

# The Story of a New India

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*Concerted efforts by the government, opposition, administration, corporate, and citizens can help realise the dream of India as a developed nation emerging as a global super power. This is the story of a Communicating India*

**I**ndia is rewriting its growth story in the global geopolitical economic landscape, charting new courses in its governance paradigm and striving to demolish the old images and impressions as viewed through coloured lenses in the comity of nations to evolve into a ‘New India’.

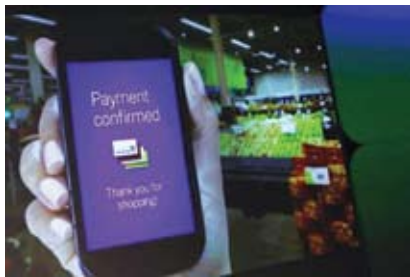
The world must indeed know that today, outside of America and China, India is the third largest economy with a robust, fast growing market for goods and services. The changing face of India, constantly challenging the status quo is brimming with examples of its leadership leading from the front across a spectrum of sectors in the last three years. Initiatives spearheaded by the government have deeply altered the mindsets and behaviours of people. The time has arrived when the stereotypical representations of India have to be discarded and the story of this ‘New India’ that is resurgent, resilient and resplendent needs to be captured in the face of crises and global threats.

Let us start with the most recent announcement of demonetisation of Rs.500 and Rs.1000 notes, one of the most impactful steps taken to curb the three pronged menace of black money, counterfeit currency and corruption. It provided a logical climax to the series of initiatives taken towards this cause in the first two and half years

of the government which include closely collaboration with the Swiss bank officials, setting up of an SIT to deal with investigations on individual cases of tax evasion and Income Declaration Scheme, which mobilised tax revenue of nearly Rs. 65,000 cr. A move to purge the economy of the toxic black cash not only induces more efficiency and reduces corruption, but also gives room for the government and the central bank to cut tax rates and interest rates respectively, spurring up investments while being on track to attain the fiscal deficit and growth targets. This is the story of a **Resurgent India**.

India’s digital leadership was clearly visible post demonetisation when the effort to boost the Digital Payments ecosystem received a much needed fillip. The aim was to inculcate a behaviour change in promoting cashless transactions and converting India into a less-cash society, thereby seeking to increase transparency and accountability. It is heartening to note that about 1.5 crore people have adopted the BHIM app so far in just over 2 months time of its launch. To facilitate digital transactions, over 30 crore Rupay debit cards had been issued by the government including those issued to Jan Dhan account holders. Around 12.5 lakh people have won under the Lucky Grahak Yojana and 70,000 traders bagged prizes under the Digidhan Vyapar Yojana. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana

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provided the last chance to tax evaders to declare their income, the funds of which would be channelized for the benefit of the poor. Demonetization gives us a unique opportunity to harness this digital revolution to deal a mortal blow to corruption and black money. Payment through online channels significantly reduces the need for cash and brings about transparency in financial dealings. It is the responsibility of those who are well-versed in the use of digital channels for payments etc to teach those who are new to it. The fight to improve people's living standards and weed out corruption and black money has to be a collective, societal effort. This is the story of a **Digital India**.

The opening of accounts under PMJDY, in turn, facilitated the channelizing of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) subsidy to targeted beneficiaries under the Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) scheme or PAHAL. It is a reform initiative that has great potential to emerge as global best practice in benefit transfers to poor households. With more than 160 million registered beneficiaries, it is the world's largest DBT program. The primary aim of this program is subsidy reform, which is not doing away with subsidies, but targeting them effectively so that they flow only to the intended beneficiaries while bringing greater transparencies and terminating leakages and corruption across the length of the value chain. This scheme has saved the government nearly Rs. 22,000 cr on LPG subsidy since the time of its launch.

Demonetisation and other decisions taken in the economic sphere have gone hand in hand with the aggressive drive towards achieving universal

financial inclusion and bringing every citizen into the formal banking net. Nearly 28.13 cr accounts have been opened so far under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) which gives a much needed fillip to move towards a cashless economy and realise the dream of 'financial untouchability'. The scheme has managed to open more bank accounts in the last two years than in the all the years since India's independence to August 2014 combined. This is the story of an **Inclusive India**.



