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# NEWSLETTER (NOVOSTI IZ INDIJE)

## News from India

**Indian Railways registered highest freight figures in the FY2020-21:** Despite the COVID-19 challenges, Indian Railways closed the FY 2020-21 with record freight loading. In the closing month of this fiscal year 2020-21, Indian Railways surpassed the last year's loading that is 1232.63 compared to last year's 1209.32 which shows the growth of 1.93%. In this period, Indian Railways earned US\$ 15.99 billion from freight loading. It is 3% higher than the last year's earning from Freight which was US\$ 15.51 billion for the same period.



**India emerging a leader in supercomputing:** India is fast emerging a leader in high power computing with the National Super Computing Mission (NSM) boosting it to meet the increasing computational demands of academia, researchers, MSMEs, and start-ups in areas like oil exploration, flood prediction as well as genomics and drug discovery. The National Supercomputing Mission was launched to enhance the research capacities and capabilities in the country by connecting them to form a Supercomputing grid, with National Knowledge Network (NKN) as the backbone. The NSM is setting up a grid of supercomputing facilities in academic and research institutions across the country. Part of this is being imported from abroad and part built indigenously. The Mission is being jointly steered by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and implemented by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune, and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.



**India became fastest COVID-19 vaccinating country:** According to the Union Health Ministry, India has become the world's fastest COVID-19 vaccine vaccinating country. India is the fastest country in the world to administer 100 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine. India achieved the feat in 85 days whereas USA took 89 days and China reached the milestone in 102 days. On the other hand, the number of new COVID-19 cases in India continues to grow, with the total number of 15.06 million cases.



**Businesses owned by women entrepreneurs likely to grow up to 90%:** According to a new report, women-owned businesses in India are projected to accelerate by ~ 90% in the next five years. EdelGive Foundation, a philanthropic organisation, conducted a survey in 13 states and union territories (UTs). Nearly 3,300 women entrepreneurs were identified during the mapping of these regions, who were divided into three categories: manufacturing, retail and service delivery. A total of 1,235 women entrepreneurs were chosen for the study and interviewed. According to the report, women-owned businesses in India are expected to increase by ~ 90% in five years, compared to similar businesses in the US and the UK, which are expected to grow by 50% and 24%, respectively.



**India's economic growth for the year 2021 at 13 %:** According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), India's economic growth for the year 2021 is estimated at 13% which is more than what the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted. The global monetary body recently projected a 12.5% growth rate for FY 2021-22, which would be more than China. The forecast of India's growth rate for 2021 is noted to be higher than any other major economy in the world including the US which is calculated to be 5.5%. Also, the EIU forecasted India's growth rate for the current year is higher than the calculation of RBI's Monetary Policy Committee i.e. 10.5%.



**India to manufacture containers in Gujarat:** According to the Ministry of Shipping, Bhavnagar in Gujarat will become a container hub. India requires about 350 thousand containers every year. Since there is no container production in India, country has to depend mainly on China which is a global producer. Ministry of shipping during the last six months has taken several initiatives to encourage container production at Bhavnagar with the help of re-rolling and furnace makers who are being encouraged to diversify in the space. Regarding the availability raw material, Ministry talked to large steel players in this regard including global steel giant ArcelorMittal which has assured to provide the specific grade of steel for container manufacturing.



## “Second Wave of Covid-19 in India: None of the scientists forecast second wave of such vehemence”



The ferocity of the second wave took everyone by surprise. Prior to the first wave, the predictions were dire. The response to those predictions was electric and everyone came on board from the start to address an unknown. During and after the first wave, multiple measures were initiated by the Centre and states for revamping response infrastructure. This, and the flattening of the first wave, and the confidence from vaccine development all contributed to us not anticipating the size of this surge. There were other important reasons too. We had seropositivity results from tests conducted in some metros, which suggested that we had a pool of recovered, possibly immune, people that would help in bending the curve. The seropositivity tests were well done, but their results should not have been taken as the average for the entire large metros. Some people did. The reasons for the extraordinary intensity of the second wave are still being looked into. But, three factors are likely to be at play — public behaviour, increased susceptibility of the population, and new variants of the virus. Certain sections of the population were more exposed than others during the first wave, but in the second wave, newer sections were exposed. Or, the greater susceptibility could also be linked to the emergence of new variants. There were major efforts by central and state governments in ramping up hospital and health care infrastructure during the first wave. That wave gave us many tools and understanding on what to do at the hospital end. But, as that wave declined, so perhaps did the sense of urgency to get this completed. Based on the inputs, when is the curve likely to begin to bend Maharashtra may have reached a plateau, but the next few days will tell better. In Delhi, hopefully, we will start seeing a decline soon. India may peak in May, but much depends on what we do by way of behaviour. We must prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed in new locations where increases are likely. For this, further and quick strengthening of infrastructure, oxygen supply, deployment of additional personnel, and behaviour-change are key. I cannot emphasize this enough but masks and physical distancing is absolutely crucial. The magnitude of infections we are seeing could lead to a more compressed course on the time-scale. This could mean faster rises, faster declines, and long, perhaps fat, tails of decline. Ensuring continued surveillance, behaviour change and vaccination-expansion during the long tail phase is critical to prevent a third phase. We all know what to do and if we each do it relentlessly, we can get out of this sooner rather than later.

