



INDIA@75 FOUNDATION ACTIVITY REVIEW REPORT

March 2023 – March 2024



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Looking Back



Dr Sanjiv Goenka
Chairman, India@75 Foundation

2023 was an especially important year for the India@75 movement.

It marked the end of the first leg of the journey and set the stage for the next milestone, India @100. CII and the India@75 Foundation held several consultations to arrive at a collective vision for the country by its 100th year of independence.

This collaborative effort culminated in the creation of the “National Vision Document for India@100: The People’s Agenda”, which encapsulates the aspirations of individuals from diverse backgrounds and serves as the cornerstone for Viksit Bharat@100.

These consultations were an eye-opener for everyone involved. The India of today is young, passionate, and fuelled by a sense of self and destiny. There is energy, excitement, and optimism about what the future holds; India is more than ready to walk the extra mile to reach its development goals and claim its rightful place amongst the leading nations of the world.

As we reflect on the past year’s endeavours and achievements, it fills me with immense pride to present the Annual Report of India@75 Foundation. With the unwavering support and guidance of board members, we have charted significant milestones in our journey towards realizing a vision for Viksit Bharat@100.

The 75th year of India’s Independence went beyond mere celebration; it was a clarion call to envision the future of our nation. We embarked on this path by redefining our vision for India@100, paving the way for transformative activities aimed at shaping the India of tomorrow. In conjunction with the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, initiatives like Har Ghar Tiranga campaigns were organised to deepen the sense of patriotism and unity.

At the heart of our mission lies the cultivation of a vibrant culture of volunteerism across the nation. The 11th edition of the ‘National Volunteering Week’ witnessed remarkable participation, benefitting the lives of over 24.8 million people. This unprecedented surge in participation underscores the collective commitment of citizens from all walks of life to drive positive change in communities across the country.

Our endeavours to foster inclusive digitalization through the Functional Literacy Programme (FLiP) have yielded remarkable results, particularly with the recently started initiative of ‘FLiP on Wheels,’ taking digital literacy to the doorsteps. This initiative has empowered rural communities by delivering digital and financial literacy.

India@75 Foundation’s Fireside Chats series ‘I Have a Dream’ continued to feature experts who shared their aspirations and wish lists for Viksit Bharat@100. Through these insightful dialogues, we not only celebrated excellence but also gained valuable insights to shape our roadmap for India@100.

Throughout the year, we conducted numerous sessions, dialogues, activities, consultations, and polls with a focus on areas such as skill development, urbanization, volunteerism, community development, financial literacy, digital inclusion, rural education, health, nutrition, art & culture, women empowerment, gender equality to work towards the vision of Viksit Bharat@100 by 2047.

As we move towards India@100, it is imperative to acknowledge the pivotal role played by the India@75 movement. Rooted in collaboration and alignment with national priorities, guided by a revered Board of Trustees, it stands as a beacon of hope and progress for the nation.

As I conclude, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all board members for their invaluable support and trust in us. Together, we are steadfastly forging a path towards a brighter, more prosperous India@100 – a nation that the world will undoubtedly look up to with admiration and respect.

Annual Activity Review

Impact created during March 2023–March 2024

VOLUNTEERISM INITIATIVE

24.8 million+ Impact Beneficiaries

8,66,083+ Volunteering Hours

68,466+ Volunteers

150+ Community Outreach activities

30 Partners

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PROGRAMME (FLiP) ON WHEELS

Parbhani, Maharashtra; Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh and Hazaribagh, Jharkhand

Over 40 Villages

5,500+ Impact Beneficiaries of Rural Communities

DIALOGUES / AWARENESS SESSIONS / WORKSHOP

20+ Dialogues

40+ Awareness Sessions

10+ Workshops

1000+ Participants

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

122k Impressions

29.9k Reach

Key Campaigns: #India@100 #BeAHeroBeAVolunteer #FLiPOnWheels #IHAVEADREAM #ViksitBharat #India@75 #HARGHARTI-RANGA #Volunteerism

FOCUS AREAS

Skill Development | Community Development | Financial Literacy | Digital Inclusion | Rural Education | Health | Nutrition | Urbanisation | Art & Culture | Women Empowerment | Gender Equality

Fireside Chats

India@75 Foundation holds a fireside chat series called I Have a Dream. It involves conversations with experts to get a perspective on how their sectors have progressed over the years, and what they want the country to be by its 100th year. This series also builds context for further conversations between stakeholders on issues key to the country's future.



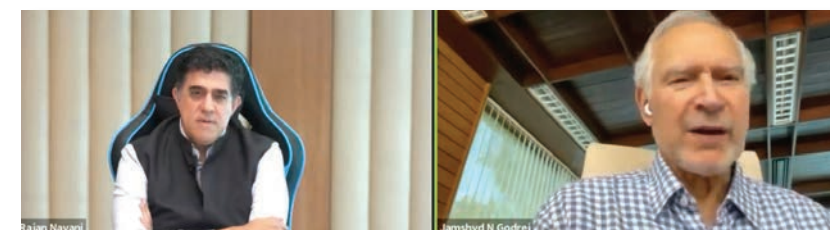
"The successful CEOs and entrepreneurs will be those who can see the vision of innovation and sustainability together. If you do that, you are built for the future."

JAMSHYD N. GODREJ

Past President, CII; Chairman and Managing Director, Godrej & Boyce Mfg Co. Ltd

Topic: **India@100: Towards Green Prosperity**

10 July 2023



India@100: Towards Green Prosperity

On the India@100 of his dreams and ways to shape it:

- » India at 100 should be a country where every single person has been pulled out of poverty and is leading a reasonably good life. India's GDP is among the lowest in the world, and unless we correct that, this dream is not going to be realised.
- » There are legacy issues; historically, everyone has not been carried along the path of growth. This needs to be corrected, and growth must not just be in terms of numbers but also in terms of equitability.
- » India must be strongly positioned in the world as a country with a sustainable and equitable growth model.
- » It is exciting to wake up every morning to work on things that can make this possible. For example, India has a large population engaged in agriculture. It is not sustainable in its current form. There has to be value added to this and every other form of traditional employment.
- » There is a need to work on the social infrastructure and fabric to ensure a level playing field for everyone.

On paving the way for green prosperity in India

- » There are two sides to this: historic and future-facing. Historically, we have been a low-emission economy because we have not seen rapid industrialization.
- » Going forward, we have to be cognizant of the emission quotient of our growth plans. To paraphrase a former PM, our growth in the future should not be a high emission model; we must keep it at or below the world averages.
- » India's ambitious plans to go net zero by 2070 are commendable. It is making the transition from a coal-dependent economy to one that is fueled by renewable energy. While laudable, this is filled with challenges. We need infrastructure to generate renewable energy; we need to promote energy efficiency, especially during the transition period; and we need to build a market for green energy.
- » Climate change is outpacing us. Even while we are making the transitions, the world is getting noticeably warmer, leading to a Catch-22 situation. The economy

- needs energy to produce. This leads to emissions and higher temperatures. As temperatures rise, it becomes important to use energy to cool the planet in the interest of health and productivity. This energy too has emissions, and the cycle continues.
- » The pace of transition has to be rapidly accelerated. The government has shown intent by announcing its net zero goals, but it has to accelerate implementation through quick and efficient policy reinforcement at the central and state levels.
 - » It has to make these policy decisions within the current realities of rapid urbanisation and an agriculture sector that needs overhauling. Rapid urbanisation means we have to look into aspects like town planning and public transport. In terms of agriculture, we should look at the sector through the lens of global sustainability and prosperity.
- On enforcing green transition on India Inc.
- » The CII collective has shown that there is a lot that industry can and does do on a voluntary basis. But rules and regulations also have a role to play. One must find the happy medium between voluntary and compulsory action.
 - » The construction sector is a good example. 40% of the buildings that will be needed by 2047 are yet to be built. Now is the time to make sustainable construction mandatory. We need to build buildings that use less energy and resources; otherwise, we will lock in unsustainable practises. But this has to be backed with supportive action and capacity building by all stakeholders to create a market that will make green buildings viable.
 - » Only incentives will counterbalance enforcement. We will have to create an enabling environment for the business ecosystem to grow. Buildings need vast quantities of cement, steel, and glass, which are energy-intensive industries. These challenges have to be factored in while working on green buildings.
 - » There are new technologies and startups that can accelerate India Inc.'s transition to green growth; they should be supported as well.
 - » Finally, green growth will need new-age, skilled labour with good prospects. No industry can grow without it.

- We need to see how to build such a force and give it the dignity of labour.
- On incentivizing the green transition for India Inc.
- » There has always been a debate on what spurs industrial growth: incentives or an enabling environment. I think a middle path works best. The production-linked incentive scheme is a very good idea to boost local manufacturing, but it is equally important to give industry the kind of environment it needs to work towards those targets.
 - » A business has to go through the process of setting up a manufacturing unit. Local and state governments can do a lot to help in this space, especially in terms of facilitation. Businesses need to be welcomed socially and economically in order to be productive. The reason small Southeast Asian nations are getting industrialised more rapidly than India is because governments at all levels work hard on facilitation.
 - » Vietnam is a good example. In the past twenty years, investment in Vietnam has risen exponentially. It has set up industrial parks and put a small group of people in charge of each site to work as a management group. It has the complete authority to sign off on any kind of clearance required for the business to get up and running as soon as possible. This is the kind of facilitation support that businesses in India require.
- How academia, industry, and civil society can collaborate to promote growth
- » In terms of academia, we actually need to worry more about the bottom of the pyramid, which is pre-primary and primary education. We have failed in terms of putting up a quality education system at the primary level. We must address this and get a larger number of students into the folds of quality basic education, which includes STEM.
 - » If we give children quality education at the school level and then give them the opportunity to hone a skill, they can earn a decent and dignified living.
 - » Basic education and skilling will be the building blocks of the future, and we need to make sure that there is enough emphasis on this.

- On the role of philanthropy in strengthening education and society
- » Philanthropy should play a strong role in strengthening society through education, but there is a larger role to be played by policy.
 - » We need policy interventions to change the way we teach our children, and these should be informed interventions. Philanthropy should support civil society organisations working on these policy pieces.
 - » There are a growing number of examples in the country of philanthropic organisations working with state governments and civil society not to build schools but to create an environment that spawns quality schools and education.
 - » Education needs to be taken up in mission mode the same way we have taken up cleanliness or digitalization.
- On creating pockets of excellence in green growth
- » Top leadership determines the level of excellence that an organisation can reach in its pursuit of green growth.
 - » CEOs and other decision-makers must approach green growth in spirit and not as a regulatory obligation. This should percolate down to the stakeholders, who must all see their roles in the context of sustainability.
 - » Communities celebrate profit-making organisations, but that perspective has to change; we need to celebrate organisations that share the profit with the planet.
- On his message for the young entrepreneurs in waiting
- » To paraphrase the late Professor CK Prahalad - successful CEOs and businesses will be those who see sustainability and innovation together. Innovation is what will forge newer paths and sustainability will provide the space to do so time and again.



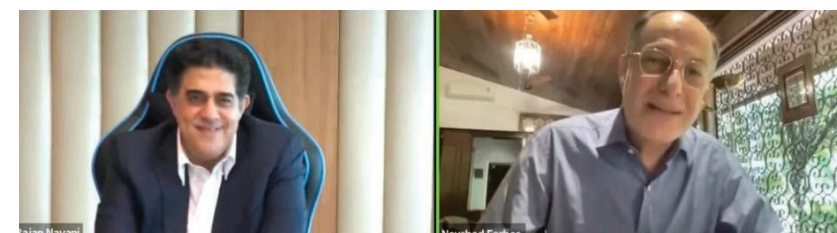
"India @100 should grow into a wealthy nation, the growth should be inclusive and the country should be synonymous with a liberal democracy."

Dr NAUSHAD FORBES

Past President, CII; Co-Chairman,
Forbes Marshall,

Topic: **How Can Industry Level the Playing Field for India@100**

11 July 2023



How Can Industry Level the Playing Field for India@100

On his dream for India at 100 and ways to make that dream come true

» The dream has three parts: first, that India grows into a wealthier nation; second, that the growth is inclusive; and third, that India becomes a model of liberal democracy.

» India@100, should rank in the upper income category among all countries worldwide. This will require a rate of growth of around eight or nine percent year-on-year for 25 years.

» It is not enough to be much wealthier. The growth has to be more inclusive. For inclusive growth, our median income needs to be much higher; it needs to be among the world's highest for the average Indian to lead a prosperous, healthy, comfortable, and clean life.

» We should also become a model democracy. Our democratic principles should deepen over time. It should show in the depth, independence, and spread of democratic institutions across different walks of life. The liberal nature of our democracy should also show in our leadership of multilateral institutions, so we contribute not only to our own well-being but to the wider well-being of the world.

On the role India Inc. can play in promoting inclusion and diversity

» Inclusion is good in itself. It promotes equal opportunities, and everyone is able to participate in the growth process.

» Inclusion is also good for business. In the last 30 years, the Indian economy has been fueled by consumption. Many people entered the consumption space, from first-time toothpaste buyers to first-time holiday buyers. However, this inclusion has not been wide enough. If we were to make 1.4 billion people capable of being consumers, it would create a strong market and benefit businesses.

» Industry can work in two areas to make growth processes more inclusive: education and skilling. CII businesses work with roughly 30, 000 schools in the country. If they worked to influence learning outcomes in these schools, it would impact 1.5 million children every year. If this is done year after year, it will give children the

resources they need to participate in a modern economy.

» Companies should also help skill people in ways that lead to more productive employment and also add value to the business.

» Skill that results in productive employment will then flow through in terms of increased consuming power, and when people have spending power, everyone wins.

On the three things India Inc. could prioritise to help catalyse inclusive growth

» The first is education, specifically the learning outcomes of children coming out of second grade. They should be able to do arithmetic and read at this level. Making this happen through the CSR route can transform the learning landscape in the country.

» The second is to train people and make them productive members of businesses. Paint companies can train painters, auto companies can train people to be mechanics, and so on and so forth.

» The third is to increase women's participation in the labour force. India has the lowest female participation in the labour force among the G20 countries. This needs to be corrected. If the number of women in our workforce were raised to comparable levels with men, India would be about 60 percent richer as a country.

» Companies will have to work out innovative policies using incentives and enforcement to ensure that there is a significant increase in the number of women in their workforce. There also has to be collaborative action to address social biases.

On the role of higher education in India's technology and innovation goals

» The quality of education determines the quality of the workforce. So every company has a direct interest in improving the quality of higher education outcomes.

» Companies need to engage in education outside of CSR. This can be in the form of offering faculty the opportunity to work with industry during sabbaticals, offering

internships to students, or occasionally participating in the actual teaching process.

» From a policy perspective, the recent announcement by the National Research Foundation is encouraging. It is a very good initiative in letter: 50 000 crores in funding over five years, only to higher education research and not to government laboratories. This will effectively double the funding available for this space. If the NRF is implemented in letter and spirit, it can really be transformative for the innovation landscape in India.

What the industry can do to create a strong R&D space in the country

» Companies must benchmark their investment in R&D as a percentage of sales against the top 10 or 20 companies in their sector. Then they need to see the flow of new products and processes from these organisations to understand how investing in R&D can make a significant difference to one's business. There can be different degrees of granularity in the benchmarking, such as the quality of people or the kind of research. This will help businesses understand the gaps and work on them better.

How India can learn from global examples of industry-fronted R&D ecosystems

» In the Global Innovation Index published every month, India usually scores high in the efficiency of its R&D spends, even though its overall ranking is low. This means that while India may not be spending much on R&D, its limited investments deliver very good outcomes. This makes an excellent case for investing more. If we benchmark ourselves against countries that are doing better in terms of investment and outcomes, we will be able to create the kind of technology and innovation environment that we want.

On how both the old and the new businesses can be helped to take the path of innovation

» A good manufacturing company gets it right the first time, while a good R&D company does not. The challenge is to align good manufacturing with good R&D, both of which require different mindsets. Different stakeholders need to come together to create an ecosystem that

is conducive to good R&D, both within and outside of organisations.

On the importance of collaboration between multiple stakeholders for pursuing any national goal

» Shared alignment will come from shared understanding.

» Having a common understanding and ownership of what is being pursued creates a positive environment for better and more meaningful collaboration.

» Companies can both compete and collaborate; they should collaborate on inputs and compete on outputs. Outputs are what companies put out in the market; they should compete with each other to put better products and services in the market so that the customer can benefit. Inputs are what they put into society—their social and development interventions. They should collaborate to raise the quality and outcomes of these interventions.

On what the youth can do to better their professional lives and contribute to national development

» In India we have an opportunity to lead a life of purpose. The opportunity to make a change in the area of one's work is huge. It has a private-sector led economy, a very active civil society space and socially committed individuals. All these together create a fertile ground for people across all sectors to create a positive change. This has always been true of India and will continue to be so in the future.



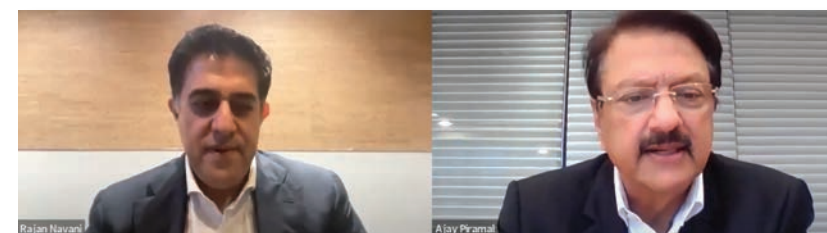
"There's a lot of conversation about conscious capitalism in the world but there cannot be peace and harmony unless the gap between the haves and have-nots is reduced."

AJAY PIRAMAL

Chairman, Piramal Group

Topic: **India@100: Charting the Path for Growth and Development**

20 April 2023



India@100: Charting the Path for Growth and Development

On how India should shape up over the next 25 years

- » There has never been a better time to be an Indian, both in India and around the world.
- » The country is young, talented, and optimistic. Importantly, it is peace-loving.
- » The present is a golden opportunity to strengthen India's business and soft power.
- » However, it is important to have homogeneous growth opportunities across the country and not just pockets of development. Inclusive development can add a few percentage points to the country's growth projections.
- » Must focus specifically on backward districts and tribal areas, which make up about a tenth of India's population.
- » The government is focusing on making this possible, but the state governments, local bodies, and industry must all come together to strengthen this effort.

