in trade of goods, services, investments and cooperation. Peru and India shall sign the Trade Agreement soon.

IG International is one of the largest importers of Peruvian fresh fruits in India. Mr. Tarun Arora, Chief Executive Officer, IG International said, "With changes



Mr. Y. R. Warekar, Executive Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Tarun Arora, Chief Executive Officer, IG International; Mr. Vijay, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Luis Cabello, Commercial Counselor, Embassy of Peru in India; Mr. Clever Pantoja, Country Manager, AJE Group India; Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Mr. Kanish Gupta, Owner, Supreme Enterprises.

in consumer patterns, and growth of organised retail, India is expected to import nearly 60,000 kgs of avocados next year." Similarly, Supreme Enterprises is the largest importer of Peruvian quinoa.

Mr. Kanish Gupta, Owner, Supreme Enterprises said that similar to India, agriculture is one of the most important sectors of the Peruvian economy. In 2016, it was adjudged as the 'Best International Destination for Super Foods'. Peru has been distinguished as the 'World's Best Culinary Destination' for the past five years at World Travel Awards. It has large varieties of fruits and vegetables. This includes nearly 4000 varieties of potatoes, many varieties of quinoas, grapes, avocados, mangoes, blueberries, corn, citrus fruits, lentils, seafood, etc.

India receives Peruvian organic mangoes around October-November every year. There is a tremendous potential for importing super natural foods such as avocados, quinoas, blueberries from Peru added Mr. Gupta.

Mr. Gupta commented, "With nearly 400 million middle class consumers in India coupled with upward mobile lifestyles and awareness of healthy food, which all goes in to making quinoa a popular super food". He further added that his company is planning to introduce snack items using Peruvian quinoa to the Indian market.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade

Centre Mumbai said, "India and Latin America are two complementary economies. India is one of the biggest importers of oil and gas from Latin America and is one of the largest exporters of steel, automobile, IT and pharmaceutical products. The bilateral trade between India and Peru is more than USD 1700 million in 2016-17. There is a great potential to promote tourism in Peru. With value additions in various products, the bilateral trade is expected to grow multifold. This will help to bring in prosperity with high employment and exports".

Mr. Kalantri further added that distance is no more a disadvantage between India and Latin America. With improved infrastructure, Indian businesses have huge potential to expand their operations in Latin American countries.

Mr. Y. R. Warekar, Executive Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai mentioned that there is vast potential for trade cooperation to ignite both economies separated by distance and culture. The stronger ties of cooperation and pro-active approach will further help enhancing presence of Indian companies in Peru.

The seminar was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on November 29, 2017.

GES 2018 Promotion to Seek Poland's Participation

Ms. Aleksandra Sobczak, Chief Specialist, Economic Promotion Department, Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PFR Group) visited World Trade Centre Mumbai to meet its officials, discuss ways to collaborate and jointly promote international trade between India and Poland. Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai introduced the 7th Global Economic Summit on Global Value Chains: Accelerating MSME Growth, Development and Sustainability to be held from February 22-24, 2018 at World Trade Centre Mumbai. Ms. Naik solicited support from Ms. Sobczak to promote GES 2018 among the Agency's members, affiliates and associates.

The meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on December 1, 2017.



From (L-R): Mr. Anil Velde, Joint Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Ms. Aleksandra Sobczak, Chief Specialist, Economic Promotion Department, Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PFR Group) and Ms. Dolly Awati, Joint Director-Corporate Communication and Trade Promotion, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai.

EPFO Settlement Time to be Reduced to Three Days from 20 Days, says Mr. Aditya Sah

An interactive meeting on Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with All India Association of Industries. Mr. Aditya Sah, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-I, Employees Provident Fund Organisation, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India said, "Today more than 1.65 crore employers have subscribed to Provident Fund and 7 crore employees are in the ambit of Employee Provident Fund. The new scheme- Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) aims to further generate employment as part of the Prime Minister's programme. However, so far only 250 companies have taken benefit of this Yojana in Mumbai; whereas other States are far ahead.

Mr. Sah highlighted that out of the INR 156 crore benefit disbursed across India under PMRPY, Mumbai has a share of only INR 5.36 crore. Therefore, there is tremendous potential to increase the coverage of establish-



Mr. Aditya Sa, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-I, Employees Provident Fund Organisation, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India [left] addressing the participants. Also seen is Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai (right).

ments in Mumbai under this scheme.

Mr. Sah further informed, "Under India's digital programme, the EPFO offers online service to 4.5 crore employees and the Regional Office of Bandra settles 60,000 claims every month. Out of these claims, only 450 are pending for more than 20 days. We need to bring down the settlement time to 3 days in future. In Mumbai, currently there are 29 lakh contributing members and 9,000 companies subscribing to Provident Fund. In view of the digital online service, we feel

more and more employees will come in our ambit as Provident Fund is not only a saving but it also gives timely help in the form of housing loans, medical and other benefits to employees".

Mr. Amit Chougule, Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner, Employees Provident Fund Organisation, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India delivered a presentation on

PMRPY and the latest initiatives of EPFO.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai said, "Many of the employees are not aware of the new scheme. There is a need to create awareness among employees to avail of the benefits of

the new scheme. It is also important to generate confidence among the employees for timely benefit".

The interactive meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on December 7, 2017.

GES 2018 Promotion at Vendex 2017

A team from World Trade Centre (WTC) Mumbai participated in Vendex 2017 which is an industrial exhibition and national vendor development programme. WTC Mumbai exhibited various promotional material on the forthcoming 7th edition of Global Economic Summit on 'Global Value Chains: Accelerating MSME Growth, Development and Sustainability' to be held in February 22-24, 2018.

The event was organised by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India and MSME-Development Institute, Mumbai in association with the Chamber of Small Industry Associations (COSIA), Thane near Mumbai. The objectives of the event were to promote Public Procurement Policy of Government of India, provide opportunities to Micro Small Enterprises (MSEs) to showcase their capabilities to potential buyers, provide opportunities to Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and government departments to identify potential suppliers and vendors from MSE, to



World Trade Centre Mumbai exhibits GES 2018 promotional material at a stall.

organise interactive meetings and conferences to promote flow of business from government undertakings and PSUs to MSEs.

The exhibition-cum-programme was at Navi Mumbai held from December 9-11, 2017.

Women's Empowerment is Key to Development of the Economy

An interactive meeting on 'Empowering Women in Global Markets and Presentation on SheTrades' was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE) and All India Association of Industries. The objective of the meeting was to emphasise the importance of the growing number of women's participation in mainstream economy and their significant contribution to the overall growth of India. Traditionally, women have been predominantly homemakers. They are now venturing to seek employment with the help of technology and available digital networks. The presentation on Shetrades enabled World Trade Centre Mumbai, verifiers of the Shetrades to create more awareness on the importance of women's contribution to the mainstream economy. Shetrades is a mobile and web app,

an initiative of the International Trade Centre (ITC), Geneva which seeks to connect one million women entrepreneurs to markets by 2020.

The meeting was marked by experience sharing of women who have made a difference to society. Dr. Vayjanti Pandit, City Champion, Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE) said, "Women are multiskilled and talented and have very strong will to win. Entrepreneurship is gender agnostic. Women should continue to be positive about their goals and their businesses. Always rise after every fall".

Ms. Sucharita Eashwar, Founder and CEO Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE) said, "Networking is very important to reach out to your correct audience. Dream

big, work to reach there and make it happen”.

Mr. Mahinder Chugh, President, Keiretsu Forum said, “Passion, will and knowing your subject irrespective of



Dr. Vayjanti Pandit, City Champion, Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE); Ms. Sucharita Eashwar, Founder and CEO Catalyst for Women Entrepreneurs (CWE); Ms. Neha Kare Kanabar, Founder, UniverseofMoms; Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Mr. Mahinder Chugh, President, Keiretsu Forum.

your gender will lead you to achieve your goal and drive success”.

Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai said, “Several studies have suggested that women-owned businesses can contribute significantly to the nation's GDP”.

Ms. Neha Kare Kanabar, Founder, UniverseofMoms said, “Before branding your products or services, focus on branding 'yourself'. Social media isn't just a way for you to talk to people who may potentially visit you. It's a way of getting your name out there into the world. In case someone needs your services, they can find you. The only way you're going to increase your odds and achieve true success is by putting your personal brand at the fore front of the company.

Ms. Farhana Haque, Vice President-Internet of Things, Vodafone said, “Irrespective of what products or services you are selling, take feedback from your peers, customers and competitors and never fear to fail - it's all about conviction and belief, just be you”.

The interactive meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on December 13, 2017.

GES 2018 Promotion to Seek Sannam S4 Participation

Mr. Michael Green, General Manager-India, Sannam S4 visited the World Trade Centre Mumbai to meet its officials, discuss ways to collaborate and jointly promote international trade between India and United States of America. Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai introduced the 7th Global Economic Summit on Global Value Chains: Accelerating MSME Growth, Development and Sustainability to be held from February 22-24, 2018 at World Trade Centre Mumbai. Ms. Naik solicited support from Sannam S4 as an 'Outreach Partner' to promote GES 2018 and garner support from American companies for participation at GES 2018.

The meeting was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai on December 22, 2017.



Mr. Y. R. Warkerkar, Executive Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai (second left) felicitating Mr. Michael Green, General Manager-India, Sannam S4 (second right). Also present are Mr. Anil Velde, Joint Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai (extreme left) and Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai (extreme right).

Celebrating 25 years of Bilateral and Cultural Relationship between India and Uzbekistan

A Musical Evening 'Sangeet Sandhya' by Uzbekistan's Havas Guruhi was organised by Consulate of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Mumbai in association with the Embassy of Uzbekistan in India on the occasion of celebrating 25 years of bilateral and cultural relationship between India and Uzbekistan.

H.E. Mr. Farhod Arziev, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to India who was present at the event said, "There is tremendous opportunity for exchange of cultural and trade ties between India and Uzbekistan. In the next 3 years trade should cross 1 billion especially in sectors like pharmaceuticals, food processing, textile etc.

H.E. Mr. Arziev further added that India and Uzbekistan share excellent diplomatic and cultural relations which needs to be enhanced further. He also invited Indian companies to explore the tourism potential that Uzbekistan has to offer especially in ecological tourism, health tourism, sport tourism and business tourism.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Honorary Consul of Republic of Uzbekistan in Mumbai and Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai said, "Organising this event is just the beginning of the programme under 25 years of Bilateral and Cultural Relationship between India and Uzbekistan and we look forward to organise many more such events in the coming years".

Mr. Kalantri further said "With improvement in the ease of doing business and India's ambitious initiatives such as Make in India, there are innumerable opportunities between Uzbekistan and India which can be explored. The bilateral trade of USD 370 million is meagre and there are much more opportunities in minerals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, chemicals, oil&gas, automotive, agriculture, construction material, tourism etc. Uzbekistan is an independent and dynamic country and both countries can work together in trade-related



From (L-R): Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Honorary Consul of Republic of Uzbekistan in Mumbai and Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai felicitating H.E. Mr. Farhod Arziev, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to India.

and trade promotion areas, thereby fostering fruitful collaborations".

The Havas Guruhi group from Uzbekistan led by Mr. Ermatov Rustamjon Gulomjonovich, Director, Havas Guruhi Group performed popular Hindi and Marathi melodious songs which were appreciated by the audience.

The program was well attended by diplomats, consul generals, representatives from trade and industry and others.