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*Amidst continuously rising coronavirus numbers in India, Principal Scientific Advisor K VijayRaghavan spoke to The Indian Express on what went wrong, why there couldn't be enough infrastructure for a surge like this, and whether there was any end in sight. Read the full article here: [LINK](#)*

## ALTPRO AND SIGMA RAIL – first fully approved axle counters Vendor in India

ALTPRO and its Indian partner SIGMA RAIL have officially become the first fully approved axle counter Vendors in Indian Railways according to the latest technical specification. SIGMA RAIL and ALTPRO jointly introduced BO23 axle counter to Indian market in 2018., having successfully done all the needed tests and obtained all the necessary approval certificates as developmental sources in 2019. Considering the timeline, BO23 axle counter was the last of the current axle counters which was adopted by the Indian Railways for the list of Developmental Orders where all the other OEM's currently still stand. As of 21st of April 2021 ALTPRO and SIGMA RAIL are the one and only fully approved Vendors, according to the latest specification of the Indian Railways. This gives them a competitive advantage in the Indian market. This phenomenal success is attributed to the exceptional efforts put in by Sigma's MD and co owner Mr. Prateek Bhalotia and continuous support from Altpro team Mr. Darko Barisic and Mr. Tin Viduka. Indian Railways are one of the most propulsive railway networks in the world with more than 120 000 km of rail and continuous growth. Approximately 7000 stations across the network serve more than 13 million passengers daily. According to the „Vision 2024“ India will become one of the biggest markets for signalling systems in the world.



## Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme

Keeping in view India's vision of becoming 'Atmanirbhar' (Self-Reliant) and to enhance India's Manufacturing Capabilities and Exports, an outlay of INR 1.97 lakh crore (about USD 26 Billion) has been announced in Union Budget 2021-22 for PLI schemes for 13 key sectors for a period of 5 years starting from fiscal year (FY) 2021- 22.



The PLI Schemes are expected to enable the setting up of a widespread supplier base for the global champions established under the scheme. It will help bring scale and size in key sectors and create and nurture global champions. All the units put together would help India to generate massive primary and secondary employment opportunities. The Government of India is making continuous efforts under the Investment Facilitation for implementation of Make in India action plans to identify potential investors. Investment Outreach activities are being carried out for enhancing International co-operation for promoting FDI and improve Ease of Doing Business in the country.

### Electronics Industry:

Electronics permeate all sectors of the economy and the electronics industry has cross-cutting economic and strategic importance. The Government has been actively working to create a conducive environment for electronics manufacturing and to offer incentives comparable with those offered in other countries to attract large investments into the electronics manufacturing sector. 1.2 The domestic production of electronics hardware has increased substantially from ₹1,90,366 crore (USD 29 billion) in 2014-15 to ₹5,33,550 crore (USD 75.7 billion) in 2019-20 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 23%. India's share in global electronics manufacturing has grown from 1.3% in 2012 to 3.6% in 2019, as per industry estimates. With the domestic demand for electronics hardware expected to rise rapidly to approximately INR 26, 00,000 crore (USD 400 billion) by 2025, India cannot afford to bear the rapidly increasing foreign exchange outgo on account of import of electronics.

Over the years, the IT Hardware manufacturing capability and capacity in the country has progressively declined and many units have either ceased operations or are operating at low capacities. Currently, the laptop and tablet demand in India is largely met through imports valued at USD 4.21 billion and USD 0.41 billion, respectively, in 2019-20 (as per ICEA-EY estimates on market value of imports). The unutilized installed manufacturing capacity is a low hanging fruit as regards to quickly scaling up manufacturing in the country. India's Digital Economy is currently valued at USD 200 billion and is slated to grow to USD 1 trillion by 2025. In addition, India has the fastest growing digital ecosystem with over 1.2 billion mobile subscribers and over 600 million internet users. As per Industry estimates, data centres being key enablers in any Digital Economy will see an increase in market size from USD 1.0 billion in 2018 to USD 1.5 billion by 2022. Deeper internet penetration increases in data consumption, public cloud services, IoT devices and the Government's push for data localization, shall lead to an influx of local and international players setting up data centres in India, which will further boost server demand in the country. Given the limited relief expected for the aforesaid electronics manufacturing sector under other available schemes, there is a need for mechanism to compensate for the manufacturing disabilities vis-à-vis other major manufacturing economies. Also, as a signatory to the Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) at the World Trade Organization (WTO), India has implemented zero duty regime on 217 tariff lines which inter-alia includes IT Hardware.

**Objective:** The Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing proposes a financial incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in the electronics value chain including electronic components and semiconductor packaging. The Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for IT Hardware proposes a financial incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in the value chain.