On the role of entrepreneurs in shaping a new India

- » Moving from a socialist to a capitalistic society means business has a bigger role and responsibility in shaping the future of the country.
- » To make India an investment destination, rules and regulations will have to be revisited in order to encourage the ease of doing business.
- » Digitalization is a big opportunity for both economic and social development. Access to data leads to better lending and borrowing, as well as targeted social interventions.
- » A strong private sector and social development go hand in hand. The former will bring about a ripple effect in terms of growth and help bring about holistic development in the country.

On what constitutes India's soft power and

how it can shape the country's future

- » The soft power of India lies in the philosophy of "One Earth, One Family," which was particularly evident during the pandemic. As India actively provided vaccinations and medicines to countries in need, demonstrating its strong soft power.
- » In the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, India has played a balancing role despite criticism about not taking a unilateral stand; now other countries actually want it to play a larger role in resolving the conflict.
- » India's view of education as something beyond cognition and based on mindfulness and empathy, its ancient traditions such as yoga, and its way of living all contribute to its soft power.

On what can be done in the pharmaceutical sector in the next twenty-five years to make it self-reliant.

- » R&D and innovation are at one end of the spectrum, and the manufacturing of generic drugs that are off-patent is at the other end.
- » India is now known to have the lowest cost and perhaps the best quality globally for generic drugs, but there is a need to look at other parts of the value chain.
- » We need to focus on much more in RND; in 75 years, there's not been any original drug discovered outside of India, and therefore more needs to be done to encourage drug discovery. This calls for a whole ecosystem to be developed: good universities, state-of-the art labs, and enabling regulations.
- » In the R&D sector, India has also lost out in the manufacturing of APIs, or active pharmaceutical ingredients, which are the building blocks for the final finished product, because of a poor manufacturing environment.
- » Manufacturing, not just in the pharma sector but across other sectors, needs a boost. We have to become competitive. Now is the time to do so.

On how to strengthen philanthropy in India

- » There's a lot of talk about philanthropy in countries like the US, where large families make big donations. More than 150 years ago, the Tatas gave all their wealth to philanthropy. 99 percent of what the Tata Group makes is the wealth of the Tata trust. This has no parallel.
- » Two percent CSR, which the government has asked companies to give of their profits, has been a big plus, but the real solution will lie in partnerships.
- » For change to happen at scale, the country will need partnerships between the government, industry, local NGOs, and hyperlocal NGOs. This kind of collective needs to work together to bring about change.
- » It is important that when foundations put in one rupee, the ROI must be manifold. It is also important to determine what this ROI should be and whether it has tangible outcomes.

On how India Inc. can encourage nation building

- » Industry Institutes like CII are playing a very important role in presenting a balanced picture to the government on what needs to be done to boost Indian industry because stronger business will mean stronger development.
- » There's a lot of conversation about conscious capitalism in the world, but there cannot be peace and harmony unless the gap between the haves and have-nots is reduced.
- » Part of the responsibility to reduce this gap lies with business leaders.

On the future of the education sector

- » Education has to be forward-looking. Public schools in India, which are where most children get their education, need to be made better.

- » Leadership is all important; we have to build leadership at the school level so that it has the vision to implement the new education policy in spirit.
 - » School-level leadership must have the ability to drive curriculum change, build the capacity of teachers, and get the best out of children.
 - » Investing in education must mean more than just putting money into infrastructure. While the built environment is important, it is equally crucial to measure outcomes and milestones.
- Message to the youth of India**
- » It is the best time to be in India. Take the future into your hands and shape it.
 - » More women should join the workforce.



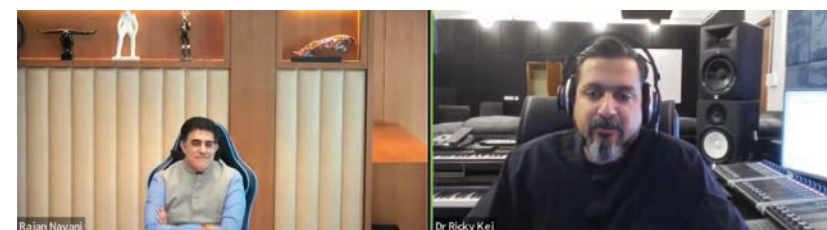
"India is rich in traditions, cultures and spiritual forms and all these are represented through music which can play an extremely important role when it comes to soft power."

Dr RICKY KEJ

3X Grammy Award Winner &
Environmentalism

Topic: **India@100: Orchestrating the
Symphony of Change**

6 October 2023



India@100: Orchestrating the Symphony of Change

<p>On his wish list and vision for India @ 2047.</p> <p>» To see India have a seat at the table alongside the most powerful nations in the world</p> <p>» To see it participate in intergovernmental decisions and demonstrate strong global leadership.</p> <p>On the journey from a young musician to a Grammy-winning artist and an environmentalist</p> <p>» Two prime interests in life: music and environment. Every major decision in life influenced by these factors.</p> <p>» Music system was the centre of the universe during childhood; would listen to his father’s music collection all the time</p> <p>» Learnt to play several musical instruments when young.</p> <p>» Received formal education in music and, through music, experienced a deep connection with nature.</p> <p>» Musical career took off in college; initial assignments were commercials for television and radio.</p> <p>» Composed commercials for almost every major brand in the world—3500 in a span of 13 years.</p> <p>» Reflection on the power and reach of commercial music led to the idea of using music as a tool to spread positive messages and create a better world. Started creating own music to this end.</p> <p>» The sixteenth album brought in the first Grammy, which was life-changing.</p> <p>» Meeting with PM Modi was a defining moment. PM seeded the idea of dedicating his music to one single pursuit: social impact.</p> <p>» Every single piece of music created since has been about social impact and the environment.</p> <p>On how music can contribute to India’s</p>	<p>growth as it moves towards India@100</p> <p>» Trying to make Indian art forms, and especially musical forms, more and more popular.</p> <p>» Classical forms of music such as Hindustani classical and Carnatic classical, are well known. But tribal and folk music predate them, and there are many such genres across the country.</p> <p>» Spent four years making a documentary on the Bauls of Bengal. The Bauls are the wandering minstrels of West Bengal, whose song and dance reflect the joy, love, and longing for mystical union with the Divine. Their history can be traced back a thousand years, when the people belonging to the lower castes felt the need to break the social confines to connect with God and chose to do so through their songs.</p> <p>» Constant collaboration with tribal musicians, especially tribal farmer musicians, to document their songs on different subjects, from coexistence and harvest to health and happiness.</p> <p>» Have done a version of the National Anthem with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The idea was to record with a symphony orchestra, simply because a symphony orchestra is reminiscent of India. Unique notes come together to form a cohesive whole. In India, everybody can have their own philosophy, but somehow the country works together.</p> <p>On how India can leverage its soft power and cultural richness to become a global leader by 2047</p> <p>» India has ideas, culture, artforms, and traditions.</p> <p>» Music can play an extremely important role when it comes to soft power.</p> <p>» Even spiritual forms are represented through music. And I think because</p> <p>» While Indian musical forms are considered niche and exotic, they are not accorded the same respect as</p>
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<p>Western forms. Indian music should be mainstreamed. But it will need resources and effort.</p> <p>» Music from India weaves in themes of empathy and coexistence and is especially relevant in the current times.</p> <p>On how India can achieve its growth ambitions in times of climate change</p> <p>» The need of the hour is to be inclusive.</p> <p>» As a teenage environmentalist, everything was either black or white. Age brought perspective. In India, every problem can be put into two large buckets: the problem of survival and the problem of thriving.</p> <p>» Environment and climate change are looked upon as problems of thriving rather than survival, because the latter are about more immediate issues like poverty, health, and education.</p> <p>» The West’s narrative on climate change cannot work in India. For example, the call to consume less is irrelevant in a country like India, where many people do not have the means to consume at all. The global south needs to prioritise its problems and work out its own solutions.</p> <p>» Everyone has needs and dreams and must not be left behind in the quest for sustainable development.</p> <p>» Everyone will need to be carried along, and communication will be important here. There are two ways to communicate: the Greta Thunberg approach and the Richard Attenborough approach. The first is about shaming people into action, and the second involves getting people to fall in love with the natural world and, wanting to protect it.</p> <p>» The Richard Attenborough approach is the preferred one because people only love things that they understand.</p> <p>» The Life Mission of the Prime Minister is a game changer because it is about changing one’s self before changing the world and calls for a movement against the use -and-throw economy. This will help bring about a more environmentally conscious society.</p>	<p>On how individuals can contribute to a better environment</p> <p>» Possible practices:</p> <p>» No fast fashion; have a limited set of clothes.</p> <p>» Meat-free diet</p> <p>» Give up the car; use public transportation even in home city.</p> <p>» Get carbon footprint audited every quarter in order to course correct</p> <p>Advice to young and upcoming musicians who want to use their art to create positive change in the world</p> <p>» Young musicians in India feel they need to have English music to succeed on the international stage. This is not true at all, because the people who have actually gotten global recognition are people like Pandit Ravishankar and Pandit Vishwa Mohan.</p> <p>» India is becoming visible everywhere; it is getting respect and visibility, and that is opening doors everywhere. This needs to carry on so that the younger generation of artists is enthused to learn and spread Indian music all over the world.</p>
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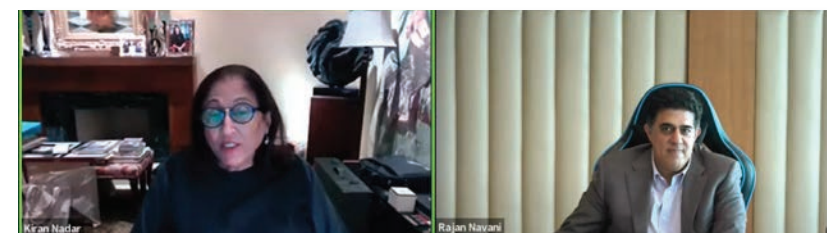
“Education and art go hand in hand. What we achieve in education has a big role to play with respect to art and culture. If we can merge both the aspects, it will be a great step forward.”

KIRAN NADAR

Chairperson, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art

Topic: **Shaping India@100 Through Art and Culture**

21 November 2023



Shaping India@100 Through Art and Culture

On how India will shape up over the next 25 years

- » India has a rich heritage that it needs to carry forward
- » Art and education go hand in hand; merging them would be a great step forward
- » Individuals need to contribute more to the art landscape and should be encouraged to do so. The private sector can play an important role in this area.
- » Art and culture should be seen as a very important aspect in the growth of India.

On, some of the things that KNMA does to heighten interest in art and culture

- » Gets children and youth into the museum to widen the profile of people who engage with art.
- » KNMA aspires to become a place for confluence, through its curatorial initiatives and exhibitions, school and college workshops, art appreciation discourses, symposiums and public programs.
- » It is focused on bridging the gap between art and the public and fostering a museum-going culture in India.
- » The Foundation is setting up a museum and cultural centre in the same space. This will help cross-pollinate; people who visit the cultural centre will also likely visit the museum and vice-versa.
- » Interest in art and culture has increased over the last decade; a lot needs to be done to grow and sustain this interest.

On how private and public participation can help bring change at scale

- » Setting up a museum is an expensive endeavour; it is not easy to set up one with private funds.
- » The Government needs to work out ways to increase private participation in this space. This space needs giant steps and not just ad hoc interventions.

» The government has also spoken of setting up a large public museum on the South and North blocks on Raisina Hill in the national capital, which will be an “encyclopaedic museum for the nation as a whole. This is a very welcome and interesting step.

» There also has to be an attitude change towards art in cities. Interest in art and culture has to extend beyond Kolkata and Mumbai.

On how to broaden cultural promotion and engagement across the country

- » India has not leveraged its rich heritage to potential.
- » India has places like Hampi that could be promoted with more fervour; art and culture can be two major pitches to bring in more tourists.
- » Domestic tourism must also be increased to get the people of India more interested. These are some of the areas India should be focusing on.

On the intersection of technology and art

- » Covid forced one to look at new ways of promoting shows and events; KNMA held digital shows.
- » It started a new way which has become very important. People are now engaging digitally even if they do not necessarily visit museums.
- » As time goes on, digital platforms will become more important. The West too is emphasising the digital medium, it is going to make a difference to India.

On how to encourage creativity and capture the interest of a broader audience

- » Have programs and competitions for schools at every economic and social level; this helps broaden the exposure and talent pool.
- » Children from different social strata have their own worldview based on the way they experience the world. It is important to understand and enrich this view, because their vision will shape the future of this country. *.

» Art and culture should be nurtured and emphasized, along with sports and tourism, as India continues to build for the next generation.

» Art empowers people to dream and allows them to imagine possibilities. In the next 25 years, these dreams can shape a new heritage for India

On the role of women shaping the art and culture over the next 25 years.

- » Over the last decade there has been a significant influx of women artists who have become dominant and important in the field. Many women are doing great work, not only in art but also in culture, music, and dance.
- » KNMA actively seeks diversity and engages with several talented women. The museum recognizes the historical marginalization of women and is focussed on choosing talent over gender.

On how India compares globally in terms of promoting its art and culture, and what it can improve upon

- » Both China and India have a very rich heritage, but China has developed art and culture in a phenomenal way. Beijing alone has about a hundred private museums. This has been encouraged by the government.
- » During the financial crisis of 2008, Indian art and Chinese art were roughly at the same price. Today, Chinese art is at least 50 times more valuable. The collectors of Chinese art are mainly from China.
- » In India, the collector base needs to expand. Indians should get many more collectors interested in Indian art and start collecting it. It doesn't have to be something exorbitantly expensive.

On ways to create a culture of appreciating and participating in art

- » Running some art courses in the neighbourhood, engaging in carpentry, playing, conducting workshops, or exploring tribal art can be beneficial.

» Tribal art is gaining prominence, which is an encouraging development.

On how to build an enabling ecosystem for collectors

- » Both the ability and intent to invest is important. In India, jewellery is seen as an important asset class but not art.
- » In the next five years this outlook is likely to change significantly. Art fairs in Mumbai and Delhi show an increase in the number of people looking at art through both the creative and investment lenses.
- » On the message to artists and ecosystem players
- » Artists, curators, and individuals involved in the Indian art scene should study the growth pattern and get involved in a larger way. Finding a good curator is challenging; there's a need for training and growth. This will create numerous employment opportunities.
- » Young collectors should view art not only as an investment but also have the ability and finesses to appreciate it.
- » In the next 25 years, the art world is going to be very exciting..



"We have all the solutions to health and wellness in India. If we go back to our ancient traditions of Yoga and Ayurveda, all solutions are there, we just have to bring them back."

DEANNE PANDAY

Fitness Expert, Health Coach & Author

Topic: **Towards a Healthier Nation:**

Building a Fitness and Recreation Culture for India@100

15 January 2024



Towards a Healthier Nation: Building a Fitness and Recreation Culture for India@100

On her dream of a healthier India@100

» Indians will look inwards for wellness and health. The answers lie in ancient practices such as yoga and meditation as well in the traditional approach to food and exercise.

» Reverting to the simple lifestyles, prior to modernisation, could be a key step to rejuvenate the health of the nation.

» Both the natural and the cultural environment in the country must be revived because they contribute to wellness.

» Need to revisit ancient practices such as ayurveda for both preventive and curative approaches.

On her personal fitness journey

» Chanced upon a Jane Fonda workout video at the age of 12 and enjoyed the exercise. Began to do the workouts in free time. This sparked of an interest in fitness.

» Shortly thereafter stumbled upon an old yoga shala and started practising meditation and breathing exercises. This led to a feeling of calm and centricity and further fuelled the interest in fitness.

» Took up a gym membership at 16 and began lifting weights, could lift more than the males in the club. The interest in physical fitness extended to holistic wellbeing including food and nutrition.

» Realised that health and wellbeing would drive both personal and professional goals. Started writing on health and wellness for magazines and newspapers.

» In 2000 was offered the assignment to train Miss India Pageant contestants; thus began the journey as a personal trainer.

» Alongside being a sought-after trainer, was also known for her workshops on holistic health, and for her books and articles on the subject.

» The next step was setting up a gym to serve a select

clientele willing to understand and invest in good health and not fads.

» Continues to be a proponent of a holistic approach to wellness. Post pandemic this approach is becoming more mainstream.

On how habits can be changed at scale in India

» Yoga should be taught as a subject in schools and given the same importance as any other lesson. All students should be taught Yoga and meditation from a very young age. A calmer person is a better student.

» Gardening should be a subject too. Kids who grow their own food understand its importance and grow up to conscious, healthy and responsible eaters.

On the importance of being fit, especially for women, to maintain work life balance

» Fitness is important for all women, especially women who balance home and work.

» Being fit and healthy, in mind and body, makes it easier to deal with situations and makes one stronger every role. Self-care is not selfish, it is a necessity given that women have so many roles to play nowadays.

» Approach is important, fitness is not about weight loss. It is a holistic approach to health – about feeling, acting and doing better. Movement is important, one must engage in some form of physical activity – yoga, dancing, cycling, swimming.

» Women are conditioned to believe that they are built to take stress. That's not true. Stress impacts everyone. It is important to recognise and address this.

On the creative process behind writing a book

» Was approached by Penguin Random House to write a book on fitness and diet. It set in motion the process of selecting the core premise for the book.

» At that point of time, was running a full-fledged gym with several clients. Realized that most had one thing in common – they would get stressed about very small things. Started doing research and found the shocking data that stress is the number one killer today. It leads to lifestyle diseases and issues like heart attacks.

» Thus was born the book – “I am not stressed”. It is about stress and what it does to the body. It connects the dots to nutrition, yoga, workouts, and sleep.

» The second book, “Shut Up and Train, was a guide for both men and women, covering everything from workouts to nutrition. It's a serious book that provides knowledge for fitness enthusiasts and trainers. It was so named to tell people who want quick fixes that there aren't any and that one has to look at a holistic approach, and stay natural.

» The third book, ‘Balance,’ focuses on 13 aspects of life, and how to strike a balance between them to stay happy and healthy. The book was released in the middle of the pandemic and has helped a lot of people.

On what the ideal fitness regime, 20 years from today, should look like

» Likely to go backward. People are getting ill despite doing so much. They are likely to take a few steps back and go towards slower and more holistic ways.

» Prevention is better than cure. However, one must not do things drastically; balance and mindfulness are the key to preventive measures.

» Consulting multiple doctors, nutritionists, and trainers is not the solution. One has to do what feels natural. CrossFit, for example, isn't suitable for Indians. It is better to do other things that feel right.