The musical evening was held at the Y. B. Chavan Auditorium in Mumbai on December 27, 2017.

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Cloud - An Effective Platform for E-commerce

A workshop on 'Smart Business on Cloud' was organised by World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar in association with Batoi Systems Pvt. Ltd. with the objective to create and enhance awareness of MSMEs on the use of Cloud Technology. This technology serves as a means to shift consumption and delivery of IT over the internet with the goal of simplifying processes more effectively. The session was conducted by Mr. Ashwini Kumar Rath, Founder Director & Chief Executive Officer, Batoi Systems Pvt. Ltd., providing an insight into reorienting business processes with the help of cloud computing and analytics. The talks and demonstrations thus aimed at helping entrepreneurs to understand the best practices and tools to achieve greater productivity in their business.

Mr. Rath through his presentation outlined the various usages and implications of Cloud. His deliberations emphasised on the need for a website, a mobile app, an e-commerce storefront and enterprise software tools to manage data and workflow for a business, in order to use the Cloud Platform.

He shared the details of how Cloud Platform enables users to build, deploy, use and manage cross-device software applications on the cloud, without any upfront investment, thereby ensuring that the user does not face any extravagant costs and does not have to make large capital investments. Understanding the varied need of users, Cloud Platform with specific tools enables users to customise software apps to handle specific workflows and software usage.



From (L-R): Mr. Ashwini Kumar Rath, Founder Director & Chief Executive Officer, Batoi Systems Pvt. Ltd. and Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar.

Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar spoke of the importance of constant upgradation of business practices by MSMEs in order to sustain businesses and also be competitive in global markets. She further highlighted that World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar assists and handholds MSMEs of Odisha by familiarising them with various aspects of business performance.

The workshop was held at the World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar on October 28, 2017.

Conference on Rural Marketing

A Conference on 'Rural Marketing' was organised by World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar in association with Centre for Agri Management, Utkal University. The conference presented a platform for industry experts from Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector to talk on various aspects of rural marketing in India.

Mr. Piyush Agarwal, Director, Agarwal Spices & Food Processors Pvt. Ltd. provided an insight on the 'Branding & Promotion Strategy for Rural Consumers'. While encouraging entrepreneurship he deliberated that enterprises which focus on rural markets should consider certain vital and basic facts before venturing into it. "Identification and a thorough understanding of

the market in terms of realising ground level issues and adoption of a problem-solving product or service accordingly are the key factors" he added.

He further deliberated that rural markets are fragmented and do possess a robust consumption pattern as a result of which successful brands have a lifetime existence with such consumers. While talking about effective channelisation of products he emphasised on efficient realisation of pain-points, appropriate product modification, product improvisation and necessary value addition to be put in place in order to have a sustained business in rural markets. He also explained the various challenges in terms of infrastructure, distribution, affordability, availability etc. which are

generally faced by the entrepreneurs in such markets.

Mr. Prabhar Choudhury, Head-Market Dynamics, Aranyak EcoHarvest Pvt. Ltd., in his address while talking about 'Market Linkages', presented a detailed case study of his organisation's success in establishing various models of rural and urban market linkages. He emphasised on creation of synergy through convergence and partnerships as the key to establishing the necessary linkages between the rural products and urban consumers and vice versa.

Deliberating on the 'Emerging Issues in Marketing of Consumer Products in Rural Areas', Mr. Akshay Kanungo, Senior Consultant, MART through his presentation highlighted various critical areas such as

consumption patterns, influence of wider reach of media and telecommunication services which have provided information to India's rural consumers and is influencing their purchase decisions, increasing value provided by products and services which involves aspects of price combined with utility, aesthetics and features, and not just low prices.

Mr. Jatindra Mishra, Head-Centre for Agri Management, Utkal University provided a macroeconomic view of rural markets in India. He further highlighted the FMCG and agriculture sector which significantly contribute to the increasing rate in rural consumption of urban products.

Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research,

World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar shared World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar's objective of conducting more of such informative programmes in its endeavour to educate and cultivate local trade and industry, while working toward the growth of the economic portfolio of the state.

The conference was held at the World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar on November 10, 2017.



From (L-R): Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar; Mr. Jatindra Mishra, Head-Centre for Agri Management, Utkal University; Mr. Prabhar Choudhury, Head-Market Dynamics, Aranyak EcoHarvest Pvt. Ltd.; Mr. Akshay Kanungo, Senior Consultant, MART and Mr. Piyush Agarwal, Director, Agarwal Spices & Food Processors Pvt. Ltd.

State Industry Secretary Solicits Support to Promote Odisha's Investment Opportunities

Mr. Sanjeev Chopra, IAS, Principal Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Odisha met key functionaries of World Trade Centre (WTC) Bhubaneswar with a view to discuss diverse and new investment opportunities that the State of Odisha offers across multiple sectors. The objective behind the discussions was to work toward transforming Odisha into an investor's paradise.

Mr. Chopra introduced 'Invest Odisha' and solicited World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar's cooperation for promoting the event. He further expressed interest in allocating land for building WTC Bhubaneswar and appreciated the trade promotion activities organised by the Centre, thereby promoting trade and business of the state.

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Director, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar elaborated on the role of World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar in development and growth of SMEs and the overall industrial fraternity of Odisha and assured all support to 'Invest Odisha'.

The interactive meeting was held at the Trident Hotel in Mumbai on November 30, 2017.



From (L-R): Mr. Sanjeev Chopra, IAS, Principal Secretary, Industries Department, Government of Odisha, Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Director, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar, Mr. Y. R. Warkerkar, Executive Director, MVRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, World Trade Centre Mumbai.

Workshop on Quality Control & Management for Micro Enterprises

A workshop on Quality Control & Management was organised by World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar in association with Urban Micro Business Centre. The workshop was organised with an objective to provide an insight on various quality control measures and quality management techniques with special focus on micro enterprises.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Subrata Panigrahi, Founder Director of Institute of Quality and Environment Management Services Pvt. Ltd., Bhubaneswar Area. Mr. Panigrahi firstly deliberated on the prerequisites of quality control. He further highlighted on 5s (five Japanese words: seiri, seiton, seiso, seiketsu, and shitsuke which translates to Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize, Sustain respectively) model, quality standardisation and discussed critical aspects such as market survey, process control, customer satisfaction etc.



From (L-R): Mr. Subrata Panigrahi, Founder Director of Institute of Quality and Environment Management Services Pvt. Ltd. and Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar

Discussing the economics of quality, Mr. Panigrahi advocated appropriate knowledge of regulations and techniques of production by the personnel engaged with production units as indispensable. "Achievement of due standards of quality and effective marketing of the products is only possible through creation of awareness and technical expertise", he added. He also addressed various topics such as importance of environmental demonstrations in terms of hygiene, waste management, and shelf life analysis as key factors influencing quality management at production units. He informed entrepreneurs on how establishment of control mechanisms could be set in place by implementing appropriate testing procedures.

Ms. Nimeshika Natarajan, Manager-Trade Research, World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar highlighted World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar's objectives which are geared toward improving the socio-economic portfolio of the state. "Micro enterprises play a pivotal role in influencing and boosting trade, commerce and economy of a country", she said. Such enterprises must be encouraged and provided with suitable mentoring from time to time, empowering them to develop not only into a successful but a sustainable business unit within a certain span of time" she added.

The workshop was held at the World Trade Centre Bhubaneswar on December 12, 2017.

GST Awareness Workshop for MSMEs and Consumers

A GST Awareness Workshop for MSMEs and Consumers was organised by World Trade Centre Goa in association with World Trade Centre Mumbai and Customs and Central Excise Department. The objective of the workshop was to create awareness on the new rules and regulations of GST to MSMEs and consumers.

The key speakers at the workshop were Mr. Gaurav Kumar Jain, IRS, Assistant Commissioner, IRS (C&CE) at CBEC, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Dr. Raghavendra Raikar, IRS, Assistant Commissioner, GST.

Questions relating to filing of GSTR-3, provision for revising GSTR-1, adding invoice-related issues on the system, were specially taken up for discussion. Notable suggestions that came forth included MSME's difficulty to pay the advance tax upfront, especially if the line of business is seasonal. Similarly, MSMEs suggested that the requirement of monthly filing of returns caused undue hardships as they spent more time in tax compliance matters rather than marketing and sale of production. Hence, an appeal was made to change filing of returns to half yearly instead. MSMEs also suggested the limit of INR 75 lakh per year, under the Composition Scheme, which may suitably be increased, to enable more of the small units to register under the GST regime.



From (L-R): Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa; Mr. Gaurav Kumar Jain, IRS, Assistant Commissioner, IRS (C&CE) at CBEC, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Dr. Raghavendra Raikar, I.R.S. Assistant Commissioner, GST.

The officials informed the delegates that problems and suggestions faced by MSMEs were more of a structural kind and hence they should make representations to the GST Council.

Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa helped facilitate the event.

The workshop was held at the World Trade Centre Goa on October 6, 2017.

Workshop on GST - Returns Filing

A workshop on GST Returns Filing was organised by World Trade Centre Goa in association with World Trade Centre Mumbai, Central Board of Excise and Customs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and The International Centre, Goa. The workshop was designed to help representatives of industry to seek clarification on various issues of the GST system.

The key speakers at the workshop were Mr. Gaurav Kumar Jain, IRS, Assistant Commissioner, IRS (C&CE) at CBEC, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Dr. Raghavendra P. Raikar, IRS, Assistant Commissioner of GST.

Dr. Raikar highlighted the recent changes introduced to the Composition Scheme. The eligibility for enrolment under this scheme is based on aggregate turnover which was capped at INR 75 lakh which now has been increased to INR one crore, thereby making the scheme available to more MSMEs. He informed that under this scheme companies would have the opportunity of filing quarterly returns as against monthly filing of returns, filed earlier. Under this scheme no taxes are required to be collected, hence, no tax input credit can be availed. Dr. Raikar emphasised that this would result in lesser cost and less time spent on compliance as far as maintenance of accounts was concerned.



From (L-R): Dr. Raghavendra P. Raikar, IRS, Assistant Commissioner of GST; Mr. Gaurav Kumar Jain, IRS, Assistant Commissioner, IRS (C&CE) at CBEC, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa.

Mr. Jain made a presentation which provided solutions to problems on filing of GSTR-3B, GSTR-1 and Trans -1.

Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa highlighted the various initiatives taken by World Trade Centre Goa to enhance business productivity and effectiveness with the objective of encouraging and facilitating International Trade.

The workshop was held at the World Trade Centre Goa on October 16, 2017.

Seminar on Swiss VET: The Gold Standard in Vocational Training

A seminar on 'Swiss VET - The Gold Standard in Vocational Training' was organised by World Trade Centre Goa in association with Swiss Indian Chamber of Commerce, Mumbai, SkillSonics India Pvt Ltd. and World Trade Centre Mumbai. The event showcased the Swiss VET Model, Switzerland's expertise in the field of vocational training and specific initiatives of Swiss Skill Development in India.

Chief Guest, Mr. Vivek. B. Kamat, Director-Technical Education, Government of Goa, began his address by giving an overview of the various courses currently offered. He stated that in the current scenario, on the industry front there has been a paradigm shift in the methods used to employ and hire labour force. He said Industry has to recast job requirements, descriptions and specifications, keeping in mind changing technological advancements, educational Institutes, both formal and informal in order to have highly skilled manpower that can be absorbed by industry.

