



# Mimansa मीमांसा

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः  
ऋग्वेद -1.89.

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

Vol. 34, September - October 2023

## The Mysuru Dasara: Reliving the Royal Grandeur of an Erstwhile Empire

India is a land of festivals. During the months of August to November, various communities celebrate numerous festivals, like the Ganesha Chaturthi, Krishna Janmashtami, Jain Chaturmasa and Paryushan, Diwali, Guru Purnima etc.

One of the festivals which is celebrated across the country, though in different names and styles is the 10-day festival of Dasara/Dussehra. In the southern states, it is celebrated as the Dasara; in the eastern states, specially in West Bengal, it is called the Durga Puja; the western state of Gujarat calls this the Navaratri and celebrates it with the famous Garba and Dandiya; in north India, the festival is observed as Dusshera or the Ram Lila. The Dasara is the reaffirmation of Righteousness over Sin, of Good over Evil. It is also a celebration of the strength of the Mother Goddess.







The Ram Lila



The Durga Puja

A prominent city to soak in the splendour and grandeur of the Dasara celebrations is Mysuru/Mysore in the state of Karnataka. Karnataka is a successor state to the erstwhile princely state of Mysuru, and observes the Dasara as a State Festival, maintaining a link with a long and illustrious history of the state. The kingdom of Mysuru itself was a successor to the glories of the powerful Vijayanagar Empire. In Mysuru, the kings have been celebrating the Dasara since 1610 AD.

### **Legends of the Dasara**

In Hindu mythology, there are multiple stories and legends pertaining to the celebration of Dasara/Dussehra.



- In the epic Ramayana, it is said that Lord Rama, the 7<sup>th</sup> Incarnation of Vishnu, defeated the demon king Ravana on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Dasara, a day called as Vijaya Dashami (the Victorious Tenth Day). Ravana had kidnapped and imprisoned Sita, the wife of Lord Rama and an incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi herself. It is to mark this event that at the culmination of the Ram Lila, on the 10<sup>th</sup> night, huge effigies of Ravana are burnt, celebrating the victory of Lord Rama, symbolizing Righteousness, over Ravana, symbolizing Sin.
- In the Mahabharata, the other Indian epic, Vijaya Dashami marks the day the five Pandava brothers stepped out of their one year of incognito and won a minor battle against the Kauravas.
- However, the most prominent legend pertains to the Mother Goddess or Shakti. On each day of the Dasara, the Goddess takes a different form to defeat various demons. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day, the Goddess becomes Chamundi/Durga to kill the demon Mahishasura or the Buffalo-headed demon.

Interestingly, according to some historians, the ancient name of Mysuru was Mahishamandala and was ruled by Mahishasura. Today, the temple for Goddess Chamundi stands atop a hill in the city of Mysuru, overlooking the city, protecting it.

### **Celebrating the Dasara**

During the time of the Vijayanagara empire in the 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century C.E, celebrations of the Dasara was a platform to display the strength and riches of the empire. In the ruins of Hampi, the erstwhile capital of the Vijayanagara empire, one can still see the enormous Maha Navami Dibba (the Maha Navami Platform), which served the purpose of the Emperor holding court during the festival, for all to see.

The Emperors organized wrestling matches, literary meets, music and dance performances and rewarded the participants lavishly. It was also a time to take stock of the military prowess of the empire and parades would be organized by the different forces as well as vassals. This was similar to the armed forces march-past we see today along the Kartavya Path on India's Republic Day. After the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire, the kings of Mysuru, who were tribute-payers to the Emperor took it upon themselves to continue the legacy of the Dasara. Since 1610, the royal Wodeyar dynasty of Mysuru has celebrated Dasara, with pomp and glory.



One of the major attractions of the Dasara celebrations in Mysuru is the procession of the elephants, with the leader of the herd carrying the golden howdah. Until a few years after independence, the king/scion of the Wodeyar dynasty would sit in the howdah as the elephants marched through the city, accepting the respects of the citizens. Once the State of Karnataka took over the celebrations of the Dasara, the idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari is kept in the howdah and carried in procession. Today, along with the elephant procession, tableaux depicting various monuments, government policies, successful projects in the different districts of Karnataka are also shown, not to mention the colourful cultural troupes accompanying them.