### List of Specified Electronic Components eligible under PLI Scheme:

1. SMT components 2. Discrete semiconductor devices including transistors, diodes, thyristors, etc. 3. Passive components including resistors, capacitors, etc. for electronic applications 4. Printed Circuit Boards (PCB), PCB laminates, prepregs, photopolymer films, PCB printing inks 5. Sensors, transducers, actuators, crystals for electronic applications 6. System in Package (SiP) 7. Micro / Nano-electronic components such as Micro Electromechanical Systems (MEMS) and Nano Electromechanical Systems (NEMS) 8. Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units.

The government's production-linked incentive scheme (PLI), instituted in April 2020 for large-scale electronics manufacturing in India, has gained significant traction over the past year. It offers a simple and direct incentive based on incremental sales, designed to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in mobile phone and specified electronic component manufacturing units. In November 2020, the PLI scheme was extended to ten more sectors, including food processing, battery storage, automobile components and specialty steel.

The PLI scheme is designed with four objectives: 1) Target specific product areas; 2) Introduce non-tariff measures in order to compete more effectively with cheap imports; 3) Blend domestic and export sales to make manufacturing competitive and sustainable; and 4) Promote manufacturing at home while encouraging investment from within and outside India.

The reason it has caught on is that the application process is not complicated, and the incentive offered is very simple and tied to conditions that are specific and easy to calculate. The incentive is 4-6% of incremental sales with a defined base year.

Incentives for electronics have been availed by several firms, including Samsung, Foxconn, Hon Hai, Rising Star, Wistron and Pegatron. Of these, Foxconn, Hon Hai, Wistron and Pegatron are contract manufacturers for Apple iPhones. Among Indian mobile phone companies, Lava, Micromax, Padget and Optimus have been approved as beneficiaries. In the pharma sector, 130 companies have submitted expressions of interest, particularly as the incentives relate to active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and medical devices. In the electronic components sector, companies like Ascent Circuits, Visicon, Neolync and Vitesco have applied.

If all these companies deliver on their projections, the incentive payments would total about ₹2 trillion. The biggest chunk of that is for automobile and auto component companies (₹57,000 crore), electronics and components (₹51,000 crore) and pharmaceuticals and APIs (₹15,000 crore). Of the companies that have been in the programme the longest, only Samsung has been able to meet its investment and production criteria. Other companies are now petitioning the government to move the benchmark year forward by declaring the pandemic as a 'force majeure' event.

#### Pharmaceutical Industry:

Indian pharmaceutical industry is the 3rd largest in the world by volume and is USD 40 billion in terms of value. The country contributes 3.5% of total drugs and medicines exported globally. India exports pharmaceuticals to more than 200 countries and territories including highly regulated markets such as the USA, The UK, European Union, Canada etc. India has complete ecosystem for development and manufacturing of pharmaceuticals with companies having state of the art facilities, highly skilled/technical manpower. The country also has a number of renowned pharmaceutical educational and research institutes and a robust ecosystem of allied industries. At present a major component of Indian exports are low value generic drugs while a large proportion of the demand for patented drugs is met through imports. This is because the Indian Pharmaceutical sector lacks in high value production along with world class pharma R&D. In order to incentivize the global and domestic players to enhance investment and production in these product categories, a well-designed and suitably targeted intervention is required to incentivise specific high value goods such as biopharmaceuticals, complex generic drugs, patented drugs or drugs nearing patent expiry, cell based or gene therapy drugs. Further, looking to the increasing imperative of drug security, continued support to domestic production capability in APIs/KSMs would ensure higher resilience of the Indian pharmaceutical industry to external shocks. These initiatives have the potential to contribute significantly to achieving higher objective of affordable healthcare in the country and globally on a sustained basis.

**Objectives:** The objective of the scheme is to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities by increasing investment and production in the sector and contributing to product diversification to high value goods in the pharmaceutical sector. One of the further objectives of the scheme is to create global champions out of India who have the potential to grow in size and scale, using cutting edge technology and thereby penetrate the global value chains.

**Category of Goods:** The scheme shall cover pharmaceutical goods under three (03) categories: (I) Category 1 1. Bio-pharmaceuticals 2. Complex generic drugs 3. Patented drugs or drugs nearing patent expiry 4. Cell based or gene therapy drugs 5. Orphan drugs 6. Special empty capsules like HPMC, Pullulan, enteric etc. 7. Complex excipients 8. Phyto-pharmaceuticals 9. Other drugs as approved (II) Category 2 1. Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients / Key Starting materials / Drug Intermediates (III) Category 3 (Drugs not covered under Category 1 and Category 2) 1. Repurposed drugs 2. Auto immune drugs, anti-cancer drugs, anti-diabetic drugs, anti- infective drugs, cardiovascular drugs, psychotropic drugs and anti- retroviral drugs 3. In-vitro diagnostic devices 4. Other drugs as approved 5. Other drugs not manufactured in India.

