



High Commission of India

Trinidad & Tobago

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Celebration of India's 72nd Republic Day



High Commission of India observed the 72nd Republic Day of India on 26th January, 2021 at India House. The High Commissioner Mr. Arun Kumar Sahu hoisted the National flag and read the President's address to the nation. A short cultural programme of patriotic songs was organised to celebrate this event by teachers of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Cultural Corporation. Local artiste Ms. Savita Singh joined the celebration by her melodious renditions of patriotic songs.

Celebration of World Hindi Day



The High Commission of India hosted World Hindi Day Celebrations on January 16, 2021 at the newly constructed Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Cultural Cooperation, Mt. Hope. World Hindi Day is celebrated every year on January 10 in order to promote Hindi as an important language of the world. The event was attended by Prominent Members of Society, Socio-Cultural and Religious Organization, Hindi Teachers and Students, Members of Trade and Business Chambers, Members of the Media and other distinguished guests. On this occasion, H.E Mr. Arun Kumar Sahu, High Commissioner of India to Trinidad and Tobago delivered the welcome remarks and greeted all those associated with learning, teaching and promoting Hindi language in Trinidad & Tobago. The event also featured remarks by His Worship Mr. Junia Regrello, Mayor of San Fernando and Mr. Chanka Seeterram- President of the Hindi Foundation of Trinidad and Tobago.

DPIIT launches regulatory compliance portal



The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched a regulatory compliance portal that will act as a bridge between citizens, industries and the government to minimise burdensome compliances. It will also act as a first-of-its-kind central online repository of all central and state-level compliances. All central ministries/departments and states/UTs would examine laws/ regulations/rules under their purview and implement an action plan to rationalise and simplify all the processes and remove burdensome compliances, decriminalise laws and repeal redundant acts, it added. These details would be captured and tracked on the portal. The department said industry stakeholders from trade bodies such as CII will also be able to submit compliances and proposed recommendations. "This will be assessed by concerned government authorities and suitable action would be undertaken to minimise the regulatory compliance burden," it said. DPIIT has conducted 21 training sessions from January 4 to January 14 for all ministries and states to familiarise them with the portal. The department has been directed by the Cabinet Secretary to act as the nodal department for coordinating the exercise of minimizing regulatory compliance burden for citizens and businesses. "A systematic exercise across Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs is being undertaken by DPIIT to eliminate/reduce compliances which have an adverse impact on time and cost of businesses, it added. Speaking at a CII webinar, DPIIT Secretary Guruprasad Mohapatra said that activities have been identified to be undertaken by the central government ministries as well as states to reduce the compliance burden by carrying out the corrective actions by March 31, which is the first target. Almost 7,000 odd compliance burdens have been identified by the Centre and states, he said.

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<https://yourstory.com/2021/01/dpiit-launches-regulatory-compliance-portal>

India's global position rises in innovation



India's excellence in science has now been combined with the recognition of its brilliance as an innovative economy. While the country has already attained the third position in terms of publications, it now features among the top 50 innovative economies globally as per the Global Innovation Index (GII), placing it ahead of many developed and developing countries. The combination of scientific excellence and innovation has been possible through encouraging investments in scientific activities, infrastructure as well as manpower development along with boosting of the entire innovation chain in an environment charged with the start-up India movement. "Our efforts for connecting the invention ecosystem that excels in creating knowledge and the innovation ecosystem facilitating knowledge consumption have helped bring about this transformation, and the 5th National Science Technology and Innovation Policy will help us take this forward more effectively," said Professor Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST) while talking about this achievement. India's national investment in R&D has increased from Rs. 1,13,825.03 crore (US\$ 15.59 billion) in 2017-18 to Rs. 1,23,847.71 crore (US\$ 16.96 billion) in 2018-19. At the same time, initiatives of DST like NIDHI have played a crucial role to reach this position. The implementation of NIDHI has nurtured 3681 start-ups under incubation through the network of around 150 Incubators created by DST, generated 1992 intellectual property. Further, in the last five years, jobs generated in the form of direct employment were 65,864 and Rs. 27,262 crore (US\$ 3.73 billion) of economic wealth. While the start-up India movement and push for patenting has brought a paradigm shift in science and technology, the country has maintained its growth in publications—the traditional indicator of scientific excellence.

