

**GULF TIMES**  
Special Supplement

26<sup>th</sup> January

# INDIA

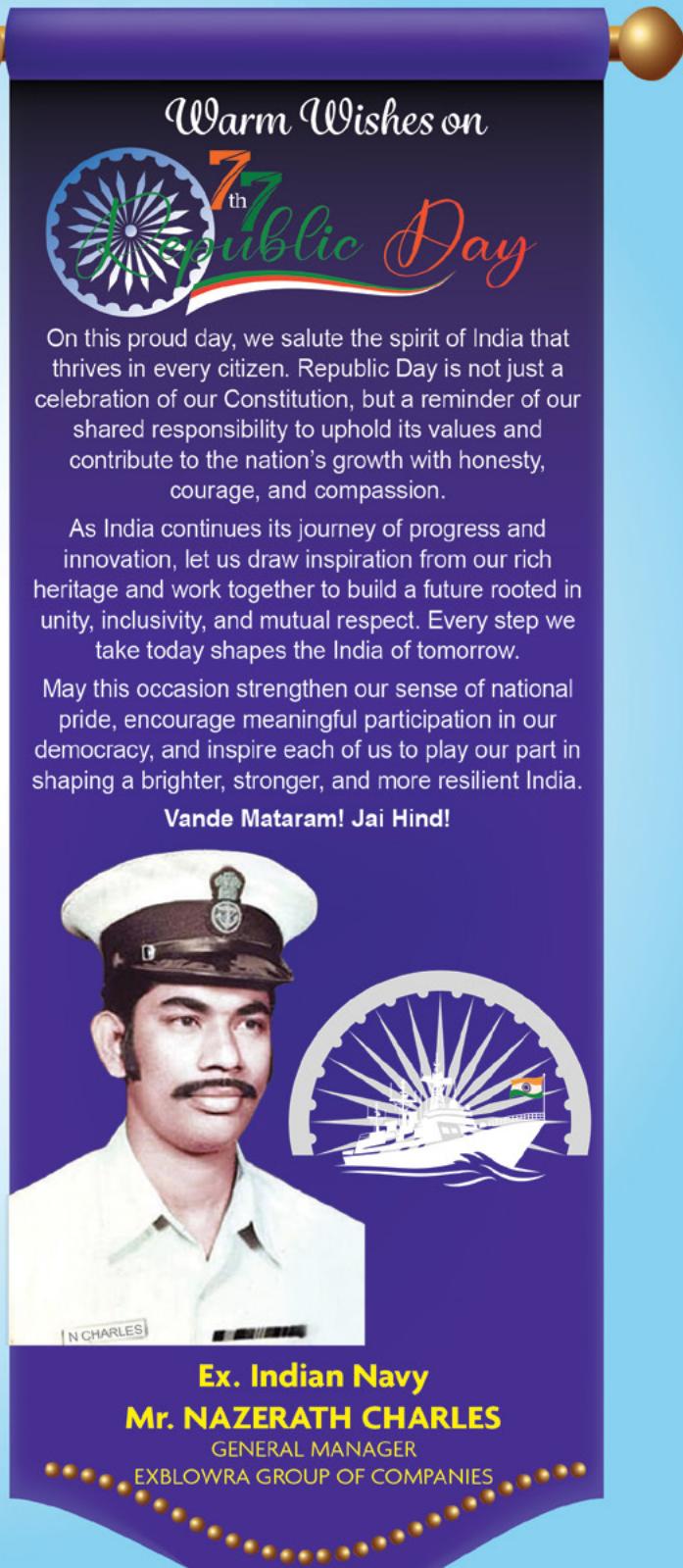
## REPUBLIC DAY



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GREEN ENERGY INVESTMENTS ENTER A NEW ERA



# 77<sup>TH</sup> REPUBLIC DAY 26 JANUARY INDIA



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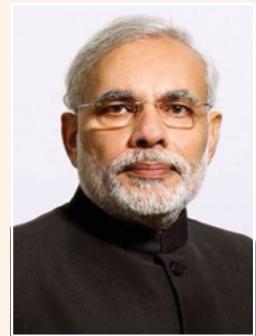
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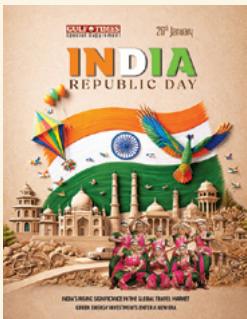
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## GULF TIMES Supplement Team

### Marketing Manager

Violette Fakhry

### Marketing Team

Kuriakose Joseph  
Sanjai Noah  
Biju Paul Simon

### Editor

Amjad Vanimal

### Layout / Cover

A.K. Vinay Kumar

### Graphics

Krishnamurthy

### Ad. Controller

Thomas Jose  
Dr. Sabu K.C.

### Circulation In-charge

Sherif Samy

### Printed by

Raya Commercial

### Advertising Office

Gulf Times/Arrayah Bldg,  
C Ring Road,  
P.O. Box 533, Doha Qatar  
Tel: (+974) 44466621  
(+974) 44466657  
email: advr@gulf-times.com

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## Ambassador's message

**O**n the occasion of the 77th Republic Day of India, I extend my warm greetings to all Indians and friends of India in Qatar. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the respected Members of the Royal Family, and the Government and people of Qatar for their continued goodwill and support to the members of Indian community in Qatar.

India's journey as a democratic republic has been guided by the values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity enshrined in our Constitution. As the world's largest democracy, India draws strength from its people and from its institutions to ensure inclusive growth and good governance for all. On Republic Day we remember the sacrifices of the leaders of our freedom struggle, the foresight of the makers of Constitution and contribution of leaders who have made India a strong nation. We also salute our armed forces who keep India safe and secure. Operation Sindoar in 2025 was a resounding success because of their courage and valor.

Over the last year despite facing many challenges India has continued its march towards progress and prosperity. Our economy, supported by timely reforms and investments in manufacturing and infrastructure crossed a historic milestone and became the fourth-largest global economy. We remain the fastest growing large economies in the world with economic growth of 7.4% in FY 2025-26. The people of India continue to distinguish themselves in various fields including business, entrepreneurship, science, technology, innovation, culture and sports. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of *Viksit Bharat* (Developed India) by 2047 inspires every Indian, especially the youth, to contribute to this goal. The focus on creating digital public infrastructure has helped in ensuring that the fruits of development reach the most disadvantaged sections of society.

Our scientific feats like the visit of Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla to the International Space Station and successful launch of the BlueBird Block-2 (BlueBird-6) satellite, the heaviest commercial payload ever launched from Indian soil by ISRO's "Bahubali" rocket have drawn global applause. The Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, 2025, reflects the government's effort to modernize the laws governing the nuclear sector. This will shape India's long-term journey toward building a secure and sustainable energy future including by allowing private companies to participate in India's nuclear energy sector.

India is experiencing a massive AI-driven data center boom, with billions invested by global tech giants to power India's AI ambitions and digital economy. India is also taking a lead in advocating for equity in AI by engaging with international community. AI Impact Summit is being held in New Delhi in February 2026 which would advocate use of AI for people, planet and progress. India continues to pursue reliable partnerships, guided by its philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* - the world is one family. India has worked closely with its partners for addressing shared global challenges while consistently raising the voice of the Global South.

The year 2025 was a landmark year for India-Qatar relations as we had the honour of hosting His Highness the Amir of Qatar on his second State Visit to India in February 2025. Both sides elevated their ties to strategic partnership during the visit and set the foundation for deepening and expanding our relations in different areas. Following the visit, the top leadership of both sides has pursued continuous high-level engagement. In a telephone call in September 2025 PM Modi expressed deep concern over the attacks in Doha and condemned the violation of the sovereignty of the State of Qatar. He also appreciated the role being played by Qatar in promoting regional peace and stability, including its mediation efforts in Gaza.

India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar visited Qatar in November and met His Highness the Amir and H.E. Prime Minister

and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abulrahman Al Thani. The meetings reviewed progress in bilateral ties and also included exchange of views on regional and global developments. India's Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal held the first meeting of the renewed Joint Commission on Economic and Commercial Cooperation with Minister of Commerce and Industry H.E. Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani in Doha in October 2025. He also met Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and other dignitaries. The inaugural meeting of India-Qatar Joint Business Council was also held during his visit.