Mr. Kamat opined that, currently, engineers are expected to do a number of activities once employed in a particular Industry, leaving them with no quality time to do the core activity of engineering. He was optimistic that the Swiss VET Model would provide

the much-needed skills to upgrade output and quality of Indian labour force.

Mr. Larry D'Souza, Chief Executive Officer, Swiss Indian Chamber of Commerce, spoke of his association with the Swiss VET pilot project that was initiated in 2008. He also shared that the project involved six Swiss compa-



From (L-R): Mr. Swaroop Naik, President, Tuem Industrial Estate Manufactures Association and Director, Pai Kane Group of Companies; Mr. Vivek. B. Kamat, Director-Technical Education, Government of Goa; Mr. G. P. Chandra Kumar, Founder, Co-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, SkillSonics India Pvt. Ltd. and Mr. Stany Oommen, Factory Manager, Nestle India Ltd, Bicholim, Goa.

nies in Pune which gained tremendous success, and he would like to see the same in Goa as well.

Mr. G. P. Chandra Kumar, Founder, Co-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, SkillSonics India Pvt. Ltd. informed that the 3-year pilot project started in 2008 in India, has been successful and well received. SkillSonics, he said, will offer various diploma and certificate courses for students passing out of the 10th standard as well as Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). They will also offer 'Train the Trainer' programmes.

Mr. Kumar also spoke on the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQL) and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) Sector Skill Council (SSC) Model and elaborated that SkillSonics creates value through analysis, curriculum, enablement, training and assessment aiming at the success of an individual as well as society at large through building up attitude, skills and knowledge. Mr. Kumar informed that they will be aspiring to train one million technicians by 2022.

Mr. Stany Oommen, Factory Manager, Nestle India Ltd, Bicholim, Goa, spoke on Swiss VET: The Indian experience, and said that in Switzerland the job profiles do not matter, every job is given equal status, which is not the case in India. He opined that for every change there has to be a start, and Goa being a small state, may

rightly be where it can start looking for this change to happen, and if successful, the same can be implemented all over India. He said that the focus is not only on engineering aspects but also on others like skilling of carpenters, masons, hotel receptionists etc. as the industry needs multi-skilled personnel who contribute tremendously to the reduction of cost of production and enables the company to make products available in the market at a right price.

Mr. Swaroop Naik, President, Tuem Industrial Estate Manufactures Association and Director, Pai Kane Group of Companies stated that he was convinced that the Swiss VET Training Module would bring in the right kind of skill sets that the industry requires. He said that Goa is a place where professionally skilled labour is hard to find. He hoped that this model of vocational training would be implemented all over the state and he would be willing to support the initiative so that it would be successful in the State of Goa.

Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa, helped in facilitating the Seminar.

The seminar was held at the World Trade Centre Goa on November 10, 2017.

Export-related Issues and More Discussed at a Session with DGFT

An interactive meeting with Mrs. Shakuntala Naik, ITS, Deputy Director General of Foreign Trade, was organised by World Trade Centre Goa in association with Directorate General of Foreign Trade and World Trade Centre Mumbai.

Mrs. Naik addressed the participating exporters on the various aspects of the revised Foreign Trade Policy of 2015-2020. She began her address on Goods and Services Tax (GST) related reforms and their impact on export of finished goods. An exporter has an option of either obtaining refund of GST already paid or obtaining exemption from payment of GST on submission of letter of undertaking or bond. She informed that merchant exporters have been allowed to pay nominal GST of 0.1% for procuring goods from domestic suppliers for exports. Mrs. Naik opined that uniform tax rates across states have led to a huge logistics and transaction cost saving for exporters.



From (L-R): Mrs. Shakuntala Naik, ITS, Deputy Director General of Foreign Trade and Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa.

Mrs. Naik further spoke on repositioning of the export strategy laying emphasis on continued support to multilateral rule-based trade and increasing ease of trading across borders, through trade facilitation and promotion of exports by MSMEs and labour-intensive sectors.

Regarding the ease of trading across borders, she emphasised that a professional team is envisaged to handhold, assist and support exporters with export-related problems, to access export markets and to meet regulatory requirements. She pointed out that systems are in place to closely monitor and reduce dwell time at ports, airports and Inland Container Depots (ICDs), through coordination among customs and the ministries handling infrastructure.

Enhanced scope and incentives as a percentage of exports under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS), duty-free procurement of raw materials or inputs used for manufacturing export products under Advanced Authorisation Scheme, Export Promotion of Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme, Market Access

Initiative (MAI) Scheme to act as catalysts to promote exports, were some of the exports promotion schemes that were explained by Mrs. Naik.

Exporters enthusiastically participated in the Open House Session. Mrs. Naik encouraged exporters to visit the office of the Deputy DGFT to be advised on solutions to issues and challenges faced while promoting exports.

Mr. Cyril Desouza, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Goa explained the purpose of World Trade Centre Goa which helps facilitate and enhance exports. He also apprised participants of the various Initiatives and facilities WTC Goa offers exporters to enhance their reach in international markets.

The interactive meeting was held the World Trade Centre Goa December 21, 2017.



World Trade Centre (Goa) Association

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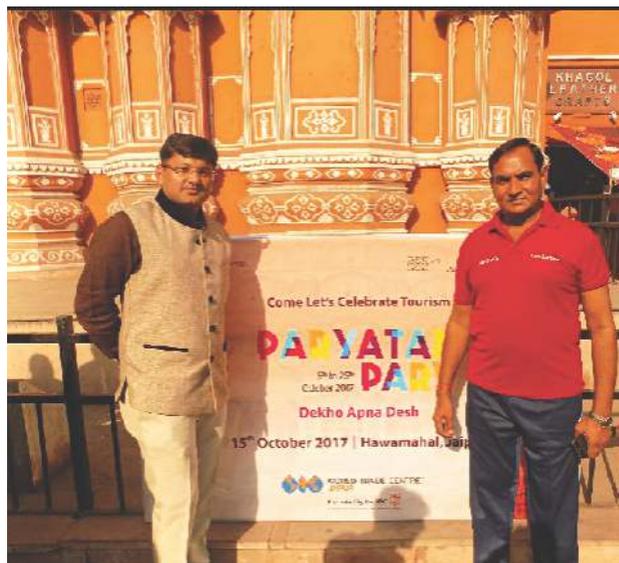


Paryatan Parv Helps Sensitise Tourism and Related Issues

World Trade Centre Jaipur organised 'Paryatan Parv' (Tourism Day) in collaboration with The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Hotels and Restaurant Association of Rajasthan (HRAR) and International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) Jaipur. The event was organised across the country from October 5-25, 2017. The objective of the programme was to focus on the benefits of tourism, showcase the cultural diversity of the country and reinforce the principle of 'Tourism for All'.

The Day was marked by a series of events and activities which included a walkathon, a sensitisation programme for tourism service providers and yoga demonstrations. In addition, it was further planned to organise such events at various other tourist destinations within the State, interactive sessions and workshops on varied themes related to skill development in the tourism sector and development of rural tourism sites.

Mr. S. R. Meena, Director, India Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India said, "In the last few years, youth travel within the country has witnessed a strong growth. Paryatan Parv is one event which motivates youth to travel to different parts of the country and also involves spreading the message of Paryatan Parv among stakeholders. The event aims at inculcating tourism culture among youth, so that they could become key influencers in promoting tourism in the country. As a part of the Paryatan Parv, celebrations included activities like Tribal Youth Exchange Programme, 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' - Inter State Youth Exchange Programme, Neighbourhood Youth Parliament (one programme in each state), District-level Cultural Programme (one programme in each state), Awareness Programme on the Importance of



From (L-R): Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur and Mr. S. R. Meena, Director, India Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

Tourism especially for Rural Youth and overall tourism (one programme in each state) covering a country-long celebration. In addition, activities like cyclothon, river walks, heritage walks and trekking were also organised".

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the event.

The event was held at Hawa Mahal in Jaipur on October 15, 2017.

Session on Export Procedure and Documentation

A session on Export Procedure and Documentation was organised by World Trade Centre Jaipur with a view to the rising demand for training in export-import documentation. Dr. Shikha Sharma, Professor, International Business and Economics, Amity University Jaipur conducted the session elaborating various aspects of documentation procedures and formalities.

Dr. Shikha explained, "In almost all countries, a onetime licensing procedure to act as an

exporter/importer is required to be completed. In India, Import Export Code Number (IEC number) is required to be an importer or exporter. She explained the various methods of payment in an export contract such as advance payment, Documents against Acceptance (D/A), Documents against Payments (D/P), Letter of Credit (LC). To cover the credit risk against overseas buyers, she explained the role of ECGC Limited (Formerly Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd). Dr. Shikha also explained important terms such as Ex-Works (EXW); Free on Board (FOB); Cost and Freight



From (L-R): Dr. Shikha Sharma, Professor, International Business and Economics, Amity University Jaipur and Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur.

(CFR); Cost, Insurance and freight (CIF); Delivered At Place (DAP), Delivery Duty Paid (DDP). She also discussed ways of availing export finance from the bank for pre-shipment or post shipment against export orders.

Dr. Shikha further discussed the role of national quality check agencies such as SGS (It is the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company), BVQI (Bureau Veritas' quality control and quality assurance (QC/QA)) etc. as per the terms and conditions between exporter and overseas buyers. She also explained the mechanism of international logistics for export.

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the event.

The session was followed by a discussion with the participants on how to make a successful career in exports.

The session was held at the World Trade Centre Jaipur on October 26, 2017.

Participation in MSME Jodhpur Workshop

World Trade Centre Jaipur participated at a workshop on 'Product Innovation Trends, New Marketing Techniques & Export Potential in Handicraft Sector' comprising exporting fraternity. The workshop was organised by MSME Jaipur and EPCH Jodhpur.

Mr. M. K. Saraswat, Director, MSME, Jaipur said, "To encourage the growth of MSMEs, both state and central governments have conceptualised schemes in such a way as to provide maximum benefits to enterprises falling under the MSME sector. Registration of an MSME is not mandatory, however, if done, it will help MSMEs reap several benefits from the government including credit at low interest rates, incentives on products for exports, excise exemption, statutory aid such as reservations, and the interest on the payments delayed due to unavoidable circumstances. To ensure that the MSME sector is not affected by stiff competition in the market, the central government has given exclusive rights to manufacture certain products only to this sector. Under the Government Stores Purchase Program, the central government has reserved the purchase of more than 300 products exclusively from this sector", he added.

Mr. Pradeep Ojha, Deputy Director, MSME Jaipur said, "New MSME schemes provide support through deputation of MSME business delegations to other



Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur interacting with participants.

countries for exploring new areas of technology infusion, up gradation, facilitating joint ventures, improving market of MSME products and foreign collaborations. Participation by Indian MSMEs in international exhibitions, trade fairs and buyer-seller meets in foreign countries as well as in India, holding international conferences and seminars on topics and themes of interest to MSMEs will greatly benefit them.

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur made a presentation on the Centre's activities and encouraged exporters to join it in order to benefit from its international linkages.

The workshop was held in Jodhpur on November 10, 2017.