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<https://www.ibef.org/news/indias-global-position-rises-both-in-innovations-publications>

ICAR has played a pivotal role in agricultural research and education: Mr. Piyush Goyal



Mr. Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare addressed the 92nd Annual General Meeting of the ICAR Society today. Mr. Tomar briefed about the science driven path developed by ICAR to resolve the various agricultural and farming problems along with the government's schemes for doubling the farmers' income by 2022. The Union Minister applauded the invincible efforts of the agricultural scientists, teachers, students and farmers associated with the Council. He also stressed that the farmers' hard work and latest technologies developed by the agricultural scientists have helped the country to achieve an important place in milk production and fisheries sector at the global level. The Union Minister underlined the Central Government's implementation of several comprehensive schemes for enhancing the production and productivity to accelerate the growth rate of agriculture and empower the farmers of the country. He emphasized that the Farmers' Producers' Organizations will play a pivotal role in resolving the various agricultural and farming problems in the country. Mr. Tomar stressed that even during the challenging times of COVID-19 Pandemic; the Council maintained its relevance by achieving considerable growth in the production of various necessary food crops. He stated about the development of various new varieties of crops by the Council that is rewarding the country in many ways. Underlining the un-paralleled contributions of the Council and Agricultural Universities, the Union Minister urged to make the agricultural sector to be more employment-oriented with the help of the New Education Policy. Mr. Tomar accentuated that the joint efforts will help in growth of the country's agricultural sector, empower the farmers and enhance their income.

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<https://www.ibef.org/news/icar/>

Airtel ready to offer 5G with 4G bands, needs mid-band for true 5G speeds, says CEO Vittal



Bharti Airtel NSE 0.02 % is preparing for a 5G battle with Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio and has claimed its end-to-end readiness to launch the high-speed technology in the country immediately after the availability of "adequate" spectrum. It has demonstrated live 5G services on its commercial 4G network in Hyderabad using 1800 MHz band. The Sunil Mittal-led telco said that it can commercially launch 5G services without the mid-band with the help of existing 4G spectrum bands but it will wait for the government to release 5G spectrum, especially in the mid-band. Analysts said that Airtel is looking to position itself as the main 5G telecom operator in India. The announcement made by India's second largest telco follows Mukesh Ambani's claim that Reliance Jio will launch 5G using its own technology in the second half of 2021. Gopal Vittal, chief executive office of Airtel, said that the telco can commercially launch 5G services without the mid-band as its network now fully supports the high-speed technology. "When we launch 5G and make it available commercially, it must have a full power of 5G instead of marketing. Delivering experience is a must and you need more spectrum, especially in the mid-band. That doesn't mean 1800, 2300 and 2100 MHz can't be used...true 5G will be enabled through mid-band," Vittal added. He, however, added that it is premature to launch 5G using existing 4G bands since the 4G ecosystem for devices and applications is fairly matured. "We have been working on this since last one year to make our networks 5G ready. It is a flick of a button. It is important to have the right amount of spectrum for true 5G," he further added.

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<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/telecom/telecom-news/airtel/>