» Nutrition is important; one should eat sensibly. Food should be clean, seasonal and locally grown.

» Fitness pursuits should have a mindful approach. Yoga and meditation should be integral to a fitness regime. An uncluttered mind makes sensible choices.

» The way to holistic health is straightforward. It involves going back to local food, yoga, meditation and walks. Walking is the best form of exercise, and totally free. One can walk anywhere. While it is fine to join the gym, lift weights, sign up for outdoor training, one must not complicate things.

» The food plate should be simple—adequate protein, a bit of simple, complex carbs, fibre. One should eat a lot of fruits and vegetables.

On a message for the youth

» Plant a tree today, the world needs more oxygen and more greenery. If every household plants a tree, we will get back the green India that once was.

On investments in the space of wellness and its future

» After the pandemic, a lot of organic products have come in. Farmers are moving towards organic farming.

» Yoga and meditation are appealing to the popular imagination, as are wellness centres that promote traditional approaches. These areas are ripe for investment.



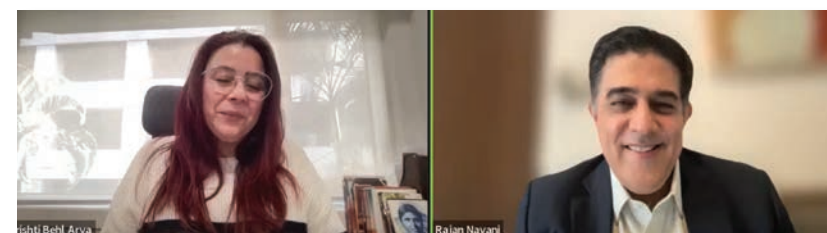
"We have so much talent in this country that we haven't even touched the tip of the iceberg. Digitization is leading to increased access points, and there's a democratization happening to content."

SRISHTI BEHL ARYA

CEO, Phantom Films

Topic: **India@100: Content Capital & Storyteller to the World**

16 January 2024



India@100: Content Capital & Storyteller to the World

On her vision of India in 2047

» India is a land of dreamers that’s about to find ways to make its dreams come true thanks to the growth opportunities available. It has a bright future and can carry forward a lot from its past, particularly in media and entertainment.

» India is also a land of storytellers; a strong media and entertainment industry is empowering both the story-tellers and the audience.

» Dream of taking Indian stories to the world and sharing the knowledge, ambition, and dreams of this country.

On the future of India’s media and entertainment industry and the areas in which it can dominate

» Cautiously optimistic about leading across all fields in the industry.

» Have a robust tradition of traditional artforms such as street plays and theater productions; over the last century, they have built a strong tradition of films and, more recently, television. Gaming is on the rise. The live events industry is also growing.

» Very optimistic about live events picking up in a big way. Hope to eventually lead into the metaverse.

» The present is an opportunity to not only entertain but also educate in an entertaining way.

» Immense untapped talent exists in the country; dig- itization is leading to increased access points and the democratization of content. Radio too will never go out of fashion.

» It’s a matter of time before one looks at Korea to learn to earn the mind space of people outside of one’s country. That’s where Indian media and entertainment businesses should aim to go.

» Exposure to other ways of working from outside the country will help. India has fantastic locations and should allow people to come work with the Indian entertainment industry. Policies and incentives should be worked out to this effect.

On how to realize the true potential of India’s creative industries

» It is about taking people along; currently, not every talent has the opportunity.

» There’s a need to formalize a lot of things, especially in the content creation sector. The entry points are heavily barricaded at the moment. For somebody to break out from outside of the business is quite prohibitive

» The cost of production is very high, so people don’t want to take enough chances. Additionally, there are guardrails around the stories and the manner in which they are told.

» India is a young country and should think outside the box. It should not be protective of the old ways. There’s some saturation at the moment, which needs to be addressed.

» India has been self-sufficient in terms of content because of its robust culture of storytelling and has been able to create a big industry purely by looking within itself. However, there’s also a need to travel globally while penetrating its own people. The journey has to be both inward as well as outward.

On how India’s soft power can be shaped to become a force

» We can do better at educating people. We need to formalize some sort of education for everyone, helping them understand how to use tools needed in the enter- tainment industry.

» People are going west to learn these tools and skills; although there’s a great deal to learn from the global schools, they are prohibitively expensive and not for everyone. India needs to invest in developing writers and also the people working behind the scenes, most of whom are not skilled and therefore add to the cost of production. Considering the large number of people in the industry, it would be positive to upskill them.

On the extent of influence the creative industry has in transforming the lives of the general population

» The more people want to watch a particular kind

of content, the more content of that kind is created, because, at the end of the day, it’s not just a show; it’s show business.

» Globally, people tend to think of India as a monolith. But there is a lot of diversity in the content that is gener- ated. Art must elicit a response; hence, everybody’s story needs to be told. While recommendation engines suggest content, it’s also the responsibility of the audience to make a choice.

» The industry should also aim to educate, engage, and empower people to tell their own truth. It is important to acknowledge that there isn’t a one-size-fits-all influence. Audiences take away different things from content based on their life stage; hence, there’s always a dynamic rela- tionship between the creator and the consumer.

» The soft power, likeability, and larger-than-life fantasy on the big screen are tremendous. It is encouraging to see fandom extending to directors now. This will empower more people to come out and speak their truth.

On how to achieve increased recognition and success at international film festivals

» Most of the festivals considered significant are also film markets. They are opportunities for Indian films to resonate with buyers and achieve true success.

» Indians don’t need validation from the West. However, smaller filmmakers, who often go to these festivals, need more support as they struggle to find funding and backing while trying to balance commercial considerations with artistic fulfillment.

» Eventually, the world will come to India due to its large market size. It is crucial to strike a balance between com- mercial success and artistic integrity.

On how the entertainment sector can actively promote a more diverse representation of women in key positions

» In the last three decades, the role of women has changed considerably. While many negative perceptions have been cleaned up to a large extent, there are still pockets of less-than-perfect working conditions.

» Although the number of women on the sets, and in po- sitions of decision-making, has increased, they still have some distance to go when it comes to making movies. One can count them on their fingertips.

» It is important to be mindful of giving women equal opportunities, especially when in a position of power. Also important to help them upskill so that they can bridge the gaps that impede their success.

On advice to aspiring professionals looking to make their mark in the M&E industry

» The most important thing is to find one’s voice. This is the age of disruption, where one can come up with their own unique way of putting something out there.

» It is time to let go of the holy cows. Find an authentic story to tell. In the nature of show business, if one creates something fantastic, they will be sought after.

On evolving technologies and their impact on the future of content creation in the country

» AI will be a boon and a bane for our business, especially because access to certain kinds of technology is going to empower a larger number of people to create the stories they want to tell. In parallel, there’s fear in the industry about people being made redundant.

» There is a lot that is authentically human, and the way technology is evolving, it may well be able to recreate it authentically. Currently, we are feeding machines our thoughts and our experiences. It is important to be a little more mindful about what we put out there and how we want to use this technology. It is here. We have to work around it. The main thing is to educate ourselves about its potential.

India@100: Perspectives

Dialogue is an important part of development; it brings rich perspectives to the table and helps inform the policy making process. India@75 Foundation holds multi-stakeholder dialogues on issues that are key to the India@100 journey and thereby helps shape its national priorities.

Role of Women in Inclusively developed India@100

Women can play a crucial role in shaping an inclusively developed India. It is vital that the country address issues which inhibit their participation in core fields such as the workforce, science and technology, leadership and environment stewardship. India@75 Foundation organised a discussion – The Role of Women in Shaping Inclusively Developed India@100 to understand some of these issues and look at ways to create a more level playing field in order to give women an equitable shot at shaping the nation.



Rumjhum Chatterjee, Co-Founder & Managing Trustee, The Infravision Foundation



Smita Agarwal, Director & Chief Financial Officer, PTC Industries Limited



Vanitha Datla, Vice Chairperson and Managing Director, Elico Ltd



Anavila Misra, Renowned Sustainable Fashion Designer



Shriti Pandey, Founder, Strawcture Eco

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

On whether women can play a pivotal role in driving transformation towards India@100

» Currently, women make up 50% of India's population, yet their participation in the workforce is only around 33%. This figure includes a substantial number of women involved in labor-intensive sectors like construction and agriculture, where they work hard but often receive inadequate economic compensation, an issue that needs addressing. In most other sectors, women typically earn about 76% of what men earn, highlighting a significant wage gap that requires attention.

» India's future as an economic superpower by its 100th year in 2047, hinges on economic progress for every Indian. Achieving this goal requires actively engaging at least 50% of the workforce, leveraging their potential and unique cultural contributions.

» While India's achievements in technology and sports showcase our progress, maintaining this momentum necessitates equal participation from women and historically marginalized groups. To become a global superpower, it's crucial to tap into the vast talent and innovation potential of these individuals.

» As global regulations and supply chains evolve, the demand for inclusive organizations will intensify, aligning with India's vision to be a global supply chain hub.

» All stakeholders should focus on addressing low-hanging fruits in terms of inclusion across all genders, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, physical abilities, and sexual orientations. These aspects will undoubtedly gain more prominence in the future. As a nation, India should make this a mission for the next 25 years to accelerate the pace of change.

» Currently, India is doing well in education and health-care but needs to focus on political representation and economic empowerment. These are two critical domains that require a mission-oriented approach to ensure participation from all sections of society, where decisions are made, and policies formulated. This approach will introduce diversity in thought and perspective, benefiting all sections of society, including those who have been overlooked in the past.

» Corporate sector should take the lead by acting as role models, implementing the changes it advocate for, and



set an example for other stakeholders to follow.

» In remote rural parts of India, the progress in terms of women empowerment and equal opportunities is slow. Despite women playing significant roles in sectors like crafts and textiles, their participation and recognition, particularly in decision-making and policy influence, remain limited. Textiles, after agriculture, is a significant source of rural employment, presenting an excellent opportunity to empower women. They should be provided with better representation, even at the block and self-help group levels, allowing rural voices to be heard and contributing to stronger representation from rural India.

» 4.32 million women are part of India's workforce, with a striking 94% of them in the unorganized sector, likely including construction. Empowerment is closely tied to agency—the ability to make your own decisions.

» In rural construction sites, both men and women work, but women often do the physically demanding labor while earning significantly less than men. To enhance women's empowerment and mobility, they must be up-skilled, provided h vocational training, enabling greater financial independence. This is especially crucial in sectors like textiles, which employ many women.

» In the next 25 years, addressing women's limited agency due to family responsibilities is vital. We need to provide health and education support to enable women already in the workforce to contribute more efficiently without worrying about family constraints. This would significantly empower women both economically and personally.

On how more women can be encouraged to both enter the workforce and take up leadership positions in various sectors

» Surveys by the Indian Women Network found only 9% of firms have women in management positions. To tackle this, it is important to focus on three key areas: getting women into the workforce, empowering them to become entrepreneurs, and increasing women in governance roles.

» Current statistics reveal a stark gender gap in leadership positions, with just 4.7% of CEOs, 3.9% of CFOs, and 3.1% of CHROs being women. Moreover, women earn 76% of what men earn for the same job. Biases, traditional mindsets, and cultural stereotypes perpetuate these disparities.

» Survey data showed that many men believe it's a man's job to earn money, and men should earn more than women. These biases and perceptions of male superiority persist, limiting opportunities for women.

» To address these issues, it is important to provide essential infrastructure, strong laws, and governance, and actively work to counter biases in the workforce.

» Corporate India must foster women's leadership and implement enabling workplace policies like flexibility. When women become financially independent, they gain decision-making power, enhancing the overall ecosystem. Recent legislation on women's reservation in politics is promising, but more work lies ahead.

» Much of the discourse around roles is deeply connected to identities. Women juggle multiple identities, and often, when they enter a room or a space, one aspect of their identity becomes more prominent, either from a privileged or less privileged position. This underscores the significance of women taking on leadership roles in India to foster inclusivity.

» Women, in leadership roles, are better equipped to make decisions, formulate strategies, and shape policies that prioritize inclusivity, drawing from their personal experiences of what it feels like not to be included.

On the key things that can be done to create a level playing field for women

» Need male allies who recognize the value of diversity and actively promote female role models to inspire the next generation.

» Gender stereotypes and biases persist, and it's essential for the corporate sector, government, and media to champion female leaders and break these stereotypes.

» Visibility and representation are key to changing mindsets and conditioning the next generation for a more inclusive future. Empathy drives women to ensure

inclusivity, and we must open doors for everyone.

On collaborations with local artisans and the positive impact of these collaborations on the lives of women and their communities

» Many artisans hail from remote interior villages, where many women have never ventured outside their villages or traveled to a city. Important to give them perspective through workshops.

» Collaborations must look at integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, to bring about confidence in the quality and demand of their products.

» Simple changes, such as opening bank accounts can make a significant impact. When they are covered by the media, they became role models in their communities, affecting positive change, particularly for the younger generation. When women come together to collaborate, they can bring about subtle yet powerful transformations.

Advice to young women who aspire to create a greener and more eco-friendly India at 100

» India's age-old traditions, philosophies, and way of life naturally align with sustainability, boasting low carbon footprints and providing a fertile ground for innovation. Sustainability stands as a monumental challenge and a vast market opportunity.

» Young women should embark on a journey of skill diversification, exploring sectors ranging from fashion, textiles, and construction to cutting-edge technology. Their focus should remain on sectors addressing pressing global issues, embracing the burgeoning green movements, and contemplating forays into deep tech for sustained success.

» Initiating their ventures early, embracing setbacks as learning experiences, and staying at the forefront of emerging climate change trends are vital steps for them to effect meaningful change

On whether women are more innovative or creative

» Fewer women are visible in certain ecosystem, such as startups. Startups, by nature, are founded by young entrepreneurs, so it's essential for investors and stakeholders to embrace young women as leaders and trust in their potential. This entails believing that investing in women-led startups is not riskier than investing in similar ventures led by men. Men need to champion this change and facilitate it.

» Women often exhibit high creativity and productivity, largely due to the constraints they face. Unfortunately, hiring women in certain sectors can be challenging due to the limited pool of female candidates. However, given the right opportunities, women are capable of driving substantial innovation. They excel in combining creativity, productivity, and frugality, which are essential components of innovation. When empowered and given the chance, women can contribute significantly to innovative efforts, often surpassing our expectations.

» Diversity. maybe the hardest thing for a society to live with but perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society

to be without. Women, by their nature, tend to uplift not just themselves but their families and communities as well.

» Women have the capacity to create more inclusive and diverse platforms and opportunities for society. They understand the importance of uplifting the entire community, and their natural inclination is not to seek power and subjugate others but to work inclusively.

» In terms of leadership, women are fully capable of taking on leadership roles and contributing significantly to progress and innovation.

Innovating Towards a Digitally Inclusive India@100

India needs a multi-pronged approach to ensure digital inclusivity. It needs multiple interventions to bridge the urban-rural digital divide, including those that address infrastructure and literacy concerns. Innovation can play an important role in accelerating digitalization by helping address conventional problems in a new way. India@75 Foundation organized a multi-stakeholder discussion to view the digitalization process through different lenses and arrive at a few actionable solutions.



Dr Avik Sarkar, Researcher & Visiting Faculty Data, Technology & Public Policy, Indian School of Business



Dr Lovneesh Chanana, Sr VP & Head of Govt Affairs (Asia Pacific and Japan) SAP



Dr Pavan Duggal, Advocate, Supreme Court of India Chairman, International Commission on Cyber Security Law



Dr Sarayu Natarajan, Founder, Aapti institute & Co-Director, Eco Lab



Suryadeep Verma, Sr Vice President & Chief Marketing Officer, Comviva (A Tech Mahindra Company)



Santha Subramoni, Head, Cybersecurity, TCS

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

On what inclusive digital India@100 means and why it is crucial for the country's future

» In the last couple of decades, India has witnessed enormous growth in the digital space especially health-care, education, and finance. However, despite the movement and the government efforts, digital divide remains. A large part of India is still not part of this space

» Digital inclusion refers to equal access, equal participation, and equal benefit for all citizens irrespective of background and ability. The key pillar of a digitally inclusive country includes – Digital Access, Digital Literacy, Government support, Investment towards a Digital economy, Language and Culture for Digital space, and Safety and Security.

» increasing the access to markets, state, services, products and to each other can also enable the governments to be able to serve and reach their citizens better. One of the downsides is that there are whole new categories of marginalization that technology creates for people.

» The question of access is critical and needs dedicated focus in the country's journey towards an inclusive digital society. The questions of trust should also be addressed because that is what enables individuals and communities to trust digital systems.

» Despite progress in digital expansion, challenges persist in the last mile of implementation, linked to the literacy rate of communities. Accessibility depends on digital tool availability, and ability to use the tools therefore the need for digital literacy is extremely important.

» Individuals who are unable to read effectively utilize mobile phones by relying on imagery. For instance, they may store contact details using visual cues, even if they cannot read the names. It is essential to acknowledge societal weaknesses instead of expecting universal improvement in literacy and intelligence.

» To address these challenges, there is need to leverage the existing technological solutions available rather than assuming that humanity will universally evolve and become more technologically adept.

» Moreover, the notion that digital information constitutes personal property is not prevalent at the moment. People readily understand the importance of safeguarding hard assets, while the awareness of the significance of digital



assets needs to be equally emphasized.

» Projecting into the next 25 years, significant advancements are anticipated, including the pervasive presence of AI, imaginary video, and visual methods of communication. Additionally, automation is expected to extend into various physical systems. To prevent the last mile from falling behind in this rapidly evolving landscape, innovation becomes crucial.

On, how the development and expansion of digital public infrastructure be strategically leveraged to ensure inclusivity and equitable access to technology across all segments of society in India

» Different countries have varied approaches to providing services to their citizens. In the digital realm, the U.S. pioneered technologies, particularly in email and social media, primarily driven by private firms. However, a significant challenge arises in determining whether digital platforms, especially social media, should be governed by the government or remain private, and if private, whether they should be domestic or foreign-owned.

» This challenge extends to sectors like fintech, with a two-player market dominated by an Indian and a foreign entity. The government faces a dilemma in relying on foreign tech giants or building its own framework. The ongoing journey towards Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in India aims to address such challenges and has already proven beneficial in sectors like agritech and fintech. The DPI's potential impact extends beyond language technology, offering opportunities for global South countries.