India stays the third largest trading partner of Qatar and mutual investments between both countries have continued to grow. The energy partnership of both countries has also remained solid with new long-term contracts signed for supply of LNG from Qatar to India. During the State Visit of His Highness The Amir to India both sides set ambitious targets of doubling bilateral trade by 2030 and increasing Qatari investments in India to USD 10 billion. Qatar's MOS for Foreign Trade Affairs H.E. Dr Ahmed Al Sayed led a high-level investment delegation to New Delhi in August 2025 and co-chaired a meeting with his counterpart exploring investments in sectors like infrastructure, manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, fintech, semiconductors and start-ups.

The age-old cultural ties between India and Qatar have been manifested through some new initiatives over the past few months. We are delighted that Qatar's Minister of Culture HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad bin Jassim bin Hamad Al Thani visited New Delhi in January 2026 for attending the New Delhi World Book Fair in which Qatar was 'Guest of Honour' country. There have also been new linkages established between our museums which should promote greater cultural exchange and understanding. India also hosted a delegation of Qatar Leadership Centre in November 2025. We are glad that Visit Qatar has marked a presence in Mumbai which will promote tourism linkages between both countries.

Both countries have also continued close cooperation in multilateral forums. Our Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya visited Qatar in November 2025 for participating in the Second World Summit for Social Development. Qatar's Minister of Culture participated in the UNESCO Intangible Culture Heritage Committee meeting held in New Delhi in December 2025. Our parliamentarians have met during the IPU meetings. There are great opportunities for both sides to work together on technology, innovation and sustainability in accordance with Qatar's Third National Development Strategy and India's vision of *Viksit Bharat*.

Indian community in Qatar remains an important and strong pillar of our bilateral relationship. The hard work, professionalism and cultural ethos displayed by the community make us proud and strengthen the bonds between our two people. Indians in Qatar can also now avail Unified Payments Interface (UPI) services for making payments at QNB points of sales in Qatar. We in the Embassy remain committed to serve the community through efficient consular services. I also thank Indian community organizations for their services to the Indian community in Qatar and strengthening India-Qatar relations.

As we celebrate the 77th Republic Day of India, let us renew our commitment to the values of our Constitution and build together a future of peace, prosperity and progress. I am confident that the friendship and strategic partnership between India and Qatar will continue to scale newer heights in the years ahead. Jai Hind! Jai Qatar!



**Shri Vipul**  
Ambassador of India to Qatar

# Bilateral Engagements



India-Qatar relations reached a significant milestone in 2025 with the State Visit of HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, to India on 17-18 February 2025. HH the Amir was welcomed by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Delegation-level talks resulted in the elevation of bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership and the exchange of important bilateral agreements, reflecting growing depth and mutual trust.

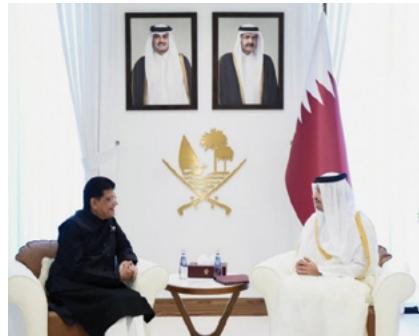
## Visit of Dr. S. Jaishankar to Qatar (15-17 November 2025)



Hon'ble External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar was honoured to call on HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Amir of Qatar, in Doha. The Hon'ble Minister conveyed the warm greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and reiterated India's commitment to further strengthening India-Qatar relations.

Hon'ble External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani in Doha. They reviewed key aspects of the Strategic Partnership including energy, trade, investment and people-to-people ties. Dr. Jaishankar appreciated the exchange of views on developments in the Middle East/West Asia, as well as regional and global issues.

## Visit of Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal to Qatar (05 - 07 October 2025)



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal called on H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar. They discussed strategies to enhance economic and strategic cooperation, reaffirming their commitment to advancing the India-Qatar relationship under the visionary leadership of both nations.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal held a fruitful meeting with Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al-Thani, Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry. The two sides discussed ways to enhance bilateral trade between India and Qatar, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening the multifaceted partnership in trade, investment, and strategic cooperation, while exploring broad prospects for greater collaboration.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal co-chaired the India-Qatar Ministerial Joint Commission on Economic and Commercial Cooperation with Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al-Thani, Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening the India-Qatar partnership by building on the strong bilateral trade between the two countries. They also agreed to further intensify cooperation to achieve the trade and investment goals set by the leadership during the visit of H.H. the Amir of Qatar to India in February.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, participated in a fruitful luncheon hosted by HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim Al-Thani, Chairman of the Qatari Businessmen Association, where key developments in India and Qatar were discussed. The Minister encouraged businesses on both sides to leverage this forum to explore partnerships and collaborations in trade and investment, paving the way for deeper economic engagement between the two countries.

Congratulations to the Government and the People of India  
on the Joyous Occasion of

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Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, addressed the inaugural meeting of the India-Qatar Joint Business Council, alongside Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry, H.E. Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani. The Minister encouraged businesses on both sides to leverage the strategic partnership and cultural ties to further deepen India-Qatar economic relations, highlighting how the robust economies of both countries offer significant synergies across sectors for shared growth and prosperity.

Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, met with HE Sheikh Bandar bin Mohammed bin Saud Al Thani, Governor of the Qatar Central Bank and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Investment Authority and the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority. They discussed ways to further enhance trade, investment, and financial cooperation between India and Qatar.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal launched Bharat's own UPI at Lulu Hypermarket in Doha, Qatar. This move represents a significant step forward in digital connectivity and payment efficiency, reflecting India's commitment to facilitating cross-border trade and leveraging the "Digital India" initiative.

Operating at Qatar National Bank (QNB) points of sale, the platform covers a wide range of the Qatari market and will benefit Indian travelers, boosting trade and tourism between the two countries.

## India-Qatar Invest Meet (August 2025)



India's Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman met His Excellency Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sayed, Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs, in New Delhi. FM Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the transformative measures India has undertaken over the past decade to attract foreign investment. Both Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing bilateral trade and investment under the India-Qatar Strategic Partnership. The Qatari delegation noted the significant opportunities for investment in India, given the country's robust economic growth and technological advancements.



India's Union Minister of State for Finance, Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, and Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs, H.E. Dr. Ahmad bin Mohammed Al Sayed, co-chaired a meeting on investment cooperation between India and Qatar. The discussions focused on enhancing Qatari investments in India, particularly in sectors such as infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, transport, logistics, food processing, health, semiconductors, and finance.

Both sides recalled Qatar's commitment to invest \$10 billion and establish a QIA office in India, announced during the State visit of H.H. the Amir of the State of Qatar to India in February 2025. In this context, they agreed to further promote discussions on investments by QIA and other Qatari entities, focusing on key sectors, specific projects, and companies. The Qatari delegation emphasized the opportunities for investment in India, given the country's robust economic growth and technological advancements.

QIA has already made investments in India across sectors including retail, utilities, media, housing, healthcare, and real estate. Similarly, the Indian community in Qatar has invested, particularly in the SME sector. The visit of this high-level Qatari delegation will help deepen understanding of the available opportunities in India and further strengthen the investment partnership between the two countries.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal held a productive meeting with HE Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sayed, Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs of Qatar. They discussed strengthening bilateral trade and investment, and deepening cooperation across key sectors including energy, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, food processing, and fintech.



As part of the ongoing partnership between the two countries, and in the presence of HE Saad bin Ali Al Kharji, Chairman of Qatar Tourism and Chairman of the Board of Visit Qatar, and Eng. Abdulaziz Ali Al Mawlawi, CEO of Visit Qatar, Visit Qatar celebrated the richness of Qatari culture alongside Indian arts. The initiative offered a glimpse into Qatar's cultural identity, showcasing the country as a destination where heritage and modernity meet, at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) in Mumbai.

The evening featured the unveiling of an artwork presented by Visit Qatar, in the presence of HE Mohammed bin Hassan Al Jaber, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Republic of India, and HE Ahmed bin Saad Al Sulaiti, Consul of the State of Qatar in Mumbai. The programme also included a ceremony honouring the participants, providing direct opportunities to connect and strengthen collaboration with partners in India.

HE Dr. Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser Al Misnad, Minister of State for International Cooperation, received the Shield of Humanity from Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister of Kerala, in recognition of the State of Qatar's ongoing humanitarian efforts and its continued support for the Republic of India and the Kerala community residing in Qatar.





The Qatar Chamber held a meeting with a business delegation from India, headed by Sanjay Beswal, Co-Chair of the International Affairs Committee at PHDCCI India, while the Qatari side was led by HE Mohamed bin Mahdi Al Ahbabi, a Board Member of the Qatar Chamber.