Ola partners with Siemens for Rs 2,400 crore EV manufacturing facility



Ride-hailing major Ola said it has partnered with Siemens to leverage the latter's technology at its upcoming electric vehicle manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu. In December, Ola had announced inking an agreement with the Tamil Nadu government to invest Rs 2,400 crore for setting up its first electric scooter factory in the state. "Ola's factory will be built on Industry 4.0 principles and will be the most advanced manufacturing facility in the country. It will have almost 5,000 robots deployed across various functions," a statement said. As part of the partnership, Ola will have access to Siemens' integrated 'Digital Twin' design and manufacturing solutions to digitalize and validate product and production ahead of actual operations, it was outlined in the release. A digital twin is a virtual representation of a physical product that can help understand and predict the physical counterpart's performance characteristics. Digital twins are used to simulating, predict, and optimize the product and production system before investing in physical prototypes. "The factory will be artificial intelligence-powered with Ola's proprietary AI Engine and tech stack deeply integrated into every aspect of the manufacturing process, continuously self-learning and optimizing every aspect of the manufacturing process," Ola said. This will provide unprecedented control, automation and quality to the entire operations, especially with Ola's implementation of cyber-physical and advanced IoE systems, it added. Ola said the entire material handling at its factory would be fully automated for maximum efficiency - right from raw materials to materials movement inside the factory, to the storage, to the finished scooter rolling off the production lines and being loaded onto trucks.

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<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/power/ola-partners-with-siemens-for-rs-2400-crore-ev-manufacturing-facility/>

Microsoft launches third India Development Centre facility in NCR

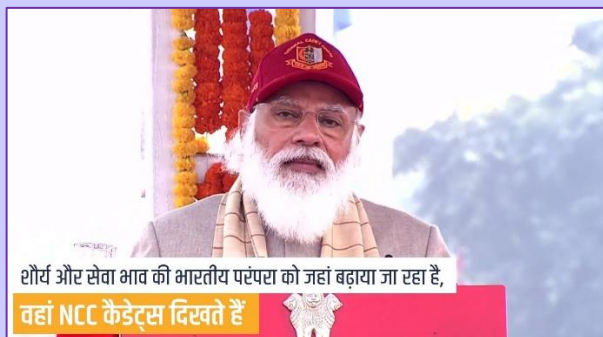


Internet major Microsoft launched its third India Development Centre (IDC) facility at NCR for driving new-age engineering and innovation. It has two other IDC's in India situated in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. The IDC NCR facility will collaborate with Microsoft teams globally to build products and services for driving digital innovation. The centre will provide opportunities for engineering talent in the areas of Business & Productivity tools, AI, Cloud & Enterprise, Core Services, and the new Gaming division, said the company in an official statement. "Recognizing the strategic importance of establishing Microsoft engineering presence in Noida, my team went over and beyond in ensuring that our first engineering hub in Noida truly represents Microsoft Design Language infused with local culture and inheritance," said Riku Pentikäinen, Regional Director, Asia Real Estates Operations, Microsoft. "The Microsoft NCR workplace represents a critical expansion of our world-class technology talent and exceptional engineering presence in India. Digital Transformation is set to trigger the new frontier of innovation, and the excellent facilities at the Microsoft Noida workplace provide the right environment for shaping the future of the IT industry in this part of the world," said Rajiv Kumar, Managing Director, Microsoft India Research & Development Pvt.Ltd. IDC also recently opened an additional office space at Sohini Tech Park in Hyderabad, built to a hybrid work environment. It features Team-Based Neighbourhood Spaces with workstations-on-wheels, Scrum areas, Microsoft Teams AV enabled meeting rooms, collaboration spaces, and breakout hubs.

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<https://telecom.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/microsoft-launches-third-india-development-centre-facility-in-ncr/80495639>

India will be known as a big producer of defence equipment instead of a big market': PM Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing a rally of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) at Cariappa Ground in Delhi, said India will soon be known for being a producer of defence equipment and not just a market. While talking about the Centre's efforts to usher in domestic manufacturing of defence equipment the PM said "The day is not far when India will be known as a big producer of defence equipment instead of a big market." Referring to the flagship 'Aatmanirbhar' programme of the government, the Prime Minister said that India has successfully exhibited its indigenous capabilities on all fronts, including in the production of Covid-19 vaccines. "Whether it is developing protective shields of the vaccine or destroying with modern missiles intentions of those challenging India, the country is capable on all fronts," he said. PM Modi also said that the government is taking every necessary step to modernize all wings of its armed forces, asserting that India has in its possessions some excellent "war machines". The Prime Minister praised NCC cadets for their help during the coronavirus pandemic and other natural disasters. He said: "Be it the floods or any other calamity, NCC cadets helped the people of this country last year. During the Corona pandemic, lakhs of cadets worked with the administration and society across the country. Their work is commendable." PM Modi also declared that keeping in line with the announcements made during last year's Independence Day, 1 lakh NCC cadets are being trained by the armed forces, with one third of them being girl cadets. "On August 15, last year, it was announced that NCC will be given new responsibilities in around 175 districts in the coastal and border areas.

