

15 AUGUST, 2026

80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY OF *India*

GULF TIMES
SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT





HAPPY INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

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

LONG LIVE INDO-QATAR FRIENDSHIP





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preparing this supplement



Smt. Droupadi Murmu
President



Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Chargé d'Affaires' message

On the proud occasion of the 80th Independence Day of India, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all Indians and friends of India residing in the State of Qatar. At this significant time, we pay our due respect and homage to the brave freedom fighters and national heroes whose courage, sacrifice and unwavering determination secured India's independence in 1947. Their sacrifices laid the foundation of a free and sovereign India and continue to inspire generations to uphold the values of freedom, unity, democracy and national service. We also gratefully acknowledge the visionary leaders who, with their wisdom, foresight, and commitment to nation-building, shaped modern India and continue to energise our pursuit of a stronger, more prosperous and inclusive nation.

Since Independence, India's remarkable journey has been anchored in its Constitution and its enduring values of democracy, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. These principles have provided the foundation for a vibrant and resilient democracy, strengthened by the energy, aspirations and active participation of our young population. The vibrant energy of India's youth, strength of democratic institutions and the rich cultural heritage empower India's leap. With Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, India is firmly committed to becoming a developed economy by 2047, driven by inclusive growth, technological advancement, sustainable development and the empowerment of its people.

India continues to be among the world's fastest-growing major economies, with real GDP growth estimated at 7.7 % in FY 2025-26, demonstrating the strength and resilience of the Indian economy. This progress is supported by sustained public investment in infrastructure, with government capital outlay having risen considerably in FY 2025-26, alongside initiatives such as PM GatiShakti that are transforming connectivity and logistics across the country. The Government's development agenda is equally focused on empowering people and preparing India for the future. Through initiatives supporting education, skilling, entrepreneurship and access to credit, opportunities are being expanded for youth, students, women and small entrepreneurs.

It is a matter of immense pride that India has also positioned itself at the forefront of the technologies that will shape the future. The IndiaAI Mission is advancing AI compute infrastructure, datasets, indigenous AI models, skilling and support for startups, while the India AI Impact Summit 2026 underscored India's commitment to responsible, inclusive and human-centric artificial intelligence.

In healthcare, continued expansion of medical education and health infrastructure reflects the commitment to building a healthier and more productive population. These achievements are important milestones on the road to Viksit Bharat @2047.

India is now entering a new era in which government institutions, universities, start-ups and private industry are working together to expand the frontiers of innovation. The successful orbital launch of Vikram-1, the country's first privately developed orbital rocket, by Indian space start-up Skyroot Aerospace on 18 July 2026, carrying customer payloads into low-Earth orbit as part of its maiden mission, "Mission Aagaman", marked a landmark moment for India's emerging private space sector. Looking ahead, India's ambitions extend from human spaceflight and advanced satellite technologies to artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, semiconductors and deep-tech innovation.

On the bilateral front, India and Qatar share a centuries-old relationship, sustained and nurtured by maritime links, commerce, cultural exchanges and deep people-to-people ties. Today, these historic bonds have evolved into a strategic partnership. The elevation of our relationship to a strategic partnership reflects the political confidence and mutual trust between the leadership and peoples of the two countries. The visit of Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Shri Hardeep Singh Puri to Doha in April 2026, and his discussions with Qatar's Minister of State for Energy Affairs H.E. Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, demonstrated the continuing importance of cooperation and solidarity, particularly during a period of significant regional and global energy-market uncertainty. Most recently, Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Qatar on 5 July 2026 and met with H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. The discussions focused on strengthening of bilateral cooperation as well as regional developments and their impact on the global economy and energy markets. Both sides emphasized the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in addressing regional challenges. Following the passing of the Father Amir, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Shri Kiren Rijiju, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, visited Qatar on 14-15 July 2026 to convey condolences on behalf of the Government and people of India. The visit was a poignant reflection of the respect and affection India holds for the Father Amir and his contribution to the development of modern Qatar and to India-Qatar relations. In January 2026, H.E. Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, visited New Delhi to participate in the Second India-Arab Cooperation Forum Ministerial Meeting. His participation provided another valuable opportunity to advance India-Qatar political and diplomatic engagement. These frequent exchanges demonstrate the translation of strategic partnership objectives into sustained political, economic and institutional engagement. The recent conversations between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani have reaffirmed the close political understanding between the two countries. In March 2026, Prime Minister Modi conveyed India's solidarity with Qatar and emphasized the importance of resolving regional challenges through dialogue and diplomacy. In June 2026, the two leaders again reaffirmed their commitment to the safety and well-being of their citizens and to further strengthening of bilateral cooperation. The passing of the Father Amir, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, in July 2026 is a moment of deep sadness in both countries. India declared a day of national mourning in his honour, reflecting the profound respect for a leader who played a transformative role in Qatar's development and was regarded in India as a true friend.

I wish to thank the Indian community in Qatar for always showcasing India's unity in diversity and for being a living bridge for trade, tourism, and cultural exchanges between our countries. The Indian community in Qatar is not only a valued partner in Qatar's development but also an important ambassador of India's culture, values, skills and aspirations. Indian professionals, entrepreneurs, workers, educators, doctors, engineers, technicians, members of the business community and our Diaspora are contributing significantly to India's growth and international outreach.

We are confident that India will continue to make resilient progress towards becoming a Viksit Bharat, and the India-Qatar strategic partnership will continue to flourish for the benefit of our two peoples and for peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond.

On behalf of the Embassy of India in Doha, I wish all Indians in Qatar and around the world a very Happy Independence Day 2026. As we celebrate this landmark occasion, let us renew our commitment to strengthening the bonds of friendship between India and Qatar and to building a future marked by greater cooperation, prosperity and mutual understanding.

Jai Hind!

Sandeep Kumar
Chargé d'Affaires





Bilateral Engagements

Prime Minister condoles the passing of Father Amir

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had a telephone conversation with the Amir of the State of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

The Prime Minister conveyed his heartfelt condolences on the passing of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir of Qatar.

Recalling the Father Amir's significant contributions as the chief architect of modern Qatar, the Prime Minister paid tribute to his visionary leadership and recalled his pivotal role in strengthening India-Qatar relations over the years, as well as his deep affection for India and the Indian community in Qatar.

The Amir of Qatar thanked the Prime Minister for his call and expressed his appreciation for the words of support during this difficult hour.

The two leaders reaffirmed their resolve to carry forward the Father Amir's legacy and further strengthen the India-Qatar Strategic Partnership and people-to-people ties.

They agreed to remain in close touch.



India observes one-day national mourning

The National Flag flies at half-mast in New Delhi as India observes a one-day national mourning as a mark of respect for His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Father Amir of the State of Qatar.



Community condolence meeting on the sad demise of H.H. the Father Amir

A community condolence meeting was organised by community organisations working under the aegis of the Embassy of India. Ambassador H.E. Vipul and community leaders and members expressed their heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of H.H. the Father Amir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and remembered His Highness's leadership and benevolence towards the expatriate community, which will be cherished forever.