#### Renewable Energy Sector:

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy's proposal for implementation of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 'National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV (Photo Voltic) Modules' for achieving manufacturing capacity of Giga Watt (GW) scale in high efficiency solar PV modules with an outlay of Rs.4,500 crore. Solar capacity addition presently depends largely upon imported solar PV cells and modules, as the domestic manufacturing industry has limited operational capacities of solar PV cells and modules. The National Programme on High Efficiency Solar PV Modules will reduce import dependence in a strategic sector like electricity. It will also support the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Solar PV manufacturers will be selected through a transparent competitive bidding process. PLI will be disbursed for 5 years post commissioning of solar PV manufacturing plants, on sales of high efficiency solar PV modules. Manufacturers will be rewarded for higher efficiencies of solar PV modules and also for sourcing their material from the domestic market. Thus, the PLI amount will increase with increased module efficiency and increased local value addition.

The outcomes/ benefits expected from the scheme are as follows:

- Additional 10,000 MW capacity of integrated solar PV manufacturing plants,
- Direct investment of around Rs.17,200 crore in solar PV manufacturing projects
- Demand of Rs.17,500 crore over 5 years for 'Balance of Materials',
- Direct employment of about 30,000 and Indirect employment of about 1,20,000 persons,
- Import substitution of around Rs.17,500 crore every year, and
- Impetus to Research & Development to achieve higher efficiency in solar PV modules.

### Telecom Sector:

The Telecommunication sector has a pivotal role in facilitating the growth of economy. Telecom is the key infrastructure and a key enabler of digital connectivity and Digital India.

**Objectives:** The PLI Scheme will promote Telecom and Networking Products manufacturing in India. Accordingly, a financial incentive is proposed to boost domestic manufacturing and attract investments in the target segments of telecom and networking products in order to encourage "Make in India". The Scheme is also expected to boost export of telecom and networking products "Made in India".

### List of Specified Telecom and Networking Products:

Core Transmission Equipment Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM), Optical Transport Network (OTN), Multi Service Provisioning Platform (MSPP), Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH), Packet Transport Network (PTN)/ Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS), Gigabit Passive Optical Networks (GPON)/ Next Generation- Passive Optical Network (NG-PON) Optical Line Terminal (OLT), Digital Microwave Radio 4G/5G, Next Generation Radio Access Network and Wireless Equipment 4G/ Long Term Evolution (LTE) Radio Access Network (RAN) Base Station & Core Equipment; 5G RAN Base Station & Core Equipment; Edge and Enterprise Equipment; Wireless Telecommunication Equipment in Access and Backhaul Access & Customer Premises Equipment (CPE), Internet of Things (IoT) Access Devices and Other Wireless Equipment Unified Communications Platforms, IP Multimedia Subsystem, Soft Switch, GPON Optical Network Terminal (ONT), Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) Access Point and Controller, LTE CPE, 5G CPE, Short Range Devices and Associated Electronics in new technologies like 4G/5G/Fibre To The Home (FTTH) etc.

### Food Processing Industry:

On March 31, the central government approved a new PLI scheme for the food processing sector, with a budget outlay of INR 109 billion (US\$1.46 billion). The goal of this PLI scheme is to increase the capacity of India's domestic food processing ecosystem, boost Indian exports, and build-up the brand image of Indian food products in foreign markets. Incentives under the scheme will be disbursed for six years to 2026-27.

The government hopes that PLI beneficiaries will create 250,000 jobs, expand existing industrial capacity to generate output of processed food worth INR 334 billion (US\$4.4 billion) and boost exports. Ultimately, the scheme intends to attract greater sectoral investment, accelerate agri-exports, push for rise in farmer incomes and remuneration for farm produce, and culminate in the growth of globally competitive Indian food brands.

India's quantity-based PLI scheme is one-of-a-kind. It is extremely simple in its incentive construct as a 'subsidy' for sales; i.e., a straight boost to the top-line. Tax incentives matter only when companies become profitable. Credit incentives often turn into non-performing assets. Revenue incentives kick in immediately and encourage companies to get off the investment fence.

If companies invest, then employment and development in that region follow, and with incentive payments, a virtuous cycle sets in. The scheme has been carefully constructed to adhere to World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. By its very construct, the PLI scheme does not link the eligibility or quantum of its subsidy to exports and local value addition, thus making it WTO-compliant.

Its details (for instance, offering the subsidy to phones with price tags of over ₹15,000) influence companies to commit themselves to exports and local value-addition targets, but indirectly.

## Destination India: Medical and Wellness Tourism as a way of rejuvenate post COVID-19

On a way to process the post COVID era the Tourism sector will bounce back from the recuperation of Wellness and Health offers.

The pandemic has created a global health crisis posing an unprecedented public health emergency. The consequences of the pandemic can be witnessed in different sectors and some of them might recover sooner than others.

The question arises, how will 3T's – Trade, Tourism and Technology, overcome challenges due to COVID-19?



Picture courtesy: <https://tourism.gov.in/>

Travel and Tourism are among the sector mostly affected by this crisis globally, with international travel failing by around 80% in India. At the same time, Tourism can also be an integral part of the global recovery efforts. Countries will need to adjust to the new reality of the tourism and travel industry and make all efforts to shape the sector accordingly.