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<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-will-be-known-as-a-big-producer-of-defence-equipment>

India debuts largest domestically-built nuclear reactor



India's success in connecting its largest domestically-built nuclear reactor to the grid is a boost for plans to deploy the technology to help the world's third-biggest polluter limit emissions, according to the official overseeing the plans. The 700-megawatt pressurized heavy water reactor of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Station in Gujarat is the first of 16 planned units that will help balance the grid against growing intermittent renewable generation, according to K.N. Vyas, India's atomic energy secretary. "Renewables are less capital intensive and can be implemented much more quickly. Yet, they need to be balanced with more stable power," Vyas said in a phone interview. "Nuclear provides clean base load power and that makes it an important element of our climate strategy." India is counting on its nuclear program to help meet its Paris climate commitments to reduce the emissions intensity of its economy by a third from 2005 levels by 2030. So far, domestic built reactors have avoided cost-run-ups that have hit projects planned with overseas technologies, said Debasish Mishra, a Mumbai-based partner at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. Nuclear Power Corp. of India Ltd., also known as NPCIL, which connected the reactor to the grid last week, expects to start five more units through March 2027, and is placing orders for another ten to be commissioned by 2031. The combined cost of the fleet is estimated at about 1.5 trillion rupees (\$20.4 billion), according to the state monopoly. India considers nuclear power a "safe, environmentally benign and economically viable source" of energy, it said in its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions at the Paris climate summit in 2015. The nation strives to achieve 63 gigawatts of nuclear power capacity by 2032 if there is enough fuel to run the plants, according to the document.

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<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/power/india>

Many more COVID-19 vaccines will be made available from India to help world fight pandemic swiftly: PM



India will soon make available many more COVID-19 vaccines to other countries after two Made-In-India jabs have already been introduced to the world, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on January 28, 2021 while emphasising the country's global responsibility in fighting the pandemic. Davos Agenda Summit, Modi also said he wants to assure the global business community that situation will now change rapidly on the economic front also and invited businesses from all over to participate in the country's growth journey. PM Modi said that some had said in February-March 2020 that India would be the worst affected country by COVID-19 and would face a "tsunami of corona infections". "Some had talked about 70-80 crore people expected to get infected in India, while some talked about over 20 lakh possible deaths but India did not let the disappointment get better of it," he said. "When COVID arrived, India had its share of problems. At the beginning of last year, several experts and organisations had made several predictions that India would be most affected by the pandemic. Looking at the condition of countries with better health infrastructure, the world was right in worrying about us," he said. The prime minister, however, said in the midst of numerous doubts, he was here with "a message of belief, positivity and hope from over 1.3 billion Indians." PM Modi said, "We transformed the fight against coronavirus into a people's movement and today India is among the most successful countries in saving lives." "We focussed on developing COVID-specific health infrastructure, we trained our human resources to fight against this pandemic and we made full use of tech for testing and tracking," he said. He said India has ensured that it follows its global responsibility by sending essential medicines to over 150 countries while COVID-19 vaccines are also being sent to other countries.

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<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/>

India's Union Budget 2021: Key Provisions Foreign Investors Should Track



India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented an expansionary budget geared towards pushing the country into long-term economic recovery mode after the COVID-19 pandemic. Signalling the government's ambition in this regard, the budget revised the fiscal deficit for the current fiscal year at 9.5 percent of the GDP and targeted 6.8 percent of GDP for fiscal year 2021-22. Sitharaman also announced that gross government borrowing will be INR 12 trillion (US\$164.16 billion). The pillars of the 2021 Union Budget are: health and wellbeing, capital and infrastructure, inclusive development, reinvigorating human capital, innovation and R&D, and minimum government and maximum governance.