The meeting discussed trade and economic relations between Qatar and India, ways to enhance them, opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between the Qatari and Indian private sectors, and promising sectors for Qatari investment in India.

Addressing the meeting, HE Mohamed bin Mahdi Al Ahbabi highlighted the strong cooperation between Qatar and India at all levels, particularly in trade and economic relations. He noted that India is one of Qatar's most important trading partners, with bilateral trade reaching QR 48 billion last year. He added that the Indian business community plays an active role in supporting Qatar's economic development, with numerous Indian companies operating across various sectors in the Qatari market.

He also emphasised the Qatar Chamber's commitment to strengthening partnerships and cooperation between Qatari and Indian companies through joint investments and projects across diverse sectors, including energy, infrastructure, technology, healthcare, and food security.

## Visit of Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya for Second World Summit for Social Development (03-06 November 2025)



Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, highlighted the Prime Minister Modi government's exemplary efforts in poverty alleviation and the expansion of social security coverage at the United Nations' Second World Summit for Social Development.



Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Labour and Employment and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, held productive bilateral meetings with HE Petre-Florin Manole, Minister of Labour, Family, Youth, and Social Solidarity of Romania; HE Buthaina bint Ali Al Jaber Al Nuaimi, Minister of Social Development and Family of Qatar; and HE Anton Kotyakov, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of the Russian Federation, on the sidelines of the 2nd World Summit for Social Development.

The discussions focused on sharing best practices in digital innovation for efficient last-mile service delivery. The Hon'ble Minister highlighted India's e-Shram and NCS portals as robust platforms to strengthen social protection systems and promote international youth mobility.

A Qatar Leadership Centre delegation visited the Parliament of India, where they were addressed by Smt Aparajita Sarangi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament. The visit was facilitated by PRIDE, Lok Sabha Secretariat.



ICC Chairman Shri Jay Shah and QCA President HE Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Saud Al Thani graced a women's cricket tournament in Qatar. Ambassador Vipul also joined the event, along with members of the Indian community in Doha, including women cricketers.

# Key Events



The Embassy of India, Doha marked Hindi Diwas as part of Hindi Pakhwada celebrations. The program featured poetry, speeches and cultural performances, celebrating Hindi as a bridge of unity and expression.

The Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) celebrated Hindi Diwas at ICC Ashoka Hall. The celebration featured cultural performances, poetry recitations, and discussions highlighting the richness of the Hindi language and literature.



The Embassy of India warmly welcomed Indian college students in Qatar at a special Welcome Ceremony. The Ambassador briefed the students on the Embassy's services and functions, followed by interactive sessions with officials. The students enthusiastically showcased vibrant cultural performances, celebrating unity and tradition.

The Embassy of India in Doha celebrated Ayurveda Day in association with ICC. Dr. Fazeha Ashkar delivered an insightful talk on the relevance of Ayurveda and this year's theme, "Ayurveda for People & Planet." Medicinal plants were distributed, and cultural performances showcased Ayurveda's rich heritage.

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The Viksit Bharat Run at Al Janoub Stadium was a grand success. Ambassador Vipul flagged off the run with over 450 enthusiastic participants, celebrating fitness, unity, and the vision of a developed India by 2047.



### Floral Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi

On the 156th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Ambassador HE Shri Vipul led Embassy officials and members of the Indian community in paying floral tributes to Gandhiji. Participants reaffirmed Gandhiji's ideals by taking the Swachhta Pledge and joining a cleanliness campaign.

As part of the Gandhi Jayanti 2025 celebrations, the Embassy organized a symposium on 27 September titled "Resilient Earth & Responsible Living – The Gandhian Way." In addition, the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) successfully organized the ICC Gandhi Jayanti Competitions 2025 for school students.

The Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), under the aegis of the Embassy of India in Qatar, also celebrated Gandhi Jayanti to commemorate the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at the DPS Modern Indian School Auditorium. The event featured tributes and a special one-act play highlighting Gandhiji's life and values. The highlight of the programme was the one-act play titled "Gandhi," presented by a visiting team from India led by renowned cine and stage artist Makarand Deshpande.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at the Embassy premises.



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal planted a seedling of the Sidr tree at the embassy as part of the Prime Minister's "Ek Ped Maa ke Naam" initiative.



The Embassy, along with the Indian community in Qatar, celebrated the 150th Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Rashtriya Ekta Diwas with great enthusiasm. The occasion was marked by a soulful rendition of Vande Mataram by Doha-based Indian artists, the screening of a documentary on Sardar Patel, and the reading of excerpts from the Hon'ble Prime Minister's message at the Ekta Parade.



The North Indians' Association (NIA), Qatar, affiliated with ICC under the aegis of the Embassy of India, successfully organized The Utsav - Shaam-e-Roshni 2025, featuring colourful performances that celebrated India's rich traditions and the spirit of togetherness among the diaspora. Ambassador HE Shri Vipul commended the community's efforts in preserving Indian heritage abroad.



The Embassy of India, Doha, joined the Indian community from Uttar Pradesh in celebrating Roshni Utsav 2025, organized by Amrit Uttar Pradesh Navrang Sanskritik Mandal (AUPNSM) Qatar. Ambassador HE Shri Vipul commended AUPNSM's efforts in fostering unity and promoting India's vibrant cultural heritage.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), under the aegis of the Embassy of India, Qatar, organized a Community Reception in honour of Ms. Jaya Prada, renowned actress and former Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha & Lok Sabha), at ICC Ashoka Hall. On this special occasion, Ms. Jaya Prada was felicitated by the ICC Management Committee and Advisory Council in recognition of her outstanding lifetime contributions. She also received felicitations from the ICC Women's Forum, ICC Film Club, and representatives of various community organizations.



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The Embassy of India and the Indian Cultural Centre, Doha, celebrated Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh, commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. Mesmerizing tribal dance performances brought India's rich cultural diversity to life, alongside an inspiring exhibition of tribal art, handlooms, and handicrafts that highlighted the vibrancy of India's tribal heritage.



The Embassy of India in Doha celebrated Constitution Day with great enthusiasm at its premises, honouring the architects of the Indian Constitution and the visionary ideals that guide its democracy towards a Viksit Bharat. The celebrations featured a documentary on the making of the Constitution, a collective reading of the Preamble by members of the Indian community, vibrant cultural programmes, and a painting competition for students of Indian schools in Doha. Selected artworks were exhibited at the Indian Cultural Centre, beautifully reflecting India's constitutional values. Together, the community reaffirmed its commitment to the spirit of Bemisaal Bharat and the guiding principles that unite the nation.



Glimpses from the Special Consular Camp held at Invito Hotel, Al Khor. The embassy provided around 260 consular services at the camp.

The Special Consular Camp held at Invito Hotel, Al Khor. The embassy provided around 224 consular services at the camp.



Indian Cultural Centre, in association with Maharashtra Mandal Qatar, presented 'Wednesday Fiesta' - Festivals of Maharashtra at ICC Ashoka Hall. The colourful evening showcased the rich cultural heritage and festive traditions of Maharashtra through vibrant performances, traditional music, and dance.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), in association with the ICC Women's Forum, organized a Resume Writing & Interview Master class, at the ICC Mumbai Hall. The session was led by Sunitha Ashok, Regional HR Manager - Asia, Middle East and Africa at Applus+, who shared her expertise on career-building skills. She guided participants on how to craft impactful resumes, present with confidence, and master interview etiquette.



The Indian Cultural Centre, in association with the ICC Women's Forum, organised a vibrant Garba Night at the ICC Ashoka Hall. The Chief Guest for the evening was Nitika Gyanveer. Members of the Indian community in Qatar celebrated the occasion in colourful ethnic attire. The event featured energetic Garba performances and DJ music, creating an atmosphere filled with joy, colour, and cultural pride.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) organized a Grand Festival Bazaar 2025 at the ICC Ashoka Hall. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Vaibhav A. Tandale, Counsellor (Head of Chancery and Consular), Embassy of India, and Dr. Manisha Tandale. The Festival Bazaar featured more than 60 vibrant stalls showcasing handicrafts, leather products, imitation jewelry, Indian traditional wear, and delicious Indian food.



Indian Cultural Centre, along with ICC Malayalam Literature Club and ICC Malayalam AO's, celebrated Kerala Piravi – Kerala Formation Day at ICC Ashoka Hall. The evening featured a vibrant array of cultural performances and other traditional art forms that highlighted the rich cultural heritage and spirit of Kerala.