Hon'ble EAM meets Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar held a meeting with H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar. They reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, with a focus on energy, trade, investment and people-to-people ties. They also discussed regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. The External Affairs Minister commended Qatar's prominent and active mediation role in the ongoing US-Iran negotiations.



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MoPNG Holds Talks with Qatar's Minister of State for Energy Affairs

Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri met with H.E. Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Energy Affairs of Qatar and President and CEO of QatarEnergy.

The Hon'ble Minister conveyed greetings and a message of solidarity and support on behalf of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to H.H. the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, as well as to Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

He recalled the two telephone conversations between Prime Minister Modi and H.H. the Amir in March 2026, following the start of the conflict, during which both leaders emphasised the urgent need to restore peace and stability in the region through dialogue and diplomacy. Prime Minister Modi had also conveyed his gratitude to His Highness for the care and support extended by Qatar to the Indian community.

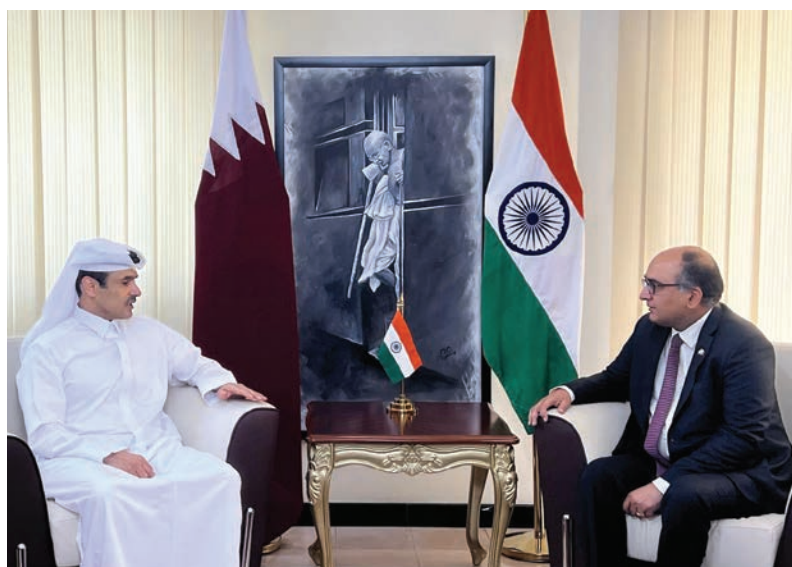
The two ministers discussed all aspects of the strategic relationship between India and Qatar, including high-level engagements, trade, investment, energy, culture and people-to-people ties. They expressed hope for an early return to peace and stability in the region and for further strengthening of bilateral relations between India and Qatar.

H.E. Minister Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi reaffirmed Qatar's commitment to remaining a reliable energy supplier and expressed his desire to continue and strengthen energy relations and cooperation with India.

Both ministers welcomed the two-week ceasefire agreed on April 8 and stressed the importance of an early end to disruptions in global energy supplies and the restoration of normalcy. In this context, they emphasised the need to ensure unimpeded freedom of navigation and the global flow of commerce to maintain global supply chains.



MoS for Energy Affairs and President & CEO of QatarEnergy visits Embassy of India



H.E. Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Energy Affairs and President and CEO of QatarEnergy, visited the Embassy of India to convey his condolences on the tragic demise of 12 Indian nationals in an accident at Ras Laffan Industrial City on June 21.

Ambassador Vipul received H.E. the Minister and thanked him for the kind gesture and for the support extended by the Qatari authorities to the affected individuals and their families following the tragic accident.

Ambassador Meets Minister of State for International Cooperation



The Ambassador had the honour of paying a courtesy call on H.E. Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad, Minister of State for International Cooperation. The meeting covered various aspects of bilateral relations, as well as the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in promoting de-escalation amid the current regional situation. The Ambassador also thanked H.E. Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad for her support for the Indian community.



Ambassador Meets Qatar's Olympic Committee President

The Ambassador had the honour of paying a courtesy call on H.E. Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani, President of the Olympic Council of Asia and Qatar Olympic Committee. Discussions covered bilateral cooperation in the fields of sports and youth affairs, as well as ways to further advance the Olympic movement. The Ambassador also expressed appreciation for Qatar's leadership in sports and sports infrastructure, which has established the country as a global sporting powerhouse.



Embassy of India, Doha Partners with Qatar Post

The Embassy of India, Doha, has signed a partnership agreement with Qatar Post to offer the Indian community the option of receiving consular documents by post, eliminating the need to revisit the Embassy to collect them.







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Indian Mango Festival at Souq Waqif

The third edition of the Indian Mango Festival, organised by the Embassy of India, Doha, in association with Souq Waqif, was inaugurated on June 18 by the Ambassador in the presence of diplomats, Qatari dignitaries, business leaders and members of the Indian community. The festival showcased a rich and diverse selection of Indian mango varieties and irresistible mango-based products, offering a unique culinary experience for mango enthusiasts.

Organised by the Celebrations Committee of the Private Engineering Office, in cooperation with the Embassy of India, the exhibition was held at Souq Waqif's Eastern Square from June 18 to 27, 2026.

This year's edition recorded its highest results since the exhibition was first launched, with total mango sales reaching 187,300kg and more than 155,600 visitors attending the 10-day event.

More than 35 Indian companies participated in this year's exhibition, showcasing a wide selection of premium Indian mango varieties alongside an extensive range of mango-based products, including beverages, desserts, pickles, specialty foods and other culinary offerings. Together, they provided visitors with a distinctive cultural and gastronomic experience.

The third edition also introduced several mango varieties and new mango-based products to the Qatari market for the first time, attracting significant public interest and further enhancing the exhibition's appeal.

Khalid Saif Al Suwaidi, General Supervisor of the exhibition, said the results achieved during this year's edition exceeded all expectations in terms of both visitor turnout and sales.

He noted that the achievements reflected the exhibition's growing reputation and increasing public demand for premium Indian mangoes and mango-based products.

Al Suwaidi added that the diversity of participating companies, the outstanding quality of the products, daily air shipments of fresh mangoes from India, and the introduction of new varieties all contributed to the exhibition's exceptional success.

He also emphasised that the exhibition has become an important platform for strengthening cultural and commercial ties between the State of Qatar and the Republic of India.



Flavours from India at Katara

"Flavours from India", organised by the Embassy of India in collaboration with Katara Cultural Village, brought together diplomats and dignitaries for an evening celebrating India's rich gastronomic traditions and culinary heritage.

Guests enjoyed a selection of popular Indian delicacies, including Punjabi samosas, Medu Vada, Rasmalai, refreshing buttermilk and Alphonso mangoes — making it a delightful celebration of culture, hospitality and the enduring bonds between India and Qatar through food.

The Embassy expressed its appreciation to H.E. Professor Khalid Al-Sulaiti, General Manager of Katara Cultural Village, and his entire team for their valuable support.