The Jamboo Savari/Elephant Procession



The Royal Mysore Palace

The city of Mysuru decks itself up in lights during the Dasara celebrations, to welcome thousands of national and international tourists. The Royal Palace of Mysore under lights is a sight to behold! Food festivals are organized, catering to a wide variety of cuisines. Cultural performances, including specific platforms for the young artists are patronized by the royal family as well as the Government of Karnataka.



The other interesting cultural practice in Karnataka and other states in southern India is the doll exhibition that occurs in most households. Dasara is also referred to as “Gombe Habba” or the “Festival of Dolls” in Karnataka. These dolls depict a variety of themes, solely dependent on the creativity of the individuals involved. Stories from mythology, historical themes, scenes from daily life etc. Such doll exhibitions are also a way of ensuring the livelihoods of artisans. The Channapatna wooden/lacquer dolls are very famous and also have a GI Tag.



The Dasara Doll Festival

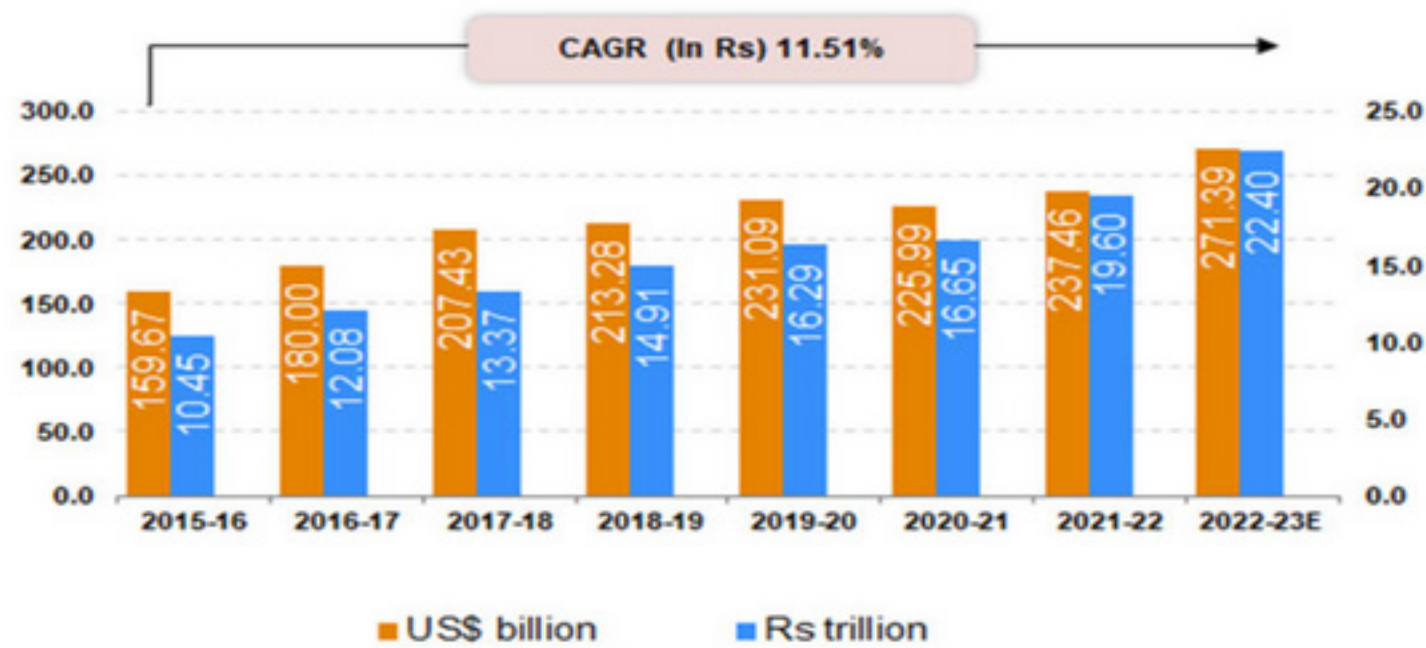
Indeed, the Dasara festival season is a good time to visit Karnataka. However, the vast and rich state offers a diverse set of experiences, living up to its tagline of “One State, Many Worlds.”



