

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः  
ऋग्वेद -1.89.

Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions in the universe.

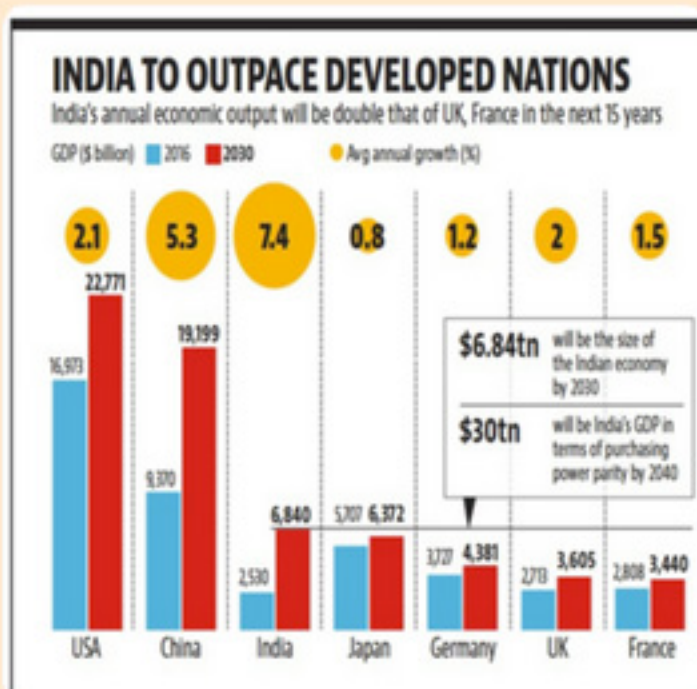
Vol. 32, July 2023

## Nation first, Always first: 77th Independence Day of India

Home to more than 10% of global population throughout this century, transformations in India create waves globally. The speed and scale of such changes, specially over the last decade, coupled with India's increasing economic and strategic importance, have been influencing global discourse. In this edition we try to encapsulate a few such transformations across multiple sectors.

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

Over the last decade and a half, India has gone from strength to strength: the GDP reached **US \$1 trillion in 2007** (nominal terms). In 7 more years, it clocked US\$ 2 trillion, reaching **US\$ 3 trillion in 2021**. According to projections, India would be a more than **US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2030**. More importantly, India's economic growth would be **green, inclusive and democratic**. India has also taken a leading role in decarbonizing global economies and focusing more on renewables, through the **International Solar Alliance**.





## START-UP ECOSYSTEM

India's growth story, occurring in a democratic framework, is also underpinned by a strong start-up culture. This entrepreneurial spirit brings innovative solutions as well as creates jobs that cater to an aspirational demography. Governments at the federal and state levels are actively promoting start-ups through supportive measures. 26 out of 28 states in India today have an active start-up policy, along with the over-arching **Start-Up India** framework of the Union Government. Today, India has the **3rd largest start-up ecosystem** in the world, with **nearly 100,000 start-ups**. There are **108 unicorns** with a total valuation of **US\$ 340.80 bn**. Remarkably, 44 of these companies attained unicorn status in 2021, while the world was combating the COVID-19 pandemic, indicative of the confidence investors have in India's talent pool.



## DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Aiding the growth of India's digital economy is the creation of **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**. Over the last decade and a half, India has pioneered in designing **low-cost, inclusive, democratic and open-access technological solutions**. Public-investment led innovations like **Aadhaar** and **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** have resulted in what is today called the **India Stack**.

Being open-access, it has allowed private players to utilize these innovations to develop applications and solutions for the public. Seeding bank accounts with Aadhaar and combining it with UPI has enabled real-time financial transactions with low-latency and





India's fintech solutions and digital public infrastructure are gaining global acceptance. During the visit of Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi to France for the Bastille Day celebrations in July 2023, France became the latest country to agree to enable the UPI. DPI is a major theme under India's ongoing Presidency of the G20. India is also open to sharing these solutions with countries from the global south, aiding them in financial inclusion and innovation.

## INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

India's infrastructure development is not restricted to the digital domain alone. The last decade has seen great emphasis on augmenting existing network of roads, rails, bridges, airports etc., all necessary ingredients for enabling faster economic growth.

\* The total length of the national highways in India has increased by about 59% in the last nine years, from 91,287 km in 2013-14 to 145,240 km in 2022-23. India today has the **2<sup>nd</sup> largest road network** in the world.

\* **Indian Railways**, on average, handles **24 mn passengers everyday**. The railways is seeing the infusion of **new-age, high-tech, high-speed Vande Bharat Expresses** along multiple routes. The mission of the Government is to ensure that the **railways become carbon neutral by 2030**. The Government also launched a major **revamp of 508 railway stations** under the **Amrit Bharat Station** scheme, to enhance the "Ease of Living" for citizens.



\* Aviation is a booming sector in India, catering to an aspirational middle-class that is willing to spend. India is the **3<sup>rd</sup> largest domestic aviation market** globally. **FY23** saw **~327.2 mn passengers** (domestic and international), across the network of **148 operational airports**.



Today, India is home to the world's tallest statue – The Statue of Unity (Kevadia), the world's largest cricket stadium – Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium (Ahmedabad), not to mention the state-of-the-art **Bharat Mandapam**, which was inaugurated recently, as the **venue for the upcoming G20 Summit**. India is also constructing the **world's highest railway bridge** on the river Chenab, as well as the **world's longest highway tunnel** in the form of the **Atal Tunnel**.



SPACE SECTOR

India's progress in the space sector is an inspiring story. From humble beginnings captured in an iconic photograph of rocket parts being transported on a bicycle to recently launching Chandrayan-3 Mission, including an orbiter, a lander and a rover, ISRO and India have come a long way. Today, India is among the elite spacefaring



countries globally, whose launch vehicles like the PSLV and GSLV are trusted by countries worldwide.

- \* In 2017, ISRO's PSLV – C37 successfully launched a record 104 satellites in a single mission.
- \* Through the Mangalyaan Mission, India succeeded in putting its orbiter in Mars' orbit in its very first attempt, a feat with few parallels.
- \* India is now preparing for its maiden human spaceflight mission, called the Gaganyaan.

India is also opening up the space sector to private players, allowing for greater investment and innovation. Through Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (INSPACe) and NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL), India is encouraging entrepreneurs to utilize ISRO's expertise to develop new space-based solutions.



ISRO Officers carrying part of rocket in 1960s





In the years since independence, India has undergone momentous transformations. The Green Revolution, the White Revolution, the software revolution etc., and is now in the midst of a digital revolution and a green-energy revolution. From importing vaccines to eradicate polio to exporting over 7 crore doses of vaccines during COVID-19, India has come a long way.



This is a rising, aspirational New India. In this Amrit Kaal leading upto India @ 100, India will grow from strength to strength, claim and consolidate its position as a *Vishwaguru* (Teacher for the World), share its experience and expertise with other partners, thereby living up to the ideal of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" (World is One Family).



## The Month That Was:

### PM's visit to France and the United Arab Emirates

PM Shri Narendra Modi paid an Official visit to France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 13-15 July 2023.





The PM visited Paris from 13-14 July 2023 at the invitation of President Macron. PM was the Guest of Honour at the Bastille Day Parade on 14 July 2023, where a tri-services Indian armed forces contingent also participated.



During the visit, PM held formal talks with President Macron and a State Banquet as well as a private dinner in honour of PM was hosted.



PM also met the Prime Minister of France, as well as the Presidents of the Senate and the National Assembly of France. He separately interacted with the Indian diaspora in France, CEOs of Indian and French companies, and prominent French personalities.



The visit coincided with the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the India – France Strategic Partnership, and provided an opportunity to chart the course of the partnership for the future across diverse sectors such as strategic, cultural, scientific, academic, and economic cooperation.