» Furthermore, the DPI initiative is not limited to language technology; it encompasses various aspects, presenting a significant opportunity for global diplomacy and growth. India's positioning in the global South and the develop-

ment of open-source platforms like MOSIP benefit not only the 1.4 billion within India but also an additional 1 billion users outside India. DPI is poised to become a key agenda for India in global diplomacy and its own growth, presenting opportunities for its tech companies and fostering collaboration with other nations.

On how the collaboration between industry and government can be optimized to enhance digital transformation while strengthening cybersecurity measures to extend benefit to larger population in India

» The role of government-industry partnerships is critical in achieving inclusive digital transformation and enhancing cybersecurity measures for the broader population in India. A multi-stakeholder approach is essential, structured through traditional PPP models or alternative frameworks. Despite differing objectives, both government and industry are now collaborating more closely, particularly in the transition from a digital to a digitally intelligent India driven by the emergence of AI.

» Collaboration opportunities abound in areas like workforce skilling, adopting global best practices, conducting funded research, and supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem. For instance, addressing the significant role of India's 63 million SMEs in employment generation and grassroots digital transformation is crucial.

» Expanding into various domains, such as Quantum and supporting initiatives like the Atal Tinkering Labs through the Atal Innovation Mission, showcases industry engagement in schools for exposure to 3D printing and robotics for students.

» As India integrates AI, the collaboration landscape evolves, emphasizing a two-way revolution: accessing data to identify problem areas and innovating solutions collaboratively. Cybersecurity must transition from a vertical specialization to a horizontal imperative. The dual impact of AI on cybersecurity raises considerations of liability, safety, ethics, and bias.

» Distinguishing between technology development and deployment, particularly in sectors like healthcare, is crucial. Targeting lower-hanging fruits in deployment, such as unbiased job descriptions, can pave the way for a successful journey in enhancing cybersecurity and unlocking application potential.

On how cybersecurity efforts can be tailored and customized to ensure that the most vulnerable in society are protected to safeguard their interest.

» It is crucial to shift the perspective to view it as a societal public good rather than just a technical concern. Historically, the approach has been that cybersecurity is solely a government responsibility, while users may assume they can engage in risky behaviours on their devices with the expectation that the government will manage cybersecurity. Notably, India lacks a dedicated law on cybersecurity, and the existing Information Technology Act of 2000, though amended post-2008 Mumbai attacks, remains insufficient.

» Despite having a National Cyber Security Policy in 2013, implementation has been lacking, and a new National Cyber Security Strategy is still pending. With India having a vast population of over 140 crore users, predominantly online, there is a pressing need to bridge the digital gap responsibly.

» Utilizing cybersecurity legislation for the digital empowerment of vulnerable individuals, particularly those in digital have-nots, becomes paramount. Effective sensitization and capacity building are necessary for user; leveraging mass media communication methods, especially through mobile platforms, can be a starting point. Additionally, offering effective remedies to victims of cybersecurity breaches is essential.

» Despite the government's efforts, compliance with reporting cybersecurity incidents remains low. To truly empower the digitally vulnerable sections of society, a strong dedicated legal framework for cybersecurity, a prompt national cybersecurity strategy, increased capacity building, and possibly making cybersecurity awareness a mandatory CSR provision for companies are critical steps forward.

» Implementing effective deterrence mechanisms and remedies for affected individuals, along with expanding reporting options, are essential for enhancing India's cybersecurity landscape.

On how critical infrastructure and data can be protected from cyber threats and digital innovations & technologies that can be formulated to ensure secure and safe digital space

» Ensuring a secure digital ecosystem is a common concern for businesses and governments alike, emerging as the third front of war after borders and essential resources. Different sectors face unique threat surfaces, with challenges in modernization outpacing cyber protection measures. The current approach involves continuous management of vulnerabilities, but there is a need for standardized methods and obligating companies to ensure cybersecurity. Striking a balance between securing

everything and acceptable risk is crucial, especially for startups and agile enterprises. There is a big lack of such standardised systems.

» Regulations can act as a catalyst, compelling companies to adopt cybersecurity measures, and introducing similar frameworks for different industries can be beneficial. Agility in responding to crises is equally important, with frequent scenario-based testing required at both enterprise and national levels. Exercising crisis management at a national scale, like testing responses to major disruptions in telecom or railway ecosystems, is vital to identify and cover critical attack paths.

» Looking ahead, the convergence of Quantum Computing and AI will present unprecedented challenges, requiring significant investments, collaboration, and innovation. India needs to address these challenges by developing Quantum-protected infrastructure, indigenous cybersecurity technologies, and fostering a world-class cybersecurity ecosystem. Dependence on foreign technologies for critical infrastructure protection must be reduced, encouraging the evolution of indigenous solutions. Balancing the focus on developing cutting-edge protection technologies and nurturing startups in the cybersecurity domain is essential for comprehensive cybersecurity preparedness.

On how digital innovations can be tailored to bridge the urban-rural and socio-economic gaps in the nation and ensure that remote and marginalized communities have equitable access to digital services and information

» Inclusivity and access should be an ongoing concern rather than a goal achieved and checked off.

» It should be viewed as a comprehensive process, considering factors from the decision to engage with technology to the entire transactional process. For instance, some communities may face challenges in merely reaching a location to access a system, making it imperative to think of design beyond the transactional interface. Acknowledging these barriers and addressing them is critical for designing inclusive systems.

» The role of intermediaries, who often act as facilitators for others in accessing technology, is important. These intermediaries can play a vital role in enabling meaningful access. Acknowledging and incorporating their role in system design can enhance inclusivity, as research has shown their positive impact, especially in the context of government systems.

The action points and recommendations for

government, industry, and civil society to shape a country that is digitally inclusive and forward looking

» While technology is essential, considerations like citizens' perspectives, social aspects brought by groups like social scientists, and the financial feasibility are crucial. In addressing issues like inclusion, one must devise business models that align with practical realities.

» The collaboration between different groups, beyond traditional technology-centric approaches, is crucial for bridging gaps in innovation. This interdisciplinary approach is vital for addressing diverse aspects of innovation, including legal, regulatory, and societal dimensions.

» There's a crucial need to emphasize communication and sensitization. Raising awareness and fostering a deeper understanding of technology are essential for driving the adoption necessary for inclusive and safe practices.

» There is need to make the education system more tech and digital ready including putting things which are more innovation-centric for students. This will contribute to preparing students for the digital age. Every school, particularly government schools and colleges, make cyber education a mandatory component..

» It is important to enact enabling legal frameworks to support the concept of a digitally inclusive India.

» There's need to address standards and interoperability. The current scenario where innovations operate in silos due to geographical complexities necessitates a focus on achieving a more holistic and cohesive impact through interoperability and standardization.

» Concentrating on SMEs can serve as the linchpin for fostering the inclusive ecosystem India aspires to create.

» The government can also leverage secondary legislation under Section 87 of the Information Technology Act 2000 to mandate companies as intermediaries to contribute to the Cyber ecosystem's security through CSR initiatives. It is essential for corporations to see their role as giving back to the nation and actively participating in the ongoing digital revolution and also ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left behind.

» It is crucial that the public and private sectors take steps to educate, warn, and raise awareness among users on data sharing. Indiscriminate sharing of data in the digital ecosystem may jeopardize the dream of a digitally inclusive India in the foreseeable future.

Ancient Wisdom For Modern India

India is a goldmine of knowledge thanks to its roots that go back to ancient times. The country is uniquely positioned to leverage this wisdom as it paves the way to a future that is both inclusive and sustainable. India@75 invited some eminent names from the academia for a conversation on how the country can delve into repository of knowledge for solutions and contextualize it to the current day realities.



Prof. Abhay Kumar Singh, Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University;



Prof. (Dr) Arun Kumar Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor of Uttarakhand Ayurved University;



Ajay George Varghese, CEO, Bipha Ayurveda



Talish Ray, Managing Partner, TRS Law Offices

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

What is it that we can learn about the strength of the Indian culture and civilization then, which remains even today and would lend a an advantage?

India has had fruitful interactions with other civilizations since ancient times, sharing knowledge openly. The exchanges with Greeks, Chinese and others were mutually respectful. India's trade, especially during the Roman era, enriched the country without exploitation. Indian navigators shared their discoveries freely. Historical texts and maps highlight India's exports and imports without any mention of exploiting others. India's approach has been "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - the world is one family, promoting shared growth of civilizations through exchange of knowledge in mathematics, science, philosophy and more.

On, the resurgence of traditional health management systems, and how they can be integrated in one's daily lives.

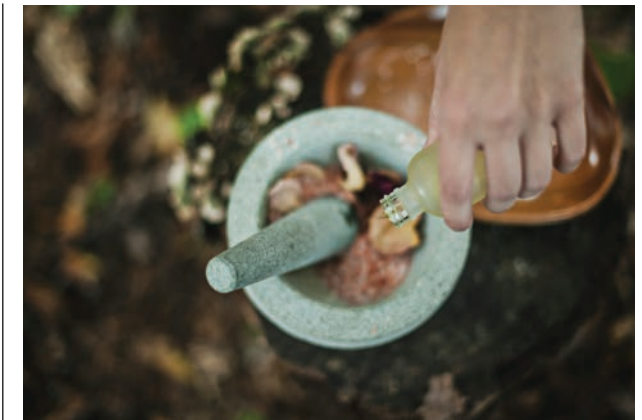
Ancient Indian wisdom like Ayurveda, over 5000 years old, continues to evolve and integrate with the modern era. Focused on prevention and promotion of health, Ayurveda complements contemporary medicine. Its unique Rasayana branch offers preventive, immunity-boosting concepts for all ages and specific organs/systems. During COVID-19, Ayurveda's role in preventing diseases was reaffirmed. As the world shifts towards wellness, Ayurvedic principles of holistic health will significantly contribute to the burgeoning wellness industry, making it highly relevant for the future.

On the current trends in the wellness industry and its future

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a global awakening towards health and immunity, reviving interest in Ayurveda as a holistic lifestyle beyond just medicine. In India, it sparked a second awakening, prompting people to seriously embrace Ayurveda's preventive approach. This led to a surge in Ayurvedic product innovation, startups catering to consumer needs, and new formats for integrating Ayurveda into daily life. While retaining its core knowledge, Ayurveda is evolving to be more consumer-friendly and customizable as part of a balanced, holistic lifestyle focused on prevention and wellness.

On Nalanda university living up to the ethos of its ancient namesake

Nalanda is a pride for all, being the mother of universities. It stemmed from the ancient guru-shishya tradition,



but innovated by institutionalizing education during the Gupta dynasty, creating a residential campus supported by society. This organized interaction from across the world made significant contributions. Though Nalanda was destructed, the guru-parampara tradition persisted, preserving knowledge like Ayurveda.

Nalanda's revival aims to recover and share knowledge promoting peace and understanding. It integrates traditional wisdom with modern disciplines like environmental studies, finding convergence points. The focus remains on interactions that drove progress historically, exemplified by yoga's global embrace today.

There is no end to learning, because when a society stops learning it signals the end of civilization. There's always more to explore. The present day Nalanda University aims to rediscover and share knowledge promoting peace and understanding by integrating traditional wisdom with modern disciplines.

Its mandate like its ancient namesake is convergence - finding common ground between streams of knowledge for mutual progress and harmonious living.

On how to integrate Ayurveda in the wellness industry

Ayurveda offers more than just consumable medicinal products; it provides a holistic lifestyle approach to prevention and wellness. Rather than merely addressing specific ailments, Ayurveda aims to promote overall physical, mental, and emotional well-being through balanced living.

From digestion to neurological and ophthalmological issues, Ayurveda provides comprehensive solutions tailored to individual needs and desired level of engagement with the system. The West better recognizes Ayurveda's holistic healthcare benefits, while in India,

there’s often a misunderstanding, viewing it narrowly as medicine rather than an all-encompassing way of healthy living.

On how to go about seeking ayurvedic or any traditional treatment

Finding authentic Ayurvedic services and products is quite accessible, especially in Kerala where Ayurveda is deeply rooted. Kerala offers renowned institutions specializing in various treatments like ophthalmology, rheumatology, and general wellness – some with decades of tradition. However, for consumers outside Kerala, discoverability remains a challenge. While reputable, credible Ayurvedic centers exist across India, locating and accessing them can be difficult without proper guidance or recommendations. This lack of streamlined information and trusted sources poses an obstacle for those seeking quality Ayurvedic healthcare from their location.

On how to make Ayurveda as a mainstream healthcare system and where should a consumer begin the Ayurveda journey

While much ancient Ayurvedic text was once lost, it has been rediscovered, digitized, and is currently undergoing scientific examination. Ayurveda is a comprehensive healing system centered on an individual’s distinct mind-body makeup (prakriti) and the three vital forces (doshas) that govern human physiology. Treatment modalities focus on thoroughly understanding the patient’s prakriti, implementing lifestyle and dietary adaptations aligning with seasonal cycles (ritucharya), and panchkarma – a detoxifying purification therapy.

As wellness and herbal medicine markets rapidly expand, key challenges involve sustainably procuring authentic, high-quality botanical raw materials and building a robust workforce of skilled Ayurvedic professionals. Historically, students pursued Ayurveda after failing to gain admission into modern medicine programs. However, this trajectory has shifted, with educated students now intentionally choosing Ayurvedic education driven by escalating public interest. With governmental backing and industry momentum, Ayurveda’s renaissance holds great promise if lingering gaps in implementation are effectively bridged.

On ancient learning that can be applied to areas like architecture and urban planning

In India, the previous generation experienced vastly different lifestyles and education environments across villages, towns and cities. Their grounded, active rural upbringing contrasted with the artificial comforts and

physical inactivity of contemporaries in bigger cities. This highlighted the importance of lifestyle in maintaining not just health, but a rooted mindset.

The Nalanda University’s philosophy emphasizes living harmoniously with nature and fellow humans, not conquering the environment. Its net-zero, nature-friendly campus incorporates ancient architectural techniques like cavity walls and rainwater harvesting. Students experience an immersive connection with their natural surroundings.

Lifestyle corrections involve inner faith – in goodness, nature, medicine and wisdom traditions – balanced with a spirit of inquiry. Education plays a vital role in fostering this mindset convergence of modern facilities with traditional ethos. Synergizing ancient knowledge systems with contemporary advances is key to holistic living and progress.

On the strategies that wellness businesses can adopt to enhance their global appeal, especially in the context of India’s global positioning

India possesses a vast repository of ancient knowledge systems like Ayurveda, though faith in these traditions has wavered over time. However, this extensive wisdom combined with India’s rich biodiversity and abundance of medicinal herbs presents immense opportunities to innovate and globalize Ayurveda as a multi-billion dollar industry.

The current potential spans functional foods/ingredients, cosmetics, lifestyle solutions for mental health, healthcare services like panchakarma, herb cultivation, and more. Scientific validation through modern disciplines like molecular biology can harness this knowledge to develop new products and overcome raw material shortages.

While preserving Ayurveda’s core traditional practice, there is a need to reposition and reformulate it for contemporary global audiences with different lifestyles and needs. This could mean creating easily consumable formats like drinks, gummies etc. rather than conventional preparations. Customizing solutions based on modern requirements around “what, how, when and where” to consume is key to unlocking Ayurveda’s vast commercial prospects, similar to how yoga gained worldwide adoption.

India must have faith in its ancient wisdom, scientifically validate it, innovate based on it, and globalize Ayurvedic solutions to capitalize on this tremendous opportunity.

On how Ayurveda can be a mainstream health system worldwide

The Chinese herbal medicine market commands a 90-92% global share, while the Indian herbal market lags behind despite equal potential. Ayurveda considers the physical and mental faculties as an integrated whole, unlike modern medicine’s segregated view, which can pose treatment challenges.

Ayurveda offers various psychoactive herbs like Brahmi, Ashwagandha, and Jatamansi to enhance mental faculties like memory and manage stress/anxiety. However, treatment holistically combines medication with diet, lifestyle, and conduct (achar rasayan) for overall wellness.

As modern science progresses, it is re-embracing Ayurveda’s focus on immunity and prevention, evident in emerging approaches like immunotherapy for cancer. Ayurveda’s immunomodulatory herbs like Sitopaladi enable innate resistance against diseases like tuberculosis. Reversing heart disease is also possible through Ayurvedic lifestyle interventions that improve circulation and tissue oxygenation.

With its integrated, preventive mindset, Ayurveda aligns with the changing trajectory of modern medicine, further highlighting its contemporary relevance across ailments as people understand and adopt its holistic approach.

On validation of ancient knowledge through research and experiment

The National Education Policy has facilitated integrating Indian knowledge systems like Ayurveda with modern methodologies at institutions like Nalanda University. The aim is to conclusively establish the contemporary relevance of ancient wisdom through experimentation and validation, without disregarding traditional knowledge. Nalanda strives to reorient education from merely “learning to do” towards “learning to be” – promoting a lifestyle grounded in holistic well-being, as envisioned by Swami Vivekananda. This lifestyle correction approach combined with Ayurveda’s recent academic and commercial progress holds promise for holistic development.

Dialogue on Volunteering: Leveraging People Power for Change

Volunteering plays a very important role in the development of a nation. In India especially it can help in shaping behaviour change, plugging last mile gaps in service delivery and paving the way for empathetic and inclusive development. India@75 is a strong proponent of volunteering and actively advocates for its institutionalisation, through strategic platforms one of which is its annual event - the National Volunteering Week (NVW). In the course of NVW 2024, it held a dialogue with eminent names working in this space to understand how India can build an ecosystem that leverages the power of people to fuel change.



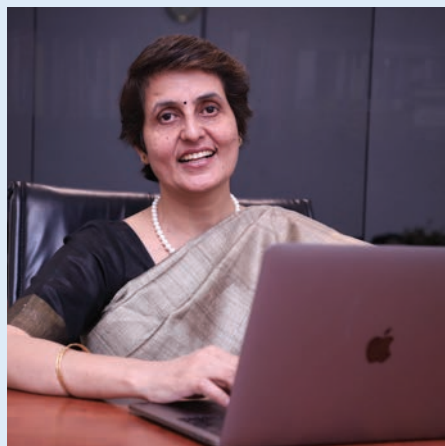
Preeti Khattri, Managing Director, Strategy & Consulting, Talent & Organization, Accenture in India



Chetan Kapoor, Chief Executive Officer, Tech Mahindra Foundation



Jayanti Shukla, Chief Executive Officer, United Way India



Dr Vinita S. Sahay, Director, IIM Bodh Gaya



Abhimanyu Sahu, Chief Operating Officer, Schneider Electric

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

On the volunteering landscape for India at 100 and its evolution over the next 25 years

» Currently optional, it should become an integral part of the social fabric.