Thanks to what Mahatma Gandhi called “enlightened governance,” the princely state of Mysuru became a pioneer in industrialization and development. The state of Karnataka is a proud legatee of such inheritance and has made tremendous contribution to the growth of India’s technology sector. It is one of the economic engines of India, thanks largely to Bengaluru, India’s Silicon Valley and start-up hub. Karnataka has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest number of start-ups globally and more than 30% of start-ups within the country.



## GSDP of Karnataka at Current Prices



Note: Exchange rates used are averages of each year, E- Advance Estimate, BE- Budget Estimate, E-Estimate

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics of Karnataka, Central Statistics Office, Karnataka Socio Economic Survey 2017-18, Budget 2020-21

The GDP of the state of Karnataka is roughly the size of Vietnam and is expected to grow at a rate of 9.5% in the current fiscal. Being one of the top investment destinations in the country, Karnataka alone attracted an FDI of US\$ 45 bn between October 2019 and June 2023, the second highest inflow in India.

For 3 years in a row, Karnataka has been #1 in NITI Aayog's India Innovation Index. More than 400 top multinational companies have their R&D centres in Bengaluru. Thanks to top-class educational institutions like the Indian Institute of Science, Indian Institute of Management (Bengaluru) etc., there is a readily available talent pool in Bengaluru. As a result, several of the global tech giants have large facilities in the city. For example, Intel has its largest design centre outside the US in Bengaluru. For Google, Bengaluru is home to its first engineering centre outside of the US focusing on AI, ML and natural language processing. Samsung's largest R&D centre outside South Korea is in Bengaluru.

Karnataka also hosts several critical R&D facilities of the Government of India, including the Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) etc. In aerospace and defence design and manufacturing, Karnataka has a 65% share in the country. It is also a pioneer in semiconductor chip designing, with more than 85 chip design firms having operations in Bengaluru.

Indeed, while most of the technology and development is based out of Bengaluru, the Government of Karnataka is undertaking efforts to enhance the geographical spread of industries. The city of Mysuru in the south and Dharwad in the north are being developed as alternatives for Bengaluru. The recent inauguration of Indian Institute of Technology Dharwad dovetails with such a vision. The newly built



Bengaluru - Mysuru expressway enhances the ease of travel and boosts connectivity between the two cities.

Apart from the prowess in the fields of IT and manufacturing, Karnataka also boasts of diverse landscapes. Combined with a rich recorded history of over 2000 years, Karnataka is a hotspot for tourism, some of which have been shown below.



The Western Ghats, a global biodiversity hotspot runs in Karnataka, creating dense forests, which is home to tigers and elephants. The ghats are also home to several scenic trekking trails. Several rivers have their birthplace in the ghats, the most important being the Kaveri, the lifeline of southern Karnataka. These rivers create beautiful waterfalls, like the Jog Falls in the image above.

Having seen the rise and fall of several dynasties, major and minor, the state of Karnataka is dotted with monuments, rich in architecture and history. In September 2023, a group of monuments dating to the 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Century C.E, constructed by the Hoysala dynasty, was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, making it the third such group from Karnataka. (The other two being the group of monuments in Hampi and Pattadakal.)



Hoysala Temple, Somanathpura



## The Month That Was:

### India hosts G20 Summit



The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, expressed confidence that the New Delhi G20 Summit would chart a new path in human-centric and inclusive development. He emphasized that India's G20 Presidency had been inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented, actively addressing the developmental concerns of the Global South.

The Prime Minister chaired Sessions on 'One Earth,' 'One Family,' and 'One Future,' covering a range of issues of prime concern to the world community, including furthering strong, sustainable, inclusive, and balanced growth. He also mentioned holding bilateral meetings with several leaders and Heads of Delegation to deepen the bonds of friendship and cooperation.

### Launch of the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)





## Launch of the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)



On the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi, PM Shri Modi along with the leaders of Singapore, Bangladesh, Italy, USA, Brazil, Argentina, Mauritius and UAE, launched the Global Biofuel Alliance on 9 September 2023.

The Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) is an initiative by India as the G20 Chair. The Alliance intends to expedite the global uptake of biofuels through facilitating technology advancements, intensifying utilization of sustainable biofuels, shaping robust standard setting and certification through the participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The alliance will also act as a central repository of knowledge and an expert hub. GBA aims to serve as a catalytic platform, fostering global collaboration for the advancement and widespread adoption of biofuels.

## Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) & India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)



PM Shri Modi and President Biden co-chaired a special event on Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) and India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), on 9 September 2023 on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi.



The event aimed at unlocking greater investment for infrastructure development and strengthening connectivity in its various dimensions between India, Middle East and Europe.

Leaders of the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Mauritius, UAE and Saudi Arabia, as also the World Bank, participated in the event.

PGII is a developmental initiative aimed at narrowing the infrastructure gap in developing countries as well as help towards accelerating progress on SDGs globally.

The IMEC comprises of an Eastern Corridor connecting India to the Gulf region and a Northern Corridor connecting the Gulf region to Europe. It will include a railway and ship-rail transit network and road transport routes.

In his remarks, Prime Minister highlighted the importance of physical, digital and financial connectivity. He said that IMEC would help promote economic integration between India and Europe.

An MOU on IMEC was signed by India, USA, Saudi Arabia, UAE, European Union, Italy, France and Germany.

### **PM's meeting with President of the European Council and President of the European Commission**



PM Shri Modi met Mr. Charles Michel, President of the European Council and Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission on 10 September 2023, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

Both visitors congratulated Prime Minister on the success of India's G20 Presidency.



Discussions focussed on various aspects of the India - EU Strategic Partnership, including the next India - EU Summit, ongoing Free Trade Agreement negotiations, climate change and LiFE, digital technology, and Trade and Technology Council (TTC).

The leaders also discussed the India- Middle East- Europe Economic Corridor that was launched on 9 September 2023. They felt that there should be expeditious implementation of the Corridor. Prime Minister also highlighted the possibilities of solar projects under the Corridor.

The Hon'ble President hosted a dinner for the leaders on 9th September 2023. The leaders paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat on the 10th of September 2023. At the Closing Ceremony, on the same day, G20 Leaders shared their collective vision for a sustainable and equitable 'One Future,' together like 'One Family,' for a healthier 'One Earth.'





## The Month That Was:

### PM's visit to Jakarta




PM Shri Narendra Modi traveled to Jakarta at the invitation of President Widodo of Indonesia to participate in the ASEAN related meetings.

His first engagement was the 20th ASEAN-India Summit to discuss with ASEAN leaders the future contours of the partnership, which entered its fourth decade. Engagement with ASEAN is an important pillar of India's "Act East" policy. The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership entered into the previous year had injected new dynamism into our ties.

**Prime Minister's 12-point proposal to strengthen ASEAN-India cooperation:**

- Establishing multi-modal connectivity and economic corridor that links South-East Asia-India-West Asia-Europe
- Offered to share India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack with ASEAN partners
- Announced ASEAN-India fund for Digital Future
- Announced renewal of support to Economic and Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia
- Called for collectively raising issues being faced by Global South in multilateral fora
- Invited ASEAN countries to join Global Centre for Traditional Medicine being established by WHO in India
- Called for working together on Mission LIFE
- Offered to share India's experience in providing affordable and quality medicines to people through Jan-Aushadhi Kendras
- Called for collective fight against terrorism, terror financing and cyber-disinformation
- Invited ASEAN countries to join Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
- Called for cooperation in disaster management
- Called for enhanced cooperation on maritime safety, security and domain awareness

**- PM Narendra Modi**







Thereafter, PM attended the 18th East Asia Summit. This forum provided a useful opportunity to deliberate on issues of importance to the region, including food and energy security, the environment, health, and digital transformation. PM exchanged views with other EAS Leaders on practical cooperation measures to collectively address these global challenges.

### **The Month That Was:**

#### **Visit of External Affairs Minister to the United States of America**



External Affairs Minister (EAM), Dr. S. Jaishankar visited the United States of America from 22-30 September 2023.

During his visit to New York from 22 to 26 September, EAM led the Indian delegation for the High Level Week at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

In keeping with India's support for Global South, EAM hosted a special event 'India-UN for Global South: Delivering for Development'.



During the visit, EAM attended various plurilateral and bilateral meetings. EAM also met with the UN Secretary General Mr. António Guterres and Mr. Dennis Francis, President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly.