In his visit to UAE on July 15, PM held talks with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, President of the UAE. The India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership had been steadily strengthening, and the Prime Minister's visit was an opportunity to identify ways to take this forward in various domains such as energy, education, healthcare, food security, fintech, defense, and culture. It was also an opportunity to discuss cooperation on global issues, particularly in the context of UAE's Presidency of COP-28 of the UNFCCC and India's G-20 Presidency, in which UAE is a Special Invitee.





## The Month That Was:

### G20 Commemorative Postage Stamps released by PM at 'Bharat Mandapam' Complex during its inauguration



In connection with India's ongoing G20 Presidency, PM Modi released special G20 commemorative postage stamps and coins. The G20 India Stamps and Coins were released during the inauguration of Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The designs of both the coins and stamps draw inspiration from India's G20 Logo and theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'One Earth · One Family · One Future'.

The two Postage Stamps of denomination ₹20 each, celebrate India's ongoing G20 Presidency, which would culminate with the G20 Leaders' Summit. The first G20 Commemorative Stamp, rendered in gold colour, represents India's diversity, inclusiveness and rich cultural heritage. It takes inspiration from the lotus, the national flower of India, as represented in India's G20 Presidency Logo with the seven petals of the stamp symbolizing the coming together of seven continents.





The second G20 Commemorative Postage stamp demonstrates togetherness and the collective will of G20 members to achieve inclusive, ambitious, decisive and action-oriented outcomes under India's Presidency. The 'seven hands' also signify seven continents, reflecting the values of unity and inclusivity as symbolized by India's G20 theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. Also marking this milestone of India's G20 Presidency, two G20 commemorative coins of denominations ₹75 and ₹100 were released by the Prime Minister. The denominations of these coins signify the completion of 75 years of India's independence, and the beginning of 'AmritKaal', India's journey towards 100 years of its freedom. The designs of the G20 commemorative coins are stylised renditions of India's G20 logo and theme with each coin made of a quaternary alloy of silver, nickel, zinc & copper.

India assumed Presidency of the multilateral forum on 1 December 2022 for a period of one year, until 30 November 2023. Marking the culmination of a series of G20 meetings and processes held across the country, the 18th G20 Leaders' Summit will be held on 9-10 September, 2023 in New Delhi at Bharat Mandapam, the newly unveiled complex which has been developed as India's largest MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) destination.





## The Month That Was:

### India Chairs the SCO Heads of State Council Meeting 2023



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prospects for expanding the Organisation.

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to forging a more diverse, democratic, equitable and multipolar world order, based on generally recognised principles of international law, multilateralism, equal, indivisible, comprehensive and stable security, cultural and civilisational diversity, mutually beneficial and equitable cooperation between states, with the UN playing a central coordinating role.

The sides signed or approved 14 joint documents, including the New Delhi Declaration, a statement on countering radicalisation leading to terrorism, separatism and extremism, a statement on cooperation in the field of digital transformation, as well as a number of decisions on certain aspects of the Organisation's activities.

One of the key achievements of the summit was the completion of a procedure for admitting the Islamic Republic of Iran into the Organisation as a member state. Now the SCO has nine member states.

Minsk has also taken one more step towards becoming an SCO member state, with the concerned parties signing a memorandum on the obligations of the Republic of



Belarus in order to obtain the status of an SCO member state.

This meeting of the SCO Heads of State Council is the final event of India's SCO chairmanship in 2022-2023.

The Republic of Kazakhstan will take over the chairmanship in the Organisation in 2023-2024.



### The Month That Was:

#### Visit of External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar to Jakarta: Strengthening ASEAN-India Relations and Regional Cooperation



Dr. S. Jaishankar concluded a significant diplomatic visit to Jakarta, Indonesia, from July 12 to 15, 2023. The visit encompassed several pivotal meetings, including the ASEAN-INDIA Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the 13th East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and the 30th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), along with bilateral engagements.

On July 13, at the opening session of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with India, Dr. Jaishankar expressed his appreciation for the warm hospitality extended by Indonesia and thanked Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi. He also lauded Indonesia's



adept handling of ASEAN under the present geopolitical circumstances and its visionary approach of "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth." Dr. Jaishankar emphasized India's support for ASEAN centrality and its outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Reflecting on the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations, elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, he highlighted the multifaceted activities that marked this achievement, including cultural exchanges, defense cooperation, and maritime exercises. The minister underscored India's commitment to strengthening ASEAN-India ties, particularly in domains like cyber, financial, and maritime security, to foster a robust Indo-Pacific partnership.