World Environment Day Celebrations

Ambassador Shri Vipul and DCM Shri Sandeep Kumar joined members of Karnataka Sangha Qatar and officials from Qatar's Ministry of Public Parks at Old Airport Park, Doha, to mark World Environment Day with a tree-planting and environmental awareness drive.

Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Vipul highlighted the importance of environmental conservation and sustainability and appreciated Qatar's ambitious goal of planting five million trees under Qatar National Vision 2030. He also highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiatives, Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam and LiFE, and encouraged the Indian community in Qatar to plant more trees in their communities.

The event reflected the shared commitment of India and Qatar to building a greener and more sustainable future




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India-Qatar Virtual Energy Conference

The Embassy of India, Doha, in coordination with the Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC) Qatar, successfully organised the India-Qatar Virtual Energy Conference 2026, bringing together industry leaders, policymakers and businesses to explore opportunities arising from Qatar's expanding energy and industrial sectors.

The conference focused on three key themes: Qatar's energy ecosystem and outlook, the regulatory framework for market entry, and emerging opportunities for trade, investment and partnerships.

The Ambassador of India highlighted the growing India-Qatar Strategic Partnership and the vast potential for collaboration in energy, infrastructure, technology, manufacturing and industrial development.

Nasser Jeham Al Kuwari, Chairman of COREINFO and former CEO of Q-Chem and QAFAC, outlined Qatar's ambitious plans to expand its LNG production capacity from 77 MTPA to 142 MTPA by 2030. He emphasised the significant opportunities this growth would create across engineering, manufacturing, industrial services, downstream industries and advanced technology solutions.



Qatar's Guest of Honour participation at New Delhi World Book Fair highlights deep ties with India

Qatar's participation as the Guest of Honour at the New Delhi World Book Fair reflects the deep cultural and intellectual ties between Qatar and India, H.E. Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad Al Thani, Minister of Culture of Qatar, said.

Speaking at the opening of the New Delhi World Book Fair, the Minister highlighted the role of culture and knowledge in building bridges between peoples and fostering dialogue and understanding among different cultures.

The opening ceremony was attended by India's Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan; Spain's Minister of Culture Ernest Urtasun; Qatar's Ambassador to India Mohammed Hassan Al Jabir; Qatar's Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture, Dr. Ghanem bin Mubarak Al Ali; and a number of officials, diplomats and intellectuals.

Sheikh Abdulrahman said Qatar was proud to participate as Guest of Honour at the international cultural event, which celebrates books as repositories of collective memory, instruments for creating awareness and channels for dialogue and rapprochement among cultures. He also expressed his appreciation to the Indian side for its warm reception and support for Qatar's participation.

He noted that Qatar's presence at the fair reflects the strength of bilateral relations, which are based on mutual respect and a shared belief in the power of culture and knowledge to connect peoples. He also stressed the importance of investing in



knowledge as a key driver of societal progress, development and national security.

The Minister said the New Delhi World Book Fair highlights the pivotal role of books in shaping human awareness and building civilisations, in line with Qatar's vision of promoting reading and the publishing industry and strengthening the role of culture in sustainable development.

India's Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan, meanwhile, said Qatar's participation as Guest of Honour demonstrated the depth of the cultural relationship between the two countries, while enriching the fair's cultural programme and promoting intellectual and cultural dialogue between the peoples of India and Qatar.

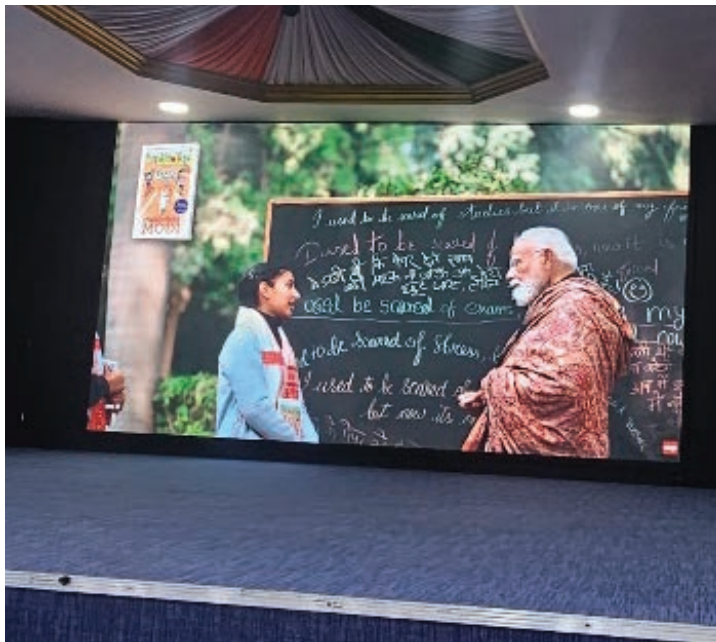
Spain's Minister of Culture Ernest Urtasun said the event went beyond showcasing books, serving as a vibrant platform for exchanging ideas and expertise, supporting the publishing industry and encouraging reading as an essential tool for building informed societies capable of addressing future challenges.



KEY EVENTS

Screening of Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 at ICC

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2026 was screened at the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), bringing together students from schools across Doha. The programme was received with great enthusiasm as students listened attentively to the inspiring and motivating words of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.



MoPNG Interacts with Indian Business Leaders

Hon'ble Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) held an engaging interaction with Indian business leaders, professionals and members of the Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC), Qatar, representing a wide range of sectors of the Qatari economy, including energy, technology, fintech and infrastructure.

The Minister shared his thoughts on the deep and historic ties between India and Qatar, including cooperation in trade and commerce, energy and cultural exchanges. The gathering was also attended by several Qatari friends, who expressed appreciation for the strength and resilience of the Indian economy.



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Photo Exhibition on Pahalgam Attack and Operation Sindoor at the Embassy

The Embassy expressed gratitude to India's armed forces for their valour during Operation Sindoor and paid tribute to the victims of the cross-border terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

A photo exhibition at the Embassy will serve as a lasting remembrance of both the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor for members of the Indian community and other visitors. The exhibition will remain on display for an extended period.

The exhibition portrays the pain and anguish of the families who lost their loved ones in the cross-border terrorist attack in Pahalgam and underscores the urgent need to eradicate terrorism, which can never be justified on any grounds.



International Day of Yoga

The Embassy of India in Qatar, in association with the Indian Sports Centre (ISC), Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) and Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC) Qatar, organised a grand celebration of the International Day of Yoga 2026 on June 20 at the UDST Cricket Ground in Doha.

The event witnessed an overwhelming response, with more than 2,000 yoga practitioners from the Indian and other expatriate communities in Qatar participating enthusiastically. Celebrated under the global theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing," the event highlighted the importance of yoga in promoting longevity, vitality and overall well-being.

H.E. Vipul, Ambassador of India to the State of Qatar, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The event was attended by yoga enthusiasts from India and other countries, diplomats, Qatari dignitaries and leaders of Indian community organisations.

In his remarks, the Ambassador recalled that the International Day of Yoga has been celebrated around the world since the United Nations adopted the resolution in 2014, with 177 countries co-sponsoring it. He also highlighted Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's message that yoga is a lifelong companion that supports physical health, mental well-being and inner balance, enabling people to age gracefully and remain productive members of society.