Participation in World Trade Expo 2017

World Trade Centre Jaipur participated in World Trade Expo 2017 which was organised by World Trade Centre Mumbai in association with All India Association of Industries. A delegation from the Government of Rajasthan comprising senior officials from Industries Department namely, Mr. P. R. Sharma, Joint Director, Industries, Jaipur, Mr. Subhash Sharma, Deputy Director, Industries-Rural, Jaipur, and Mr. Nagesh Sharma, General Manager, Bureau of Investment Promotion, Government of Rajasthan participated in the Expo. The officials interacted with representatives from 37 consulates and embassies and other prominent states about the investment opportunities and emerging sectors of Rajasthan.

The first-of-its kind event provided a unique platform for Business-to-Business meetings with officials at the consulates, embassies and state governments to showcase various facets of co-operation for trade and investment. The participants and exhibitors seized the opportunity to explore various dimensions of co-operation in export-import, technology transfers, services and other areas with specific focus on MSMEs and other stakeholders.

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the State of Rajasthan's participation at World Trade Expo 2017.



From (L-R): Mr. Nagesh Sharma, General Manager, Bureau of Investment Promotion, Government of Rajasthan; Mr. P. R. Sharma, Joint Director, Industries, Jaipur; Mr. Subhash Sharma, Deputy Director, Industries-Rural, Jaipur and Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur.

The Expo was held at the World Trade Centre Mumbai from November 16-17, 2017.

Session on Real Estate Regulatory Authority

A session on Real Estate Regulatory Authority was organised by World Trade Centre Jaipur in association with Jaipur Chartered Accountants Group. Session speaker, CA Mr. Himanshu Goyal, Partner, Ramanand Goyal & Company, Jaipur said, "The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016 is an Act of the Parliament of India which seeks to protect home buyers as well as help boost investments in the real estate industry. The Act establishes Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) in each state for regulation of the real estate sector and also acts as an adjudicating body for speedy dispute redressal. The Act came into force on May 1, 2016 with some provisions that came into force on May 1, 2017." He further elaborated, "It is an Act to establish the Real Estate Regulatory Authority for regulation and promotion of the real estate sector and to ensure sale of plot, apartment in a building, or sale of real estate project, in an efficient and transparent manner. It also protects the interests of

consumers in the real estate sector and also establishes the Appellate Tribunal to hear appeals from the decisions, directions or orders of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority, the adjudicating officers and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

Discussing other provisions of the Act and on registrations under the Act, Mr. Goyal said, "The Real Estate Act makes it mandatory for all commercial and residential real estate projects where the land is over 500 sq. mtrs., or having eight apartments, to register with the RERA for launching a project, in order to provide greater transparency in project-marketing and execution. For ongoing projects that have not received completion certificate on the date of commencement of the Act, will have to register within three months. Application for registration must be either approved or rejected within a period of 30 days from the date of application to RERA. On successful registration, the promoter of the project

will be provided with a registration number, a login id and password for the applicants to fill up essential details on the website of RERA. For failure to register, a penalty of up to 10 percent of the project cost or three years imprisonment may be imposed. Real estate agents who facilitate selling or purchase of properties must have prior registration with RERA. Such agents will be issued a single registration number for each State or Union Territory, which must be quoted by the agent in every sale facilitated by him”.

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the event.



CA Mr. Himanshu Goyal, Partner, Ramanand Goyal & Company, Jaipur conducting the session.

The session was held at the World Trade Centre Jaipur on December 7, 2017.

Entrepreneurship Day Observed with Session on 'How to Become a Successful Entrepreneur through E-commerce'

Entrepreneurship Day was organised by World Trade Centre Jaipur. The topic of discussion was 'How to become a Successful Entrepreneur through E-commerce'. The Day was marked keeping in mind the importance of an ever-expanding world of e-commerce keeping in mind the opportunities that are open to entrepreneurs and startups.

Mr. Mayank Agarwal, Regional Manager, Flipkart, Jaipur who conducted the session said, "The entrepreneurs are considered 'change agents' in the process of industrial and economic development of an economy. The premium mobile role that entrepreneurs play in promoting industrial and economic development of an economy is well presented across the countries. Entrepreneurial ventures generate new wealth. Existing businesses may remain confined to the scope of existing markets and may hit the glass ceiling in terms of income. New and improved products, services or technology from entrepreneurs enable new markets to be developed and new wealth to be created. In addition, increased



From (L-R): Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur and Mr. Mayank Agarwal, Regional Manager, Flipkart.

employment and higher earnings contribute to better national income in the form of higher tax revenue and higher government spending. This revenue can be used by the government to invest in other sectors and human capital”.

Mr. Mayank further said, "An e-commerce transaction can be between enterprises, households, individuals, governments, and other public or private organisations. Included in these electronic transactions are orders made over the web, extranet or electronic data interchange. The type of transaction made is defined by the method of placing the order.

Normally excluded are orders made by telephone calls, fax or manually-typed e-mails." Citing cost advantage he said "For SMEs in developing countries, e-commerce has advantages of reduced information search and transactions costs (i.e., improving efficiency of operations reducing time for payment, credit processing, etc). Surveys show that information on the following is most valuable to SMEs: customers and markets; product design; process technology and

financing source and terms". He further added "unlike the requirements necessary to run a business from a physical building, e-commerce does not require storage space, insurance, or infrastructure investment on the part of the retailer. The only pre-requisite is a well-designed web storefront to reach customers".

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade

Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the event.

The Entrepreneurship Day was organised at the World Trade Centre Jaipur on December 8, 2017.

Organic Lunch Organised Showcasing Flavours of Rajasthan

An organic lunch was organised by World Trade Centre Jaipur along with Mr. Kamal Morarka, Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai. The first-of-its-kind event was planned with a view to ascertain the importance of adopting organic and vegetarian food habits into one's lifestyle. Besides, it gave an opportunity to showcase organic flavours of Rajasthan.

Hosted in the sprawling lawns of Entertainment Paradise, Jawahar Circle, in the heart of Jaipur, the dignitaries and attendees enjoyed the winter sunshine

and interacted with Mr. Morarka and Mr. Kalantri while enjoying traditional Rajasthani cuisines.

Mr. Kalantri, on the occasion met senior officials from the Government of Rajasthan and apprised them of various programmes organised by World Trade Centre Jaipur and World Trade Centre Mumbai. He also conveyed his regards to Commissioner Industries, Government of Rajasthan & Bureau of Investments, Udyog Bhawan for their participation in World Trade Expo 2017 held in Mumbai in November 2017. The officials were also briefed on the recently held WTO Public Forum in Geneva, Switzerland where Mr.

Kalantri and Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai participated in the Forum.

The lunch was attended and savoured by more than 2000 distinguished guests from all over the state of Rajasthan.

Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur helped facilitate the event.

The organic lunch was held in Jaipur on December 17, 2017.



From (L-R): Mr. Jaipdeep S. Balhar, Director, Airport Authority of India, Jaipur, Rajasthan; Mr. Kamal Morarka, Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai; Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Centre Mumbai and Mr. Navneet Agarwal, Assistant Director-Trade Promotion, World Trade Centre Jaipur.



Forging India-Russia Ties through Greater Economic Linkages

Himani Pant
Junior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation

2017 marks the completion of seventy years of the establishment of India’s diplomatic relations with Soviet Union/Russia. Despite their share of lows, especially in the beginning of the transformative 1990s, the relationship has evolved and includes cooperation in political, military-technical, economic, scientific and cultural spheres. However, dynamics of cooperation in these spheres remain uneven. The growth pace of military-technical cooperation is unmatched by other equally important pillars of the relationship. Of these, the economic ties constitute the weakest link.

In stark contrast to the robust economic ties with the Soviet Union, India’s current economic relationship with Russia is extremely limited. India’s exports to the Soviet Union totalled US\$ 2,881 million in 1989. Two decades later, the figure stands at US\$ 1,937.06 (2016). Similarly, total imports from Russia amounted to \$5,552.30 million last year. These figures, when compared with other countries (Table 1), reflect the bleak state of the bilateral trade relations. Figure 1 traces the share of India’s imports to and exports from Russia since 2010 - the year when the bilateral relations were accorded the status of ‘special and privileged partners’.

A quick glance at India’s imports to and exports from other major partners reflects the stagnant state of its economic ties with Russia.

Table 1: Comparison of total imports from and exports to Russia, the US, China and the EU for the year 2016-17 (in US\$ million)

2016-17	Imports	Exports
Russia	5,552.30	1,937.06
USA	22,307.44	42,212.27
EU	42,359.23	47,161.92
China	61,281.57	10,171.18

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Government of India

India’s total exports to Russia were worth just \$1,937 million as against \$42,212 million during that year to the US, \$10,171 million to China and \$47,161.92 to the European Union.

An approximate one percent share in total trade with a special partner brings to fore a lack of clear vision which has resulted in a loss of momentum in the relationship.¹ The same is also attributable to the absence of coherence in government-to-government policy toward Russia.

There are a few obvious hindrances to optimal trade ties like lack of

Figure 1: Total imports from and exports to Russia (in US\$ million)



Source: Ministry of Commerce, Government of India

¹ Dmitri Trenin, 'Pressing need to tap potential bilateral ties' in Konstantin Fets and Nandan Unnikrishnan (eds.) A New Era: India-Russia ties in the 21st century, Rossiskaya Gazeta, 2015, p.11.

connectivity, banking ties, low media ties, lack of information etc. However, these have been stretched for too long now. In reality, a strong political will and participation of the private sector is all that is needed to overcome these hindrances.

There is no denying the progress achieved in some of these directions, especially energy cooperation. Chabahar port is a case in point. Its progress after the signing of trilateral agreement on Establishment of International Transport and Transit Corridor last year is noteworthy and its first phase is now reportedly complete.² Along with boosting ties with Iran, the port would also bring India closer to Afghanistan and ultimately Russia. Both sides are also striving toward the creation of an energy bridge, including energy cooperation in nuclear, hydrocarbon and renewable sources.³ In August 2017, the Russian state-owned oil giant, Rosneft and partners Trafigura and United Capital Partners (UCP) finalised takeover of Indian refiner Essar Oil - a move that would increase its base in India as well as Asia.⁴ Energy cooperation could see a further boost if India is able to pursue successful swap arrangements with countries like Japan and Iran. Under one such swap, Russia would export oil to Northern Iran who in turn would deliver equal quantity of oil to India from its southern part.⁵ Another swap proposes for India's share from Sakhalin to be sent to Japan, which is geographically closer. In return, Japan's imports of gas from West Asia could come to India.⁶ Despite the fact that the swap deals require several rounds of negotiations from third parties, they are a good way to enhance cooperation with reduced costs.

Apart from energy ties, there is a need to scale up multi-faceted economic cooperation to achieve a catalytic improvement. Currently, the major items of trade could be summarised as follows:

Table 2: Major items of imports and exports

Export from India	Import from Russia
Pharmaceuticals, tea, coffee and tobacco, nuclear reactors and boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances, organic chemicals, electrical machinery and equipment	Pearls, precious and semi-precious stones and metals, nuclear power equipment, electrical machinery and equipment, mineral oil and products, iron & steels, and optical, precision and surgical equipment.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs

There is a need to push trade in the existing commodities mentioned in Table 2. For one, pharmaceuticals is one area carrying tremendous potential and requires

greater investment. Indian investors could also take advantage of the rising demand for alternative medicines like Ayurveda in the Russian market.