The 13th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting on July 14 saw Dr. Jaishankar advocating for a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific, aligned with India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). He affirmed India's support for the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and emphasized the congruence between AOIP and IPOI. He assured that the Quad complements ASEAN-led mechanisms and contributes to the vision of AOIP. Dr. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's commitment to ASEAN centrality and the strengthening of the East Asia Summit.

Participating in the 30th ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting, Dr. Jaishankar focused on global challenges. He underlined India's diplomacy-driven approach to conflict resolution, cooperation against terrorism, economic resilience through diversified supply chains, and resource access for the Global South. The minister stressed the significance of adhering to UNCLOS 1982 for maritime matters and supported ASEAN's stance. He voiced concerns about activities affecting peace and stability in the region and advocated a Code of Conduct that respects the rights of third parties. On Myanmar, Dr. Jaishankar assured ASEAN of India's commitment to stability and security in border areas. He also urged ARF members to adopt a unified and zero tolerance approach against terrorism.





In bilateral discussions, Dr. Jaishankar met with H.E. Mr. Josep Borrell Fonteles, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice President of the European Commission, further enhancing India's diplomatic outreach.

The visit reaffirmed India's dedication to strengthening ASEAN-India relations and fostering cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

### The Month That Was:

#### Chandrayaan-3 scripts a new chapter in India's space odyssey: PM



**Narendra Modi**   
@narendramodi

...

Chandrayaan-3 scripts a new chapter in India's space odyssey. It soars high, elevating the dreams and ambitions of every Indian. This momentous achievement is a testament to our scientists' relentless dedication. I salute their spirit and ingenuity!



**ISRO** @isro · Jul 14

LVM3 M4/Chandrayaan-3 Mission:

LVM3 M4 vehicle successfully launched Chandrayaan-3 into orbit.

Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft was successfully launched onboard LVM-3 on 14th July, 2023 at 14:35 hrs from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR. The spacecraft is currently undergoing a series of orbit maneuvers with the objective of reaching the moon's orbit and has two phases namely Earth Bound Phase and Lunar Bound Phase. The spacecraft is currently in the Earth Bound Phase.

Chandrayaan-3 components include various electronic and mechanical subsystems intended to ensure safe and soft landing such as Navigation sensors, propulsion systems, guidance & control among others. Additionally, there are mechanism for release of Rover, two way communication related antennas and other onboard electronics.





Chandrayaan-3 Lift off mass is nearly 3896 kg and the mission life of Lander and Rover is approximately one Lunar Day which is equivalent to 14 earth days. The planned landing site for lander is ~ 690S, South Pole.

The objectives of Chandrayaan-3 are:

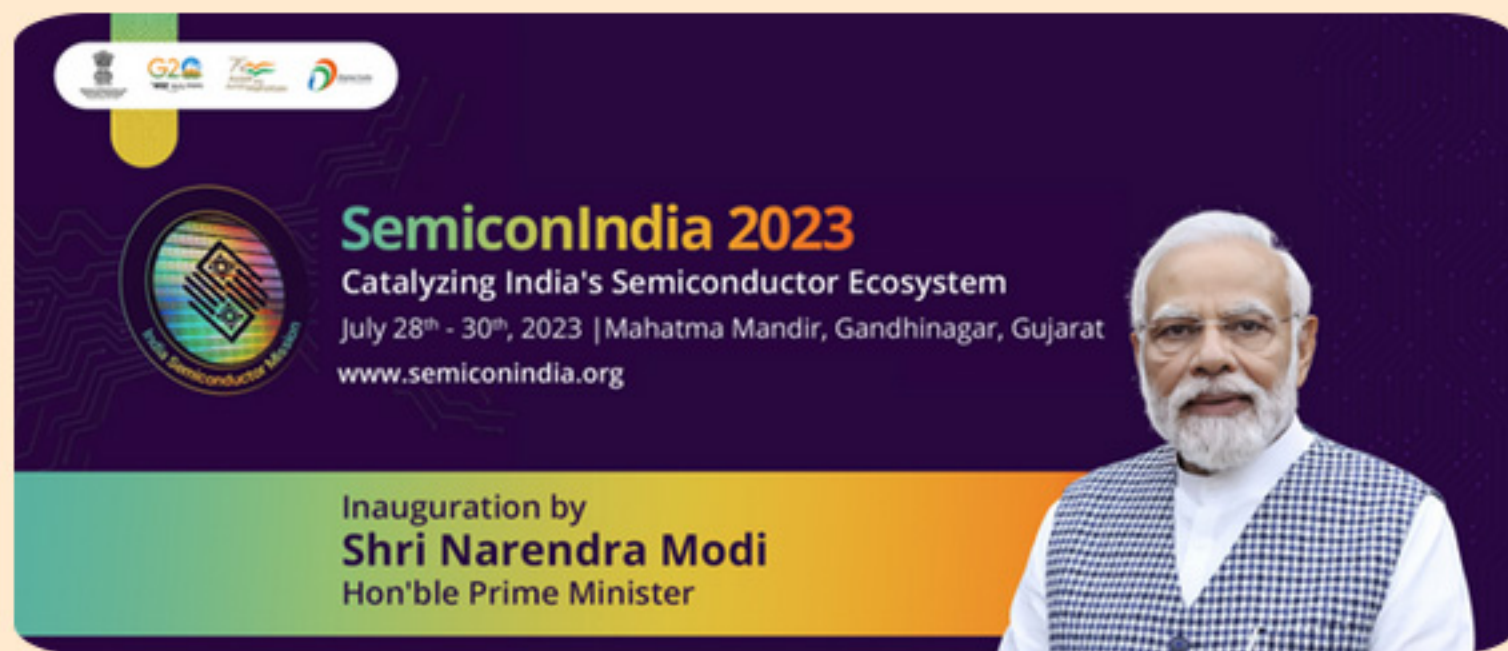
- i. Safe and Soft Landing
- ii. Rover Roving on Moon Surface
- iii. In-situ Scientific Experiments.
- iii. In-situ Scientific Experiments.

Chandrayaan-3 will take nearly 33 days from the launch date of 14th July, 2023 to reach the orbit of moon.

The successful soft landing on the surface of the Moon would make India the fourth country in the world to achieve such a significant technological capability. The successful soft landing is envisaged to serve as fore-runners for future landing missions and other technological progress in planetary exploration.

### The Month That Was:

**PM pitches India as a viable chip hub to global investors**



India has launched a conducive environment for the semiconductor sector to the global investors as a potential chip-making powerhouse during SemiconIndia 2023, gathered for semiconductor industry executives' annual chip convention in the State of Gujarat. PM Narendra Modi addressed the executives, saying that the semiconductor industry trusts India because of its massive talent pool, adding that by 2028, India would have a skill pool of over 100,000 chip design engineers. With USD10 billion of incentives and assistance granted to encourage domestic chip manufacturing, India is on track to become a key player in the global semiconductor supply chain in the coming ten years. In contrast to China's three decades of progress, India is on track for the next 10 years in the semiconductor field with US\$ 10 billion (about Rs. 81,993 crore).



इंडिया सेमीकंडक्टर मिशन  
India Semiconductor Mission



## The Month That Was:

### International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH-2023) held in New Delhi



A three-day International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH-2023) was held in New Delhi from 5th to 7th July 2023 to give industry participants the chance to learn more about the rapidly changing green hydrogen environment and innovation-driven solutions that are enhancing the sector's sustainability ecology. It brought together the world's top scientists, policy makers, academics and business figures to address recent developments and upcoming technologies throughout the full green hydrogen value chain. The Conference also investigated strategies to create an ecosystem for green hydrogen and promote a systemic strategy for achieving the global targets for green hydrogen-based decarbonization. It included green financing, human resource upskilling, and startup initiatives in this field in addition to domain-specific research collaborations on hydrogen production, storage, delivery, and downstream uses.