The celebration featured a mass yoga demonstration and expert-led sessions conducted by experienced instructors. Exhibition areas showcasing the benefits of Ayurveda, health and wellness, and the use of AI applications in yoga were also appreciated by attendees. The event successfully conveyed the message of health, harmony and unity through the practice of yoga.



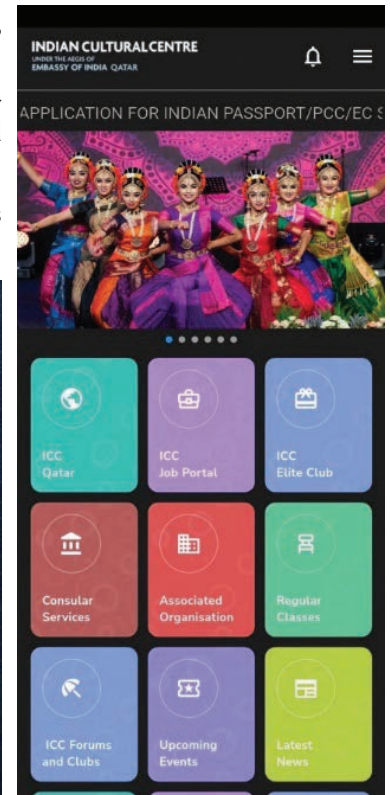
EVENTS BY THE INDIAN CULTURAL CENTRE (ICC)

Felicitations of ICC MC Members and Launch of ICC App

The Ambassador felicitated the ICC Managing Committee members of 2023-24 and 2025-26 for their distinguished contributions to the Indian community. During the event, the official ICC App was also launched, streamlining access to essential information and services.

The Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) continues to stand as a shining example of Jan Bhagidari (community participation), working closely with the Embassy of India, Doha, to provide vital services, solutions and social connectivity to the Indian community.

On the occasion, the Ambassador also felicitated dedicated Indian community volunteers for their selfless support and service during the current challenging times.





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80th Independence Day

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Inauguration of ICC Library

The Ambassador inaugurated the Library at the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), marking a significant step towards promoting knowledge and learning within the Indian community. On the occasion, the Embassy also donated more than 100 books to enrich the library's collection and encourage a culture of reading.



ICC farewell to Ambassador

Apex bodies and more than 70 associate organisations came together to bid a heartfelt farewell to H.E. Shri Vipul, Ambassador of India to Qatar, celebrating his leadership and dedicated engagement with the Indian diaspora.

Expressing his gratitude to the community, Ambassador Vipul highlighted its strength and invaluable contribution to strengthening India-Qatar friendship. He also reaffirmed the Embassy's continued commitment to the welfare and well-being of the Indian community.





Events by the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF)

ICBF Blood Donation Camp

The Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), in coordination with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), organised a blood donation camp, with more than 230 members of the Indian community coming forward to donate blood.

Ambassador H.E. Shri Vipul appreciated the ICBF team, HMC, community volunteers and blood donors for their valuable support and for coming forward for this noble cause during the challenging times of the ongoing conflict.



Free medical check-up and health screening camp

On the occasion of Labour Day, the Embassy of India in Qatar supported a series of community outreach initiatives aimed at supporting blue-collar workers.

A free medical check-up and health screening camp, organised in collaboration with MKP, the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) Qatar and Naseem Healthcare, benefited more than 250 workers through medical consultations, health screenings and wellness guidance.

As part of the outreach, sweets and food kits were also distributed at a labour camp as a gesture of appreciation and support for the workers and their valuable contribution to Qatar's development.



International Labour Day

The Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), Doha, paid tribute to the dedication, work ethic and resilience of Indian workers in Qatar at an event marking International Labour Day. The organisation also expressed gratitude to the leadership and people of Qatar for their continued support to the Indian community.

The Ambassador of India, representatives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Qatar's Ministry of Labour, along with other dignitaries, graced the occasion.





Events by the Indian Business & Professionals Council (IBPC)

Annual Connect 2026

The Indian Business and Professionals Council (IBPC) Qatar successfully hosted its flagship event, IBPC Annual Connect 2026, bringing together senior Indian and Qatari business leaders, policymakers, entrepreneurs and professionals for high-level dialogue and strategic networking.

Held under the theme “Unlock Potential and Accelerate Growth – Opportunities and Challenges”, the event reflected the deepening diplomatic and economic partnership between India and Qatar, particularly against the backdrop of the recent landmark visit of His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar to India. The forum provided a robust platform to explore emerging opportunities for collaboration, investment and sustainable economic development in Qatar.

Delivering a special address titled “Looking Ahead: India-Qatar Bilateral Business and Professional Relations”, Ambassador of India to Qatar and Patron of IBPC Qatar, H.E. Vipul, congratulated IBPC on its growing impact and reaffirmed India’s commitment to further strengthening bilateral ties.

He noted that trade has long been a strong foundation of India-Qatar relations, which have evolved into a deep and enduring partnership. The Ambassador highlighted the significant presence of the Indian community in Qatar, built over generations and supported by the country’s safety, security and opportunities.



He said relations between the two nations today encompass political engagement, diplomacy, trade, investment, culture, people-to-people ties and technology, adding that both sides remain committed to expanding cooperation across these sectors in the years ahead.



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Events by the Indian Sports Centre (ISC)

National Sports Day celebrations

The Embassy of India, Doha, welcomed the enthusiastic participation of the Indian community in Qatar National Sports Day celebrations. Children, women and men took part in a range of sporting activities organised by the Indian Sports Centre, celebrating fitness, teamwork and community spirit.



Labour Day Celebrations

The Indian Sports Centre, under the aegis of the Embassy of India, organised a carrom tournament for workers to mark International Workers' Day. More than 60 skilled players from the blue-collar community participated in the event. Winners were felicitated with utility gifts.



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A GLOBAL INVESTMENT POWERHOUSE

India has emerged as one of the most attractive investment destinations globally, driven by strong economic growth, a stable policy environment, rising FDI, world-class digital infrastructure and a growing manufacturing ecosystem. For businesses and investors exploring investment opportunities in India, the country offers a unique combination of scale, talent, innovation and long-term growth potential.

Quick Takeaways: Why Invest in India?

- One of the world's fastest-growing major economies
- Strong Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows
- Stable political and policy environment
- Large and growing consumer market
- Young and skilled workforce
- Expanding infrastructure network
- Competitive manufacturing ecosystem
- Business-friendly reforms and digital governance

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently said that India is the most attractive investment destination for innovation and manufacturing while inviting European companies to invest in the country. His words are not mere rhetoric but reflect the conviction of a nation that has created a conducive environment for global capital.

The country's emergence as a lucrative investment destination is the outcome of deliberate and sustained policy choices. From record FDI inflows to strong digital public infrastructure, the data provides compelling evidence of this transformation.