The Embassy of India, in association with the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), participated in the "Civilization Forum 2025" organized by the Qatari Women Association for Economic Awareness and Investment, under the patronage of the Ministry of Social Development and Family.



Indian Cultural Centre presented 'Wednesday Fiesta' – celebrating Children's Day at ICC Ashoka Hall. The event showcased vibrant cultural performances by students from different Indian schools in Qatar.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), in association with the ICC Women's Forum and Medfort SHE Clinics, organised a free medical camp exclusively for women, girls, and children below six years. The camp focused on preventive health, wellness, and early medical care. The Chief Guest, Dr. Vaibhav A. Tandale, Counsellor (Head of Chancery and Consular) at the Embassy of India, graced the event.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), under the aegis of the Embassy of India, Qatar, successfully hosted the Legacy & Leadership Evening, a special ceremony recognising the contributions of the outgoing Students Forum Managing Committee (2023-24) and welcoming the newly appointed committee for the term 2025-26. Held at the ICC Ashoka Hall, the event was graced by Chief Guest Shri Harish Pandey, First Secretary, embassy of India in Qatar.

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Indian Cultural Centre presented 'Wednesday Fiesta'—celebrating Andhra Pradesh Formation Day, at ICC Ashoka Hall. The event showcased vibrant cultural performances that highlighted the rich heritage and traditions of Andhra Pradesh.



Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), in association with Skills Development Centre, presented Raga & Rhythm: An Evening of Sitar Recital and Odissi Dance at ICC Ashoka Hall. The event featured visiting artists Sitarist Anjan Saha, Dr. Kaberi Sen, and Pt. Santosh Kulkarni.



The ICC Film Club, under the aegis of the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), successfully conducted the Indian School Students Short Film Festival 2025 at the Ashoka Hall. The festival received an overwhelming response, with around 40 short film entries submitted by students from various schools across Qatar. After a rigorous screening process, 12 outstanding films were shortlisted for the final round. The shortlisted films were judged by a highly experienced and knowledgeable jury panel, who selected the winners for the Best Film, Best Runner-Up, and other categorized awards. All participating students were awarded participation certificates in recognition of their creative efforts and contribution to the festival. The event served as a vibrant platform to encourage young talent in filmmaking and promoted creative expression among school students in Qatar.



Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) distributed food kits to laborers at Industrial Area, Street 15 Labour Camp, bringing comfort and hope to those in need.



Telangana Gulf Samithi Qatar (TGS Qatar), an Associated Organization (AO) of the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), continues to excel in promoting the ICBF Insurance Scheme.



The Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF) organized a special educational session titled "Digital Detox – A Journey to Mindfulness" at the Kanjani Hall, ICBF Office.



IBPC hosted Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. The session offered valuable insights into strengthening India-Qatar business relations, inspiring dialogue and collaboration. Minister Goyal also addressed key questions from the audience, making it an engaging and impactful interaction.



IBPC Qatar participated alongside the Embassy of India to showcase Incredible India at Hospitality Qatar 2025.



The Embassy of India, in association with IPhAQ Qatar and IBPC Qatar, participated in the Qatar Medicare Exhibition. Four Indian companies and several Indian-owned firms in Qatar took part, highlighting India's strengths in the healthcare sector, including its robust pharmaceutical and medical equipment industries. The Indian Pavilion was inaugurated by the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM).



The Doha Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, in association with Embassy of India, hosted a seminar on #GST2.0 reforms. The event highlighted simplified tax structure, lower GST on essentials, healthcare, MSMEs and industry boost.



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Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, joined the Indian community for a refreshing cycling drive in Doha.

# PM Modi hails India's fab power as key to change

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Semicon India 2025, underscoring India's resolve to achieve semiconductor self-reliance and emerge as a global leader in the sector.

He stressed that the world now looks to India with confidence to shape the future of semiconductors, while outlining a vision for a holistic ecosystem that goes far beyond manufacturing alone.

PM Modi said that the world now looks to India as a trusted collaborator in building the semiconductor industry's future, suggesting that even the smallest domestically produced chip could spark monumental global transformation.

PM Modi drew a powerful analogy, noting that while oil was the driving force of the 20th century, in the 21st century, it's the compact semiconductor chip—what he referred to as the "digital diamond"—that holds real power and promises to accelerate progress across sectors.

Highlighting India's economic strength, he pointed to the robust 7.8% GDP growth in the April–June quarter, which outstripped all expectations. All sectors, from agriculture and

manufacturing to services and construction, performed exceptionally well.

The event also highlighted international partnership opportunities, especially with Japan, following Modi's visit to a Japanese semiconductor plant. The focus remains on building a resilient, end-to-end semiconductor ecosystem, from design to manufacturing, anchored in India's ambition for technological self-reliance.



According to industry projections, India's semiconductor market, valued at approximately \$38 billion in 2023 and \$45–50 billion in 2024–25, is projected to more than double, reaching \$100–110 billion by 2030.

## Digital gold transactions surge 377% as UPI drives shift in investment

Investing in gold is undergoing a transformation, with more consumers opting for digital gold even as prices of the yellow metal climb steeply. Data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) shows that the volume of digital gold purchases through UPI rose 377% in just 16 months, hitting 99.77 million transactions in August, compared with 20.92 million in April 2024. The value of transactions more than doubled during the same period, to INR 1,184 crore from INR 550 crore.



Experts say the surge is driven by expectations of further price increases and the convenience of digital purchases. The price of 24-carat

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gold rose 44% year-on-year in August to INR 11,021 per gram, up from INR 7,633 a year earlier. Analysts note that digital platforms enable buyers to purchase even small quantities, making gold more accessible to households with varying budgets.

Consumers are using service providers such as PayTM, Google Pay and PhonePe to invest in digital gold, which is primarily offered by MMTC PAMP and Augmont Goldtech. Jewellers, including Tanishq and Senco, have also entered the space. Digital gold is certified 24-carat, backed by custodians, and buyers receive digital certificates that can be redeemed for either cash or physical gold at designated outlets.

The category has emerged as one of the fastest-growing for UPI transactions, joining the NPCI's top 10 medium-volume merchant categories in April 2024 and climbing steadily since. UPI remains most heavily used for groceries, which accounted for transactions worth INR 68,116 crore last month.

India's chief economic advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran recently said consumer buying patterns are shifting structurally, with digital channels gaining traction. He added that disposable incomes are set to rise further with recent GST and income tax cuts, which will likely boost digital gold purchases even more.

## From 5G to 6G: IMC 2025 signals India's next telecom leap

With over 1.2 billion mobile users and a rapidly expanding digital economy, India's telecom sector is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of connectivity

The India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2025 opened on October 8, with a keynote by Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, who laid out India's ambitious telecom roadmap beyond 5G. Speaking at the event, Scindia emphasized that India is not just catching up with global telecom trends but is poised to lead the next wave of innovation.

Scindia highlighted the transformative impact of 5G rollout across sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and education, and stressed the need to now focus on 6G research, satellite communications, and AI-driven networks. He called for deeper collaboration between government, industry, and academia to build a robust digital ecosystem that supports emerging technologies.

The minister also underscored India's growing stature as a global telecom manufacturing hub, citing the success of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme and rising exports of telecom equipment. He urged stakeholders to invest in semiconductor fabrication, quantum communication, and green telecom infrastructure to future-proof the sector.

IMC 2025, held in New Delhi, brought together global tech leaders, telecom operators, startups, and policymakers to showcase innovations



and discuss regulatory frameworks. The event featured exhibitions on 5G use cases, smart cities, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion.

Scindia's roadmap reflects India's strategic vision to become a net exporter of telecom technology, reduce dependency on imports, and ensure universal digital access. With over 1.2 billion mobile users and a rapidly expanding digital economy, India's telecom sector is set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of connectivity.

The IMC platform is expected to catalyze partnerships, investments, and policy reforms that will drive India's transition from a 5G-enabled nation to a global leader in next-generation telecom innovation.



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# India's renewable energy push signals a new era for global investors

India is rapidly emerging as one of the world's most compelling clean energy investment destinations, driven by unmatched scale, surging demand, and a stable, forward-looking policy framework that is turning ambition into execution

In the renewable energy sector, smart capital is driven by three key factors: scale, long-term demand, and a stable policy environment. Few countries globally offer this powerful combination at the scale India does today. That is precisely why India is starting to feature prominently on the radar of global green energy players.