Similarly, cooperation can be beefed in the area of precious stones. India is one of the leading importers of diamonds and a large portion of its imports arrive via European intermediaries.⁷ Direct trade with reduced costs and a faster dispatch rate would positively contribute to overall trade between the two. In this respect as well as for other products, it would be interest on both sides to work toward rapid operationalisation of the Green Corridor. A Green Corridor envisions 'a list of entrepreneurs or companies, whose goods, on a reciprocal basis will not have to pass customs inspection' from both sides.⁸ The mechanism ensures an electronic pre-declaration issued for the cargo, whereby a unique individual number is assigned in accordance with a Green Corridor registry.

In a similar vein, early finalisation of the Eurasian European Union Free Trade Agreement would help India's economic relations not only with Russia, but also with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. This would also give the much-needed boost to India's Connect Central Asia Policy.⁹

At the same time, there is a need to diversify the area of cooperation. Apart from the usual areas of economic engagement, impetus needs to be given to small and medium businesses for which the participation of the private sector becomes crucial. This would be possible only when there is sufficient knowledge on both sides about each other markets. Dissemination of information would also boost financial and banking ties required for such cooperation. In addition, there is a strong demand for dairy products and fruits in the Russian market where the Indian investors could venture. In fact, the Ukraine-related sanctions on Russia provided a unique opportunity for India's agricultural produce but remains underutilised. Over and above shipping, agricultural

² <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/first-phase-of-chabahar-port-work-over-iran-tells-india-eyes-sunday-launch-4959524/>
³ <http://www.narendramodi.in/pm-modi-addresses-india-russia-business-forum-535694>
⁴ <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/essar-oil-completes-rosneft-deal-for-129-billion/article9824587.ece>
⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/russia-iran-energy/update-1-russia-offers-gas-oil-swap-deals-to-iran-idUSL8N12N1KU20151023?type=companyNews>
⁶ <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/COhNKrbpOKCjvCnk3q3m8H/India-leverages-Sakhalin-to-cut-transport-costs-of-imported.html>
⁷ <http://www.theworldreporter.com/2017/10/diamond-diplomacy-india-russia.html>
⁸ <https://www.ibef.org/archives/detail/bmV3cyYzNzc5MzEwEwNw==>
⁹ <http://www.orfonline.org/research/india-russia-economic-and-energy-cooperation-the-way-ahead/>

products to Russia, seasonal labour from India should also be explored extensively. Infrastructure development is another area where Russia could invest in. Projects like the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor offer a good opportunity for such cooperation.

Finally, information technology sector offers great scope for cooperation especially in the current context as it faces a setback in the US. The Indian IT sector is a well-established success story in the West. Both sides could collaborate to the advantage of the other in this sphere.

Conclusion

India's relations with Russia have come under scrutiny

in recent years. Skeptics question the relevance of traditional India-Russia partnership in the current scenario where both countries are perceived to have drifted away substantially. A major churn in global geopolitics is underway, making the outreach to other partners from both sides inevitable. However, a weak economic base in such a scenario adds to the disenchantment, which is often visible during public debates. A multi-pillared foundation of India-Russia relations based on robust economic linkages would go a long way in narrowing the drift in the relations.

(The author is currently pursuing her PhD at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University)



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Portall: An Application that Serves All Export-Import Needs

Mr. R. K. Ganguly
President, J. M. Baxi & Co.

The Export-Import (EXIM) industry in India has seen a massive growth, and this can be attributed to one major factor: the development of the e-commerce industry. With the advent of the internet it was only a matter of time before online, electronic shops were developed, since the internet was seen as an uncharted territory with major gains if navigated correctly. India is one of the largest importers in the market today, leading to a rapidly developing maritime industry. This includes physical infrastructure as well as IT, an example of this can be seen in the Port Community System (PCS) being redeveloped (Version 2.0), a project currently under the Indian Ports Association (IPA). The Port Community System has been in place since 2007, and is still a basic system designed only for keeping all stakeholders of the maritime industry on the same platform. Nevertheless, the PCS has brought about a new mode of working.

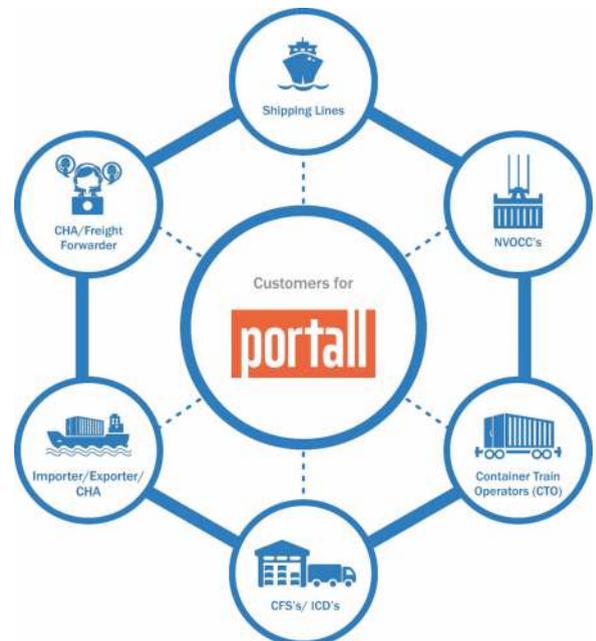
'Portall' is the world's first cooperative Logistics Management Application introduced to India providing solution to the ever-growing, ever-changing landscape of the EXIM Industry in the country. The trade has definitely seen a change over the years, especially now with more of the world turning to technology for a solution.

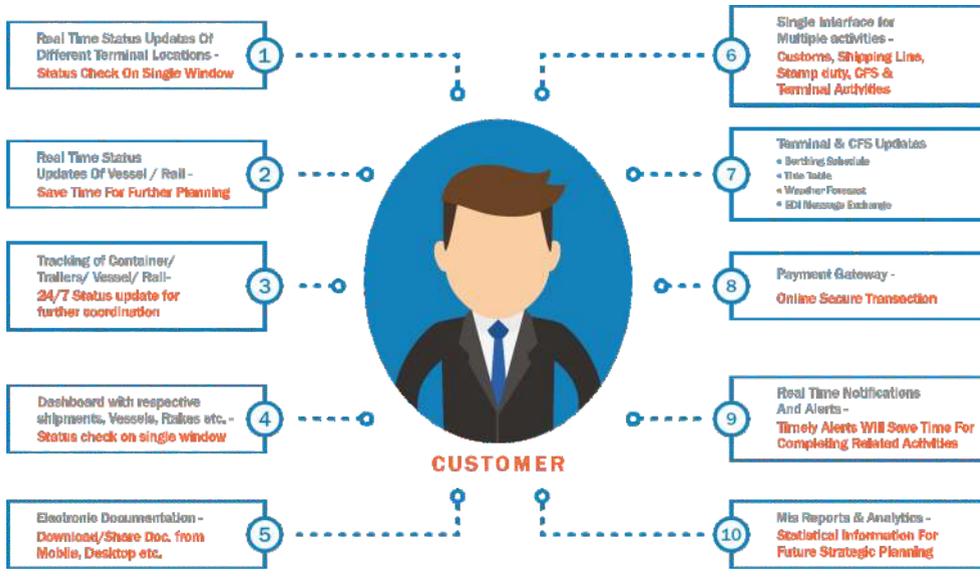
The web-based and mobile application is a subscription-based value-added service for the customers of Container Freight Station (CFS), Terminal and Inland Container Depot (ICD). It provides for a one-stop consolidated dashboard solution for customers to complete their import- and export-related shipments. Importers, exporters, Custom House Agents (CHAs), shipping lines, Non-Vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCCs), container train operators, CFSs and weighbridges are all customers of Portall. Portall enables the customers to have complete transparency and

trust in the entire import-export process with real-time updates, status, tracking, alerts and notifications.

Portall is more focused when it

Manage everything
in one place





various activities that need to be performed in import or export.

The issue of documentation is reduced with the services of e-documentation (e-DO, invoices, etc.) With Portall, the issue of documentation is removed by allowing the stakeholders to directly interact and communicate with other stakeholders over a single platform and from a single window. An example of this would be the documentation between a CHA and the

comes to addressing the needs of stakeholders within the maritime industry in India. By allowing end-to-end communication and interaction, a seamless one-window-one-interface mode of working and resolving the issue of documentation by making it as paperless as feasible.

Portall offers secure cloud-based storage having the advantage of being readily available from anywhere across the world via the Internet.

Major Issues

There are a plethora of issues faced by stakeholders of the maritime industry. These issues mainly focus on documentation at various locations and between various stakeholders. This can often be delayed due to a lack of proper communication or an overflow of data, for example at CFSs or customs. Another major challenge within an expansive ecosystem is interaction and communication between various

stakeholders which can be a major constraint to efficiency and valuable management of time. This includes the interaction of, for eg. a Line with its nominated CFS or with a forwarder or consignee. A lesser known issue is payment within the logistics sector that Portall aims to tackle.

The solution to all problems is in the form of a consolidated package of services and Portall has different modules for all. The application has a CFS/ICD module, a line module and a terminal module which has

respective Line, the CHA could request for mandatory documents through Portall, while at the same time, the Line will review and communicate via notifications and alerts.

Portall is looking to be a unique solution to the EXIM industry in the form of an electronic wallet. This reduces the time taken for payments to respective stakeholders, fewer trips to the bank and their representatives. An e-wallet would allow a user to simply complete all the work



needed from within the office through the computer, and even complete the final step: The payment. This would be in addition to the e-payment solutions already provided such as card payment and net banking.

The solution of Portall includes an 'empty yard solution' which includes the inventory management facility as well. A seamless experience for customers is provided by a smooth flow of services. The intuitive study helps understand how the real world functions and more changes are brought in with each enhanced version. The process is understood from each stakeholder's perspective and it provides everyone with something on their dashboard.

The customer can keep track of all his container movements in the history tab that is provided. Portall also provides a solution for Electronic Verified Gross Mass (e-VGM) which connects to the Form 13/6 to pre-advice. This will expedite the entire process of the movement from the CFS/factory to the terminal.

Portall will reduce time and save cost. The introduction of Portall in a logistics organisation will enhance its productivity. The documentation is electronic so it has reduced paperwork. The notifications and alerts keep one on track of what is happening with their shipments all across the chain which is the objective to bring transparency all the way. The more automation and digitalisation is going to bring the manual work to a rest and enhance more efficiency.

The fewer human errors will also tend to save certain costs. The delays tend to reduce as there is advancement. Cloud solution is provided for few stakeholders in order to keep up with their database and enjoy a much more seamless experience.

Portall Benefits

- Document Exchange - IGM, EGM, IAL, EAL, Import Baplie, Movins etc.
- Electronic Documentation - Reduction in Cost
- Proforma Invoice Request & Final Invoice
- Counter less Management - Reduced Manpower
- Payment Gateway - Secure Transaction
- Real time Update and Confirmation
- Extension Process
- Tracking of Container in Port and CFS
- Reports and MIS as per requirements
- Real Time Notifications and Alerts

Portall saves time in the following ways:

- Single interface for documentation
- Electronic Documentation which will be sent to respective users for further processing
- Delivery Status with tracking details which can be monitored from any location
- Terminal/CFS Updates and schedule to plan further activities
- Real Time Notifications and Alerts for each activity

By providing a single window, electronic documentation, real time updates and further integration with CFSs, ICDs, Terminals and Rail Terminals, which provides the users (stakeholders) with complete transparency regarding the whereabouts of their documentation, cargo and resources. Documentation would be instantaneous over the internet and can be tracked and verified over secure channels.