India's Economic Growth Story

The country's macroeconomic trajectory stands apart from the global norm. At a time when most major economies are grappling with global uncertainty, India recorded a GDP growth rate of 7.7% in FY 2025-26, with the fourth quarter of that year recording growth of 7.8%.

Bank projects sustained growth of 6.5%, while the IMF forecasts 6.6% expansion for calendar year 2025. This places India among the world's fastest-growing major economies.

India is presently the fifth-largest economy in the world by nominal GDP. Its nominal GDP is projected to reach approximately US\$3.91 trillion in FY 2025-26. The country's economic resilience is reflected in healthy GST collections, which stood at Rs 1.78 lakh crore in March 2026 alone. The figure represents an 8.2% year-on-year increase, signalling strong domestic consumption and improved tax compliance.

Notably, this growth story is structurally diversified. Private consumption continues to be its principal driver, while sustained government capital expenditure, surging exports of goods and services, and a robust financial sector provide further support. This multi-engine growth architecture offers both resilience and long-term scalability for investors.

Political Stability and Policy Continuity for Investors

A foundational requirement for long-term investment is a predictable and stable policy environment. Over the last decade, the country has pursued a sustained and coherent economic reform agenda under a stable political mandate. This has ensured that major policy decisions, from tax reform to foreign investment liberalisation, are implemented with consistency.

The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) unified India into a single national market. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) transformed creditor rights and resolution timelines.

The corporate tax rate reduction in 2019 brought rates to among the most competitive levels in Asia. The move further signalled the nation's commitment to making its investment climate globally attractive.

This policy continuity extends to the foreign investment regime. Today, 100% FDI is permitted under the automatic route in most sectors. The recent opening of the space sector to 100% FDI and other liberalisation measures continue to broaden the scope for global investors.





The National Manufacturing Mission further reinforces the government's long-term commitment to industrial self-reliance and international competitiveness.

Demographic Dividend and Skilled Workforce

India boasts a strong demographic profile, which is significant for its long-term economic potential. As of last year, the country's median age was 29 years, with 68% of the population in the working-age cohort of 15-64 years. By 2030, the median age is projected to be 31 years, compared with 43 years for China and 40 years for the United States.

This demographic dividend translates into a growing and increasingly productive labour force and a rapidly expanding consumer class. It also supports a deepening pool of skilled professionals across engineering, technology, finance and management disciplines. India currently produces more than 1.5 million engineering graduates annually, making it one of the largest sources of technical talent in the world.

For multinational corporations, the combination of scale and skill creates an unmatched opportunity. This includes establishing innovation centres, building shared-service operations and scaling up manufacturing capacity.

Structural Reforms for a Stronger Growth Climate

The key structural reforms introduced in the country over the past decade have systematically addressed long-standing barriers to investment and enterprise.

The GST framework eliminated cascading taxes and created a seamless national market. The IBC significantly reduced insolvency resolution timelines, improving creditor confidence.

Land acquisition and labour-law reforms across multiple states, along with the decriminalisation of several provisions under the Companies Act, have collectively reduced the compliance burden on businesses.

The Jan Vishwas Act 2023, which decriminalised more than 180 provisions across 42 laws, further demonstrated the government's intent to move from a punitive to a facilitative regulatory philosophy. The National Single Window System (NSWS) has digitalised the approval process for investors, providing a unified portal for clearances across central and state agencies.

These reforms collectively signal greater openness, transparency and efficiency. The sustained trajectory of these reforms has given investors a positive boost.

Infrastructure Development Supporting Economic Growth

India has made infrastructure development a cornerstone of its economic agenda. World-class physical and digital connectivity is essential to sustaining the growth ambitions of a US\$5 trillion economy.

The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), with a projected investment of ₹111 lakh crore (approximately US\$1.5 trillion) for the period 2020-25, represents one of the most ambitious infrastructure investment programmes in the world.

The NIP, covering more than 79 sub-sectors, including roads, railways, ports, airports, urban infrastructure, renewable energy and digital connectivity, has reinvigorated the country's economic architecture.

Government capital expenditure has been a key driver of this transformation. Roads, logistics parks, metro rail networks and port modernisation have improved multimodal connectivity. As a result, logistics costs have declined and supply-chain integration has improved.

India's digital infrastructure, including one of the world's largest UPI networks and the Aadhaar identity architecture, has created a technology stack that enables frictionless commerce, financial inclusion and digital service delivery at an unmatched scale.



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These investments have not only enhanced efficiency but also created new investment opportunities in logistics, real estate, energy and urban services.

Ease of Doing Business in India

The country has undertaken substantive efforts to improve its business environment. The National Single Window System (NSWS) provides investors with a unified digital interface for navigating central and state-level approvals. The decriminalisation of business-law provisions, simplified compliance frameworks and the introduction of faceless assessments in tax proceedings have materially reduced regulatory friction.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has also introduced a State Business Reform Action Plan to drive competitive reforms across Indian states, creating a race to the top in the investment climate.

The country's current FDI policy framework is among the most welcoming in Asia. The numbers support this trend. Cumulative FDI equity inflows from April 2000 to December 2025 reached US\$776.76 billion, with total FDI inflows exceeding US\$1.14 trillion. Additionally, annual FDI inflows more than doubled from US\$36 billion in FY 2013-14 to approximately US\$81 billion in FY 2024-25.

Manufacturing and the Make in India Opportunity

Perhaps no sector better illustrates the nation's investment proposition than manufacturing. The confluence of policy support, competitive factor costs, a large skilled workforce and improving infrastructure has positioned India as an attractive alternative and complement to established global manufacturing hubs.

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, spanning 14 strategic sectors, including electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, textiles, speciality chemicals and advanced materials, has been transformative.

As of June 2025, actual investments realised under the PLI scheme had crossed ₹1.88 lakh crore. This generated incremental production of more than ₹17 lakh crore and direct and indirect employment for over 12.3 lakh individuals. The scheme has been particularly effective in catalysing FDI in electronics manufacturing, attracting more than US\$4 billion since FY 2020-21 alone.

Between April 2014 and March 2025, the manufacturing sector attracted FDI equity inflows of US\$184.15 billion. This represents a 69% increase compared with the previous decade. In FY 2024-25, FDI in manufacturing grew 18% year-on-year, reaching US\$19.04 billion.

India's pharmaceutical sector, ranked third globally by volume, supplies more than 50% of global vaccine demand and approximately 40% of US generic medicines, reflecting a global leadership position built on manufacturing excellence and regulatory quality.

The Make in India initiative, PM MITRA textile parks, semiconductor incentive schemes and the National Manufacturing Mission collectively constitute a coherent industrial policy framework designed to elevate manufacturing's share of GDP from the current 17% to 25%.

India's manufacturing ecosystem offers a compelling and maturing platform for global manufacturers. This is particularly relevant for those seeking to de-risk supply chains, reduce concentration in a single geography or establish a presence in a high-growth domestic market.

Finally, India's investment proposition is neither cyclical nor speculative. It is grounded in structural realities: demographic scale, infrastructure investment, an open FDI regime and a manufacturing ecosystem of increasing sophistication.