On the flip side of the PAHAL scheme is the 'Give it Up' campaign. This scheme encouraged customers who earn more than Rs. 10 lakh per annum, to voluntarily give up the LPG subsidy. The amount saved was used to give over 65 lakh new LPG connections to those who still use firewood or kerosene stoves for cooking. Over 1 crore users voluntarily gave up the subsidy benefit and saved the government exchequer to the tune of nearly Rs. 5000 cr. This is the story of an **Incorruptible India**.

The 'Make in India' Campaign is one of the flagship schemes of the government that aims at making India a global manufacturing hub and reaping the economic spin offs thereon in terms of better infrastructure, better employment opportunities and leveraging on India's massive demographic dividend. The net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows have hit an all-time high in early 2017 of the order of \$3.35 bn and have more than financed the current account deficit. Foreign investment has increased by nearly 46 per cent since the launch of Make In India. This is the story of a **Investor-friendly India**.



The passage of the historic GST legislation is set to simplify the tax regime, create a nation wide market for goods and services and broaden the tax base giving a fillip to economic growth. Government revenues are set to rise, Logistics, Inventory costs, tax evasion will fall and manufactured goods would be cheaper. The dream of One nation, One tax is now a reality. This proves beyond doubt the decisiveness of the government. Manufacturing will get more competitive as GST addresses cascading of tax, inter-state tax, high logistics costs and fragmented market. There will be increased protection



from imports as GST provides for appropriate countervailing duty. This is the story of a **Transformational India**.

To realise the dream of a more efficient economy, the Digital India Campaign was launched to step up digital infrastructure and promote digital literacy. Bringing on e-governance ensures efficiency and transparency while saving a lot of time on procedural matters. While this is in its early stages, proliferating this scheme across multilingual platforms and improved internet connectivity in rural areas can help scale up this initiative. The government realizes the importance of adequate infrastructure. This is why the government is committed



of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood. With the slogan of “Kaushal Bharat, Kushal Bharat”, a total of 19.85 lakh youth have been trained and 2.49 lakh placed in FY 16, while 8479 training centers have been opened in 596 districts. This is the story of a **Skill India**.



to establishing Bharat broadband, connecting 2.5 lakh panchayats to the Internet. As on January 29, 2017, Optical Fibre Cable has been laid to 76,089 gram panchayats with a total length of 1,72,257 kilometres. As many as 16,355 gram panchayats have been provided with broadband connectivity. This is the story of an **Digital India**.



front, 23 States during Kharif 2016; 390 lakh farmers covered and 386.75 lakh hectares have been insured to the tune of Rs.1,41,883.30 crores. During Rabi 2016-17, as of now, 167 lakh farmers have been covered and about 193.35 lakh hectares insured over the sum insured of Rs. 71,728.59 crores. These numbers speak volumes about the government’s commitment towards the welfare of the ‘Annadaatas’ of the nation.

One initiative which is synonymous with the government is the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan which can be hailed as a transformational move that sets the lofty goal of achieving an open defecation free India by 2019. The infrastructure in terms of the number of toilets constructed has been augmented manifold under this scheme. The next focus of the government is to address behaviour change by shackling age old cultural, social and religious norms that prevent people from using toilets. More than 4 crore toilets have been constructed so far since the inception of this scheme, and 573 cities, 1,88,008 villages and 130 districts have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). This is the story of a **Clean India**.

The government believes in the maxim of ‘Minimum government, Maximum governance’ and this can be witnessed in the changed work ethic of the government. The current leadership has a professional work style and has ‘corporatized’ the governance by invigorating a new work culture in the government. Routine review meetings comprising of ministers and top bureaucrats, and periodic interactions with officials all across the country via video conferences forms the new hallmark. The biggest achievement of the government has been to curb widespread corruption in the system and eliminate delays and administrative bottlenecks as seen in decisions such as coal block allocations. This is the story of a **Transparent India**.

On the infrastructure front, initiatives such as the Smart Cities project, AMRUT Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, passage of RERA among others have enhanced the performance of the sector.



Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Atal Pension Yojana, Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Krishi Sinchai Yojana, MUDRA Bank Yojana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Nayi Manzil Yojana among others try to ensure a well balanced development of all sections of the society, be it the girl child, senior citizens, farmers, minorities, urban house dwellers or rural villagers. The schemes of the government have touched all sections of the society and have simplified their lives. This is the story of the Garib, Kisan and Mahila who are reaping the benefits of a **Transforming India**.