» By the year 2047, India will be a more developed and equal society. People will be open to the idea of volunteering their time and effort and even giving away part of their wealth for a good cause. This has already been a trend over the last two decades.

» CSR in India tends to revolve more around philanthropy, but today voluntary contributions and leveraging the skills of people are far more important. In the next 25 years, there will be an increase in digital volunteering and a greater exchange of skills in the voluntary sector, whether it's in health, education, or any other area of development.

» There will be more collaboration between NGOs, corporations, and the government. Working together, we can promote and facilitate more voluntary efforts.

» 65% of the population is below 35. This is a population that is very high in integrity. It says and does what it really thinks. It is also a generation that has not grown up with scarcity and, hence, is more open to giving.

» Academia will have to play a very important role in raising socially responsible and mindful leaders. Volunteering too can, to a large extent, help in this process. It creates a collective swell, collective inspiration, and collective enthusiasm.

On strategies that organisations should deploy to ensure that volunteer efforts are sustainable and contribute to long-term community development

» Volunteering is not a function of the number of hours contributed; it's about the value being brought to the table. Post-Covid, there has been a very real change in the manner in which employees want to contribute to meaningful causes. Organisations should leverage this by planning strategic volunteering activities, spread over a period of time, that can help bring measurable change to the community. Currently, most volunteer activities are ad hoc and not as fulfilling for those who want to engage.

» It is important to create a bouquet of options for people



to choose from to make the best use of their skills and proclivities.

» It's very important to let volunteers know of the impact that they have helped create.

» It is helpful to earmark certain days for volunteering to keep the debate on this issue high and help mainstream it in the corporate culture.

On some of the best practices in volunteering that India Inc. can adopt from around the world

» The top leadership needs to commit to a social vision, one that must be manifested inside the organisation as well as in the larger society. It is helpful when a cohort of leaders drives impact because it sends out strong signals in the corporate world about values-driven leadership and corporate culture.

» Go deep, not wide. This brings focus, creates impact, and helps spread interest amongst the employees.

» It is important to have measurable targets against which to plan activities and evaluate efforts. This helps in mobilising volunteers.

On facilitating greater youth involvement in volunteer activities to contribute to the overall development of the community

» Youth need to be shown the way; their vision will create the destiny for the nation.

» They must be shown how the smallest of efforts can bring about tangible change. When there is proof of concept, groundwork will happen.

» There should be an effort to make it cool to be a giver. This will help bring more youngsters into the giving fold, where giving means volunteering one's time and skills for social and environmental causes.

» The joy of giving is addictive; once the youth have had a taste of grassroots issues, they will continue to engage well beyond their campus years.

On the role of volunteering in contributing to the culture of social responsibility and increasing employee engagement

» A culture of volunteering that helps increase employee engagement also attracts talent.

» The humdrum of daily life can make it easy for employees to lose touch with the ground realities. Volunteering helps employees get an opportunity to actually participate in addressing some social issues and environmental challenges, fostering a sense of commitment to society and environmental challenges. It also helps them make sense of corporate commitments, whether through CSR or otherwise.

» Volunteering also helps foster empathy, teamwork, and collaboration because it brings on the realisation that nothing can be done alone. It also helps people develop their leadership qualities, which in turn benefits organisations.

On advice to organisations looking to start or enhance their volunteering initiatives to maximise their impact on social change

- » Start off small. Start off with a vision.
- » Arrive at the vision using a bottom-up approach instead of top-down. Ask the employees what they would like to work on, and then use the data to distil the vision.
- » Align this with the organisation's core values to keep it relevant and a priority.
- » Focus on one cause and then link it to targets. Short-, mid-, and long-term targets help keep things actionable. Never lose focus, and stick to collaborations and interventions that link directly to the vision.
- » Build collective awareness around social obligation and responsibility.
- » Identify the right partners who can help the organisation reach its social goals, and then engage deeply with them.

» Find the right people to lead the programmes—people who proactively reach out to be a part of the programme. These are people who have deep personal reasons to want to engage; having such people at the helm almost guarantees success.

» It is also helpful to identify and bring on board someone from the top leadership to give the programme stature and momentum.

» Look at campuses as possible pools for volunteers beyond those available in the organisation.

» Evaluation and monitoring mechanisms must be put in place to keep volunteering activities focused and impact-driven.

» Celebrate the volunteers publicly and give them their due credit. This is important in what is fast becoming a dog-eat-dog world.

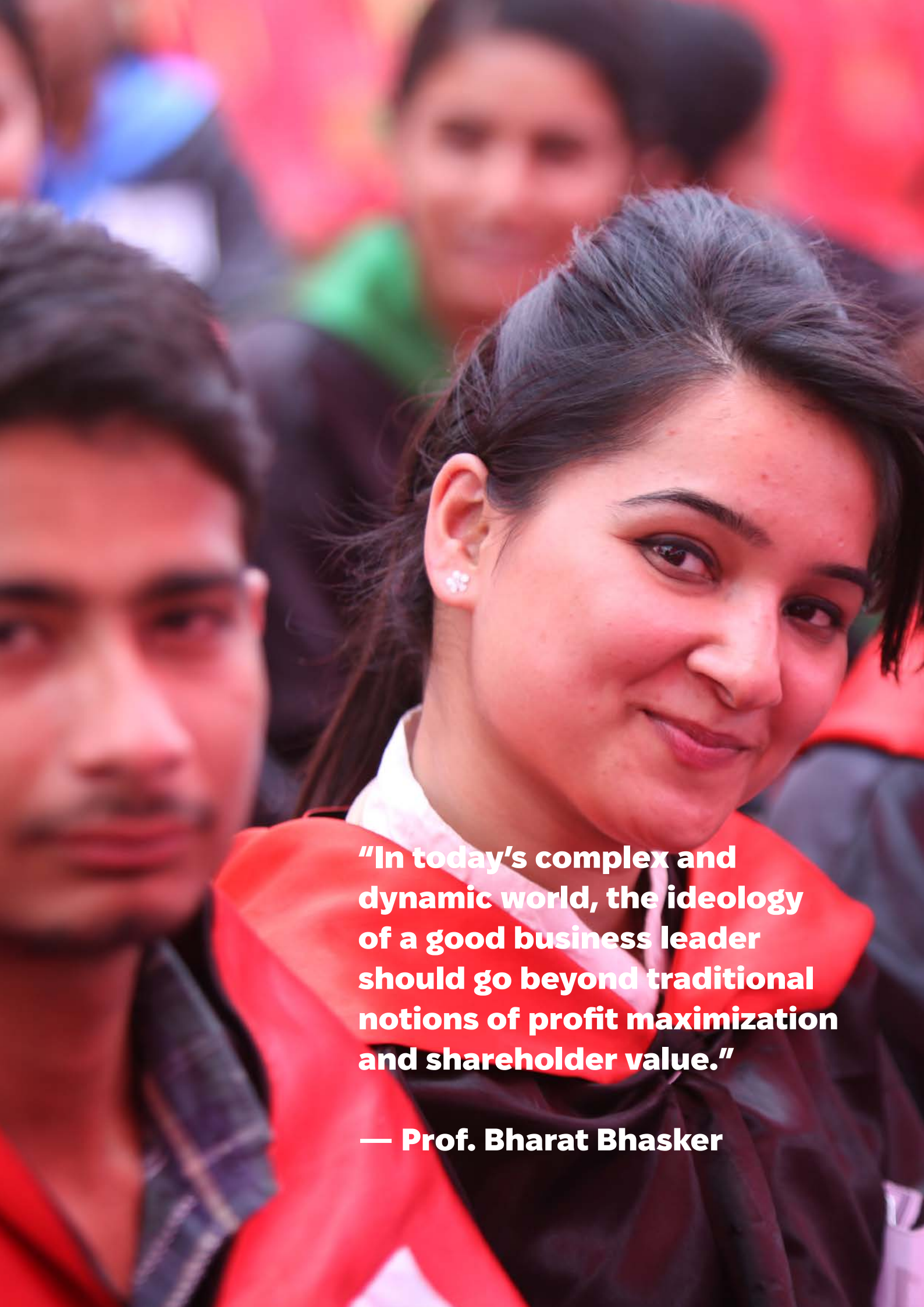
On how volunteering can be institutionalised in the country

- » Encourage volunteering from a young age at school. There should be some credit in the education system for volunteering.
- » Make Indian business schools more oriented towards creating socially responsible leaders.
- » The government can create a digital volunteering ecosystem on the scale of Aadhar to give more people the opportunity to volunteer.
- » Give tax offsets to smaller businesses in exchange for volunteering hours.



CHANGESPEAKE

CHANGESPEAKE, a series of interviews with people who are creating the language of change. India@75 reaches out to individuals are shaping India@100 by the dint of their perseverance to understand what drives them to act upon their belief in India and how they hope this will shape the nation in the making.



"In today's complex and dynamic world, the ideology of a good business leader should go beyond traditional notions of profit maximization and shareholder value."

— Prof. Bharat Bhasker



PROF. BHARAT BHASKER, Director, Indian Institute of Management(IIM), Ahmedabad

Professor Bharat Bhasker is an experienced Information Technology leader with almost three decades of experience in industry, research, teaching, and consulting in India and globally. He brings rich industry experience to his academic tenure having held senior positions at reputed global organisations such as the Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA, SYBASE Inc. and MDL Information Systems.

In his conversation with India@75, Prof. Bhasker touches on issues that need urgent consideration: the need for interdisciplinary studies, the evolving role of technology in shaping social and business decisions and importance of raising good business leaders.

How do you foresee the role of technology shaping India's progress in the next decade, particularly in areas like digital transformation and business analytics?

The next decade for India will be tech-fuelled with digital transformation and business analytics playing a crucial role in driving the economy. From widespread adoption of 5G and fibre networks to empowered government services and from data-driven business decision making to AI-powered government initiatives, digital adoption is set to impact every aspect of our lives.

Businesses will rely on data-driven decision making, undertake AI-powered risk analysis to enhance their risk management strategies and to ensure financial stability and operational resilience. We can expect more personalised customer experiences, far-reaching digital literacy initiatives that will empower marginalized communities, greater access to education and healthcare, etc.

However, there are challenges that will need to be addressed if the power of this technological revolution is to be harnessed to its maximum potential. There is need for robust data governance frameworks and stringent regulations to ensure data security and privacy. Furthermore, this digital boom will bring in the need for a workforce that has relevant skills. Hence, there has to be adequate focus on skilling. We must also think of ways to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban areas. Another key factor is to ensure responsible AI development and deployment to ward off untoward consequences.

In your opinion, what role can academic institutions play in preparing the next generation of business leaders to address the challenges posed by rapid technological advancements, and how can they bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application?

Academic institutions shoulder the responsibility of training and developing talent that is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and adaptability to thrive in the ever-changing landscape of business and technological advancements. As educators, we need to reimagine the curriculum, integrate technology, foster critical thinking and problem-solving among our students, provide them the much-required exposure to real-life business challenges through collaborative projects with the industry, and thereby equip them for the future.

At IIMA, we follow the Case Study Method, which allows students to immerse themselves into real-life challenges and come up with solutions. Our academic offerings are

reviewed and updated periodically to keep pace with industry demands. Our long-standing association with the industry combined with the research undertaken by our Research Centres allows us to bring real-world challenges into the classroom and, therefore, allow our students to be at par with industry expectations. Our students also get the opportunity to work on projects with the industry, and, thereby, grow into innovative, ethical, and responsible leaders.

Taking note of the widespread proliferation of AI, we have also included courses and electives that have been designed specifically based on research-driven insights. Through this, we enable our students to have a holistic view of the industry and foresee the trends to stay ahead of the curve. While we endeavour to match our pace, it is important to remember that this is a continuous process and academic institutions will take a while to completely adapt and evolve. In such a scenario, collaborations with the industry are mandatory as they facilitate effective, relevant and continuous learning.

As someone deeply involved in IT education, what are your thoughts on the role of interdisciplinary studies, combining IT with fields like business and analytics, in preparing students for the evolving demands of the industry?

Interdisciplinary studies are absolutely crucial. Today, technology is integral to every facet of business – from marketing to finance and from customer service to product development. Hence, equipping students with the knowledge, skills and training to think holistically across disciplines is critical in today's world.

When you bring together different disciplines, you create a fertile ground for innovation and creativity. Interdisciplinary studies can help students think outside the box, come up with new ideas, and develop solutions to complex problems.

The need for interdisciplinary studies is critical now more than ever. The industry is in a constant state of flux, and it needs leaders who are not only adept at their core skills but also are aware of the other components that impact their business.

Disruption is a continuing phenomenon and business leaders now must have the foresight and tact to predict trends and anticipate disruptions to keep their businesses resilient. By embracing interdisciplinary studies, we can prepare the next-generation of professionals who not only possess the business acumen but are also technically skilled, well-rounded, adaptable, and ready to lead in

the ever-evolving world of business.

With a focus on your interests in Data Analysis, how do you see the evolving landscape of data-driven decision-making influencing India's business and policy domains, and what steps can be taken to harness the full potential of data analytics in the country?

Data holds tremendous potential and is poised to revolutionize both business and policy domains. Businesses are already relying on data insights to design and optimize their marketing campaigns, offer personalized experience to their customers, undertake risk mitigation and fraud detection, optimize logistics, improve inventory management, etc. In the future, we will see data-driven decision spread further due to its efficiency and accuracy.

In the policy space, we can expect greater evidence-based policy making, transparency and accountability. Data analysis can help predict and prepare for natural disasters, saving lives and minimizing economic losses.

To unlock the full potential of data analytics, we need to first develop robust data infrastructure, foster data literacy by training both the workforce and the public on data interpretation and analysis, strengthen data privacy and security by implementing water-tight protection regulations and lay down ethical guidelines to ensure responsible data use. Collaborations between the government, academia, and private sector to share data and expertise for collective benefit is a great way to do this.

By embracing these steps, India can leverage data analytics as a powerful tool for progress, driving economic growth, improving public services, and creating a more equitable and data-driven future.

In today's world, in your opinion what should be the ideology of a good business leader? Are our business schools geared towards shaping such leaders?

In today's complex and dynamic world, the ideology of a good business leader should go beyond traditional notions of profit maximization and shareholder value. A good business leader should operate with a clear sense of purpose which aligns with social and environmental responsibility, embrace a stakeholder-centric approach, displays integrity and ethical conduct and makes decisions with transparency, fairness, and accountability, respecting all stakeholders and upholding high ethical standards.

Furthermore, a good leader should be agile and adapt-

able to the rapidly changing environment. They should encourage innovation, embrace new technologies, and be open to learning and evolving to stay ahead of the curve.

However, above all, a good leader must understand the humane value of business. Building strong relationships with employees, customers, and partners is crucial. Leaders should lead with empathy, understand diverse perspectives, and foster a collaborative and supportive work environment.

Ultimately, the future of business leadership lies in embracing a broader, more human-centered ideology that

balances profit with purpose, ethics, and responsibility. Business schools have a vital role to play in equipping future leaders with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to navigate this complex landscape and lead their organizations towards a more sustainable and equitable future.

By incorporating these changes, business schools can play a crucial role in shaping the next generation of leaders who are not only financially savvy but also ethical, responsible, and focused on making a positive impact on the world.



“When you empower professionals to become better versions of themselves, they in turn deliver great services to consumers and carry the brand forward.”

— Abhiraj Singh Bahl



ABHIRAJ SINGH BAHL, Co-founder, Urban Company

Abhiraj, is one third of the trinity that founded the Urban Company in 2014, to address a huge need—that of trained and reliable professionals such as electricians, carpenters, and plumbers. A decade down the line, Urban Company is the largest home services platform in Asia. It links professionally trained service providers with consumers who require their services, thereby letting the latter book quality services from the comfort of their home. Today, Urban Company has not only a major presence in India but is also widening its footprint in Singapore, the UAE, and Australia. In this conversation with India@75, Abhiraj touches on the importance of skilling, the potential of digital technologies to catalyse transformative change, the need to establish the dignity of labour, and most importantly, how to carry everyone along in the development journey.

On the journey of Urban Company – from idea to impact.

Our journey started in November 2014, we were known as Urban Clap then. The three co-founders Varun (Khaitan), Raghav (Chandra) and I come from different backgrounds. We had all worked abroad but returned to India, wanting to start something of our own. One of the areas that caught our interest was the local services sector.

Finding a plumber, electrician, cleaner, carpenter, or a beautician was not easy. Especially a skilled one. We began to spend a lot of time with service professionals trying to understand why they struggled to deliver a high quality experience to end consumers. Was it an intent problem, or something else? What we found in those initial conversations was that most of the professionals lacked opportunities not intent. Most depended on local contractors and middlemen who sucked out all the profits from the value chain without adding commensurate value back into the system especially for these service professionals. Many of these professionals came from small towns and villages and had very little in terms of skills or tools to add value to their service. Most did not even have the basics for business such as access to bank accounts and credit. And as for the consumers, the level of professionalism, quality and convenience they were looking for was completely missing in the industry.

The more we did our research, the more it became evident that the space was ripe for disruption. The demand side had several pain points while the supply system was fragmented and fractured. There was immense potential in organizing the entire services sector in the country in terms of quality control, technology and robust processes. Importantly we could see that over the next 10-15 years the space was bound to get organized and move from local, unorganized fragmented offline, to organize standardized online. We just wanted to be the folks to lead the change.

What were some of the challenges you faced in the early days and how were those addressed?

Hindsight is 20x20. Today Urban Company seems like a good idea. But in the early days there weren't too many believers. I guess for most people, it was very hard to imagine a start-up trying to organize the informal sector. That's understandable because this sector has people who we tend to write off. We would hear things like where will you find them, how will you train them? How are you even going to get them to use smartphones? Well, just then the smartphone revolution happened and the rest say is history.

Today, Urban Company has more than 50,000 care-fully-selected service professionals all of whom have been trained by us. We have a large footprint of training infrastructure across the country where we train thou-sands of professionals every month. There are about 250 plus training centers and a team of more than 300 full time trainers.