The solutions remove the need of middlemen between stakeholders

to move about physically and submit documents or complete customs clearance. Costs to companies such as the extra resources and instant delivery of documents can be avoided and in so doing, it would save time. In the long run this would speed up the documentation process by several times, allowing for a seamless EXIM in India.

Portall does not interact with the Government of India's single-window interface for facilitating trade, however seeing the level of communication and integration that Portall offers would be a great benefit to the logistics industry and a major boost to the IT infrastructure of the India's EXIM industry.

In conclusion, Portall or even PCS in India are examples of platforms that have aligned with the concepts of Digital India, Ease of Doing Business and Make in India. PCS has been a platform that has showcased the concepts. The objective of Portall is to bring transparency all the way by providing all stakeholders with solutions to reduce challenges and make it as easy and simplified as possible to continue with trade. Digitalisation is where the world is moving to and Portall can only further enhance it in the future. Understanding that the industry has a variety of stakeholders, needs and challenges, Portall provides customisable solutions to them without letting go of the standardisation that is brought in.

Portall is flexible to one's use and more benefits are to be added. So far the application has had positive feedbacks from its customers. It is marketed to interested stakeholders in order to bring in transparency at all levels in the industry.



World Trade Centre Institute of International Trade, Mumbai

Commencement of Basic Chinese Mandarin Course

World Trade Centre Institute launched its first language course in basic Chinese Mandarin. With China being one of the major trading partners of India, it was felt that Indian businessmen needed to learn the native language of Mandarin in order to successfully conduct their business with China.

The basic Chinese Mandarin course is a practical business conversational course designed for those who intend to use the Mandarin language in business settings and also for frequent travelers. Students will be equipped to read, write, understand and interact in basic business communication while dealing with Chinese partners. Exchanging greetings, arranging meetings, visiting companies, introducing products, business etiquettes in China are some of the takeaways from this course. Moreover, Mandarin will help in



From (L-R): Mr. Michael Lin, Director-TWTC; Ms. Rupa Naik, Senior Director, MVIRDC WTC Mumbai; Mr. A. O. Kuruville, Advisor-Trade & Education, MVIRDC WTC Mumbai; Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC WTC Mumbai and Ms. Jennifer Makhecha, Trainer, Chinese Mandarin.

communicating with locals not only from China, but from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore as well.

The batch has 24 participants from various sectors of the industry. The course is being conducted with the support of Taipei World Trade Centre (TWTC) Liaison Office.

The course was held at the World Trade Centre which commenced on November 2, 2017.



Captain Somesh Batra, Vice Chairman, MVIRDC WTC Mumbai addressing the participants at the inaugural lecture of Chinese Mandarin course.

Commencement of Certificate Course in Export-Import Business

A new syllabus was introduced in the fourth batch of the certificate Course in Export-Import Business (CEIB) to cover all the fundamentals of export-import business. The major subjects covered are export procedures and documentation; international marketing; export-import finance and exchange regulations and international logistics and customs procedure.

The current batch of nine students comprises entrepreneurs, persons from family business and executives working in export-import firms.

The course was held at the World Trade Centre which commenced on November 11, 2017.



Mr. A. O. Kuruville, Advisor-Trade & Education, MVIRDC WTC Mumbai (centre left) alongwith Professor Arvind Khedkar, faculty, WTI (centre right) with participants of Certificate Course in Export Import Business.

Field Visits to Port and Container Freight Station

Field trips were organised for students of Post Graduate Diploma in Foreign Trade (PGDFT) Batch 56 and 57 and certificate Course in Export Import Business (CEIB) Batch 3 and 4 to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Nhava Sheva Port and CFS – Punjab Conware. Forty-five students participated in the trip which was led by Mr. S. Binju faculty with logistics background.

The students got an opportunity to visit JNPT India's No. 1 container port. Mr. Ravi Gharat, Public Relations Officer, Nhava Sheva accompanied the students.

Students were briefed on port operations and procedures to be followed by vessels. Port authorities also shared information regarding various charges levied on liners; concessions given to Indian ships; capacity of the port to handle ships per day at different ports and different types of cranes (rail mounted gantry cranes, rail mounted quay cranes and rubber tyre gantry cranes).



Image 1



Image 2

Images 1 and 2: Field visit to JNPT.



Field visit Punjab Conware.

Post JNPT, students visited Punjab Conware, a Container Freight Station (CFS). Students were briefed on their warehousing facilities, container shipments, procedure related to export & import of cargo. They had the opportunity to interact with a custom officer. Students could physically experience dock stuffing carried out at the CFS area. Relevant fork lifts and Kalmars were seen and understood by the team. They also got an opportunity to visualise open top containers, reefer containers, liquid cargo container both in 20' & 40' sizes.

The field visits to JNPT and Container Freight Station were held on December 12, 2017.

WTO 2017 Ministerial Conference Ends without Ministerial Declaration, Clinches Couple of Deals

The eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference held at Buenos Aires, Argentina from December 10-13, 2017 concluded without a Ministerial Declaration. Despite multiple rounds of negotiations, Ministers were unable to reach a consensus on a Ministerial Declaration. With divisive sentiments prevailing, Ministers were at best able to clinch a few deals and decisions on the issues of fisheries subsidies, Work Programme on e-commerce, TRIPs non-violation and situation complaints, and Work Programme on Small Economies. Besides, on the final day of the Conference, three proponent groups announced new initiatives to advance talks at WTO on issues of electronic commerce, investment facilitation and micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs). The other notable event at the Conference included the publication of the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade.

Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body in the WTO and was attended by delegates of 164 countries which are members of the WTO.

At the closing ceremony, WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo said: 'We can't deliver at every Ministerial. It's not every time Ministers meet that they are going to be able to strike deals of the magnitude of what we achieved in Bali and Nairobi.' Stressing that development and inclusiveness must remain at the heart of WTO's work, Mr. Azevedo expressed that 'We have gained a greater understanding of each other's positions and concerns. We should acknowledge that.'

Wrapping up the discussions on the final day, Argentine Minister and Conference Chair Susana Malcorra issued a statement in her own capacity.

Public Stockholding for food Security

At the Plenary session of the Ministerial Conference, India's Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh



Prabhu had stated that the outcome of global trade must be development and he called upon WTO membership to re-endorse the centrality of development in WTO negotiations. On the issue of public stockholding for food security purposes, Mr. Prabhu reminded that this is a matter of survival for eight hundred million hungry and undernourished people in the world. "A successful resolution of this issue would fulfill our collective commitment to the global community. In this context, we cannot envisage any negotiated outcome at MC 11 which does not include a permanent solution", Mr. Prabhu had stated.

Leading up to the Ministerial and the Ministerial itself, India's coalition partners had remained steadfast in their support for a permanent solution on public stockholding as well as on all agricultural issues including a proposal to set the direction of agricultural reforms by first eliminating the most trade-distorting form of subsidies used mainly by the rich developed countries. However, much to the disappointment of India that despite an overwhelming majority of members reiterating it, a major member country (US) had reneged on a commitment made two years ago to deliver a solution of critical importance for addressing hunger in some of the poorest countries of the world. Many members regretted that this was not possible despite the mandate to conclude negotiations at MC 11. Other issues





under the agricultural negotiations pillar also were not concluded.

However, the existing mandates and decisions ensure that work will go forward and members will continue to work on issues such as the permanent solution on public stockholding for food security purposes, agricultural Special Safeguard Mechanism and agricultural domestic support.

Ministerial Decision on Fisheries Subsidies

Members agreed to continue to engage constructively in the fisheries subsidies negotiations, with a view to adopting, a deal by 2019, which is the year of the next Ministerial Conference, to set out comprehensive and effective disciplines that prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. The Ministerial decision also called for elimination by 2019 of any subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Further, appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing country members and least developed country members should be an integral part of these negotiations, the statement said.

Members re-committed to implementation of existing notification obligations under Article 25.3 of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures thus strengthening transparency with respect to fisheries subsidies.

The creation of fisheries subsidies disciplines received new impetus after the adoption by world leaders in September 2015 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG target 14.6 sets a deadline of 2020 for eliminating IUU subsidies and for prohibiting certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, with special and differential treatment for developing and least-developed countries.

Work Programme on Electronic Commerce

Ministers agreed to continue the work under the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and endeavour to reinvigorate their work and instruct the General Council to hold periodic reviews in its sessions of July and December 2018 and July 2019 based on the reports submitted by the relevant WTO bodies. General Council should report to the next session of the Ministerial Conference in 2019.

Members also agreed to maintain the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until the next Ministerial Conference in 2019. Proponents of Electronic Commerce, a mixed group of countries at various levels of development issued a joint statement on electronic commerce expressing their intent to advancing electronic commerce work in WTO to better harness these opportunities. India did not join this group. Recognising the particular opportunities and challenges faced by developing countries, especially LDCs, as well as by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, in relation to electronic commerce, Ministers decided to initiate exploratory work together toward promoting open, transparent, non-discriminatory and predictable regulatory environments in facilitating electronic commerce. Such work will be built on WTO rules and a first meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2018.

TRIPs Non-Violation and Situation Complaints

Having regard to the work done by the Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights on TRIPs Non-Violation and Situation Complaints, the Ministerial Conference decided to direct the Council to continue its examination of the scope and modalities for complaints of the types provided for under subparagraphs 1(b) and 1(C) of Article XXIII of GATT 1994 and make recommendations to the next session of the Ministerial in 2019. It was agreed that in the meantime members will not initiate such complaints under the TRIPs Agreement.

Disputes can be initiated under the WTO, like in many other legal systems, when there is a specific violation of a rule or law. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), applicable to WTO's Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU), provides for a further category of disputes - commonly referred to as Non-Violation and Situation Complaints.

The basic principles for a Non-Violation complaint are laid out under Article XXIII (1) (b) of the General

Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1994. This provision provides for a procedure for complaint to be set into motion when a member country considers that a benefit under the WTO Agreement, accruing to it directly or indirectly, is nullified or impaired as a result of another member country applying a measure, irrespective of whether or not such measure conflicts with any of the WTO Agreements.

Article XXIII (1) (c) extends such nullification or impairment as resulting from a broader range of circumstances, captured by the phrase 'existence of any other situation'. This clause is normally referred to as a 'situation complaint'.

Both these circumstances envisaged were generally felt to be very broad. Streamlining of the procedural aspects for exercise of the same is sought to be achieved to a certain extent under Article 26 of the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) of WTO. Article 26 specifies certain procedural requirements for initiating a non-violation complaint under Article XXIII (1) (b). This includes, inter alia, that where a measure is found to nullify or impair benefits under the WTO, without a violation of the same, then there is no obligation to withdraw the measure. However a panel or appellate body of WTO can recommend to the member to make a mutually satisfactory arrangement. The DSU also provides that an arbitration panel may be constituted to examine the level of benefits alleged to have been nullified or impaired, and suggest ways and means for reaching a mutually satisfactory arrangement. These suggestions, however, are not legally binding on the Member(s).

For a situation complaint under Article XXIII (1) (c), Article 26(2) of the DSU provides that a panel can review the complaint and circulate a report among WTO Members. The DSU however does not specify any obligation to withdraw the measure or provide compensation. Most disputes that have arisen under Article XXIII (1) (b) have pertained to legitimate expectations of improved competitive opportunities from a tariff concession. WTO's Appellate Body has observed that the remedy under Article XXIII (1) (b) should be approached with caution and should remain an exceptional remedy. As observed by a WTO Panel, "the

reason for this is simple. Members negotiate the rules they agree to follow and only exceptionally would expect to be challenged for actions not in contravention of those rules". There is as yet no WTO jurisprudence on Article XXIII (1) (c).