This shift has little to do with headline-grabbing announcements and everything to do with the implementation of transformative government green energy schemes across India. The country has rapidly expanded its renewable capacity, reinforced its policy framework, and unlocked opportunities for large-scale, sustainable investments. India recently achieved a new milestone with its total renewable energy capacity, including large hydro and nuclear power, reaching 256 GW, further demonstrating the effectiveness of the country's renewable efforts.

From massive solar parks in Gujarat to an ambitious green hydrogen mission along the coasts, India's momentum in the green energy is visible. It isn't a question of whether global companies are paying attention — many already are. The real question for investors is whether they are positioned to seize this growth at the right moment. Let's explore the reasons why India is among the most attractive destinations for clean energy investment and where investors should consider aligning their portfolios with sustainable growth.

## India's perfect positioning for green energy investments

India combines the key ingredients that global investors seek — scale, demand, and clear policy direction. As one of the world's fastest-growing energy markets, India's renewable energy investments are driven not only by environmental goals but also by the fundamental need to meet rising energy demand sustainably.



The government has laid out an ambitious clean energy roadmap, targeting 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030. To support this, several initiatives are already in place:

- The National Green Hydrogen Mission, launched in 2023, aims to make India a global hub for hydrogen production. It targets an annual production of 5 MMT of green hydrogen by 2030. The mission has an outlay of over ₹ 19,744 crore to facilitate the production, distribution, utilisation and export of hydrogen globally. It positions India to achieve a \$8 billion green hydrogen market by 2030 and \$340 billion by 2050. The SIGHT program (Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition) offers financial incentives for manufacturing electrolyzers and producing green hydrogen.
- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has been launched to promote the manufacturing of solar modules and batteries. Under the scheme, the government launched the National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules to promote solar PV manufacturing in India with an outlay of over ₹ 4,500 crore. Under

the scheme, 11 companies have been allocated the total domestic solar PV module manufacturing capacity of 39,600 MW.

- To further promote green energy-related manufacturing initiatives, the government is allowing 100% FDI in renewable energy within India under the automatic route, further helping global investors and enterprises. Thanks to a liberalised FDI regime, foreign investment in non-conventional energy sources has been increasing year-on-year, reaching \$12.67 Bn as on March 31, 2025.

- India is strengthening its position through key international collaborations, which began with the launch of the International Solar Alliance, in partnership with France. The European Union (EU) remains one of India's closest partners in this space. The third phase of the India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership is already underway, focusing on enhancing green hydrogen production — a critical component of the clean energy transition. Through the India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership, the

countries will collaborate on a range of renewable energy-related areas, including green hydrogen, solar photovoltaics, capacity building, and more. India is also a founding member of the Global Biofuel Alliance with the US, UAE and Brazil.

This policy stability, combined with a growing domestic energy market and export opportunities, is transforming India into a dependable destination for long-term green energy investment.

## Presence of large-scale green energy projects

India's renewable energy ambitions are transforming into substantial, large-scale projects that are already drawing global attention. These initiatives showcase the country's capacity to execute projects at scale, develop long-term infrastructure, and open up investment opportunities across diverse regions and technologies. Some of the most notable initiatives currently underway include:

## Rajasthan and Gujarat's solar parks

The two western Indian states continue to lead India's solar

expansion initiatives. Through projects like the Bhadla solar park with a capacity of over 2,000 MW, India continues to demonstrate its dedication to renewable energy initiatives. The upcoming Khadva Solar Park, being developed in collaboration with Adani Power, is already operational and expected to be the world's largest solar energy project after completion. Projects like these not only increase renewable generation but also present clear investment opportunities in associated infrastructure and services.



## Ladakh's Green Energy Corridor

The government is developing Ladakh as a strategic renewable energy corridor, which includes setting up 13 GW of renewable power and a 12,000 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). The project is anticipated to be completed by FY 2029-30. The region's ambitious solar and transmission projects aim to supply clean power across the northern grid, supported by investments from central and state governments.

## Green Hydrogen initiatives across key states

The coastal states of India are poised to gain the most from India's green hydrogen corridors, and their efforts reflect this. They have active policy incentives, abundant land resources, and well-developed port infrastructure essential for producing, utilising, and exporting hydrogen. These states

are already attracting major domestic and international energy players. Ports like Kandla are also developing electrolyzers for hydrogen to ensure they produce green hydrogen ready!

## Public-sector partnerships

Public-private partnerships are a consistent feature across these initiatives, with India's private sector playing an active role as both a participant and investor in renewable energy generation and distribution. These large Indian

targeting 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030

- Green Hydrogen, backed by a ₹19,744 crore (approx. \$2.3 billion) National Green Hydrogen Mission, aimed at making India a global hub for production and export
- Battery Storage and Grid Modernisation, with recent government tenders for 4,000 MWh of battery storage capacity, is a key step towards renewable grid stability

This momentum is already visible in the actions of global investors. Brookfield Renewable has announced plans to invest up to \$1 billion in Avaada Group for the manufacturing of Green Hydrogen, solar PV modules and the growth of a Renewable Energy platform. British International Investment has marked its foray into India's solar manufacturing industry through an investment of over \$100 million into ReNew Power. India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), in conjunction with National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), acquired a 100% stake in Ayana Renewables for \$2.3 billion,

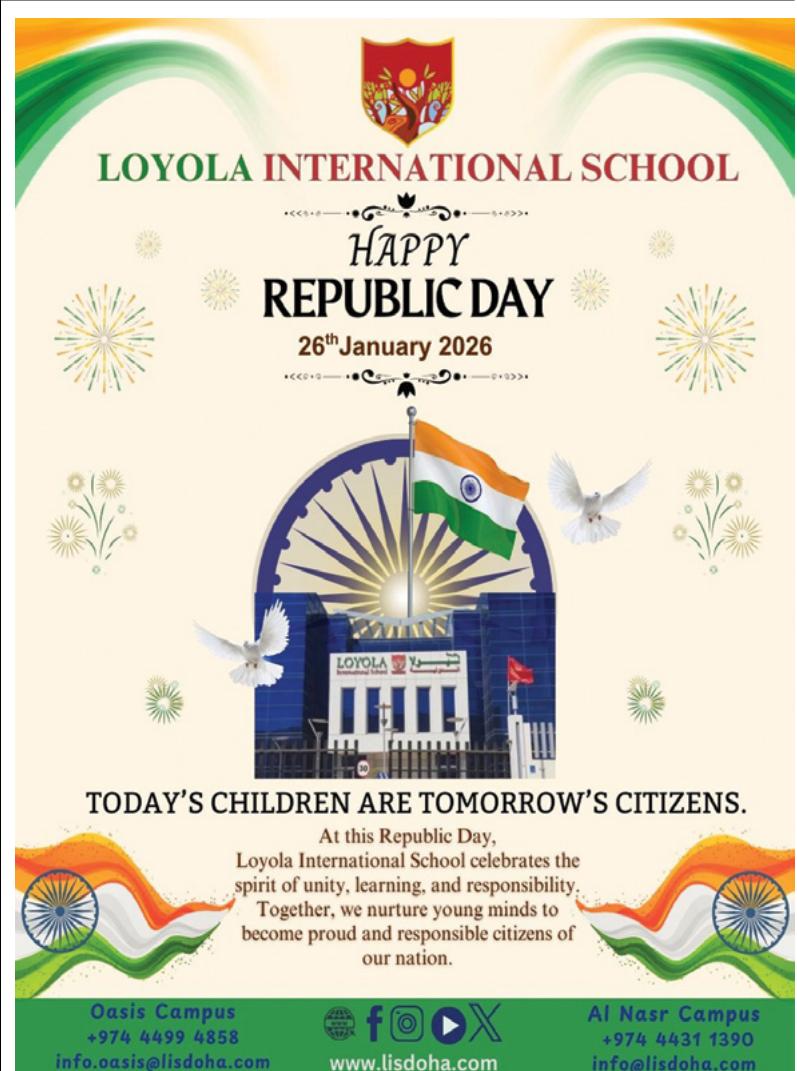
marking a significant shift in the growth trajectory for these energy companies.

Commitments such as these demonstrate increasing confidence in the market's long-term prospects.

India offers the ideal conditions for investors committed to sustainable growth, thanks to its large-scale demand, clear policy guidance, and visible project pipelines. It will require \$400 billion in financing to realise its 500 GW target of renewable energy by 2030. This is the right time to make a move in India's renewable energy sector.