The current understanding indicates that healthy precautions are vital for prevention and safeguard from disease progression. Tourism Businesses are required to restructure their operative guidelines in terms of hygiene, health and safety measures to ensure safety of their staff and clients. Tourism Service providers who undertake bookings for different services, functional workplaces with staff, transport facility providers and other facilities and services that are in close contact with the customer, are recommended to follow a list of guidelines which allows certain destinations to become a “safe travel zone”.

The Ministry of Tourism proposed certain protocols and guidelines that can help in management of domestic and international tourists. One of the the guiding principles is to minimize all possible touch points by using digital technology. Doing so will not only help reduce the risk, but also make tractability of guests easier.

The objective now is to promote India as a quality health care destination for people across the globe, as well as to gainfully utilize health care expertise and infrastructure available in the country.

## Promoting India as a Medical and Wellness destination



Tourism sector is not only of great economic importance, it also has a capacity to create a large scale of diverse employment and to improve the quality of people's lives. Health Tourism holds immense hope in creating job positions (which helps the economy) and at the same time foreign visitors and locals can benefit health-wise from various traditional Indian systems. The ancient Indian systems of medicines, i.e. Ayurveda, Yoga, Panchakarma, Rejuvenation Therapy, etc. are among the most respected ancient systems of medical treatment in the world. Effective management to address this infection is still evolving and attempts are being made to integrate traditional interventions along with standard of care.

The current understanding of COVID-19 indicates that good immune status is vital to prevention and safeguard from disease progression. Enhancing the body's natural defense system (immunity) plays an important role in maintaining optimum health. Ayurveda, being the science of life, propagates the gifts of nature in maintaining healthy and happy living. Both Ayurveda and Yoga can certainly play a pivotal role to augment preventive measures, enhance and maintain health, and promote India as a destination to rejuvenate post COVID-19.

Labeling India as a center of Ayurveda, Yoga, Sidha, Naturopathy, etc. together with the spiritual philosophy and holistic approach that are integral to the Indian way of life, India can position itself above others within the tourism sector on a global scale. Many countries are now developing measures to build a more resilient tourism economy post COVID-19. These include preparing plans to support the sustainable recovery of tourism, promoting the digital transition and move to a greener tourism system, and rethinking tourism for the future. An example of technological development to promote tourism in India is an Indian company called Travelport Ltd., that has launched its next-generation platform - Travelport+. This extensive platform creates a simplified, capability-rich, marketplace for travel retailing and offers more dynamic, differentiated, retail-ready content, delivering better choices for retailers and consumers, in a faster, frictionless way.

The centerpiece of the company's new global strategy is designed to accelerate industry innovation in multi-source content distribution, travel retailing and value generation. The Ministry of Tourism has also taken the initiative to identify India as a all-year-round destination, and to develop and promote different niches of tourism such as Medical/Health, Wellness, Golf, Conference Tourism, etc. To maintain the fluctuation of the tourism sector Ministry of tourism introduced changes such as: GST was cut on hotel rooms and restaurants in order to boost the hospitality sector. The 24/7 toll free multilingual Tourist Helpline was launched, and a Live Chat service is available which can assist tourists in better planning and quick query resolutions.

## Prospective outcomes of promoting India as a Wellness and Medical destination which will help rejuvenate post COVID-19



The Indian health care sector is growing at a brisk pace due to its cost effectiveness, strengthening coverage, services and increasing expenditure by public as well as private players. With health care cost in developed countries increasing, cost consciousness among patients seeking treatment and availability of accredited facilities has given rise to many global medical tourism corridors. Among these, India is one of the countries which have a large number of accredited facilities where Medical and Health care can be provided at international standard and at a comparatively low cost.

Medical tourists that come to India typically seek joint replacement surgeries, heart, liver and bone marrow transplants, spine and brain surgeries, cancer and kidney treatments, and in vitro fertilization (IVF). According to various studies, treatment costs in India start at around one-tenth of the price of the comparable treatment in the United States or the United Kingdom. In India out of the major Medical Tourism attracting locations like Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad, National Capital region and Kerala all these places have very high potentials to grow in this sector.

The Ministries of Health, External Affairs, Tourism and Culture are working to increase the number of medical tourists. The government provides online visas, multiple entries, extensions of stay, and accreditation to more hospitals. A new category of visa "Medical Visa" has been introduced by Ministry of Home Affairs of Government of India, which can be given for specific purpose to foreign tourists coming to India for medical treatment.

In terms of technology in health care, India is one of the most advanced nations with all the start-of-the-art medical equipment. But promotion is the need of the hour, the tourism board along with key stakeholders need to promote it aggressively in the international markets. Most health care seekers aren't aware that Indian medical centers perform robotic surgeries. It is very popular in Southern States of India, especially Kerala, which has developed Health Tourism as one of the products for the promotion of tourism in Kerala.