Upon completion of the 78th UNGA related engagements, EAM visited Washington D.C. from 27 to 30 September for bilateral meetings with US interlocutors. His program included inter alia, discussions with his counterpart Mr. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State, senior members of the U.S. Administration, US business leaders and think tanks. EAM also addressed the 4th World Culture Festival being organised by the Art of Living.



## The Month That Was:

### PM bows to Mahatma Gandhi on his Jayanti



PM Shri Modi paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on the special occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

In a X post, the Prime Minister said:

*"I bow to Mahatma Gandhi on the special occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. His timeless teachings continue to illuminate our path. Mahatma Gandhi's impact is global, motivating the entire humankind to further the spirit of unity and compassion. May we always work towards fulfilling his dreams. May his thoughts enable every youngster be the agent of change he dreamt of, fostering unity and harmony all over."*



**Narendra Modi** ✓

@narendramodi

...

I bow to Mahatma Gandhi on the special occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. His timeless teachings continue to illuminate our path. Mahatma Gandhi's impact is global, motivating the entire humankind to further the spirit of unity and compassion. May we always work towards fulfilling his dreams. May his thoughts enable every youngster be the agent of change he dreamt of, fostering unity and harmony all over.

3:42 AM · Oct 2, 2023 · 1.3M Views



## The Month That Was:

### India-EU Cyber and Maritime Security Dialogue



The Seventh India-EU Cyber Dialogue was held on 05 October 2023 in Brussels. The Indian Delegation was led by Ms. Muanpui Saiawi, Joint Secretary, Cyber Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs, while the EU delegation was led by Ambassador (Ms.) Joanneke Balfoort, Director Security and Defence, European External Action Service.

In the context of the vibrant Strategic Partnership between India and the EU, the two sides expressed appreciation for the Cyber Dialogue mechanism as it provides a platform to discuss a wide range of issues related to cyberspace. Both sides exchanged views on cyber policies, strategies and areas of mutual interest. They discussed cyber cooperation in multilateral fora, including at the United Nations, and in regional settings, including at OSCE, ARF and G20. They also discussed cooperation in promoting capacity building in cyberspace and combating the criminal use of ICTs.





The 3rd India-EU Maritime Security Dialogue was held on 5 October 2023 in Brussels. The Indian delegation was led by Ms Muanpui Saiawi, Joint Secretary for Disarmament & International Security Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and the EU delegation by Ambassador (Ms.) Joanneke Balfoort, Director for Security and Defence Policy, European External Action Service.

The two sides conferred on ways to sustain a secure maritime environment conducive for inclusive growth and global well being. They reviewed ongoing cooperation initiatives in the maritime domain and avenues of reinforcing international and regional mechanisms for comprehensive maritime security. They explored avenues to strengthen their shared efforts in areas such as countering illicit maritime activities (IMA), maritime law enforcement and capability building. They also discussed cooperation in enhancement of maritime domain awareness (MDA) and looked forward to a forthcoming India-EU maritime engagement.

Both sides agreed to hold the next India-EU Dialogues on a mutually convenient date.

### **The Month That Was:**

#### **PM remembers Sardar Patel on his Jayanti**



PM Shri Modi has paid tributes to Sardar Patel on his Jayanti. Shri Modi said that with his indomitable spirit, visionary statesmanship and the extraordinary dedication Sardar Patel shaped the destiny of our nation.

In a X post, the Prime Minister said;

*“On the Jayanti of Sardar Patel, we remember his indomitable spirit, visionary statesmanship and the extraordinary dedication with which he shaped the destiny of our nation. His commitment to national integration continues to guide us. We are forever indebted to his service.”*





**Narendra Modi**   
@narendramodi · [Follow](#)



On the Jayanti of Sardar Patel, we remember his indomitable spirit, visionary statesmanship and the extraordinary dedication with which he shaped the destiny of our nation. His commitment to national integration continues to guide us. We are forever indebted to his service.