The fundamentals are solid and supported by real, verifiable progress on the ground rather than mere promises on paper. With expanding global partnerships and set domestic targets, India's renewable energy sector is steadily creating the kind of long-term opportunities that align with both financial and environmental goals of becoming a net-zero economy by 2070.

*Learn more about renewable energy investments by visiting: [investindia.gov.in](http://investindia.gov.in).*



## How investors can benefit from India's green energy push

India's clean energy sector has moved beyond early-stage growth and is now firmly positioned as a major investment destination. The country offers scalable opportunities across:

- Solar and wind energy investments in India have achieved great success, and the country ranks 4th globally in installed renewable capacity,

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# FIVE WAYS INDIA IS MODERNISING ITS RURAL ECONOMY

**I**ndia is an agricultural superpower. For as long as most of us can remember, agriculture has been an integral part of India's identity. It is especially prevalent in rural India, where 45.8% of the workforce relies on agriculture as their primary means of income. Tech like apps, AI, and automation has also impacted agriculture.

The past few years have brought a new ally to the field: technology. Not the tech we associate with Silicon Valley, but technology addressing immediate problems on the ground. It is emerging from every angle and is equally sustainably sourced, from startups and local entrepreneurs to government subsidy schemes, offering a multitude of options and entrepreneurial opportunities.

The result is a significant difference between how rural India farms and how it earns its income. Preconditions that would traditionally take a decade to implement have been achieved in just a few years. Execution at

scale will determine outcomes, but early pilots are promising. In the past three years, the Agritech sector has experienced historic 10x growth, driven by four key factors: increasing digital penetration across India, supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19, growing consumer preferences for quality produce, and increased interest from private equity and venture capital.

As of December 2023, India had over 2,800 DPIIT-recognised agritech startups. These startups are often referred to as "a ray of hope" and are innovating and transforming the way agricultural work has traditionally been carried out in India. Here are several ways in which AgriTech startups are changing the landscape.

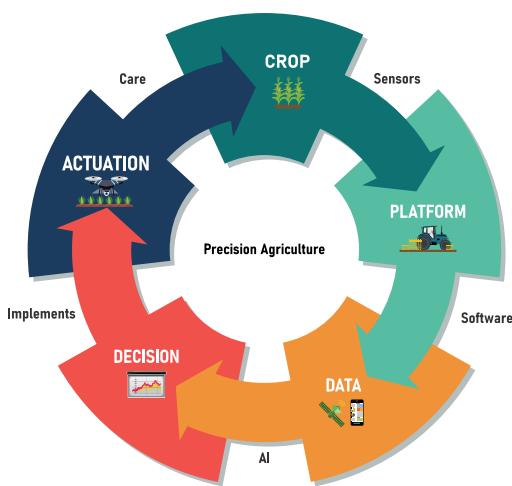
## 1. Precision farming: Making every drop and seed count

One of the leading areas in which AgriTech startups are making a major contribution is



precision farming. Precision farming enables the more accurate application of resources such as water, fertilisers, and pesticides, thereby increasing efficiency and reducing environmental impacts. This not only has the potential to improve crop yields by up to 30% but also promotes a sustainable form of farming, which is especially important with the onset of climate change. According to





industry estimates, precision farming can improve yields by 20–30% and reduce input costs by 15–20%, especially in high-value crops like fruits and vegetables. For example, Fasal Tech uses real-time data and science to help farmers make informed decisions in their fields. To provide farmers with accurate, practical guidance on five key areas – irrigation, disease management, pest control, fertiliser use, and climate risk management – they have developed a clever mix of IoT, AI, and agronomy. Their IoT device, Fasal Sense, collects data directly from the field and is at the centre of it. A central system then processes this data alongside inputs from radar and satellites, analysing and interpreting it to provide farmers with valuable information guidance.



## 2. Drone technology: Aerial solutions for ground-level issues

Drones are rapidly becoming one of the most innovative technologies in India's agricultural sector. From monitoring and imaging crops to spraying pesticides and estimating yields, drones are enhancing efficiency and safety.

To achieve fast-tracked adoption of agricultural practices, the government has launched initiatives such as "Namaste Drone Didi," which aims to train 15,000 women-led SHGs in rural areas to become licensed drone operators.

Research has shown that drone spraying technology can cut the use of crop protection chemicals by up to 30%, while also reducing farmers' exposure to pesticides during spraying. It can also cover larger areas of growing environments in a fraction of the time.

## 3. Climate-resilient crops: Adapting to a changing future

Extreme weather events now pose a greater threat to crop security as droughts, floods,

and heatwaves become more frequent. Consequently, both public and private organisations are investing resources into developing climate-resilient seed varieties capable of withstanding stress without sacrificing yield.

Under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the National Agricultural Research System (NARS), which comprises ICAR Institutes and State/Central Agricultural Universities (CAU/SAU), has developed 2,900 location-specific improved field crop varieties/hybrids between 2014 and 2024. These include 1,380 cereals, 412 oilseeds, 437 pulses, 376 fibre crops, 178 forage crops, 88 sugarcane, and 29 other crops. The Government of India is implementing the Seed Village Programme component of the Sub-Mission on Seed and Planting Material (SMS) under the National Food Security and Nutrition Mission to make seeds of climate-resilient, biofortified, and high-yielding varieties available to farmers at the village level.



Aside from that, many scientists are currently working to develop more intelligent methods of crop improvement that will help them better withstand the effects of climate change. To produce crops that can endure heat, drought, and pests, they are using cutting-edge techniques. Meanwhile, farmers are making better decisions in the field thanks to technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and satellite data, which assist them in maximising the potential of these climate-resilient crops. There are also startups such as Farmtheory that focus on reducing agricultural waste, helping farmers earn more while addressing climate change.



## 4. Agri-logistics: Bridging the last-mile gap

With an average of 55 kg of food waste generated per capita annually by households, the total food waste generated in India is about 78 million tonnes. The estimated cost of India's food waste is up to ₹92,000 crores every year.

New logistics models are complementing traditional supply chains and raising service

benchmarks. Agri-tech startups now focus on the logistics of agriculture, including cold chains, micro-warehouses, and efficient farm-to-market links. Companies like Arya.ag and DeHaat are developing systems that enable farmers to securely store their produce, access loans based on their warehouses, and reduce distress selling.

## AgriStack: Kisan ki Pehchaan!

AgriStack is revolutionizing agricultural services with a farmer-centric **Digital Public Infrastructure**.

### Key features include:

- Farmers' Registry
- Geo-referenced village maps
- Crop Sown Registry



## 5. AgriStack & Digital Agriculture Mission: Building the data backbone

At a systems level, India is advancing its digital infrastructure for agriculture through initiatives like the AgriStack and Digital Agriculture Mission.

By establishing the user's agricultural identification and linking it with land records, cropping patterns, and soil health, a user-centric framework has the potential to provide targeted subsidies, credit, insurance, and advisories, eliminating manual paperwork in future.

With 19 states having signed MoUs with the Ministry of Agriculture, the central and state governments are collaborating to advance the implementation of AgriStack. To test the development of Farmer IDs and the Digital Crop Survey, pilot projects have been conducted in six states, including Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

With e-NAM already connecting over 1,522 mandis across 23 states and four union territories, the digital plan is helping to make India's agriculture more transparent, inclusive, and sustainable, regardless of phase or form of activity.

## An Innovative Future

In India, integrating technology with agriculture not only increases output but also supports millions of people who depend on it to achieve sustainability, opportunity, and dignity. Platforms like AgroStar (inputs/advisory) and DeHaat (inputs + market linkages) help farmers buy quality inputs and access advisory, and connect produce to institutional buyers.

Agri-tech can build a more resilient and dynamic rural economy by transforming farmers into entrepreneurs, helping them adapt quickly, and ultimately boosting resilience for their collective benefit. As startups, policies, and communities continue to expand, it is clear that the vision of a Digital Bharat rooted in its fields but prepared for the future is no longer just a hope. It is already taking shape.



# India's growing role as a leading global travel destination in 2026

Major cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore, as well as regional destinations such as Kerala, Goa, and Rajasthan, are drawing millions of visitors each year

India is poised to become a leading player in the global travel industry, according to the Global Hospitality Alliance's (GHA) 2026 outlook. The country's rapidly growing tourism sector, coupled with increased international demand and a booming domestic market, places India at the center of the global travel scene.

This development signifies a new era for Indian tourism, with the potential to reshape the global hospitality landscape. Here's a deep dive into the factors contributing to India's rise as a global travel powerhouse, its impact on the industry, and what travelers can expect as the country strengthens its role in global tourism.