## Successful Medical Tourism Related Startups from India

From the past 10 years, India has become the preferred destination for medical tourism and thus, the number of medical tourism companies in India has been rising. Patients from all around the world visit India to avail the benefits of affordable treatment with world-class facilities. There is plenty of well-planned treatment packages including Urology, Organ Transplant, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Infertility treatment, ENT, Neurology, Cosmetic Surgery, cardiology, Cancer, Ayurveda, Dental Implants and more. In comparison to western countries, you can get affordable medical treatments in India along with use of state-of-the-art technology, treatment at trusted hospitals, services of expert doctors, surgeons, other medical staff, quality infrastructure and special personalized care. Below you can find a list of some of the top medical tourism companies in India

### Vaidam, Gurgaon, India

Vaidam is a top medical tourism agency in Gurgaon, Delhi, India. It is one of the oldest medical tourism companies and it is associated with 50+ hospitals all over India. This company is the only ISO registered Medical Tourism Company in India that is extremely focused on the patient getting the right care with only the best doctors & medical facilities in India. The unique quality about Vaidam is that they have excellent transparency in costs, as every medical procedure is listed on their website with approximate costs for treatment as well as airfare, accommodation, visa fees, food & daily commute.

### MediConnect India, Delhi, India

A reputed medical tourism company based in Delhi, India, MediConnect provides personalized packages to patients, which take care of all their medical requirements. MediConnect has a highly interactive portal, which has easy-to-connect options for patients to have an easy navigation online. They arrange complete assistance to medical tourists, from initial medical opinion to post-treatment checkup. It has been awarded with "National Tourism Award" twice in two years 2009/10 and 2010/11 by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

### Forerunners Healthcare, Delhi, India

Forerunners Healthcare Consultant is a government registered medical tourism company in India offering various range of medical and health care services at highly economical costs. They are renowned for providing the best cancer treatment and the best obesity surgery in India. They have close ties with the top hospitals in India with hi-tech equipment, state of the art infrastructure, **skilled doctors and surgeons** and compassionate nurses and medical staff.

### We Care Health Services

It is one of the foremost medical tourism agents in Mumbai. They are a trusted and reputed health care provider based majorly in Mumbai and Delhi. They guarantee world-class medical treatments at low prices. They offer a full range of surgical as well as non-surgical treatment services to International Patients combined with post-discharge recuperative holidays in consultation with medical personnel.

### IndiCure Health Tours

IndiCure has earned the reputation of being the most renowned and best medical tourism company in India. This is because of exceptional care and effort they put in to understand patient's requirements and give the best solution with cost-efficient treatment options, very simple correspondence and an affable and friendly atmosphere to make foreigners feel at-home in a new country. IndiCure Health Tours is the only start-up firm that had been nominated for the "TATA NEN- Hottest-Startups (2008) and it was also chosen as the only organization representing the country at the World's Med Tourism Conference (that had been organized by FAFTA, Korea).



## Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh, this 4th largest state in India that spreads across the area of 243,290 sq km, is one state that aesthetically defines India and its rich history that's as ancient as the time. This is the land wherein great sages have emerged, religions have developed, and two great epics of India: Ramayana and Mahabharata have been inspired from. With each progressing century, the state has vouched for the secularity of India by giving home to various religions: Hindu, Jainism, Islamic, Buddhist and more.



### Uttar Pradesh Tourism

Apart from Varanasi (the spiritual capital of India), Prayagraj, the holy confluence of two major rivers-Ganga and Yamuna flowing in the subcontinent and of course Agra that beautifully preserves the intellectual excellency of Mughal architecture—there are many more destinations in UP that peaks the interest of every traveller and displays every shade of Indian ethnicity. More of which can be explored in special events and festivals that embarks gathering of pilgrims from all across the country and nation's borders, be it annual like the Holi festivals in Barsana and likewise or iconic Kumbh gathering held once in 12years, at Prayagraj. Travel to Uttar Pradesh to explore India's culture and the origin of human beliefs.

### Economy

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India, with a population of nearly 200 million people. Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Uttar Pradesh is expected to grow at a CAGR of around 9.50% between 2015-16 and 2020-21BE to reach Rs. 17.91 trillion (US\$ 254.12 billion). Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) grew at a CAGR of around 12.26% between 2015-16 and 2019-20 to reach Rs. 16.03 trillion (US\$ 227.42 billion). Uttar Pradesh is recognised as a major milk-producing state in India. Milk production in the state stood at 30.5 million tonnes in 2018-19, accounting for 16.50% of the total milk production of the country. Per capita milk availability in the state stood at 359 grams per day in 2018-19. As of November 2020, Uttar Pradesh had an installed power generation capacity of 26,308.75 megawatt (MW) (comprising 6,242.00 MW under state utilities, 12,960.59 MW under private utilities, and 7,105.96 MW under central utilities). Energy requirement in the state was 107,109 million units (MU) between 2019-20.



The state's resources, policy incentives, infrastructure and climate are best suited for investments in diverse sectors such as Information Technology (IT), agro-based and food processing, light engineering goods, sports goods, textiles, leather-based, tourism, and biotechnology. The state has a well-developed social, physical, and industrial infrastructure. It also has good connectivity through 48 national highways, six airports and rail links to all major cities. The state has witnessed a high rate of infrastructure growth in the recent past. There has been a considerable rise in the number of industrial

clusters/hubs and Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) projects in the infrastructure domain.