India presents a compelling case for long-term investors. Its strengths include market size, growth trajectory, political stability, policy direction and talent availability.

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India and Africa: Relations Beyond Rhetorics

By Ambassador Anil Trigunayat

India and Africa have a historic and umbilical relationship. It makes a good talking point during speeches, but an objective assessment of the extent and depth of our engagement will be necessary to withstand scrutiny and devise better policy choices. It is also a fact that India has consistently, even if occasionally in an ad hoc manner, engaged with African countries. It emerged as a strong voice for their emancipation from the colonial yoke and, from then on, through the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), has stood for and advocated the core concerns of African countries, especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), in international forums, be it GATT/WTO, the UN/CHOGM or the climate change negotiations, and now in the reformed UNSC.

During its G20 presidency in 2023, India ensured that the African Union (AU) became a permanent member of the G20. This was widely appreciated and earned India an immeasurable "affection quotient" across Africa.

Besides, through its extensive capacity-building assistance and "Share and Care" approach, India has helped the continent considerably in creating skilled manpower, modern institutions and infrastructure, particularly in the fields of education and defence. Indian teachers and professors were widely respected, especially by those who studied during the 1960s to the 1980s. Unfortunately, this highly effective mode of engagement has dried up and needs to be revived. Several African leaders fondly recall their Indian teachers even after 40-50 years. Dozens of military officers trained in India went on to become heads of government and heads of state in their countries.

Thousands of Africans have been trained under the fully funded ITEC programme and have risen to responsible positions. Another important capacity-building effort involves training about 80 women every year to work on solar panels. Fondly called "Solar Mamas", they return to their communities and help electrify at least 50 households each. Technological competency initiatives in sunrise sectors through centres of excellence, as well as bilateral, regional, sub-regional and trilateral formats with like-minded countries such as France, Japan and the UAE, have now been mooted across the economic spectrum.



One of the most important connectivity and capacity-building programmes launched by India, pursuant to the vision of former President APJ Abdul Kalam, was the Pan-Africa e-Network initiative. It focused on telemedicine, tele-education and e-governance, providing connectivity among heads of state across 48 countries. It involved five Indian premier universities offering courses and 12 super-speciality hospitals providing consultations and medical education, and was fully funded by the Indian government under NEPAD.

The programme has since been upgraded and expanded under the Modi government under the rubric of e-Vidya Bharati and e-Arogya Bharati. Reportedly, more than 7,000 students have completed their studies. Since the 1950s, India has been encouraging African students through scholarships for higher education, training and capacity building in Indian institutions. According to estimates, there are currently more than 55,000 students from various African countries in India.

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India also has a long history of cooperation in defence capacity building in various African countries and of participating in UN peacekeeping operations, beginning in 1960 in the Congo. Its role has been broadly appreciated, especially in preventing genocide in South Sudan. Similarly, Indian women police personnel did a remarkable job in Liberia, which was rather unique, and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was full of praise for them.

Currently, India trains a large number of Africans not only in its defence institutions but also in peacekeeping operations and manoeuvring, in addition to conducting counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency training. India has set up national defence colleges in several countries, including Nigeria. It would also be useful to align our engagement with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), devised by the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU), to deal with African problems such as genocide and ethnic cleansing.

India has also been very active in anti-piracy operations along the east coast of Africa, especially around Somalia and the Gulf of Aden, extending to the Mozambique Channel, to ensure freedom of navigation and secure lines of trade and communication. The Indian Navy has successfully escorted around 2,500 vessels. Like US AFRICOM, New Delhi needs to strategically examine the Gulf of Guinea and other maritime-domain-awareness initiatives.

In the wake of the US-Iran and Israel war and the closure and blockade of chokepoints, it has become imperative for New Delhi to reorient its energy-security efforts in a mutually beneficial manner towards the African continent and secure sea lanes of communication through collaboration and capacity building.

The diaspora helps considerably in building bridges at the people-to-people level and, in turn, contributes to the growth of bilateral relations, especially in the economic field, as well as through the leadership positions acquired by members of the diaspora as a result of their exposure and experience in their respective countries.

India has around three million people of Indian origin across the African continent who have achieved considerable success. The Indian community has begun to integrate with the socio-economic needs of local communities by providing services such as education, medical treatment, job creation

and employment. No wonder the former President of Nigeria stated more than once that Indian industrialists are the second-largest providers of employment after the federal government in Nigeria. The time is ripe to also institutionalise engagement with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while speaking at the Parliament in Kampala in July 2018, outlined his Africa vision through ten guiding principles, which include: Africa is among India's top priorities, and the momentum of cooperation will be sustained through regular exchanges; development partnerships will be based on African priorities; preferential access will be provided to Indian markets for African products; India will assist in harnessing the digital revolution in Africa; India and Africa will work to improve Africa's agricultural potential; they will fight climate change together; work together to keep oceans and maritime lanes free for all; Africa, instead of becoming a theatre of competition, should become a nursery for its youth; and India and Africa should aspire and work together for a just, representative and democratic global order.

These are ideal, achievable and collaborative policies that represent a paradigm shift compared with other major powers seeking to join the "Gold Rush" for exploitation through neo-colonial approaches.

India-Africa relations have developed into a multifaceted partnership encompassing political engagement, trade and investment, development cooperation, capacity building, healthcare, education, digital connectivity, ICT, AI, defence cooperation, space, critical minerals, food and energy security, renewables and multilateral collaboration.

The 4th India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) was postponed due to the Ebola crisis and needs to be held at the earliest to focus on current issues, challenges and solutions. India-Africa engagement will be decisive in the emerging world order, as the combined synergies of their natural and human resources, capital and human-centric approaches can be aligned for the global good by bringing together the objectives of Agenda 2063 and Viksit Bharat 2047.

The partnership focuses on innovation, resilience and inclusive transformation for sustainable development.

Anil Trigunayat is a former Ambassador of India to Jordan, Libya and Malta.

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How connectivity is reshaping the nation

India is no longer just a nation with potential; it is a nation on the move. Across the length and breadth of its geography, a quiet but consequential transformation is underway. Roads are reaching remote villages that were once cut off for months during the monsoon. Optical fibre is being laid across districts that have never had broadband. Airports are opening in tier-2 cities that previously required a half-day journey to reach a flight, while ports are being modernised to handle the cargo volumes of an increasingly export-oriented economy.

Together, these developments constitute some of the boldest infrastructure-led growth stories of the 21st century, fundamentally reshaping the nation's economic framework.

Strengthening the Infrastructure

For decades, inadequate connectivity was among the most persistent constraints on India's growth potential. Poor roads increased logistics costs and made agricultural produce less competitive. Weak digital infrastructure excluded millions from formal financial and government services. Congested ports and underdeveloped freight corridors added friction to exports at a time when global supply chains were seeking alternatives to established manufacturing hubs.

The country realised early on that connectivity is not merely a public good but an economic multiplier. Every rupee invested in quality infrastructure generates returns that ripple outward: through jobs created during construction, productivity unlocked after completion, and businesses that become viable where none existed before. This understanding has translated into a focused infrastructure investment agenda.