## India's Growing Importance in the Global Travel Market

- Booming Tourism:** India has witnessed significant growth in its tourism sector over the past decade, and this trend is expected to continue well into the future. The country's diverse culture, rich history, and vast natural beauty make it an increasingly attractive destination for international travelers. Major cities like New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore, as well as regional destinations such as Kerala, Goa, and Rajasthan, are drawing millions of visitors each year.

- Domestic Tourism Growth:** India's rapidly growing middle class and increased disposable income have contributed to a surge in domestic tourism. As more Indians travel within their own country, the demand for hotels, transport services, and entertainment options has skyrocketed. The domestic travel boom supports the growth of local businesses and creates a vibrant hospitality market within the country.

- Government Initiatives:** The Indian government has been instrumental in promoting the country as a global tourist destination. Programs such as *Incredible India* and the *Dekho Apna*

Desh initiative have successfully raised awareness about India's cultural and tourist offerings. The government's efforts to improve infrastructure, such as airport expansions, high-speed rail projects, and road developments, are also helping to accommodate the growing influx of visitors.

## India's Role in the Global Hospitality Industry

- Investment in Hospitality:** India is seeing increasing investment in its hospitality sector, with both local and international hotel chains expanding their presence in the country. Renowned brands like Marriott, Hilton, and Accor have opened new properties across India, while Indian hotel groups such as Oberoi, Taj, and ITC are expanding internationally. This influx of investment is contributing to the diversification and enhancement of hospitality offerings in India.

- Rise of Luxury and Eco-Tourism:** India is increasingly catering to travelers seeking luxury experiences and eco-tourism options. High-end resorts, boutique hotels, and sustainable tourism practices are becoming more popular, particularly in destinations like Kerala, Uttarakhand, and Rajasthan. The demand for wellness tourism, including Ayurvedic treatments and yoga retreats, is also on the rise, further solidifying India's appeal as a global travel destination.

- Digital Transformation in Hospitality:** India is embracing digital technology in the hospitality industry. Online travel agencies (OTAs) like MakeMyTrip and Cleartrip are offering travelers seamless booking experiences, while innovations in hotel management, mobile check-ins, and personalized travel services are making travel more accessible and convenient.



## The Advantages of India's Growing Role in Global Travel

- Increased International Connectivity:** As India's role in global travel grows, international airlines are expanding their services to and from the country. India's major airports, such as Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, are seeing increased international flights, making it easier for travelers to visit India and travel onwards to other destinations in Asia,

Europe, and the Middle East.

- Cultural Exchange and Tourism:** India's status as a global travel powerhouse offers rich opportunities for cultural exchange. Travelers from around the world are eager to experience India's history, cuisine, festivals, and natural beauty. Similarly, Indian tourists are becoming more frequent travelers, exploring countries across the globe, particularly those in Southeast Asia, Europe,

- Focus on Sustainable Tourism:** With the rapid growth of tourism, there is an increasing focus on sustainable tourism practices. India's diverse landscapes and ecosystems must be preserved to ensure that future generations of travelers can enjoy its beauty without causing irreparable harm. Initiatives to promote eco-tourism, responsible travel, and conservation will play a major role in shaping India's tourism future.



and the Middle East.

- Economic Impact:** The booming tourism sector is having a positive effect on India's economy. The tourism and hospitality industry contributes significantly to India's GDP, providing jobs and creating economic opportunities. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) estimates that the sector accounted for approximately 9.2% of India's GDP in 2020, and it is projected to continue growing as more international visitors arrive.

- Job Creation:** The hospitality and tourism industries are among the largest employers in India. With the expansion of India's tourism infrastructure, millions of jobs have been created in sectors such as transportation, hospitality, and entertainment. This growth benefits not only those directly employed in the tourism industry but also supports ancillary businesses, including retail and local services.

## The Future of India's Role in Global Travel

- Continued Investment in Infrastructure:** India's future as a global travel powerhouse depends heavily on continued investment in infrastructure. Modernizing airports, improving transportation systems, and enhancing public services will be crucial to accommodating growing tourist numbers and ensuring a seamless travel experience.

- New Markets and Emerging Destinations:** While India's traditional tourist destinations will continue to be popular, new and emerging markets within the country will also gain attention. Regions like Northeast India, Kutch, and Ladakh are becoming increasingly attractive to tourists looking for off-the-beaten-path experiences. These emerging destinations offer travelers the opportunity to explore untouched landscapes and culturally rich areas.

## What Travelers Should Know

- India's rise as a global travel powerhouse presents exciting opportunities for travelers. With a growing tourism infrastructure, more affordable and diverse travel options, and a rich cultural offering, India is becoming a must-visit destination for those seeking a blend of history, culture, and adventure. However, travelers should also be mindful of the challenges that come with rapid growth, including potential overcrowding, environmental impacts, and the need for sustainable tourism practices.
- For those planning to visit India, staying informed about infrastructure developments, regional tourism options, and sustainable travel practices will help ensure a positive and enriching experience. India's future as a global travel hub looks bright, and travelers can expect even more opportunities to explore this incredible country in the years to come.

# FIRSTS, FAREWELLS AND FUTURE STARS

# Indian Sport's Remarkable 2025

From historic World Cup wins in cricket and squash to breakthrough performances by young stars in shooting and boxing, Indian sports in 2025 offered great promise for the LA 2028 Olympics.

It was a year defined by landmark firsts, iconic individual feats and the rise of a new generation across Olympic, Paralympic and indigenous sports.

The headline moments came at home. After heartbreaks in the 2005 and 2017 finals, the Indian cricket team finally lifted its maiden ICC Women's ODI World Cup.

On the squash front, India bagged their first-ever Mixed Team World Cup title in Chennai.

In athletics, Neeraj Chopra shattered the long-pursued 90-metre barrier in javelin throw, while youngsters announced themselves as world champions in shooting and boxing.

Beyond medals and trophies, 2025 also marked a transition year for Indian sports.

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli bid farewell to Test cricket, drawing the curtain on a defining era even as fresh faces stepped forward.

Among them was Vaibhav Suryavanshi, whose performances across age groups and senior cricket saw him top Google's most-searched list in India.

## Women's ODI World Cup 2025: India's long wait ends

India's long wait for a Women's ODI World Cup title ended in November as Harmanpreet Kaur's side lifted the trophy on home soil. Co-hosting the tournament with Sri Lanka, India's campaign was marked by resilience and fightback.

Early wins over Sri Lanka and Pakistan were followed by three consecutive defeats that left India on the brink of bowing out. A clutch victory over New Zealand in a potentially must-win encounter proved decisive, pushing the hosts into the semi-finals.

There, India produced possibly the great World Cup chases, hunting down a record 338 against seven-time champions Australia, powered by a sublime century from Jemimah Rodrigues.

In the final against South Africa, Shafali Verma composed 87, setting up a match-winning total of 298/7, before Deepti Sharma, the Player of the Tournament and World Cup's leading wicket-taker with 22 scalps, sealed the title with a five-wicket haul.

## Squash World Cup 2025: India breaks new ground

In squash - a sport set to make its Olympic



debut at LA 2028 - India claimed its maiden World Cup title in Chennai, defeating top seeds Hong Kong China in the final to create history in December.

Seeded second, the Indian team, which included the quartet of Anahat Singh, Joshna Chinappa, Abhay Singh and Velavan Senthilkumar, went unbeaten through the tournament without dropping a single match across ties.

The triumph made India only the fourth nation to win the Squash World Cup.

## World Boxing Championships 2025: A double-gold breakthrough for India

Despite Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain and Nikhat Zareen missing the podium at the World Boxing Championships 2025 in Liverpool, India enjoyed a breakthrough campaign, courtesy of gold medals from Jaismine Lamboria and Minakshi Hooda.

Jaismine stunned by Paris 2024 Olympics medallist Julia Szeremeta of Poland in the 57kg final while Minakshi edged Kazakhstan's Nazym Kyzaibay to clinch the 48kg crown. Their titles made them India's first champions under the new World Boxing governing body.

With a silver from Nupur Sheoran and a bronze from Olympian Pooja Rani, Indian boxers wrapped up their campaign in Liverpool with four medals.

## ISSF World Championships 2025: Samrat Rana's golden upset in shooting

Samrat Rana produced one of the year's standout performances by winning gold in the men's 10m air pistol at the ISSF World Championships 2025 in Cairo. The 20-year-old defeated world No. 1 Hu Kai in a tense final, becoming the first Indian to win a senior individual world title in an Olympic pistol shooting event.