### Wildlife

Uttar Pradesh gives travellers an opportunity to explore the rich flora and fauna and make the most of their wildlife holidays at its well-conserved national park and wildlife sanctuaries. The wildlife tourism in the state brings one close to the dense forests with a varied lush vegetative cover. The prime fauna of Uttar Pradesh comprises cats, antelopes, tigers, varied deer species, wild boars, elephants, rhinos and more. The state is even a home to bird sanctuaries that let the bird lovers spot a variety of birds including painted storks, black and white-necked storks, great Indian horned-owl, jungle owl, minivans, colorful woodpeckers, saras cranes, barbets, kingfishers, bee-eaters and bulbuls. The Dudhwa National Park being the largest tiger reserve, acquires fairly large territory on the Indo-Nepal border and has species such as tigers and Swamp Deer that are worth seeing in the park.



DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK

### Heritage

A land where cultures have evolved and religions have emerged, Uttar Pradesh along the mighty rivers take tourists on a magical trip. The heritage tourism in Uttar Pradesh provides an opportunity to explore the state in all its glory. Tourists visiting the heritage sites get to witness the cultural, historical and natural aspects in one place. Moving from one end of the state to other, Uttar Pradesh lets the tourists come across the popular tourist attractions and take a close look at the celebration of life in the vastness of the state.



### Education

Uttar Pradesh has a long tradition of education, although historically it was primarily confined to the elite class and religious schools.[247] Sanskrit-based learning formed the major part of education from the Vedic to the Gupta periods. Uttar Pradesh has more than 45 universities,[251] including 5 central universities, 28 state universities, 8 deemed universities, 2 IITs in Varanasi and Kanpur, AIIMS Gorakhpur and AIIMS Rae Bareli, 1 IIM in Lucknow, 1 NIT in Allahabad, 2 IIITs, 1 National Law University in Lucknow and several polytechnics, engineering colleges and industrial training institutes. A large number of Indian scholars are educated at different universities in Uttar Pradesh. Notable scholars who were born, worked or studied in the geographic area of the state include Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Motilal Nehru, Harish Chandra and Indira Gandhi.



Central Drug Research Institute, an autonomous multidisciplinary research institute

# WEBINAR ON THE OCCASION OF RAM NAVAMI

by

Indology Department of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

राम नवमी के पावन अवसर पर भारतीय दूतावास के सौजन्य से भारत क्रोएशिया संबंधों को मज़बूती देते हुए वेबिनार का आयोजन किया गया। जिसमें भारत और क्रोएशिया से विशिष्ट विद्वतजनों ने राम कथा के विश्व पटल पर बिखरे रंगों को समेटते हुए अपने वक्तव्यों से श्री राम के जीवनादर्शों की वर्तमान संदर्भों में आवश्यकता पर बल दिया। क्रोएशिया में भारत के माननीय राजदूत श्री राजकुमार श्रीवास्तव जी के नेतृत्व में आयोजित इस वेबगोष्ठी का आयोजन और संचालन ज़ाग्रेब विश्विद्यालय में भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध परिषद् की हिंदी पीठ पर नियुक्त प्रोफेसर डॉ. ज्योति शर्मा और दूतावास में योगाचार्य श्री यद्रांकों मिकलेट्स जी ने किया। वेबगोष्ठी में भारत, दिल्ली विश्विद्यालय से प्रोफेसर यामिनी गौतम जी ने वेदों, पुराणों, उपनिषद के विविध प्रसंगों का उल्लेख करते हुए वर्तमान सन्दर्भों में राम कथा के महत्त्व और राम कथा के विविध प्रसंगों की समसामयिक व्याख्या को बेहद विस्तृत फलक पर रोचक अंदाज़ में रेखांकित किया। महात्मा गांधी अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विश्विद्यालय के भूतपूर्व कुलपति रहे प्रोफेसर गिरीश्वर मिश्र जी ने बहुत सहज, ज्ञानवर्धक और मार्मिक रूप से श्री राम कथा के नाना प्रसंगों की आज के समय में आवश्यकता और उपयोगिता पर बल दिया। ज़ाग्रेब विश्विद्यालय से जाने माने भारतविद्याविद् प्रोफेसर मिस्लाव येचीच जी ने बेहद निराले अंदाज़ में अत्यंत सूक्ष्म रूप से कम शब्दों में विस्तृत राम कथा को समेटते हुए गागर में सागर भरने का दिलचस्प प्रयास किया। प्रोफेसर बोरिस मार्यानोविच जी जो संस्कृत और भारतीय दर्शनशास्त्र के विद्वान हैं, उन्होंने वाल्मीकि रामायण के विविध प्रसंगों की चर्चा की। ज़ाग्रेब विश्विद्यालय में भारतीय सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध परिषद् की हिंदी पीठ पर नियुक्त प्रोफेसर डॉ. ज्योति शर्मा ने विश्व पटल पर रामलीला की प्रस्तुतियों को पॉवर पॉइंट प्रेसेंटेशन के माध्यम से साझा किया और रामकथा में छिपे एकता के सूत्र और भारतीय संस्कृति के वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम के भाव को उकेरते हुए राम के जीवनादर्शों से विश्वभर में उभरे प्रभावों को साझा किया। योगाचार्य यद्रांकों जी ने राम कथा और योग की महत्ता पर बात की। माननीय राजदूत महोदय ने विषय का समाहार करते हुए कहा कि राम के जीवनादर्श पूरी दुनिया के लिए प्रेरणा सूत्र हैं। वेबिनार में भारत और क्रोएशिया के अलग अलग हिस्सों से श्रोताओं ने सक्रिय रूप से भागीदारी की। वेबिनार की सफलता पर आदरणीय राजदूत महोदय ने सभी को बधाई देते हुए सबके प्रति धन्यवाद ज्ञापित किया।