Both Article XXIII (1) (b) and Article XXIII (1) (c) of the GATT are referred to in Article 64 of the TRIPS Agreement, which establish a moratorium on the application of the non-violation remedy to the Agreement, and commits WTO members to examine how the concept might apply in the context of the TRIPS Agreement. The moratorium under Article 64 stands extended.

Work Programme on Small Economies

Under a Ministerial Decision of December 13, Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the Work Programme on Small Economies. Ministers took note of the chal-

lenges and opportunities faced by small economies when linking into global value chains in trade in goods and services, and instruct the WTO Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) to continue its work in Dedicated Session under the overall responsibility of the General Council. The CTD will also be directed to continue its work on the challenges small econo-

mies experience in their efforts to reduce trade costs, particularly in the area of trade facilitation. CTD in Dedicated Session will continue monitoring the progress of small economy proposals in WTO bodies and in negotiating groups with the aim of providing responses, as soon as possible, to the trade-related issues identified for fuller integration of small and vulnerable economies (SVEs) in the multilateral trading system.

Investment Facilitation for Development

In a Joint Ministerial Statement on Investment Facilitation for Development, proponents called for beginning structured discussions with the aim of developing a multilateral framework on Investment Facilitation. Ministers stressed on the dynamic links between investment, trade and development in today's global economy and the need to create a more trans-



parent, efficient, and predictable environment for facilitating cross-border investment through closer international cooperation at the global level. Ministers held out that such discussions shall seek to identify and develop the elements for a framework for facilitating foreign direct investment that would: improve the transparency and predictability for investment measures; streamline, enhance international cooperation; the exchange of best practices, among others. These discussions shall not address market access, investment protection, and Investor-State Dispute Settlement. Ministers also agreed that facilitating greater developing and least-developed Members' participation in global investment flows should constitute a core objective of the framework. The framework shall also be designed to be flexible, adaptable, and responsive to the evolving investment facilitation priorities of members.

WTO Informal Work Programme for MSMEs

A large group of Members representing various levels of development decided to establish a WTO Informal Working Group on MSMEs at the WTO. Ministers highlighted the importance of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in international trade, as notably contributing to a relevant development outcome for WTO. The Group will discuss, among others, issues of relevance to MSMEs, related to improved access to information for MSMEs; ways to promote a more predictable regulatory environment for MSMEs; reduction of trade costs, including areas such as trade facilitation; shipping and logistics; and procedures and requirements related to origin; promotion, including through cooperation with other multilateral institutions, of better access to trade finance for MSMEs; identification of issues of particular interest to MSMEs that could be addressed in WTO Trade Policy reports; and consideration of how technical assistance and capacity building initiatives could take into account the trade needs and challenges of MSMEs.

Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment

For the first time in the history of the World Trade Organization, WTO members and observers have agreed to a collective initiative to increase the participation of women in trade. In order to help women reach their full potential in the world economy, 118 WTO members and observers agreed to support the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade, which seeks to remove barriers to, and foster, women's economic



empowerment. Supporting WTO members and observers have specifically agreed to explore and find ways to best tackle barriers to trade, lack of access to trade financing and sub-optimal participation of women in public procurement markets. Members will also seek to ensure that trade-related development assistance pays better attention to its focus and impact on women. Actions outlined in the Declaration will ultimately boost economic growth worldwide and provide more and better paid jobs for women. These actions will also contribute to UN Global Development Goals to achieve gender equality through empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5). Progress will be reported in 2019.

The Buenos Aires Women and Trade Declaration was spearheaded by the governments of Iceland and Sierra Leone, as well as the International Trade Centre, Geneva.

WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo said: 'This joint Declaration is a very welcome step in promoting women's economic empowerment and is also good for the economy. Therefore focusing on women and trade is not only the right thing to do, it also makes economic sense.'

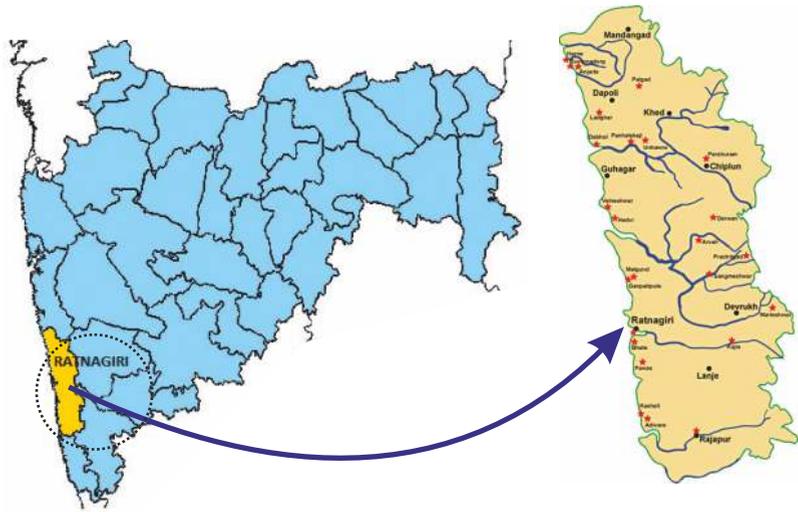
ITC Executive Director Arancha Gonzalez said: 'Lowering the barriers facing women entrepreneurs, at home and internationally, would bolster growth and make it more socially inclusive. It would go a long way toward realising Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.'

During MC11 India stood firm on its stand on the fundamental principles of the WTO, including multilateralism, rule-based consensual decision-making, an independent and credible dispute resolution and appellate process, the centrality of development, which underlies the DDA, and special and differential treatment for all developing countries.



Ratnagiri: Where Business Meets Pleasure

Ratnagiri, the port city on the Arabian Sea coast is in Ratnagiri District. It is in the southwestern part of Maharashtra, India which is part of the Konkan division of the State. The District is bounded by Raigad District in the North, Sindhudurg District in the South, Arabian Sea on the West and Sahyadri Hills on the East. Much of landscape in the coastal region has been eroded by heavy rainfall, however, the fertile alluvial valley produces bountiful agricultural produce such as rice, coconuts, cashew nuts and fruits.



The world-famous 'Alphanso' mango is the King of Mangoes and along with cashew nuts which are of commercial importance together bring in the foreign exchange to the Konkan region. As a result of this, Ratnagiri has been declared as the Horticulture District of Maharashtra, further being identified as the 'Agri Export Zone' of the state. Mango and cashew nut, coconut and arecanut are the important cash crops. There are mango processing clusters in Ratnagiri.



Ratnagiri District consists of nine talukas namely Ratnagiri, Guhagar, Dapoli, Mandangad, Khed, Chiplun, Sangameshwar, Lanja and Rajapur, all of which are gearing up to international trade. There are four Municipal Councils at Ratnagiri, Chiplun, Khed and Rajapur while

Dapoli is identified as the Nagar Panchayat (local administration government).

Ratnagiri is connected across Indian states, namely, through the State capital, Mumbai by National



Highway Number 66. This highway further goes to States of Goa, Karnataka (Mangalooru). Ratnagiri is a railway station on Konkan railway. Although it has an aerodrome, there are no commercial flights operated yet. There are many small ports on the shore and through small boats water transport is available.



Fishery Industry

Fishing is a major industry in the economy as 67,615 people are dependent on it for livelihood. Out of the 67,615 people, 25,286 are active fishermen. The district has a coastline of 167 km covering 104 villages and a continental shelf of 6600 sq. km. In the north it goes upto Boria and to Reddi in the South. However, non-availability of large vessels has restricted fishing activity to only up to 2910 sq. km. i.e. up to 80 mtrs. deep water.

Though Ratnagiri has rich fishery resources, however the available potential has not been fully utilised. This is mainly because of the traditional fishing methods. The region also lacks infrastructural facilities like communication, roads, and cold storages for fish preservation. Lack of education and literacy among the fishermen is a major drawback. There are shell fisheries also in creeks, backwaters and estuaries along the coasts. The district produces 100,000 tons of fish every year with annual revenue of INR 235 crore.

The Marine Biological Research



Station, Ratnagiri is one of the premier institutes, especially in the South Konkan Coastal Fisheries Zone, having a mandate for development of fish production technologies, transferring the technologies to fish culturists, entrepreneurs and industry, and generating professionally trained manpower in fish culture. Education in fisheries is imparted at Fisheries College, Ratnagiri.

Mineral Industry

The Bauxite deposits are located at Dapoli and Mandangad. In Dapoli deposits are found in Anjarle, Chikalgaon, Kavdoli and in few



other places. Also deposits of Limenite, Silica and Clay are found in Ratnagiri. The clay is used for making bricks, tiles and cheap red glazed wares.

Micro, Small, Medium and Large Enterprises

Ratnagiri has a large number of micro and small industries in sectors such as agro-based, textiles, jute &

jute-based, ready-made garment & embroidery, wood/wooden based furniture, paper & paper products, leather-based, chemical/chemical-based, rubber, plastic & petro-based, mineral-based, metal-based, engineering units, electrical machinery and transport equipment, repairing & servicing etc.

Large scale industries are prevalent in sectors such as fish & fishery products, freezing of marine



products, fish paste, toilet soap, agrochemicals, power generation, regasification of LNG, generation & transmission of electric energy, PVC resin & PVC pipes, fishing trawlers up to 45 mtrs. in length. The growth trend in Ratnagiri is seen in agro-based, food & beverages, fishing, salt industries and services sectors.

Medium-scale enterprises are in

sectors such as engineering, biochemicals, agro-based, fisheries, pharmaceuticals, electrical wires & cables, machine tools, etc. Major exportable items include mangoes & its processed products, fish & fishery products, food & beverages, agricultural products, PVC resin, piping systems, diethyl oxalate, files & twist drills, etc.

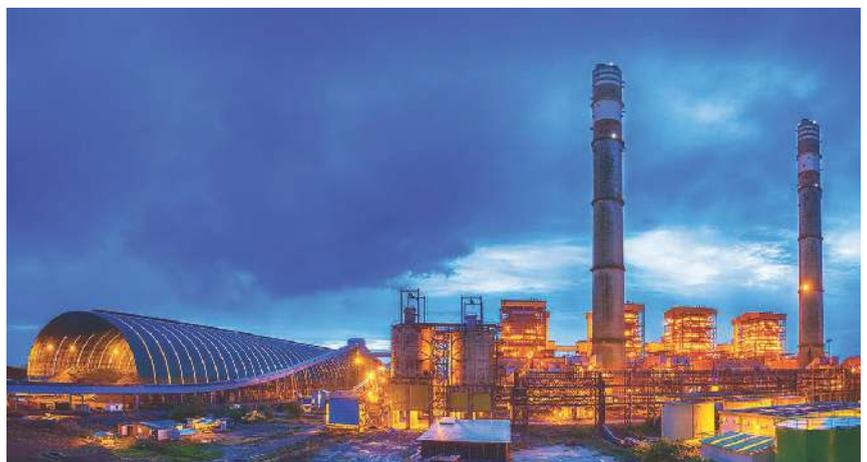
Service Enterprises

Potential areas for service industry are Ratnagiri, Mandangad, Dapoli, Khed, Chiplun, Guhagar, Sangameshwar, Lanja and Rajapur in areas such as consultancy in practically all fields, printing and related products, petroleum purification, salesmanship, computer training and servicing,

There is potential for new MSMEs to take advantage of the availability of resources, infrastructural facilities, manpower and demand for various products both in and around Ratnagiri.