The Union Budget 2025-26 allocated ₹11.21 lakh crore to capital expenditure, equivalent to 3.1% of national GDP. The allocation continues a multi-year trend of substantial increases in public investment in roads, railways, ports, airports and digital infrastructure. The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), launched in 2019, envisaged investments of more than ₹111 lakh crore across sectors by 2025, covering over 6,800 infrastructure projects spanning 39 sectors. These are not merely aspirational numbers on paper; they reflect projects being tendered, financed, built and commissioned.

The Expansion of the Road Network

The country's national highway network expanded from approximately 91,000 km in 2014 to 1,46,145 km in 2024, representing a 60% increase in a decade and making it the second-largest national highway network in the world. In FY 2023-24 alone, approximately 12,349 km of national highways were constructed, registering a compound annual growth rate of 9.3% in highway construction between FY 2016 and FY 2024.

Flagship projects such as the 1,350-km Delhi-Mumbai Expressway represent a new generation of infrastructure corridors designed not merely to move vehicles but to catalyse development. These expressways drastically reduce travel times, lower fuel costs, decrease accident rates and make industrial land along their alignments far more attractive to investors. They are, in effect, linear engines of regional economic development.

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has improved accessibility to thousands of previously isolated villages. As of July 2024, more than 8,10,083 km of roads had been sanctioned under the programme, with 7,65,530 km completed at a total expenditure of ₹3,24,177 crore. Phase IV of PMGSY, announced in the Union Budget 2024-25, will extend all-weather connectivity to an additional 25,000 rural habitations.

Improved road connectivity has had a profound impact on rural livelihoods. Farmers can now reliably transport perishable produce to mandis; children can reach schools and colleges; and healthcare has become accessible in ways it simply was not when a single unsealed road was the only link to the wider world.

Modernising the Railways

The country's 170-year-old railway network is undergoing comprehensive modernisation to meet present-day demands. The Dedicated Freight Corridor programme, spanning the Eastern and Western corridors, is transforming cargo movement between the country's major industrial and port hubs. By separating freight from passenger traffic, these corridors allow both to run faster, more reliably and at higher volumes. Logistics costs, which have historically been a competitive disadvantage for Indian manufacturing, are expected to fall meaningfully as a result.

The indigenously designed and manufactured Vande Bharat Express has gradually reshaped expectations for intercity travel. As part of the

PM Gati Shakti initiative, Indian Railways is developing 400 new Vande Bharat trains, upgrading 200 existing railway terminals and building 300 new terminals over five years. Beyond the passenger experience, the programme has generated demand across domestic steel, electronics and engineering supply chains.

Station redevelopment and the expansion of metro rail networks in cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and Ahmedabad are transforming urban mobility. Efficient urban transit systems are critical to sustaining the productivity gains that rapid urbanisation can bring.

Augmenting Digital Infrastructure

If roads and railways are the physical arteries of India's connectivity revolution, digital infrastructure is its nervous system. The BharatNet project, one of the world's largest rural broadband programmes, aims to connect more than 6,00,000 villages with high-speed optical fibre.

The results of earlier investments in digital infrastructure are already visible. In August 2025, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed more than 20 billion transactions in a single month, worth over ₹24.85 lakh crore, averaging nearly 7,500 transactions per second. Last year, UPI recorded 228.3 billion transactions with a value of ₹299.7 lakh crore, reflecting year-on-year volume growth of 29.3%. These numbers place UPI firmly among the world's largest real-time payments platforms by volume.

The JAM trinity — Jan Dhan bank accounts, Aadhaar biometric identification and mobile connectivity — has enabled direct benefit transfers that have reached hundreds of millions of citizens with minimal leakage.

The rollout of 5G networks, which began in October 2022 and has since expanded rapidly, positions India as an early adopter of next-generation connectivity. More than 13 crore subscribers have begun using 5G services, representing one of the fastest 5G rollouts anywhere in the world. For manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare and logistics, 5G's combination of high bandwidth and low latency opens possibilities that are only beginning to be explored, including precision agriculture, remote surgery, smart-factory automation and real-time supply-chain visibility.

Upgrading Ports and Logistics

India's coastline of more than 7,500 kilometres is a strategic asset that the country is finally beginning to leverage fully. The Sagarmala Programme, launched to modernise port infrastructure and promote port-led industrialisation, has identified more than 500 development projects expected to mobilise over ₹3.59 lakh crore in infrastructure investment. Major ports such as JNPT, Mundra and Visakhapatnam have seen significant capacity additions and efficiency improvements. Turnaround times, once a source of competitive disadvantage, are declining as port processes are digitised and mechanised.

The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, launched in October 2021, represents perhaps the most sophisticated approach yet to integrated infrastructure planning. By bringing together 57 Central Ministries and Departments, along with 36 States and Union Territories, on a single geospatial digital platform with more than 1,700 data layers, the plan enables coordinated infrastructure development and eliminates the siloed decision-making that has historically led to delays and cost overruns.

To date, 293 infrastructure projects worth ₹13.59 lakh crore have been evaluated through the platform's Network Planning Group mechanism. Roads, railways, ports, airports, gas pipelines and power lines can now be planned in concert rather than in isolation.

As part of the Bharatmala scheme, 35 Multimodal Logistics Parks are being developed across the country with an investment of approximately ₹46,000 crore. Once operational, they are projected to handle 700 million metric tonnes of cargo annually.

India's connectivity revolution is not a single project or a single-sector story. It is a systemic rewiring of the nation, cutting across the physical and digital realms, urban and rural areas, and coastal and inland regions.

A nation that is better connected is one where talent can migrate to opportunity, goods can move efficiently to markets, investment can flow to its most productive uses, and citizens in every district can participate in and benefit from economic growth. The infrastructure being laid today is not merely background; it is the foundation upon which India's next chapter of growth will be written.



THE MALABAR HOUSE

Located in the heart of historic Fort Kochi, Relais & Châteaux Malabar House is a beautifully restored 18th-century mansion showcasing an impressive collection of contemporary and traditional South Indian artworks

By Amjad Vanimal

In Fort Kochi, where centuries of history remain woven into the streets, buildings and everyday life, Relais & Châteaux Malabar House offers a distinctive way to experience the character of this historic neighbourhood. Located on Parade Road, the heritage property brings together the architectural legacy of the area with contemporary design, local craftsmanship, art and cuisine.

A stay here becomes an opportunity to explore the many layers of Fort Kochi and Kerala's composite cultural heritage, shaped over centuries by encounters between the East and West.

From its restored architecture and collection of art and antiques

to its food and intimate courtyard spaces, The Malabar House provides a setting in which the history and culture of the region become part of the travel experience.

The story of the property goes back to 1755, when Dutch-era mansion owner Jan Herman Clausing acquired it from Mathew Henrich Beyls. Over the centuries, the property passed through the hands of spice traders, tea traders and bankers before beginning a new chapter in 1997 as Fort Kochi's first boutique heritage hotel.