We also help these professionals with the right tools, the right products, the right SOPs. and take care of all their other needs, from opening up a bank account to accessing credit. Every professional gets a free life, accidental and health insurance cover from the company. Many of our top rated professionals also gave family health insurance. We have recently launched a stock option program for service professionals where the best performing professionals are awarded Stock Rounds at no cost as recognition of their merit.

What we’ve essentially done is gone deep into the service professional side of the ecosystem, built a full stack platform, not just technology, but training products, credit insurance, in short everything they need. Our belief has been that if you can empower professionals to become better versions of themselves, then they will in turn, deliver great services to consumers and carry the brand forward.

There’s still a fairly long, long arduous journey ahead. We’re probably scratching the surface because India has millions and millions of people who are involved in these trades. We’re very excited by the future.

On how UC onboarded service professionals in the early days when there was no prece-dent for the business model

The hardest is the early set of professionals. In a tech-nology marketplace, once you have the flywheel going, others come join via word of mouth. I think getting the first 100-200 is often the hardest. It was mostly my co-found-ers and I, who would go out to the field and meet the professionals individually. We would spend hours with some of them, make repeat visits just trying to convince them. The onboarding of each and every one of the first lot that signed up, is a story in itself.

The best part about the world is that there’s no dearth of optimists out there. One thing that I have learnt through the course of this journey is that we only assume a binary - that people will either look at a glass as half full or half empty. But there are always those who believe that this glass can also be refilled, - we were fortunate to have met those people. I think the first 100 professionals, were really just taking a leap of faith when they joined us.

Today, many of them are still with us. Some of them have gone on to buy their homes and cars, they’ve put their kids in grade schools, some have become trainers on the platform and full time employees .

On hindsight, there’s no silver bullet just old school rigour; go and meet people physically, spend time with them, break bread with them and show them your vision. Once you have the critical mass, it is about positive word of mouth.

On how much ground has been covered by digital transformation in the country in the last decade

I am amazed by how much ground the country has covered in terms of digital transformation in the last decade. In 2013, when we first started thinking about UC, we heard people say it was a wild dream because service profes-sionals in India would not have a smartphone. A part of me that was worried and thinking this could be true. I thought, maybe they would actually never come around buying a smartphone. In fact, I remember meeting one of the founders of a grocery delivery company and thinking how on earth was he thinking that people in India would buy groceries online. And I guess he was thinking the same thing about the UC idea.

And, today, look at where we are. So that shows you the ground that we have covered in these 10 years. In the course of my travel to other countries, I have found that India is probably as far ahead as can be in terms of the digital ecosystem – whether it’s digital payments, digital lending or the COVID stack for vaccination during the pandemic. Plus we benefit from the world’s cheapest data. It is 1/10th the price of the next cheapest country in the world, per gigabyte of data.

The government has laid a lot of emphasis on the digital side to fuel up movements like Startup India. That’s helped make it acceptable to start a company today. When I first told my family about wanting to start something on my own in 2013, the decisions was not very welcome. They were very supportive but uneasy because there were no precedents, no unicorns or no VCs and angel investors. A decade later, we have over 50,000 start-ups, 110 unicorns and God knows how many soonicorns. A lot of credit must go to the government for creating a digital ecosystem that has made starting something on your own the preferred option amongst the youth .

Digitization is also touching organizational processes, not just on the customer side but also the b2b side. Many big industries are getting disrupted through technology and through digitization. I have a view of the world. I believe

that in the next 15 to 20 years the top three companies by market capitalization, in every single category, will be technology first companies.

On what helped service professionals, many of whom had no exposure to most basic technologies, take to digital platforms like fish to water

I’ve thought about this quite a bit over the years. I think one of the things that is very interesting and unique about India, is that we have a very, very aspirational young population. And whenever they identify something that can change their station in life, that solution organically diffuses in the market without the need for a market-ing blitzkrieg.

While our solution is designed to serve both the service professionals and consumers, it was more disruptive for the former. It created a huge change in their livelihood and in their lives. For the first time they were making middle class wages; their monthly income shot up from 13,000–15,000 rupees a month to 30,000–40,000 rupees. That’s the tipping point for a better life. A lot changes in that bracket because basic gets taken care of and there’s money left for consumerism to kick in. This is the point at which the aspirational value of the population is unlocked.

In the case of UC, service professionals adopted the solution because it meant better earnings and a better life. It was very empowering for them to be their own masters and still make a very decent income. Then there is the whole aspect of dignity of labour, both from the system and the people, which is very, very important. The UC mode of working gives them a financial identity and therefore access to banking, formal credit and insurance. Socially too, they now have a corporate identity and the power to transact on equal terms with the customer. We have a dual rating system, the consumer rates pro-fessionals and professionals rate customers. We have tried very hard to establish dignity of labour and create a respectful common ground. That has really encouraged many service professionals to join us.

I remember this one time where there was a major dis-ruption one of our cities, because a local politician was unhappy that people of his caste was being recruited by us to clean bathrooms. He wanted us to give them different assignments. We took a stand and did not ac-commodate this view. At UC, we believe religion, caste, color, gender, doesn’t matter, what matters is aptitude and the skill level. Some people complain on social media about being sent people of different religions and our response is always the same – UC is not the place for these kinds of consumers.

On signing an MoU with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to train and certify professionals

Skilling and training have always been an important part of what we do. A couple of years back, at the start of the pandemic, a lot of professionals started coming to us. This led us to think that while having professionals join us was great, we could not always rely on getting skilled professionals from the market and that at some point, we would have to grow our own timber. We would have to build the infrastructure and the training capabilities to train, teach and upscale freshers and build them into high quality service professionals through intensive training.

So, we went out to the market and started building that capacity in most of the trades including complex ones like air condition repair and service. The training we give is the best in class. But there has to be some sort of certification of the skill acquired. That is what the professionals wanted too. So, we approached NSDC and said that we provide the best-in-class training and produce the best-in-class professionals, would you consider certifying them after due diligence? They agreed, it was not a difficult to sell them the idea because they had all used UC profession-als at some point, that’s how we signed an MoU with NSDC. Today, most of the people who are joining Urban Company are freshers who have been extensively trained by us and hold a valid certificate. Customers can see the certification of the professionals on their profile page.

On brand equity being built on the strength of its engagement with issues important to society, especially the environment

All businesses will have to have a roadmap that will not just make them environmentally friendly but sustainable as well. This is the only planet we have so environment is super-critical and at UC we think a lot about this issue as well. The biggest element of our carbon element is two wheelers which our professionals use on their beat. We want to, over time, encourage replacing that with Electric Vehicles (EVs). We are also working with the government on a repair policy because we believe that household appliances and goods are better repaired than replaced.

While matters related to the environment is something that all businesses must necessarily have a view on, I am not so sure about matters related to politics or social issues. In this day and age, businesses are expected to react to every issue – that can be a distraction. My guidance to my team has always been to keep one’s head down and focus on making a positive impact on society. That’s what we work towards. That’s our reason to be.



"The private sector, with its resources and expertise, can act as a catalyst for creating a robust sports ecosystem, ensuring that talented individuals receive the necessary support to excel on the global stage."

— Shiva Keshavan



SHIVA KESHAVAN, 6-time Olympian, 4-time Asian Champion & Head Scholarships, Olympics Sports Strategy, Reliance Foundation

*India@75 Foundation had an interesting discussion with Olympian **Shiva Keshavan**, on sports, youth and what it takes to be a sporting country. Shiva was the first Indian representative to compete in luge at the Winter Olympic Games and also the youngest person in the world to qualify for the event. In 2014 he became the founder-president of the Olympians Association of India and is committed to support the Olympic movement in India. He works to promote Winter Games in India, and create an enabling ecosystem for athletes in the country.*

Looking back on your remarkable career as a six-time Olympian and four-time Asian Champion, what inspired you to pursue luge as a sport, and how has your journey contributed to the landscape of winter sports in India?

My journey in luge began with a serendipitous encounter at the age of 15 as my talent was noticed by a former sporting legend working with the International Federation. However, I was already involved in practicing various sports and specially winter sports as I am born and brought up in the hills surrounding Manali, one of the premier winter sports destinations in India.

It was a blend of curiosity and a desire to break the mould that drew me to this unique sport. Over the years, my pursuit has been fuelled by a passion to defy conventional expectations and showcase India's diverse potential and talent. My journey has been a constant pursuit of the realisation of the potential of winter sports in India and the great socio-economic benefit it can bring to individuals and communities in the mountain belt of our country.

By representing the nation in six consecutive Olympics and clinching four Asian Championship gold medals, it has hopefully brought some attention to this less known subject initiating the conversation around sports for development at both government and corporate levels while also giving confidence to young athletes that it is possible to aim for success in this field.

Being a 10 time Asian games medallist is a phenomenal achievement. What challenges did you face in maintaining such consistent success, and how do you think it has influenced the development of winter sports in Asia?

Consistency in the face of challenges and finding unique answers to these challenges in the Indian context has been a constant theme in my journey in Sport. The scarcity of winter sports infrastructure in Asia posed initial hurdles, however the abundance of natural infrastructure and potential for development provided the belief that in the near future we will have significant venues and destination in Asia for athletes and enthusiasts alike to enjoy the charm of winter sports.

The success has not only brought personal accolades but has also influenced the development of winter sports in Asia by setting benchmarks for aspiring athletes. It highlights the need for nations to invest in infrastructure, coaching, and athlete development programs to foster sustained success in winter disciplines. I am now

on several high level committees in at the NOC in India working closely with the government to develop the Khelo India Winter Games 2024 and also at a continental level with the Olympic Council of Asia to host the Winter Asian Games in countries like China 2025 and Saudi Arabia, 2029!

How do you envision the role of private organizations in fostering sports talent and promoting a culture of sports excellence in India?

Private organizations play a pivotal role in nurturing sports talent and cultivating a culture of excellence. Their involvement is crucial in bridging the gap between grassroots potential and elite performance. While government is rightly engaged in infrastructure development required for widespread sport and hosting events, elite high-performance sport requires the unique focus and efficiency the private organizations are capable of providing.

Let us not forget that Sport is a great emotional connect between businesses and fans with inherent benefits for both. Collaborative efforts with the government can establish comprehensive programs focusing on skill development, infrastructure enhancement, and talent identification.

The private sector, with its resources and expertise, can act as a catalyst for creating a robust sports ecosystem, ensuring that talented individuals receive the necessary support to excel on the global stage.

What initiatives do you think are crucial to further boost the participation and performance of Indian athletes in winter disciplines, and how can the public and private sectors collaborate to support this growth?

Initiatives to boost participation and performance in winter sports require a multi-faceted approach. Investment in state-of-the-art facilities, access to quality coaching, and exposure to international competitions are imperative.

Master planning is required in mountain and winter sport destination wherein a wholesome approach is adopted for year-round utilisation of the infrastructure. There needs to be significant attention to safeguarding the fragile ecosystems that enable this industry to flourish. All this is possible only through collaboration of public and private sector.

From a performance perspective, winter sports must be given the same funding and support currently given

to summer sports to replicate the recent growth and success of our athletes. The regulatory framework for winter sports needs a complete overhaul as we must recognise the unique challenges of this sector with regard to summer sports that have a wider geographical reach in our country.

With such an illustrious career, what legacy do you hope to leave behind, and what goals do you have for India@100?

Winter sport is a powerful medium for ushering in economic development and social mobility for a large section of society particularly in the mountain belt. Much more than the competitive aspects of sport, I would like to see activity-based tourism bringing in Jobs for local communities, physical activity to contribute to the healthy lifestyle of our youth and to reduce the dependence of drugs that is rapidly becoming an epidemic in many parts of the country.

Looking ahead to India@100, my vision is for a robust winter sports infrastructure, a flourishing talent pool, and a nation that embraces the spirit of sportsmanship. I aspire to see India as a force to be reckoned with on the global stage, not just in luge but across various winter disciplines.

As the Nation of the mighty Himalayas, there is no doubt that we have an opportunity to take a leadership role in winter sports in the region and create a robust industry that greatly impacts the lives of not only the 50 million or so people residing in the mountain belt but also to engage with the rest of our population through tourism and sport.

My legacy aims to transcend medals and records, aspiring to instil a passion for winter sports across the nation. I hope to be remembered as someone who broke barriers and paved the way for a new era in Indian sports.

How do you think India can enhance its presence in global winter sports, and what steps can be taken to bridge the gap between Indian athletes and the world's best in luge and other winter disciplines?

Enhancing India's presence in global winter sports requires strategic planning and long-term commitment. Investments in research, technology, and international exposure for athletes are essential. Collaboration with established winter sports nations can facilitate knowledge exchange and skill enhancement. Additionally, promoting winter sports at the grassroots level, identifying talent early, and providing sustained support are critical.

Climate Change is an added challenge for winter sports so we need to make smart use of the latest technologies and planning to minimise such risks. Moreover we must use the lessons learnt from developed countries to start with best practices and use this opportunity to develop in a respectful and symbiotic way with the environment. Bridging the gap involves a holistic approach, combining governmental support, private investments, and international partnerships to propel Indian athletes into the top echelons of winter sports.

As a prominent figure in Indian winter sports, how do you believe athletes and sports organizations can actively engage with local communities to promote winter sports awareness, garner support, and encourage grassroots

participation in these less conventional sports?

Athletes and sports organizations can actively engage with local communities to promote winter sports by becoming ambassadors for change. Initiatives like community workshops, school programs, and interactive events can raise awareness and garner support. Establishing winter sports clubs and leagues at the local level can create a sense of belonging and encourage grassroots participation. By connecting with communities, athletes can inspire the next generation and build a foundation for sustained growth in less conventional sports. Collaborative efforts between sports organizations, local authorities, and educational institutions can pave the way for a cultural shift towards embracing winter sports in India.

"The responsibility to create a thriving sustainability market is a collective one - stakeholders on both the demand and supply side have to be aligned to common goals."

— Rhea Singhal



RHEA SINGHAL, CEO and Founder of Ecoware

Rhea Mazumdar Singhal is the Founder and CEO of Ecoware, India's first and largest sustainable packaging company. With Ecoware, Rhea created a new packaging paradigm in India that recognized a natural, eco-friendly and easily affordable alternative to commoditised single-use plastics.

In a conversation with India@75 Rhea spoke about the sustainability imperative, the evolution of the green market and how both the demand and supply signs must evolve along common goals.

On starting Ecoware, when the sustainability market was quite primitive

Today, it's common knowledge that we ingest micro-plastics and suffer health consequences. There's ample data in the public space and people are willing to act on the information. This was not the case when we started Ecoware in India 14 years ago. People were not well-informed and therefore had not begun to join the dots between plastic, environment and health.

I wanted to help address the situation. My family and I knew from personal experience that plastic could have very serious health consequences. We felt it was important for people to make informed life choices. Just pointing out the problem was not going to help, it was important to give them solutions which would enable them to both, eat safely and not harm the environment.

My father-in-law is a serial entrepreneur. He encouraged me to go down the entrepreneurial road and design a solution. In 2009, I set up Ecoware on three pillars - Safety, Impact and Authenticity. Ecoware's reason to exist, is to be authentic, ensuring that its products make a real difference to the health of the consumer and the environment.

Setting up Ecoware in 2009 was undoubtedly challenging. Campaigns like Swachh Bharat or Clean India had not yet been initiated. Bans and regulation served as mere lip service because there was blatant disregard for them. But we firmly believed in our purpose and our product. So, we put our heads down and started to pave the way for change, one small step at a time. It has been a long journey, but a gratifying one..

On the challenges of marketing Ecoware in the early days

In the early days of Ecoware, sustainability was not a mainstream conversation. Stakeholders did not have a comprehensive understanding of the issue and were unable to empathize or engage. We had to exert significant effort to help people understand what biodegradables were and why it was important to switch.

We started working with groups such as RWAs, trade and schools to decode the plastic issue at different levels and set the ground for responsible consumption. We had to build context for people to make lifestyle changes, we had to encourage them to be first movers by showing them that moving from plastic to biodegradable packaging was both important and inevitable. It was especially important for us to build our own credibility along with a strong market case. There were no precedents in the space we

were operating in, so it was important for us to set the right one. The three pillars of Ecoware – safety, impact and authenticity stood us in good stead during this phase.

The lack of industry standards was also a challenge. For example, when a consumer asked for an eco- friendly plate, there was nothing to certify that the product given to them was in fact indeed eco-friendly. Today, I feel extremely proud that Ecoware has become the go to brand name for biodegradable plates.

The market has evolved in the last decade. It is now looking for alternatives. People come to us for bespoke solutions. They are very well informed and want to know things like what material we would be using and what its carbon footprint would be.

But there are still a lot of miles to cover. Education and awareness are still huge gaps in the country. We need to come together to create consumers who can make informed choices because that is always the better one.

On the trust deficit faced by the industry rubbing off on the sustainable product market

I can speak for Ecoware. When we began operations there were no industry standards so we went about setting them. We went to global labs and got global certifica-

tion. It was certainly not cheap for a SME like us, but we were always vocal about our intent and believed in walking our talk.

Integrity pays in different ways. The fact that we never wavered from what we wanted to achieve, helped strengthened us as a brand and opened markets for us. Today, we are innovating with big players such as Indian Railways in 2016 and have worked with organizations that have strong processes and audit systems and their partners have to meet there very strong due diligence processes.

Ultimately, everyone wants to make sure that they’ve collaborated with the right person. Besides, one can always tell who’s in it for the short term and which brand is authentic and create impact in it to make a change and it all links back to awareness and education. The more informed the consumer, the more accountable the business. The responsibility to create a thriving sustainability market is a collective one – stakeholders on both the demand and supply side have to be aligned to common goals.

On whether there are viable options to stubble burning

I’ve met other entrepreneurs who are using stubble as raw material for their products. The problem is that we’ve

not been able to scale our innovation beyond a point. As a result, only a limited amount of stubble is being used up, the rest is still being burnt.

The landscape will not change until we dive deep into the challenges of the farmer and create innovative technology solutions that do away with the need to burn. There has to be more research and greater advancements of science and technology in this space.

Large private players should coordinate with educational institutions to create technology solutions that are of commercial value to everybody. Right now, everyone is working in silos. We need to replace this with a collaborative approach that aims for holistic solutions.

On the role of platforms like CII CEO Forum for Clean Air, of which she is a part, in fostering collaborative action between different stakeholders.