Co-operative Industrial Estates

Co-operative sector plays an important role in the development of industries in the Ratnagiri District. There are two co-operative industrial estates (Audyogik Sahakari





Swayambhu Ganapati Temple



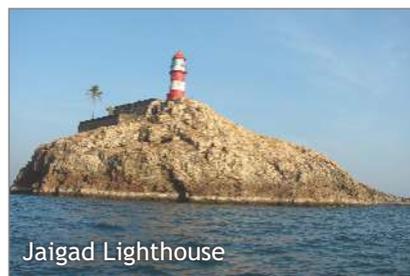
Guhagar Beach



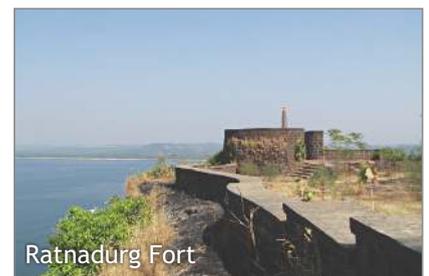
Unhavare Hot Water Spring



Marieshwar Temple



Jaigad Lighthouse



Ratnadurg Fort

Vasahat) in Ratnagiri District. They are located at Ratnagiri and Chiplun towns. Ratnagiri Udyamnagar Sahakari Sanstha Maryadit has approximately 40 units while Chiplun Audyogik Sahakari Sanstha has 13 units, including small scale industries.

Maharashtra Industrial Development Cooperation has developed six Industrial areas namely, Ratnagiri-Mirjole/Zadgaon, Khed-Lote, Parshuram, Chiplun-Kherdi, Ganekhadpoli, Sangamshwar-Devrukh-Sadavali. Also the work of five star MIDC at Nivali Phata, Ratnagiri is under progress.

Tourism Industry

Ratnagiri has a thriving tourism industry. It is a beautiful and picturesque city of art and Maharashtrian culture. There are

many tourist attractions which are mainly beaches and temples to visit and enjoy.

Swayambhu Ganapati Temple – It is renowned and the striking attraction is Ganapatipule which is dedicated to Lord Ganpati.

Ganapatipule Beach – It is one of the most visited places of the city. The beach is named after Lord Ganpati and also houses an ancient temple.

Marieshwar Temple – This temple is situated on an isolated hill surrounded by dense forests.

Jaigad Lighthouse – It is surrounded by an ancient fort of Ratnadurg on one side and by Arabian Sea on the other.

Guhagar Beach – The beach is blessed with the Sahyadri mountain

range on its east and Arabian Sea on the west. It is one of the most captivating places in Ratnagiri.

Unhavare Hot Water Spring – Unhavare is famous for its natural hot water springs.

Ratnadurg Fort - The fort is in the shape of a horseshoe. One of the Fort’s bastions has a lighthouse and a temple located inside it.

(Inputs have been sourced from http://ratnagiri.nic.in/gazetter/gom/gen_finance.html; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratnagiri> <http://dcmsme.gov.in/dips/2016-17/DIPS%20Ratnagiri.pdf> <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in> <http://dcmsme.gov.in/dips/DIPS%20Ratnagiri.pdf> <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>)



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Disparities and Possibilities: Making BIMSTEC Work for Member Countries

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The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is more than two decades old. However, it has yet not moved beyond any other Regional Economic Cooperation (REC) attempts in South Asian region such as SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). The nations engaged in BIMSTEC had close cultural, historical and religious relations before the advent of the European colonialism. However, issues like sudden resurgence of nation-state idealism, far right politics and jingoism kept the concerned nations far from each other even after abolition of the European hegemony. Thailand's attempt to change this course back in 1994 through the possibility of BIMSTEC remained futile owing to India's reservation against the then Bangladesh government and its ideological differences against the dictatorial Junta government of Myanmar.

This state of affairs changed during the last decade of the 20th century when a pro-Indian government came to power in Bangladesh and the Indian government going against its usually practised ideology started interacting with the Junta government of Myanmar. However, return of anti-Indian government in Bangladesh over 2001-06 and political instability in the concerned country from 2006-08 became a major hindrance to the progress of BIMSTEC. This was further aggravated by the surgical attack on the insurgents by the Indian army across the border of Myanmar in late 2015. Things became more normal with the political stability in Bangladesh after 2009 under the present pro-Indian government and democratic Htin Kyaw as President of Myanmar from 2016 onwards.

India's possible inclusion in ASEAN eroded in 1967 amidst the cold war owing to the myopic view toward the alleged pro-west ASEAN group. Remaining in close

proximity the success of ASEAN definitely questions the failure of SAARC, the hindrances so far to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) and the slow progress of BIMSTEC. It is paradoxical that why an REC in South-East Asia has been so successful but a similar attempt in South-Asia has never been materialised. The divisive



About BIMSTEC

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional alliance of seven countries, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand
- The BIMSTEC region is home to around 1.5 billion people which constitute around 22% of the global population with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of 2.7 trillion economy
- BIMSTEC countries agreed to collaborate on 15 sectors such as trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism, fisheries, agriculture, public health, poverty alleviation, counter-terrorism, environment, culture, people to people contact and climate change

policies that the member nations of BIMSTEC are subject to; often been extended as a possible explanation of the concerned REC's slow progress. Presence of divisive policy is best reflected through the rank variation of the member countries in terms of ease of doing cross border trade. Trade is a mutual commitment of nations and divisive policies would surely result in hindrances in cross border trade.

Again, ease of registering property, getting electricity and enforcing contracts are important aspects to consider for the security of private investment and might become important factors regarding foreign direct investment inflow and outflow among member countries. Similarity in these four factors might initiate regional economic cooperation and higher variation (measured in terms of standard deviation of ranks) might lead to confusion and hurdles to the formation of the REC. In support of this argument the article has considered the variation (measured by standard deviation of the member countries) in terms of ranks of ease of registering property, getting electricity, cross border trade and enforcing contracts of both BIMSTEC and ASEAN member countries. The table below depicts the results.

REC	Registering Property	Getting Electricity	Cross Border Trade	Enforcing Contract
BIMSTEC	46.4	60.1	52.7	65.5
ASEAN	38.8	56.5	36.7	61.7

Source: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/Custom-Query>

It is apparent that member countries of ASEAN are subject to lesser variations in terms of all the selected indicators; specially in terms of ease of doing cross border trade (probably owing to less restrictive and better inter-country connectivity along with relaxed trade regime). Again, higher disparity in terms of ease of getting electricity, registering property and enforcing contract is eventually deterring the scope of foreign direct inflow and outflow among member countries. As an example, Indian overseas investment in ASEAN countries is almost ten times that of its investment in BIMSTEC countries as recorded in October 2017. Again, India's overseas investment in BIMSTEC countries for October 2017 is only 1.29 per cent of its total overseas investment.



Indeed, disparity and divisive policy orientation are acting as negative catalysts in regional economic cooperation for BIMSTEC. Moreover, it is well documented in the existing literature that informal trade among most of the member countries of BIMSTEC is at a high and that also acts as an inhibitor to spontaneous regional economic cooperation. As estimated, for 2009 the formal and informal exports from India to Bangladesh were equal at around USD 4 billion. A recent study by Government of Nepal observes that informally imported Indian seeds to Nepal may account for 30 per cent to 45 per cent of the total vegetable seeds consumed there. In another study by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), it has

been mentioned that the price difference between formally and informally imported seeds and Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) from India to Nepal is around Rs. 3 and Rs. 10 per kilogram respectively.

The same report also refers to the indigenous chemical fertiliser demand of Nepal to the tune of 400,000 tons that is entirely met through informal imports. It is obvious that economic agents of BIMSTEC countries enjoying economic premium through informal trade are oblivious to the possible economic gains of regional economic cooperation. Such instances are hard to find among ASEAN member nations. It is worth mentioning that informal trade between Thailand and Laos declined significantly after Laos became a member of ASEAN.

Apart from the aforementioned issues, insurgency and infiltration has often been constraints to uninterrupted political-economic relations between India and Myanmar and India and Bangladesh respectively. A



close consideration of the member nations of BIMSTEC and ASEAN reveal another important perspective. Member nations of ASEAN are complimentary in nature whereas the member countries of BIMSTEC are yet to realise their complementarity.

The disparities among the BIMSTEC nations and hindrances thereof are well understood from the above discussion. It is obvious that policy-level change at least while trading among the member nations is one important aspect that needs to be addressed. A less restrictive trade regime particularly for Bangladesh, Myanmar and India would be very effective. Spontaneous removal of sanitary, phyto-sanitary and procedural Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs), infrastructural barriers, and technical barriers to trade by all the member countries of BIMSTEC would lead to the less restrictive but more effective trade regime.

Improved inter and intra country connectivity with emphasis on multimodal connectivity will improve access and eventually help in realising the actual potential of trade for the BIMSTEC member countries. With the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway in progress, possibilities are bright for India with Moreh (a town located on the India-Myanmar border in the Tengenoupal district of the Indian state of Manipur) being connected by road with Thailand through Mae Sot (a district in western Thailand) further through Myanmar. Considering India's proposal to extend this highway to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam; it is possible

that other BBIN countries might also access this highway to reach Thailand and other ASEAN nations specially if multimodal connectivity is emphasised and BBIN motor vehicle agreement is realised at the earliest possible time.

Positive political will and foresight on behalf of the Indian and the Thailand government may also facilitate India (Moreh)–Malaysia (Kuala-Lumpur) road connectivity in not so distant future. Intra-regional peace is an important aspect of regional economic cooperation and that can only be ensured through handling insurgency and infiltration through diplomatic visits and exchanges not through bloodshed.

To boost up economic growth, the role of foreign direct investment cannot be ignored and even so domestic investment will fly away if investors are not guaranteed the safety of their investments. In this regard considering the chosen indicators, there remains severe disparity in ranks among the BIMSTEC nations. The concerned countries should take individualistic approaches to improve their rank to ensure investors' interests – ease of getting electricity (Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal), ease of registering property (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Myanmar) and ease of enforcing contract (Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India and Nepal). It is also important that India's Act East Policy and Thailand's Act West Policy identify their commonality and commit to the principles of holistic growth and development for the entire BIMSTEC region.

India has historically believed in 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and is also famous for its unity in diversity. As the largest economy of the group, India has to play the role of a flag bearer if BIMSTEC is to materialise. BIMSTEC is no longer just another regional economic cooperation but the need of the time. In the absence of Pakistan, BIMSTEC offers a far peaceful abode to India than SAARC. The concerned REC might also help India to counter China's dominance in Myanmar and ASEAN. Success of BIMSTEC can change the course of economic cooperation in South Asia. BIMSTEC in close proximity of ASEAN might eventually help in mutual economic exchanges leading to holistic and inclusive growth and development for all the member nations.

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- GVCs: Enabler of Sustainable Trade
- National and Multilateral Approaches to Foster GVCs
- Building MSME Competitiveness through Value Chain Integration
- Leveraging the Power of GVCs - Case Study Presentation

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