## Sector in Focus:

### Transformation in Railways

#### Railway Revamp: India's Onward Journey



India's rail network, ranking 4th globally, is gaining momentum. Covering 126,366 km and boasting 7,335 stations, India's railways surged by 5,243 km in 2022-23, averaging an impressive 14.4 km of daily track commissioning. A daily rhythm of 13,523 passenger and 9,146 freight trains has become a norm. A remarkable feat of loading 1,512 million tons in 2022-23 positions Indian Railways as a leading employer with approximately 1.3 million personnel.

#### Vision 2024: Progressing Ahead

Vision 2024 propels India towards a freight target of 2,024 million tons by 2024. The \$14.27 billion Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail project adds vigor. Energy-efficiency is embraced, aiming for complete network electrification by 2023, with 85% already achieved. India's Green Railway ambition is rapidly becoming a reality.

#### International Opportunities

India invites 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in railway infrastructure. International collaboration is pivotal in this trajectory.

#### Fast-Track to the Future

Projected annual passengers of 12 billion and 8 million tons of freight demand by 2031 showcase the railway's impact. \$17.2 billion in freight revenue is anticipated, underlining its economic role.

India's voyage towards the world's largest green railway network is in full throttle. As the 4th largest rail freight carrier globally, Indian Railways symbolises connectivity,



progress, and potential. With innovation in its veins, the future of rail travel looks promising.

### **Railway Stations : Transforming railway stations across India**

The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme is poised to bring about a significant transformation in India's rail infrastructure as it embarks on the redevelopment of 508 railway stations. This initiative represents a pivotal step towards modernizing and ensuring a more efficient and comfortable travel experience for passengers across the country.

### **India's transformative High-Speed Rail (HSR) corridor project**

The ambitious project of connecting the bustling hubs of Mumbai and Ahmedabad signifies a leap towards development and global prominence in the railway sector. Operating at 320 km/h with Japanese Shinkansen technology, the 'bullet' train will revolutionize travel, covering 508 km in just two hours. This landmark initiative reshapes India's railway landscape, accentuating the country's developmental strides. This is another important engagement and collaboration between India and Japan. This will not only enhance the travel experience but also fuel growth by opening new avenues of opportunities across industries and various sectors.



*"The third revolution is in the making, which is the high-speed rail. When we complete that project, people will see in India what an enormous ripple impact it has. Well beyond the world of railways, it has a transformational impact on the economy, on real estate, on mobility, even on social habits of people."*

**- Union External Affairs Minister,**

**Dr. S. Jaishankar**





For more information on investment opportunities in India's railway sector, please visit:

[Invest India Railway Sector](#)



### From the Ambassador's Desk:

### Meetings and Engagements in July

Ambassador Santosh Jha graciously hosted a farewell reception in honour of Mr. Gunnar Wiegand, the Managing Director for Asia and the Pacific at the European External Action Service (EEAS). During the event, Ambassador conveyed heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Wiegand for his unwavering commitment to enhancing the bilateral relations between India and the EU. Warm wishes were extended for his upcoming endeavours as he moves forward in his journey.





Indian Diplomacy (Official Account of India's Public Diplomacy, MEA) extends its warmest greetings to the Government and the people of Belgium on the occasion of Belgium's National Day.



Ambassador engaged in a productive dialogue with Mr. Fabian Zuleeg, the Chief Executive & Chief Economist of the European Policy Centre (EPC). The discussions focused on emphasising the importance of fostering robust think tank collaborations between India and the EU. The conversation also delved into the imperative of channeling our discussions to effectively address the prevailing challenges and opportunities of our times.





A delegation, led by Mr. Vipul Bansal, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce ; along with key representatives from the Gem Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), had a substantive discussion with Ambassador. The exchange primarily focused on pertinent trade matters concerning the diamond industry, reflecting the shared dedication to enhancing bilateral trade relations.



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