2:08 AM · Oct 31, 2023



### The Month That Was:

**5G/6G waves are expected to boost the Indian economy over the next five years: KPMG**



According to a report by KPMG released at the India Mobile Congress 2023, 5G/6G, satellite communications, and semiconductors are expected to collectively contribute about US\$ 240 billion to the Indian economy in the next five years, growing to around 1.6% of the gross domestic product (GDP) by FY28, made possible by favourable policies from the government and a large domestic market. Similarly, the key policy recommendations include formulation of regulations and administrative processes in the context of digital connectivity infrastructure development (DCIP), transitioning from the assembly-only approach in electronics manufacturing to an end-to-end holistic approach, and encouraging low-cost component manufacturers to set up operations in India. In addition, the recommendations also include using its manufacturing capacity to create and export 6G equipment to other countries, expediting the plan to reach 100% fiberisation of towers from the current 38%, and lastly space foreign direct investment (FDI) norms. As indicated by KPMG in the report.



## The Month That Was:

**India will soon have the second-largest metro network in the world**



According to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Petroleum and Natural Gas, currently, roughly 874 kilometres of metro rail are in use in 20 different cities nationwide, while another 986 kilometres are being built in various locations. That makes India is well on its way to having the second-largest metro network in the world. During the parliament discussion on 12 October, 2023, an overview of the ‘One Nation One Card’, an in-house National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) that was introduced by Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi in March 2019 and allows for easy travel via metro, rail, bus, and other Public Transport Operators (PTO) as well as single-card use at retail stores, restaurants, ATMs, kiosks, fuel stations, parking lots, and retail outlets was highlighted. The National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI) qSPARC (quick Specification for Payment Application of Rupay Chip) is the foundation for the NCMC card. Currently, the metro rail companies applying on NCMC are Delhi Metro (DMRC), Bengaluru Metro (BMRCL), Mumbai Metro, Chennai Metro (CMRL), Ahmedabad Metro (GMRCL), and Kanpur Metro (UPMRCL).

## Sector In Focus

# #startupindia

Startup India is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, intended to build a strong eco-system for nurturing innovation and Startups in the country that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. The Government through this initiative aims to empower Startups to grow through innovation and design. In order to meet the objectives of the initiative, Government of India is announcing this Action Plan that addresses all



aspects of the Startup ecosystem. With this Action Plan the Government hopes to accelerate spreading of the Startup movement:

- To reduce the regulatory burden on Startups thereby allowing them to focus on their core business and keep compliance cost low
- To create a single point of contact for the entire Startup ecosystem and enable knowledge exchange and access to funding
- To serve as the single platform for Startups for interacting with Government and Regulatory Institutions for all business needs and information exchange among various stakeholders
- To promote awareness and adoption of IPRs by Startups and facilitate them in protecting and commercializing the IPRs by providing access to high quality Intellectual Property services and resources, including fast-track examination of patent applications and rebate in fees.
- To provide an equal platform to Startups (in the manufacturing sector) vis-à-vis the experienced entrepreneurs/ companies in public procurement
- To make it easier for Startups to wind up operations



## Key Pillars of Support for Startups

Under the Startup India Initiative



### Simplification and Handholding

Easier compliance, easier exit process for failed startups, legal support, fast tracking of patent applications and a website to reduce information asymmetry.



### Funding & Incentives

Exemptions on Income Tax and Capital Gains Tax for eligible startups; a fund of funds to infuse more capital into the startup ecosystem and a credit guarantee scheme.



### Incubation & Industry-Academia Partnerships

Creation of numerous incubators and innovation labs, events, competitions and grants.



Since the inception of the initiative:

- There are over 115000+ startups recognized by the government of India as of October 2023
- 49% of them having a base in Tier 2 - Tier 3 cities
- These startups are spread over 669 districts from 36 States and Union Territories of India
- As of 31st March 2023, India is home to 108 unicorns with a total valuation of \$ 340.80 Bn. Out of the total number of unicorns, 44 unicorns with a total valuation of \$ 93.00 Bn were born in 2021 and 21 unicorns with a total valuation of \$ 26.99 Bn were born in 2022
- 57 Regulations have been simplified for startups

The Startup India Portal acts as a virtual incubation platform for startup ecosystem stakeholders, to network with each other, have access to resources, tools & templates that would help them throughout their journey.