Rana topped the qualification, then held his nerve through a dramatic final. His campaign also featured a team gold alongside Varun Tomar and Sharvan Kumar.

### ICC Champions Trophy 2025: India's third crown

India marked the return of the ICC Champions Trophy after an eight-year gap by lifting the title for a record third time in the UAE in March.

Virat Kohli's century against Pakistan lit up the group stage, while Rohit Sharma anchored the final with a composed 76 off 83 balls as India chased down 252 to beat New Zealand by four wickets.

Both Rohit and Virat announced their retirement from Test cricket in May, closing a glittering chapter in Indian cricket during a year of transition.

### Neeraj Chopra breaches 90m barrier

Neeraj Chopra's performance at the Doha Diamond League 2025 delivered a moment Indian athletics had long yearned for - watching its golden boy shatter the elusive 90m barrier to enter the elite club in men's javelin throw.

At the Qatar Sports Club, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic champion breached the milestone with a 90.23m attempt.

Neeraj Chopra began the meet with what was then a world-leading mark of 88.44m. The former world champion fouled on his second attempt but followed it up with the 90.23m throw to reset the Indian national record.

His previous personal best was 89.94m, achieved at the Stockholm Diamond League 2023. In fact, the Indian ace had recorded six throws in the 89m range.

Neeraj became the 25th man in history to surpass the 90m mark in the javelin throw.

However, it was Germany's Julian Weber who toppled Neeraj off the perch in the Doha standings with a personal best of 91.06m with his final throw of the evening.



### World Archery Championships 2025: Gold and silver for India

India's Rishabh Yadav, Aman Saini and Prathamesh Fuge clinched a historic gold at the World Archery Championships 2025 in Gwangju, marking India's maiden top podium finish in the men's compound archery team event at the global showpiece.

The second-seeded Indian men's team showed

remarkable grit to overturn a first-set deficit of 59-57 and beat the fifth-seeded French team of Nicolas Girard, Jean Philippe Boulch and Francois Dubois 235-233 in the final.

The victory capped a remarkable run in which the Indian men's team came from behind in all four archery matches.

Meanwhile, Rishabh Yadav paired up with Jyothi Surekha Vennam to bag a silver in the compound mixed team event. Though not a gold, it was perhaps as significant a feat as the men's triumph considering the event will mark an Olympic debut at LA 2028.

### World Para Athletics Championships 2025: India's best-ever finish

Hosting the World Para Athletics Championships 2025 in New Delhi from September 27 to October 5, India delivered their best-ever performance, finishing 10th with 22 medals- six gold, nine silver and seven bronze.

Sumit Antil (men's javelin throw F64), Sandip Singh Sargar (men's javelin throw F44), Shailesh Kumar (men's high jump T63), Rinku Hooda (men's javelin throw F46), Nishad Kumar (men's high jump T47) and Simran Sharma (women's 100m T12) won gold medals.

The 73-member contingent of Indian para-athletes featured 54 men and 19 women.

Furthermore, Indians set three championship records, seven Asian records and registered more than 30 personal bests during the competition.

### Asia Cup 2025 cricket: India retain continental supremacy

India lifted their record-extending ninth Asia Cup title in the UAE in September with a seven-match unbeaten run.

Led by Suryakumar Yadav and with Abhishek Sharma in sensational form, India beat Pakistan in the final to secure a record-extending ninth continental title. Tilak Varma was the hero of the final with his unbeaten 69, rescuing India following a slow start while chasing 146.

#### Asia Cup 2025 hockey: India back on top

The Indian men's hockey team were crowned Asia Cup champions for the fourth time after they beat the Republic of Korea 4-1 in the final at the Rajgir Sports Complex in Bihar.

With the win, India ended their eight-year wait for the continental title and qualified for the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, scheduled to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium. India's Abhishek Nain was named the Player of the Tournament.

### Kho Kho World Cup 2025: India rule at home

The Kho Kho World Cup 2025 was held in New Delhi with India claiming the men's and women's titles after beating Nepal in both finals at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

In the men's division, India outplayed Nepal by

a 54-36 scoreline in the summit clash, while the women's title decider finished 78-40 in the hosts' favour.

This was the inaugural edition of the world kho kho competition, backed by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), and featured 20 men's and 19 women's teams.

Kho kho, along with other indigenous Indian sports like kabaddi and mallakhamb, was demonstrated on the sidelines of the Berlin 1936 Olympics.

### Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025: India crowned champions again

India beat Chinese Taipei 35-28 in the final to claim the Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025 title in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

This was the Indian women's kabaddi team's second World Cup crown, having also won the inaugural edition hosted in Patna, Bihar, back in 2012. India beat the Islamic Republic of Iran in the final 13 years ago. Sanju Devi was adjudged the Most Valuable Player of the Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025.

### Konru Humpy, Arjun Erigaisi Clinch Bronze at FIDE Championships in Doha



Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy won bronze at the 2025 FIDE Women's World Rapid Chess Championship in Doha on December 28, finishing with 8.5 points from 11 rounds and placing third on tie-breaks. Arjun Erigaisi also secured bronze in the Open section, marking a historic double podium for India.



Erigaisi went on to win another bronze at the FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship in Doha, delivering back-to-back podium finishes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated both players, praising their consistency and calling their achievements a proud moment for India and a sign of the country's rising dominance in global chess.

# Microsoft, Cognizant and Intel Chiefs meet PM Modi in efforts to boost AI adoption in India

US-based global technology giants Microsoft, Cognizant, and Intel's Chief Executive Officers met with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday, 9 December 2025, in efforts to boost the artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the country.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar, along with Chairman and Managing Director S Rajesh Varrier, and Intel Corporation CEO Lip-Bu Tan had an individual meeting with PM Modi to discuss AI, technology and upcoming investments in India.

## Microsoft's Mega \$17.5 billion investment

After meeting with PM Modi, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, in a social media post on X, disclosed that the US-based technology giant is committing its largest-ever investment in Asia as the company plans to invest \$17.5 billion.

Microsoft plans to develop the infrastructure, skills, and sovereign capabilities needed for artificial intelligence (AI), which are essential for India's future AI ambitions.

"Had a very productive discussion with Mr Satya Nadella. Happy to see India being the place where Microsoft will make its largest-ever investment in Asia," said PM Modi, responding to Nadella's post on X. "The youth of India will harness this opportunity to innovate and leverage the power of AI for a better planet," he said.

## Modi's meeting with Cognizant

PM Modi also has a meeting with Cognizant's CEO Ravi Kumar and the company's Chairman and Managing Director S Rajesh Varrier, where they discussed the company's partnership with India in futuristic sectors.

"Had a wonderful meeting with Mr Ravi Kumar and Mr Rajesh Varrier. India welcomes Cognizant's continued partnership in futuristic sectors. Our youth's focus on AI and skilling sets the tone for a vibrant collaboration ahead," said PM Modi in his post on X.

In the meeting, the company executives discussed boosting the AI adoption in India along with advancing education and skill development in the country to, in turn, boost India's AI capabilities and productivity.

"Our CEO also reaffirmed to the Prime Minister Cognizant's continued commitment to India and apprised him of our plans to expand into emerging cities to promote equitable growth and talent development," the company said in a post on X.

## Intel and India's semiconductor vision

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his meeting with global tech giant Intel's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Lip-Bu Tan, welcomed the US-based firm's commitment to the country's semiconductor journey.



"Glad to have met Mr Lip-Bu Tan. India welcomes Intel's commitment to our semiconductor journey. I am sure Intel will have a great experience working with our youth to build an innovation-driven future for technology," said Modi in his post on X.

Lip-Bu Tan, in his social media post on X, disclosed that the two talked about several topics related to technology, computing and the tremendous potential for India.

"I applaud the Prime Minister for putting in place a comprehensive semiconductor design and manufacturing policy and Intel is committed to support the India Semiconductor Mission," said Intel CEO in his recent post.

These meetings come amid India attracting major investment commitments from other US big tech giants. Earlier in October, Microsoft's tech rival Google unveiled its \$15 billion investment plan for a 1 gigawatt (GW) AI data centre in Visakhapatnam.



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## Happy Indian Republic Day

On this historic occasion, we proudly celebrate the spirit and legacy of India and extend our sincere appreciation to its visionary leaders whose leadership continues to guide the nation toward lasting peace and prosperity.

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