Below are key highlights from Finance Minister Sitharaman's 2021 Union Budget speech:

India's 2021 Union Budget was released on February 1, with major spending hikes promised for healthcare, infrastructure, and capital expenditure.

– Changes announced in the definition threshold for small companies to ease compliance as well as modifications for One Person Companies that can now be set up by NRIs.

– FDI limit raised to 74% and other amendments proposed for insurance sector to allow foreign ownership and control with safeguards.

– A revised customs duty structure is in the works and will be rolled out October 1, 2021.

– INR 350 billion set aside for India's COVID-19 vaccination program in 2021-22.

– The theme of this year's budget is economic revival and boost to government spending rather than fiscal control seen in previous years.

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<https://www.india-briefing.com/news/indias-2021-union-budget>

India projects annual economic growth of 11% for 2021/22



India forecast robust economic growth of 11% for the coming fiscal year in its annual economic survey, after a massive COVID-19 vaccination drive and a rebound in consumer demand and investments. The Indian economy, which the International Monetary Fund singled out as a global bright spot only a few years ago, is set to contract 7.7% in the current fiscal year to March 31, its worst performance in four decades, the government said in its report. But it predicts the rollout of vaccines against COVID-19, which has killed 153,847 Indians, will re-energize Asia's third-largest economy next year, putting it on track to post the strongest growth since India liberalized its economy in 1991. The survey's projections form the basis for key figures in the budget, due to be delivered by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. While the survey forecast a "V-shaped" economic recovery, it also cautioned that it would take at least two years to regain pre-pandemic levels. "With the economy's returning to normalcy brought closer by the initiation of a mega vaccination drive, hopes of a robust recovery in services sector, consumption, and investment have been rekindled," said the survey. India has started inoculating millions of people with two vaccines - Serum Institute from India's COVISHIELD, licensed from Oxford University and AstraZeneca, and COVAXIN, developed domestically by Bharat Biotech and the Indian Council of Medical Research. Despite the optimistic outlook, officials say Sitharaman may have to make tough choices to the government's ballooning debt in check while presenting a spending plan able to lift the economy.

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<https://www.reuters.com/article/india-budget-survey-idUSKBN29Y0AV>

HM Amit Shah terms budget all-inclusive, a guide to self-reliant India



Home Minister Amit Shah termed the Budget 2021-22 a guide to "self-reliant India" and said it has strengthened Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts towards doubling farmers' income and making India the fastest growing economy in the world. In a series of tweets in Hindi, Shah lauded the budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and said the "all-inclusive budget" was prepared under the guidance of the Prime Minister amidst the coronavirus pandemic. "This will pave the way for a self-reliant India, a USD 5 trillion economy and double the income of farmers," he said. He thanked the Prime Minister for earmarking Rs 35,000 crore for vaccine against coronavirus saying, "Our sensitive Prime Minister @narendramodi has announced Rs 35,000 crore fund for vaccination against coronavirus. This shows Modi's resolve to make India coronavirus free." Shah said the Prime minister has been devoted to the welfare of farmers since day one and numerous efforts have been made to double their income. Taking this goal forward, he said, the government is ensuring fixing the Minimum Support Price (MSP) at one and half times more than the cost which showed the commitment of the Modi government. The government has made a provision of Rs 16.5 lakh crore in this year's budget to provide easy loan to the farmers of the country. Also, the micro-irrigation fund has been doubled and five agricultural hubs will be built in the country.

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<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/hm-amit-shah>

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Contact:

Mr. Anand Mathai

Commercial Officer

Email: trade.pospain@mea.gov.in



HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA
#6 VICTORIA AVENUE, PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD W.I.
225-4340
cons.pospain@mea.gov.in & cons2.pospain@mea.gov.in
www.hcipo.gov.in
[Facebook.com/indiaInTnt](https://www.facebook.com/indiaInTnt)
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