## Funding

- A INR 945 Cr Startup India Seed fund Scheme has been launched in 2021 to aid setting up and growth of new startups.
- A INR 10,000 Cr 'fund of funds' is being managed for growing the domestic venture capital industry.
- Startup India Investor Connect was conceptualized to serve as an intermediary platform for both Investors and Startups to find the right beneficiaries to connect with

## Market Access

- Startup Runway has been launched as a dedicated corner for startups to sell products and services to the Government.
- To enable government linkages for growth opportunities and exposure, Grand Challenges and Knowledge series are regularly organised for the Startups





For more information please visit: [Invest India - Startup India Hub](#) and [StartupIndia](#)

# #startupindia

## From the Ambassador's Desk

Commencing the observance of Gandhi Jayanti at the Court of First Instance in Antwerp, Ambassador Santosh Jha had the honour of being joined by distinguished guests, including President of the Court of Commerce, Mr. Thomas van Houtte, President of the Bar Council, Ms. Katrien Crauwels, and two esteemed Aldermen from the City of Antwerp, namely Ms. Jinnih Beels and Ms. Nabilla Ait Daoud.





At the Antwerp Governor's Office, Ambassador, accompanied by Governor of Antwerp, Ms. Cathy Berx, and distinguished local Aldermen, solemnly paid their respects to Mahatma Gandhi. The event garnered significant attendance from a range of local dignitaries, including members of the Indian diaspora in Antwerp.



The Mission also celebrated in collaboration with the vibrant Indian community residing in Luxembourg the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The Indian Association of Luxembourg played an instrumental role in orchestrating this event, fostering an atmosphere of enthusiasm and heartfelt participation from the attendees. During the commemoration, children showcased their talents by reciting bhajans and poems dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi.

Additionally, Mr. Debashish Prusty, Deputy Chief of Mission, and Mme Catherine Moureaux, the Mayor of Molenbeek, joined hands to pay their respects to the great Mahatma Gandhi. This gesture underscored the enduring values and principles he stood for, emphasizing the shared reverence for his legacy.





Ambassador was delighted to participate in the ONAM celebrations by Kairali Belgium Malayali Association. Conveyed the best wishes to all for a joyous and prosperous year ahead. The entire atmosphere and the wonderful cultural show put up by the Indian diaspora is commendable.



Ambassador had a productive meeting with Ms. Theodora Gentzis, Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry of Belgium. The discussion encompassed a range of topics of mutual and bilateral significance, with a focus on trade, commerce, political and foreign office consultations, as well as matters related to migration and mobility.





Belgo-Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (BICC&I) and Mission hosted the BICC&I Annual Lunch Causerie at the Kasteel von Huizingen. Ambassador and BICC&I Chairman Baron Philippe Vlerick and prominent businesses from Belgium, Europe and India attended the event.



Prime Minister Xavier Bettel of Luxembourg, accompanied by the Finance Minister, Mayor of Luxembourg and Ambassador, ceremoniously inaugurated the 8th Edition of India Day. This significant event marks the celebration of the Amrit Mahotsav and the 75 Years of India-Luxembourg Diplomatic Relations.



In the midst of the India Day festival, PM Xavier Bettel, and Ambassador appreciated the vibrant cultural performances and flavoursome Indian cuisine.





---

Ambassador delivered the opening remarks during a thoughtful panel discussion on "EU-India Relations in an Emerging World Order," jointly organized by European Policy Centre and EU-India Chamber of Commerce. The discourse underscored the expanding trajectory and strategic significance that India-EU relations embody in the current geopolitical landscape.



---

Ambassador held a constructive meeting with Mr. Peter Moors, Chief of Cabinet to the Prime Minister of Belgium, at the FPS Chancery of the Prime Minister. They deliberated on matters of mutual and bilateral interest, fostering diplomatic dialogue.





Embassy of India, in collaboration with Art India, illuminated Brussels early with the spirit of Diwali during the India Day celebration at the iconic Atomium. Ambassador, alongside fellow Ambassadors and local dignitaries, inaugurated the festival, symbolizing the triumph of knowledge over ignorance. The Brussels Diwali festival, witnessed by over 8000 attendees, showcased Indian cultural richness through food, attire, music, and dance. The event, a beacon of cultural exchange, resonated positively with the diverse audience from across Europe.



The Embassy honored the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the "Iron Man of India," with a thoughtful presentation by Dr. Shobhana Radhakrishna, shedding light on Sardar Patel's pivotal role in India's integration. Ambassador @santjha paid homage to this stalwart of Indian history and administered the Ekta pledge to Embassy members, emphasizing a collective commitment to India's unity and integrity during the gathering.