I think CII has done a great job in creating a platform like the CEO Forum for Clean Air. It has the who’s who of the industry on it. What I’ve always pushed as a member is the need for us to make realistic commitments and be held responsible for them. It does not have to be for the long term; we can make commitments for the six month and follow through on what we have pledged. The beauty of the CEO Clean Air Forum is that it has cross

sector representation including from industries such as construction, transport and entrepreneurship to name a few that can play a pivotal role in shaping a solution. The platform is a real opportunity to pilot change with measurable impact.

Technology and innovation alone cannot bring about change, ultimately the way we do business has to change. In a country as large as ours, the only sustainable solutions will be the ones that are worked out jointly. And that is where platforms such as the CEO Forum become so important.

On pitching the idea of a new India to the youth

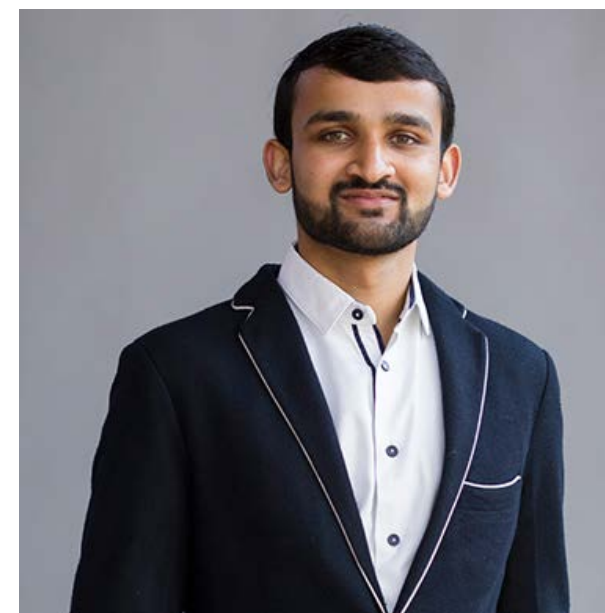
I love the fact that the next generation is very focused about wanting to create change. I would like them to incorporate measurable impact as their business objective. I often tell them as long as the intent behind their action is right, they will have the power to bring about transformative change.

The presence of entrepreneurs is crucial in expanding these initiatives, and the significant benefit of CII lies in its capacity to facilitate the scaling up process through effective policy advocacy.



"If we put a proper waste management system in place, a lot of things can be recovered and reutilized. This, in turn, can make us more independent. We can reduce our imports, create jobs, and have a greener environment."

— Shriyans Bhandari



SHRIYANS BHANDARI, CEO and Founder, GreenSole & Director, Heritage Girls School

In 2015, Shriyans Bhandari, then a college student who ran marathons, was concerned about the sports shoes that athletes had to discard frequently. He knew they went to the landfill and contributed to the already gargantuan problem of waste management, and decided to put his mind to find a solution.

Thus was born GreenSole Foundation—an organization that upcycles discarded footwear and clothes into comfortable slippers, bags, mats and other articles and provide them to children in need.

In a freewheeling conversation with India@75, Shriyans shares his views on the importance of waste management, the rise of social enterprises, the role of India Inc in accelerating development, and what the country can do to bring about positive change in the environment.

On the origin of GreenSole

It started in 2015. Ramesh, the co-founder of GreenSole, and I are athletes. We used to discard a lot of sports shoes, and we knew that they would all go to landfills. There was no alternative because there was no other way of using these footwear.

We started thinking about how these shoes could be used in a better way. So we started upcycling them into footwear, and later on, when we started to receive CSR support, we expanded to materials and retail with a focus on sustainability.

I think it was only our personal problem that led us to think about this issue and come up with an innovative alternative. At that time, it was very new; people didn't know much about recycling or upcycling. In fact, the idea is quite new, even today.

On the initial challenges faced while seeking support

We were in college when we started working on this idea. People were much more supportive, especially the athletes from our athletic group. They were able to give feedback on how to improve the product and secure funding.

The government had launched CSR initiatives at that time, which became a starting point for us. Corporates have a responsibility towards the community, and we were addressing waste management and environmental concerns, which piqued everyone's interest.

This gave us a start; we obtained CSR funds, pooled in some money from our families, did some crowdfunding, and were able to start a small unit and receive a few grants to begin upcycling.

Our project gained a lot of media coverage due to the novelty of the idea. For a new enterprise, this media coverage provided a significant push. Without it, I believe it would have been difficult to advertise and attract attention. The media coverage really helped us move the idea forward. On how GreenSole works

We have different modes of operation. We have divisions for upcycling and recycling. Initially, we started with upcycling. Essentially, we take the old shoe as a template and have a process to convert it into useful products. For example, we take the old shoe and turn it into a slipper, or we use the material to create bags, mats, and other items. We receive a recycling fee from different companies like Adidas, Sketchers, and others for this service.

This is primarily our model. The particular aspect of this model is its social service component—all the products are donated to children in need across India. To date, we have supported around 600,000 children in need and prevented 600,000 pairs of footwear from ending up in landfills.

We’ve also ventured into recycling, where we use materials that cannot be upcycled entirely. About 15% of the material becomes waste. To address this, we incorporate materials like coffee and sugar cane plant fibres to create a new material. This material is then sold to different companies, who can then use it for various purposes.

Additionally, we have entered the retail sector. This allows customers to purchase sustainable products, not just beneficiaries. These three verticals constitute our business model: customer retail, materials, and upcycling solutions. We have participated in and won awards at events like the G20 event organised by the CIA Young Entrepreneurs Alliance, showcasing our success as a startup..

On whether the recycling and retail businesses work differently from the upcycling business

We used to seek support once because we were just getting established. But now both are separate. We are looking for investors in the retail space who can help us scale the materials and retail business. CSR is well-funded, and it’s doing quite well, regularly increasing the funders,

and overall, it has gained credibility.more informed the consumer, the more accountable the business. The responsibility to create a thriving sustainability market is a collective one - stakeholders on both the demand and supply side have to be aligned to common goals.

Views on supplementing the NGO and philanthropy model with social-tech startups and impact investors

Both have an equal role to play. About \$3 billion is being invested or donated through CSR every year. So it is getting well channeled. The government is also strict on FCRA and on the donors, and overall, the money is reaching the right places. The social sector is becoming more efficient in fund utilisation and helping the government reach its SDG and other goals.On the role of platforms like CII CEO Forum for Clean Air, of which she is a part, in fostering collaborative action between different stakeholders.

On the three or four things India should focus on, over the next 25 years, to get the environment back in order

Every city has a dumpyard on its outskirts. There’s no proper recycling or any other sort of waste management system. We should have proper facilities, processes, and accountability. If we put a proper waste management system in place, a lot of things can be recovered and re-utilized. This, in turn, can make us more independent. We

can reduce our imports, create jobs, and have a greener environment.

Recycling should be taken up; nothing should be just dumped. Everything has to have a second use and has to be put back in the system.

We should also be measuring carbon emissions per user. This is basically: if one is throwing this much waste, one should be penalised or incentivized, depending on whether it’s above or below a certain level. Carbon emissions could also be a part of the corporate balance sheet.

A lot can be done in the space of skilling in the waste management sector. It will create jobs and have a positive effect on the economy. We have a workforce that will be young until 2050; it’s time for them to use it in productive ways. The EU is leading the way in this space. So it’s not something that can’t be done.

On the two or three areas that the civil society and corporates can collaborate on, to bring about tangible changes in the short term

I think there is a new usage of chemicals that is causing a lot of health problems, especially at the bottom of the pyramid. This can be looked at urgently by both the industry and civil society. They should also be looking at livelihood options to stop rural-urban migration. Ultimately, it’s more about having more money in the hands

of the people in the lower classes. We need to figure out innovative ways to do so.

What’s your vision for India@100?

Every country or region has its time on the world stage. US, USSR, and then Russia, Europe, and the Middle East—their peaks are behind them. It is now time for countries like India and China, but more specifically India. By 2047, I would like to see India among the top 5 economies in the world—a fully developed country and a global leader. Everyone should want to visit it, have a good relationship with it, and want to invest in it.





"Volunteering is not just about soft skills, communication skills and social intelligence. It's about developing humility and a sense of connectedness with everyone and everything in this creation."

— Venkatesh Murthy



VENKATESH MURTHY, Founder and Chief Mentor, Youth For Seva

India@75 Foundation had an interesting discussion with Venkatesh Murthy, on the volunteering landscape in India. What began as a small platform to connect individuals to volunteering opportunities, has since grown into a nation-wide volunteering movement that provides people, especially youth, meaningful opportunities to serve the community.

Mr Murthy spoke to India@75 on how the volunteering environment in the country is evolving, his observations on youth and their potential to herald change, the opportunities in the government machinery to absorb volunteers for better service delivery and, how corporates are doing more than just ticking boxes through their CSR interventions.

How did you come upon the idea of mobilising youth to bring about change? How did you start your journey?

I have been volunteering since my college days when I was doing engineering. I used to teach college students. Most of them were commerce students. I used to read their textbooks and then teach them. Then, later on, when I went to the US, I used to volunteer in public libraries, primarily for story-telling activities for children from underprivileged families.

Since my college days, my source of inspiration has been Sri Vivekananda. His message of seeing divinity in everyone and service as the best way of worshipping the living gods

One thing I noticed when I was in the US was their structured approach. For example, when I walked into the public library, I told them I was free on Saturdays and would like to volunteer. The receptionist immediately directed me to the volunteer manager. So this role was something new. Every hospital has a volunteer manager. Public libraries have volunteer managers. So, there is an engagement mechanism, which I feel is what is missing here.

So when I was planning to relocate back to India, I was contemplating, like, what should I do? I was trying to figure out where I should volunteer, and in the process, I came across many other young people, especially at my workplace. They were also interested and were telling me If you find something, let us know too. We would like to do something, but we don't know where to start or how to go about it. So I could sense the pulse. A lot of young people want to do something for society but don't know the right way to do it. At that time, I decided to leave my job and go full-time. When I was assessing whether there was a need for this kind of platform.

So that's when I thought, If we create a structured volunteering platform that has a plan for it, there is a purpose, and each one can contribute their own available time and skill sets. And there is a team where no one feels burdened, so I need to start something on the phone and take on a whole lot of responsibility. So this was the thought process that gave us the idea of youth. First, as I said, we registered it as an organization only 5 years later, in 2012. So then it was a very informal platform. Only when we started engaging the corporate volunteers. They said we needed to work with them, and that's when we registered. So that's how it was born.

That is when I initially thought of setting up a platform. I never had an idea of starting an organization as such.

It was only a hobby I developed in 2007, but within one year we got a great response, and in 2008, when Times of India ran a campaign called Teach India, We got 3,000 volunteers from there. So that gave us such a big push, which was not anticipated because I was planning for organic growth, and this was an explosion.

I visited a few orphanages in Bangalore and noticed that many college students were coming there. But all they were doing was playing with children and taking selfies with kids, showing up the photos. So a lot of it was like a feel-good activity. But if you look back and see what value the children's lives add, there is nothing much. That's why I asked the students: What value do you think you have added? And can you make it more impactful? which is a little more long-lasting?

Is the youth a little different today? Do you think volunteering is important to shape their worldview?

If you look back, you'll see the 16-year journey. At that time, there were no mandates in colleges or even in corporations. For example, CSR (corporate social responsibility) was not mandated, and even corporate volunteering was not mandated. However, I remember going to companies like Cisco and Intel and convincing their HR departments why they should encourage volunteering. We used to make presentations for groups of 20 or 30 employees. Over time, this has become a policy in most IT companies, and not just IT but also many other companies now encourage their employees to volunteer.

Back then, we had to persuade companies. Now, companies are proactively approaching us to engage 100 or 200 employees in similar ways. The same shift can be seen in the college space. At that time, there were no mandates in colleges, and there were no incentives for students. Even now, there are no incentives for Indian students pursuing higher studies in India. Nobody recognizes volunteering, but when they apply abroad, they need volunteer experience. Mandated service has become popular recently. Initially, a few private universities introduced it, and now the AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education), the umbrella body for all engineering colleges, has mandated that students earn activity points. With the introduction of the NEP National Education Policy, service learning will become mandatory for all undergraduate students.

While it was initially our push to encourage people to volunteer, we are now inundated with too many people wanting to do something. However, when something is mandated, it also means that there are people who are not interested but are forced to do it. There should be a mix, with only the first year being mandatory to provide

exposure. From the second year onwards, it should be incentivized and recognized rather than mandated. This way, only those who are genuinely interested in volunteering will come forward, and it will be fine for those who are not interested.

Another important change I am noticing is that many people today express a desire to be change-makers. This wasn't very common in the past. When I look back, one reason for this shift is the unprecedented financial independence of this generation. In the past, my grandfather had to support fourteen children with one income, and my father had to support three children with one income. In our generation, we have two incomes and typically one or two children. The first generation of children in college today has financially secure parents, and they don't have as many family responsibilities. This newfound freedom can go in either direction. Some may indulge in mindless entertainment, always wearing headphones to listen to music, while others may turn to more extreme forms of diversion, like drugs.

In the middle, there are those who find purpose and seriously seek answers to existential questions such as, "What am I doing, and what is the purpose of life?" In our generation, these questions were often considered part of a midlife crisis at 40 or 50, but in the current generation, they are asking these questions at a much younger age, around 18 to 21. This presents a great opportunity. They are searching for meaning in life, and that's why we see many of them seeking guidance from various gurus and spiritual leaders. This is driven by the sense of boredom, which is a significant characteristic of this generation, forcing them to seek meaning in life.

Simultaneously, they are bombarded with a multitude of messages about what they need to possess in life for happiness, whereas we try to convey that true happiness and joy come from giving, not from possessing too many things.

In 2007, you were the one advocating for volunteering, now people are asking you to lead volunteering efforts, especially in the corporate world. What in your opinion has caused this change, especially, in the corporate context?

I have discussed this with many corporate leaders, especially when introducing sabbaticals that provide paid time off for employees to work with NGOs. I questioned, "Why are you spending money on sabbaticals?" When we had a few people work with the youth, including the global HR head at Infosys, Mr. Tan Murthy, he explained that in today's corporate world, leadership demands are

more related to emotional intelligence than IQ. When people volunteer, their emotional intelligence improves, and their value system is transformed. For instance, when somebody goes on a sabbatical to work with NGOs and returns after a year, their value system undergoes a significant change. They become more humble and compassionate and work better in teams. These are all intangible benefits that the company observes.

Employees also feel proud of their company for offering such an opportunity to serve others genuinely. Additionally, there are certain marketing considerations related to the company's goodwill and the pressure from clients who want to see the company making a positive impact on the community. However, these are at the corporate level. Much of the value comes from enhancing the employees' value system.

For instance, when employees volunteer, even IBM selects a few high-performing individuals and sends them to volunteer in remote countries for one month. Many companies use volunteering as a tool to develop soft skills, particularly emotional adaptability and innovation. These are the reasons I have heard from corporate leaders, and it's not just my assessment.

How would you advise parents who wish to encourage their children to become more involved in the community and engage in volunteer activities to broaden their horizons?

The younger generation, especially those in science streams who engage in competitive coaching, often becomes very isolated, especially during the critical phases of classes 10-12. I recently attended the induction program for first-year Engineering students, and what I observed from both students and teachers was that for three years, they completely missed out on developing other social skills. They are locked up in a room, going from one coach to another for competitive exams, and this results in a lack of social interaction and deformities in their ability to connect with people.

Suddenly, when they enter engineering college, they either want to let loose with a group, engaging in activities like drinking, or some become very isolated because they've never learned how to engage in face-to-face conversations. They're more accustomed to online interactions, primarily through Social Media. This is a stark reality.

However, I've found that the same young people, when given a taste of what it's like to connect with a diverse group of people, truly benefit from it. Especially when we take them to interact with children in government schools, they experience joy and fulfillment. The children

in these schools look up to them, and that emotional bonding becomes a new experience for them, as it's often missing in their own homes. This exposure and experience motivate them to continue volunteering. We don't focus on motivational talks; we simply present concrete ideas as to how they can make a significant difference in someone's life by dedicating just 2 hours per week and finding happiness.

In many cases, parents discourage volunteering, urging their children to focus solely on their studies. However, they need to understand that by engaging in social activities, their children become more well-rounded as human beings. Focusing solely on academic performance can lead to a lack of social skills and emotional intelligence, which are often missing. Institutions are witnessing a growing number of suicides, which is cause for concern. They're supposed to educate, but they're not adequately teaching life skills and how to handle emotions. Volunteering provides these valuable life lessons joyfully and engagingly, as opposed to formal classroom sessions on emotional intelligence. Through volunteering, they learn to connect with people, especially those from different backgrounds, which is essential for their personal growth.

Many times, people who grow up in upper-middle-class environments tend to interact with the same kind of people. They spend their free time on vacations in places like Singapore or Europe. However, when they engage with children in government schools, it offers them a different perspective and exposes them to the reality of a different side of society. This kind of exposure is invaluable. I'm particularly positive about the impact on the young people who are exposed to NGOs I have seen numerous college students running NGOs and doing phenomenal work. In many cases, parents discourage volunteering, urging their children to focus solely on their studies. However, they need to understand that by engaging in social activities, their children become more well-rounded as human beings. Focusing solely on academic performance can lead to a lack of social skills and emotional intelligence, which are often missing. Institutions are witnessing a growing number of suicides, which is cause for concern. They're supposed to educate, but they're not adequately teaching life skills and how to handle emotions. Volunteering provides these valuable life lessons joyfully and engagingly, as opposed to formal classroom sessions on emotional intelligence. Through volunteering, they learn to connect with people, especially those from different backgrounds, which is essential for their personal growth.

How can we ensure that the process of volunteering remains genuine and not merely a checkbox for personal gain such as earning credits or securing a job? What are some

overarching principles for everyone to follow in this regard?

I believe that if you consider multiple stakeholders, parents’ role modeling is the first thing. You, as a parent, should volunteer first. I often say that parents don’t always understand this because they have the mindset, “I wanted to learn music, so I sent my son to music class. I wanted to learn Karate, so I sent my daughter to Karate class.” However, volunteering cannot be approached in the same way. You also need to allocate time to society because children learn more through role models. That’s my point.

Furthermore, volunteering can be a fantastic family activity on weekends. When the family works together, it strengthens the family bond. So, the first piece of advice for parents is to lead by example—volunteer first. Then, don’t just tell your children to go and volunteer; actively join with them to do so.