On the skill development front, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the flagship scheme of the government launched with the objective of enabling a large number

The schemes in the agriculture sector such as Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Soil Health Card scheme, Neem coated urea, augmenting the minimum support prices among other initiatives have served the ‘Kisans’ of our nation in good stead even in the face of vagaries of the monsoon. Nearly, 15.86 lakh hectares brought under micro irrigation from 2014-17 under ‘Per Drop More Crop’ for micro irrigation, while 6.20 crore soil health cards have been distributed so far. On the insurance coverage

Looking at India’s foreign policy, government’s efforts have been extremely proactive, with the Prime Minister having visited more than 50 countries across 6 continents in a span of a little over 2 years. The very first decision to invite all the SAARC

leaders for the swearing in ceremony can be hailed as a masterstroke that sent out a strong statement across the diplomatic circles, about Delhi's intention of engaging closely with its neighbours under the current political dispensation. This is further validated by the fact that Bhutan was the first country chosen for a bilateral visit and the PM has visited all of India's neighbours at least once so far.

India's stance has changed from that of strategic restraint to greater assertion in response to terrorism from Pakistan. It has been made amply clear that India wants pure bilateralism and will not accept Islamabad's talks with separatists as demonstrated by calling off foreign secretary level talks and walking out of regional summits (SAARC summit in Pakistan). The attack on the Indian army retaliated through surgical strikes further reinforced this position. Also, by boycotting the SAARC summit, India sent out a stern message to the extent of major world powers considering motions to declare Pakistan as terror state.

In her multilateral engagements, India's bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council found many backers and significant progress has also been made for entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group. India's engagement in regional groupings such as BRICS, SAARC, BIMSTEC has been fruitful. India has also been able to lead the cause of

the developing nations in multilateral negotiations on climate change (in Paris Summit) and trade negotiations in WTO.

The Indo-US relationship saw a paradigm shift under the current leadership. The Prime Minister has taken proactive measures to build a rapport with important U.S. political leaders and met President Obama six times just in his first 24 months in office and visited the United States three times. Defence ties between the two nations have continued along a decisively upward trajectory of growth and sophistication. India has also actively engaged with traditional allies such as Japan and Russia that has effectively checkmated China's growing ambition in the South Asian region. Projects like TAPI, and Chahbahar port agreement are meant to serve as an effective bulwark against Chinese hegemony in the region.

Apart from engaging with traditional allies, this government's focus has been on building strategic ties with the newly emerging countries in Central Asia and Africa; countries plush with natural resources and significant strategic importance. India has taken the step in the direction to emerge as a natural leader. This is the story of an **Emerging India**.

Whether it is an earthquake in Nepal, or Indians stranded in Yemen, floods in Kashmir, or a fire in a Kerala temple, the government has always

reached out to the people with relief and rescue measures. India's soft power has been on full display by effectively leveraging events like the International Yoga Day. This is the story of an **Caring India**.

The last 3 years have laid the foundation for further progress of the nation to be initiated in the years to come. Most of these efforts have been pushed through by aggressive messaging across various communication channels- press conferences, television, radio, print and social media. The PM himself walks the talk by reaching out to the people through 'Mann Ki Baat', a monthly program on All India Radio. Concerted efforts by the government, opposition, administration, corporate, and citizens can help realise the dream of India as a developed nation emerging as a global super power. This is the story of a **Communicating India**.

Our story needs to be retold – and the West must move away from viewing India through coloured glasses and moth-eaten frameworks surviving from the days of Socialism long after this Ism was given a decent burial by mankind across the world. The above are just a few of the stories that illustrate a New India with New Energy and commitment commitment that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is building. This is the story of Mission MODI – Making Of Developing India. □

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## First Largest Private Investment Initiative in Affordable Housing

Over 352 housing projects in 53 cities in 17 States across the country with an investment of over Rs.38,000 cr to build over two lakh houses were launched at Gandhinagar, Gujarat recently. These housing projects to be taken up by the members of Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) across the country is the first major private investments initiative into affordable housing. The event was held in the backdrop of several initiatives by the Government of India to promote affordable housing for Economically Weaker Sections, Low and Middle Income Groups including sanction of 'infrastructure status' for the housing sector.



Since the launch of PMAY (Urban) in June, 2015, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has approved construction of 17.73 lakh affordable houses for urban poor with an investment of Rs.95,660 cr in 30 States and Union Territories. For building these houses, central assistance of Rs.27,879 cr has also been approved. PMAY (Urban) was launched by the Prime Minister on June 25, 2015.