The Online Lecture was held on auspicious occasion of Ram Navami and Ramayana & its significance in human life with distinguished Indian and Croatian speakers on the 21<sup>st</sup> April.

The poster is purple with white text and features logos of the Embassy of India, Zagreb and INDOIA, ZG. It lists the following speakers:

- H.E. Raj Kumar Srivastava, Ambassador of India to Croatia
- Prof. Yamini Gautam, M.A., Ph.D.
- Prof. Girishwar Misra, Ph.D. in Psychology
- Jadranko Miklec, Yogacharya
- Acad. Mislav Ježić, Professor of Indology
- Ph.D. Boris Marjanović, Sanskrit and Indian Phil.
- Dr. Jyoti Sharma, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

April 21st from 5 - 7 pm (CET)  
Webinar

## ACTIVITIES OF AYUSH CELL

Ancient wisdom of Yoga was shared by Dr. Manmath Manohar Gharote Embassy's Ayush cell's fortnightly online session with participation of Ambassador, Yogacharya Miklec & others.



Webinar "Medicinal plants & Ayurvedic Formulations as a preventive strategy for coronavirus disease with Yogacharya Mr. Miklec, Amb Srivastava & Dr. Schrott, Vice-Pres. of the German Ayurveda Assoc.



The Embassy of India, Zagreb with the support of the City of Zagreb & the Zagreb Tourist Board, is organizing open yoga sessions in Bundek Park, announcing the celebration of India@75.



## AMBASSADOR'S OUTREACHES

The Deputy Mayor of Osijek, Mrs. Gamoš received Ambassador Srivastava & discussed cooperation opportunities with the University of Osijek, IT park & other areas of 3 "T" - Tourism, Technology & Talent for stronger G2G, B2B & P2P connections.



Ambassador was received by the President of the Osijek-Baranja County Assembly Mr. Vulin & discussed the possibilities of cooperation in Tourism, Digital Technologies & strengthening Osijek's ties with universities in India.



Ambassador visited the Faculty FERIT as part of his inauguration visit to Osijek. He was introduced to faculty future goals, which include the collaboration with India universities.



Read the Column sequel with Madam Srivastava published in Glas Slavonije about Indian and Croatian rich cultural heritage. But also, about Indian IT revolution & Cuisine, especially her favorite Croatian dish Sarma with Indian flavors, conducted by the former ITEC participant Mrs. Ina Stašević. <https://bit.ly/3sV1KNm>



Ambassador met with H. E. Mrs. Andreja Metelko-Zgombić, Croatian State Secretary for Europe to exchange ideas on growing India EU partnership and increasingly important role that Croatia plays in the EU. They have also discussed on situation with Covid-19 & EU Civil Protection Mechanism to provide assistance to India.



## The India-Croatia Business Forum



Ambassador spoke at a business forum held on the 14 April 2021 by FICCI & Croatian Chamber of Economy about four Ts—trade, technology, talent, and tourism. These are potential areas of growth for India-Croatia bilateral ties in the future.

“Croatia boasts of a very strong maritime economy, and there is vast land available that is yet to be harnessed by the European economy. There are opportunities to be harnessed because of the New India and New Croatia narrative that is taking shape,” said Amb. Srivastava.

Petar Ljubičić, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Croatia to India added, “Our bilateral visits at the highest levels are becoming more frequent and that is the need of the hour.”

Ines Obradović, Director of International Affairs Sector, Croatian Chamber of Economy, highlighted the bilateral trade relations between the two regions.

Ivica Zigić, President of the Indian-Croatian Business Council, pointed out, “Croatia has, in recent times, accepted the green strategy and is developing a lot of opportunities for its partners all around the world. India as a part of the Commonwealth, its environment and economy, is welcomed in Croatia.”

- Croatian media coverage: [LINK](#)
- Indian media coverage: [LINK](#)

Continuation of marking the Indiaat75 in Croatia among 150 children of the School of Applied Art & Design, Zagreb with Yoga workshops led by Yogacharya Jadranko Miklec. Ambassador Srivastava graced the occasion expressing the benefits of health-promoting & anxiety-relieving Yoga exercises which provide useful support to balance daily lives.



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*Compiled by*

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