Today, The Malabar House is a member of Relais & Châteaux and the Indian Heritage Hotels Association, but its character remains distinctly rooted in its surroundings.

A heritage that feels alive

The hotel's architecture brings together three strands: the historical character of the building, contemporary work by local artisans and craftsmen, and a carefully curated collection of furniture, objects and art.

The result is neither a museum nor a conventional modern hotel decorated with nostalgic touches. Instead, it is an ensemble in which the different layers of Kerala's cultural history sit comfortably alongside one another.

The design reflects Kochi's centuries-old position as a meeting point between East and West. Portuguese, Dutch, British, Indian and other cultural influences have all left their

imprint on Fort Kochi, and The Malabar House acknowledges this composite heritage without becoming overly formal about it.

Even small architectural details reveal the thought that has gone into the property. The reception area extends across two floors and opens towards the courtyard, while its spiral staircase features individually cast concrete steps whose surfaces were chisel-treated by granite artisans.

Elsewhere, salvaged wood, pillars, doors and windows have been reused. In a region where old Kerala homes are increasingly giving way to denser construction, such elements provide an important connection to the building traditions of the past.

It is this attention to detail that gives the property its sense of authenticity.

Where history comes alive through art

If architecture provides the foundation, art gives The Malabar House much of its personality.

Art here is not displayed as a collection of expensive objects placed behind invisible boundaries. It is part of the hotel's everyday environment. Tanjore paintings, folk art, contemporary works, black-and-white photographs, sculptures, antique furniture and objects of craftsmanship coexist across the property. Every room and public space offers something different to discover.

At reception, a striking vertical triptych by Trivandrum-based artist Pradeep Puthoor stands beside a life-size antique wooden horse once used in temple processions. Elsewhere, a graphic canvas inspired by a photograph of a tree outside the hotel shares space with a suspended steel sphere strung with Kalava cotton thread.

The collection has evolved with the hotel, with contemporary art increasingly taking centre stage.

The influence of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale has also added another dimension to Fort Kochi's already rich artistic landscape. The international contemporary art event has brought artists, curators, collectors and media from around the world into the neighbourhood, and The Malabar House has embraced that creative energy through its own programme of edited art shows.

For a guest, this means that art is not something to be ticked off on a sightseeing itinerary. It accompanies you through breakfast, an evening drink, a walk through the courtyard or simply a quiet moment in your room.

With just 17 rooms, The Malabar House has an intimacy that larger luxury hotels cannot easily replicate.

There are three accommodation categories — Deluxe Rooms, Roof Garden Suites and the Malabar Suite. The rooms are individually decorated with antique and contemporary objects, distinctive colour schemes and stone flooring.

Each room has its own veranda, terrace or garden sit-out, while the suites offer additional private outdoor space. Some ground-floor rooms open onto private



gardens, while several first-floor rooms overlook the historic Parade Ground.

I particularly appreciated the sense of privacy and calm. Despite being located in the middle of the vibrant Fort Kochi neighbourhood, the hotel feels like a retreat once you step inside.

The courtyard is at the heart of the property, creating a natural space around which the hotel's restaurants, rooms and public areas connect. The swimming pool adds another layer of relaxation, while the overall scale of the property makes the experience feel personal rather than institutional.

The rooms are comfortable and thoughtfully equipped, with large bathrooms featuring bathtub and shower facilities, Wi-Fi, television, safe deposit lockers, coffee makers and minibars.

But the real luxury here is less about technology and more about atmosphere.

Food is another important part of The Malabar House experience.

At Malabar Junction, the hotel's signature restaurant, Kerala's culinary traditions meet Mediterranean influences. The concept reflects Kochi's own history as a crossroads between cultures, while the kitchen places emphasis on local produce and the flavours of the region.

The approach is closely aligned with the Relais & Châteaux

philosophy of celebrating cuisine that represents its local culture and environment.

Dining also becomes an experience of Kerala's performing arts. Depending on the evening and weather, classical Carnatic or Hindustani music and classical dance performances take place on the courtyard stage.

For a visitor, this creates an especially evocative setting: dinner surrounded by heritage architecture, art and the sounds of Indian classical music.

A wellness pause

The hotel's Purespa extends the property's emphasis on traditional Kerala experiences into wellness. The spa focuses on Ayurveda-inspired therapies and specialised oil massages, offering treatments designed around relaxation, rejuvenation and wellbeing. Massage rooms are spread across the courtyard building, creating an intimate environment rather than the large-scale spa atmosphere found at resort properties.

Yoga is also available, with daily sessions offered at the nearby Cochin Club, while private or group sessions can be arranged at the hotel.

It is a fitting complement to the overall experience. After spending hours walking around Fort Kochi, exploring its churches, colonial buildings, Chinese fishing nets

and atmospheric streets, an Ayurvedic massage provides an ideal way to slow down.

A different definition of luxury

What stayed with me most after my stay was not a particular room, meal or facility, but the feeling of being somewhere with a strong sense of place.

The Malabar House succeeds because it does not try to separate itself from Fort Kochi. Instead, it draws its identity from the neighbourhood, from Kerala's history and from the cultural exchanges that have shaped the region for centuries.

Its intimate scale, thoughtful restoration, art collection, local craftsmanship, cuisine and personalised service come together naturally.

For travellers seeking a large resort with endless facilities, this may not be the obvious choice. But for those looking for a hotel that offers character, culture and a genuine connection with its destination, The Malabar House is difficult to overlook.

It is a heritage hotel, certainly. It is also an art hotel, a culinary destination and a quiet urban retreat.

Most importantly, it feels like a place that belongs to Fort Kochi.

And that, perhaps, is its greatest luxury.

CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF A GREAT NATION

80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY *India*

On this proud occasion, Exblowra Co. extends its warmest greetings and heartfelt wishes to the people of India and the Indian community across Qatar.

Independence Day is a celebration of freedom, unity and the remarkable journey of a nation built on courage, resilience and hope. We honour the sacrifices of those who shaped our nation and celebrate India's achievements as it continues to emerge as a global force in innovation, technology, industry and progress.

We also salute the millions of Indians around the world, including the vibrant Indian community in Qatar, whose dedication continues to strengthen the enduring friendship between India and Qatar.

May the Tiranga always fly high, inspiring generations to dream bigger and build a brighter tomorrow.

Exblowra Family proudly joins India in celebrating this glorious occasion.

Wishing everyone a proud and joyous Independence Day.

JAI HIND



Ex. Indian Navy
Mr. NAZERATH CHARLES
GENERAL MANAGER
EXBLOWRA GROUP OF COMPANIES



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Oil And Gas Projects



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FIFA World Cup Stadium Projects



FIFA World Cup Stadium Projects



Qatar Energy Headquarters



Katara Towers - Hotel Projects



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World Trade Center



St. Regis - Hotel Projects



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Let us honour India's glorious heritage, celebrate our unity in diversity, and pledge to build a stronger, peaceful, and prosperous nation.

DEEPAK SINGH
GENERAL MANAGER

Roots Qatar W.L.L.
(Coating & Water Proofing)

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