On the other side of the coin, if your children are already volunteering, don’t stop them and insist on focusing solely on their studies. I often find that educational institutions make this mistake. I suggest a different approach: if you are a high-end school, consider implementing a twin school concept. For instance, there’s a CBSE school in Bangalore that has adopted five government schools. They share their auditoriums and engage in everyday sports activities. The teachers from the private schools conduct training programs for the government school teachers. Instead of merely providing notebooks and backs, they provide opportunities for interactions, create shared resources, and strengthen their sense of community. Sharing and caring are not subjects that should be taught in a classroom; they should be practiced in real life.

Regarding corporate organizations, I encourage them to look at their ecosystems. Consider how they are taking care of their employees, including security guards, house-keeping staff, and their families. Encourage employees to build relationships with these individuals. Oftentimes, simply talking to them can bridge the gap, even if you can’t completely bridge the financial divide. I have seen volunteers ask, “I have some used clothes; where can I donate them?” My advice is to start by talking to people around you, like construction workers or security guards. Engage with them; don’t just give. Through conversations, you can learn about their families and understand their needs.

For example, I spoke to a security guard in our apartment complex who hails from Assam. In our conversation, I learned that his son in 10th standard was not attending school. When I inquired further, he explained that he was unaware that the government schools offered an English-medium option. I encouraged him to enroll his

son in the English-medium school nearby, and he did. Last year, the boy completed the sixth standard. This illustrates my point that talking to people around you and developing connections can help you understand their needs and make a positive impact without waiting for someone to tell you what needs to be done. This applies to individuals from financially challenged families and can be encouraged in corporate settings and residential complexes.

Regarding what corporations can do to support volunteering, I believe one crucial aspect is the sincerity of their support. Many times, it becomes a mere checkbox exercise, driven by pressure from the company’s US office, which mandates a certain percentage of employees to volunteer. In such cases, it’s done more for compliance than genuine engagement. On the other hand, in some companies, the CSR (corporate social responsibility) department is very compassionate. They actively participate, come with their teams, and have a deeper understanding of the importance of volunteering.

I think having compassionate people in CSR roles makes a huge difference. We have seen people from the CSR departments who were so compassionate and down to earth and they participated and understood the ground realities. One of the ideas behind volunteering is to take individuals out of their comfort zones. The aim is not to create the same comfort when they come to volunteer. So, one message I want to convey to corporations is to challenge their employees to step out of their comfort zones.

Another recommendation for corporations is to have a reflection session with volunteers at least once a year. This session should focus on what volunteers have observed during their volunteering experiences. For instance, I recently facilitated a reflection session for employees at Texas Instruments, which turned out to be a wonderful two-hour discussion. During the session, we explored questions that arose in their minds, such as why the government school is the way it is. A free-flowing discussion with someone from the NGO sector can be beneficial. Reflection is where the learning becomes internalized, and this is a crucial aspect that many organizations overlook. It goes beyond merely focusing on the activity itself.

Considering volunteering as both an economic and social strategy, what are your thoughts on how volunteering can contribute to India’s growth ambitions in the years ahead?

That’s a crucial point you mentioned because, in a market-driven economy, If GDP is the primary growth parameter, then the rich-poor wealth divide is bound to widen. That’s how the system is set up. The only way to increase

GDP is by consuming more and more, and this will have a detrimental effect on the environment. These two aspects are interconnected. Wealth is going to grow, but the environment is going to become more hazardous. Given that, this is the direction we are heading, the question is, how can we minimize some of this collateral damage?

One way is by creating a compassionate elite. Right now, can the elite be more compassionate? Can they be more inclusive in their thinking? Can they be more sensitive? Large-scale volunteering can foster such compassionate individuals. For instance, take the example of a medical student. If they are compassionate, even if the institution is profit-focused, they may choose not to join a company or hospital that sets aggressive targets for scans and surgeries. They may opt for hospitals that are not solely target-driven or even start their social enterprise if they see it as a way to serve a larger number of people. So, the bottom line is that compassionate individuals in any role, whether it’s a political leader, corporate leader, educational leader, or doctor, are an asset. Without compassion, any role can potentially harm rather than help.

It’s not just about changing systems. Even if the best systems are in place, if people within those systems are corrupt or unethical, they can exploit the system. Volunteering can create compassionate individuals who, regardless of their roles, are less likely to exploit others or the systems they work within. This type of system is needed, both in the private sector and within the government.

With the institutionalization of volunteering, the biggest challenge right now is engagement, not the supply of volunteers. Who will absorb these volunteers? Because when NEP makes volunteering mandatory, we will have 4 million college undergraduates in India, and many of them may not be eager to engage in volunteer work.

One potential solution is embedding a volunteer system within the government itself. We are experimenting with the Labour Department because the government can provide opportunities, but many individuals may not know how to enroll in such programs. Different state governments, like in Karnataka, have schemes specifically like eShram for construction workers, but they require online registration, which many laborers may not know how to do. Thus, one of the initiatives we’ve undertaken in Youth for Seva is to train young people to understand government schemes and work with the underprivileged. This would ensure that government benefits reach their intended recipients.

When NEP makes Ultimately, the government system needs to adapt to make room for volunteers. Only then can we accommodate the growing number of young people

eager to make a difference. Otherwise, we risk seeing fraudulent agencies crop up and exploit the mandated volunteering requirements in engineering colleges, where students are paying for fake reports and certificates.

Colleges do this because, for example, one engineering college may have 5,000 students. However, it’s not the expertise or specialty of the college faculty to engage all these students in volunteering, and NGOs cannot effectively manage 5,000 volunteers. As a result, the students often resort to paying agencies to provide certificates to fulfill the volunteer requirements.

To prevent this from happening, I strongly believe that the government needs to open up opportunities for volunteer engagement. However, there is still resistance to this idea. I am actively advocating with different governments to create opportunities for people to volunteer without providing monetary incentives. This is an important aspect of institutionalizing volunteer engagement.

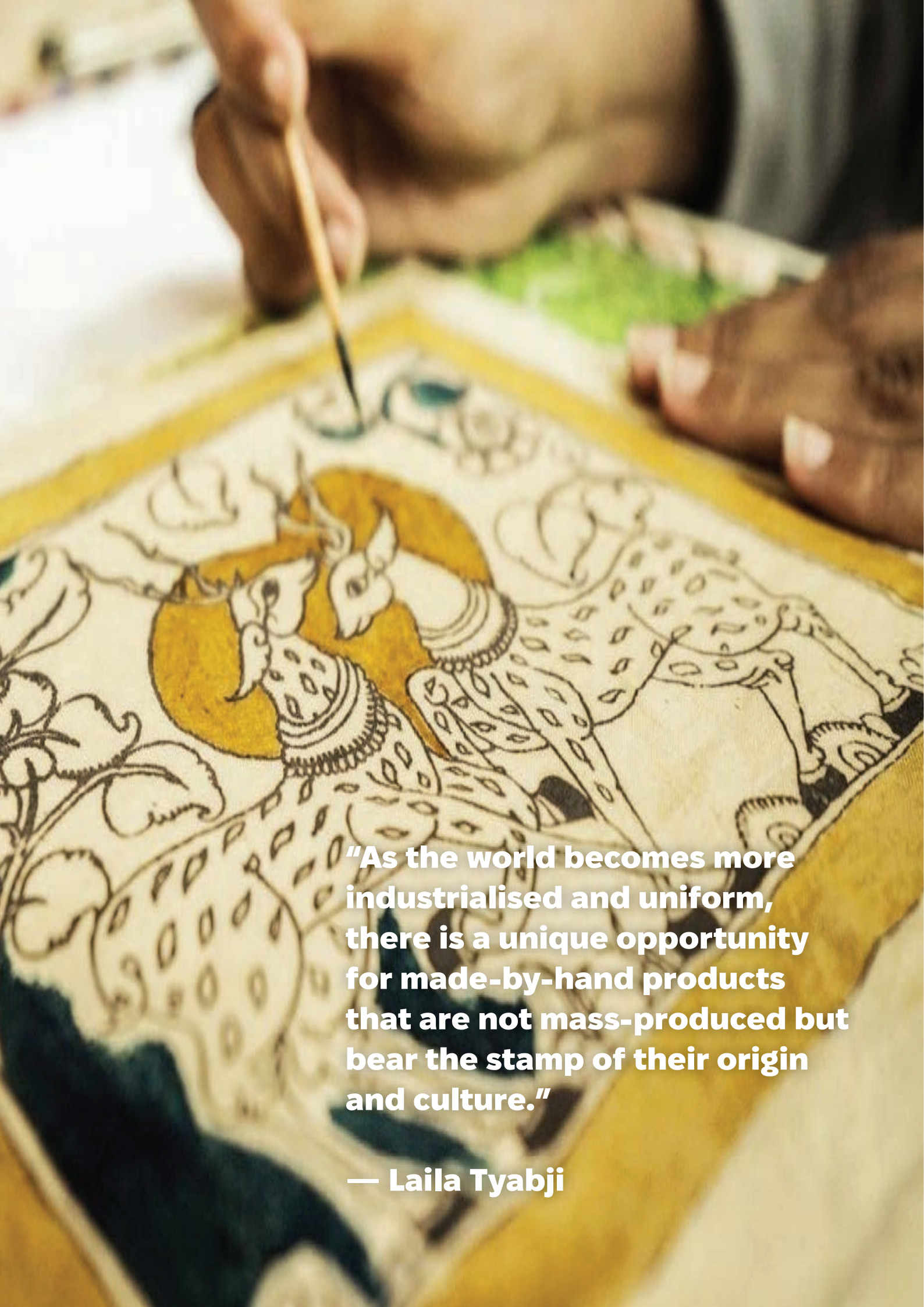
As I mentioned earlier, public libraries in India can create a role for a volunteer manager, and public hospitals can also establish a volunteer manager position. By creating these volunteer engagement systems, individuals will become more deeply involved in meaningful work.

Is making volunteering mandatory, a good way to encourage it?

I believe that the question is not really at its end. This is why we are conducting workshops for college faculty on how to effectively monitor volunteering efforts. The goal is to go beyond merely ticking a checkbox; it’s about capacity building and reorienting the leadership in colleges, hospitals, and government agencies.

It is essential that everyone, from college and corporate leaders to hospital and government officials, understand the importance of community engagement. In the past, we discussed in Karnataka’s government how the Youth Welfare Department should perceive young people not as mere beneficiaries of welfare schemes but as contributors to society. We need to enable a system where young people can actively contribute rather than waiting for government handouts. This mindset shift is necessary at all levels of leadership—colleges, corporations, hospitals, and government systems.

If we can make this adjustment, then initiatives like making volunteering mandatory in some cases or corporations making it compulsory will naturally fall into place if there is a proper mechanism. Organizations like Youth for Seva can play a role, but ultimately, this idea needs to become ingrained in the government itself.



"As the world becomes more industrialised and uniform, there is a unique opportunity for made-by-hand products that are not mass-produced but bear the stamp of their origin and culture."

— Laila Tyabji



LAILA TYABJI, Founder and Chairperson, Dastkar Society for Crafts and Craftspersons

Laila Tyabji wears many hats – writer, designer, social worker and crafts activist. She is the Chairperson and Founder Member of Dastkar, an Indian NGO that works with crafts groups across the country in order to revive the crafts of India.

In her conversation with India@75, Ms Tyabji provided interesting insights on how the issues faced by crafts people, the policy support that can help them stay relevant in the age of globalisation and, how to reacquaint children and youth with traditional craft forms.

Can you tell us about the inspiration and motivation behind founding Dastkar? What led you to start this organization?

There were five of us who began talking in early 1980 about the increasing marginalisation of the millions of skilled artisans in the Indian craft sector and how this asset was not recognised as a unique source of employment, domestic and export earnings, creative skills, and national pride. The problem seemed to be a lack of market knowledge and market access, and Dastkar was conceived as a support organisation, offering craftspeople a basket of services and acting as a bridge between them and the urban consumer. Each of us comes from a different professional background, with our own perspective, hence the holistic nature of what we offer, ranging from design and product development, costing and pricing, and visual merchandising guidance, to online and offline marketing platforms on the world.

How do we take artisanal products from class to mass in India. What can industry do to make this possible?

At the core of your question is a common misconception about craft! Indian artisans may number in the millions, but artisanal products are incredibly varied and produced by small, highly specialised communities scattered all over India. We should not think of mass orders and mass production, but think of selling craft products as unique, one-of-a-kind artistic pieces, as the Chinese and Japanese have done, and paying craftspeople fair prices for their time and creativity, leaving tourist bric-a-brac to production in semi-mechanised factories.

The skills that made the Taj Mahal are still alive today, but we encourage those artisans to make small pill boxes and coasters sold for a few dollars instead of fully utilising their full potential! We should certainly promote and market India's varied textile craft techniques and traditions, but we should not think of craftspeople as an assembly line. The whole point of handcraft is that each piece can be unique in a way that factory production cannot. It needs to be marketed accordingly, from mass to class, rather than the other way around!

In the age of globalisation and mass production, how do traditional artisans find markets for their products and compete with commercial alternatives?

As the world becomes more industrialised and uniform, there is a unique opportunity for made-by-hand products that are not mass-produced but bear the stamp of their origin and culture. It is these unique attributes we

need to promote. We should not compete with what can be mass-produced but rather design and develop products—whether garments, home accessories, folk art, or even architectural ornamentation and decor—that have to be made by hand. At the same time, we should promote crafts’ eco-friendly, green, low-carbon footprint qualities. The world is ready for it—fastly realising the wastefulness and hidden costs of fast fashion and mass production. It is India that needs to wake up to this gold mine we have and invest in it. Craftspeople do not have the resources to do so themselves; we have to do it for them.

What kind of policy support could help expand the global market for Indian handicrafts?

The demanding and volatile global market should not be our priority. Coping with its timelines, quantities, and ever-changing requirements is not easy for a rural craftsman.

India’s huge, burgeoning, and increasingly discriminating middle and upper classes should be the basic bread and butter, with the icing on the cake. Indians at every level of society still wear, use, and appreciate traditional crafts, from the terracotta cups they drink from to towering, intricately carved temples. And India is supposed to have more millionaires than any other country in the world! Craftspeople, too, are better able to understand and produce for an Indian consumer.

It is a fallacy to say the demand for crafts and handlooms has waned; it has grown with the growth of the consumer market, side by side with branded and imported goods. The advantage of being a 21st-century Indian is that we have our feet in both worlds—East and West—and can enjoy the benefits of both.

Investment, R&D, better infrastructure, and market access are the basic requirements of the craft sector, just as in any other part of the economy. We need to stop thinking of crafts producers as some primitive though picturesque part of our past and look at them as skilled professionals who need exactly the same kind of support as other industries.

How do we, as a country, reacquaint our children and youth with traditional craft forms?

This is an area I am passionate about! Young urban Indians, whether in metro cities or in small towns, know little or nothing of the wealth of Indian craft, not just as products but as a part of our cultural, social, philosophical, and

historic past that makes us so unique as a nation. Building craft education into the school curriculum is vital. Not just learning a craft (though physically “making” something is a wonderful way of hand-eye-brain coordination), but learning about its background, the region and materials from which it is made, and the significance of the colours and motifs used. A craft object can teach you so much—our artistic, cultural, mythological, and social history and geography.



"Very few things can lift the spirit of a nation the way six grammes of Olympic gold can."

— Vivek Singh



VIVEK SINGH, Co-Founder and Jt. Managing Director, Procam International

Procam International is a pioneer in the Sports Management industry in India. Since its inception in 1988, Procam has conceptualized and promoted over 100 international events across a variety of sports, that have elicited the participation of the highest calibre of athletes, as well as huge public interest and attendance. In a free flowing conversation with India@75 Foundation, Vivek Singh, Co-Founder and Joint MD of Procam International, talks about the potential sports to shape a nation and how the government and India Inc. can collaborate to change the sports narrative in India.

On wanting to change the way sports are conducted

Procam started in 1988, roughly 15 years before we held the first Mumbai marathon. Those years were actually spent conducting some of the largest tennis, squash, and horse racing events in India. We started these events to both promote the games and ameliorate the condition of those playing them.

90 percent of people today have no idea how sports were conducted back in the day. For Sportsmen, there were no good old days. Sports people were not given due recognition and the entire experience of playing was a poor one. Anil Singh (my brother) and I wanted to change that; we wanted to change the way in which sports was played and tournaments were held. With our first Standard Chartered Summer Classic Tennis Tournament in 1989, we started the process of change.

Procam put up tennis players in a five-star hotel, the players were taken from their hotel to the venue in air-conditioned buses, tournament fixtures were printed and handed out to players well in advance. That tournament shifted the paradigm for sports event in India. We raised the bar further with squash in 1993. We created an out of the world experience with an all-glass portable squash court – nicknamed the Thunderdome. The players were treated extremely well, the icing on the cake was legendary commentator Robert Edwards, who we flew down especially from Wales, and the Live Telecast, a first time for Squash in India. Procam went the extra mile long before it was fashionable to do so. We changed the way sportsmen and sporting events were treated long before it was fashionable to do so.

On bringing marathons to the mainstream in India

There was no sports management culture in India when we started. I would sit with wedding pandal decorators year after year, showing them magazine photographs of Wimbledon in the hope that they could recreate some of the ambience at the venue. Then came a point when Anil said, let's raise thing up a notch and get the marathon to India.

So, we went to take a look at the London Marathon in 2003.

What we saw just blew us away. Ordinary men and women—mothers, grandmothers, uncles and aunts, lawyers, and doctors—were running the race. Each one had this extraordinary look in their eyes—the look that belongs to athletes determined to beat the odds. It was the magic of the marathon that transformed simple, un-

assuming people into mighty warriors. Their euphoria of breasting the tape was no less than that of the Kenyans or the Ethiopians who took home the gold.

We realised that the magic of a marathon was that it produced thousands of winners. And so, we decided to bring some of that magic home. Thanks to Standard Chartered Bank in India, we were able to do so. Together, we started the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon journey, which lasted for 14 years. And then we moved to a wonderful new arrangement with Tatas, who have been fabulous. The Mumbai marathon is now the Tata Mumbai Marathon. There's also the Vedanta Half Marathon in Delhi, The TCS World 10k in Bengaluru, and The Tata Steel Kolkata 25k - in a nutshell there's a lot of running.

On how marathons have affected India

The Tata Mumbai Marathon has segued the country's needle from being purely a spectator sports nation to one that participates in sports. By the end of 2023, India will have 1600 distance races , run annually . There were less than 20,000 registered runners in 2003; today that number stands at 2.5 million. These marathons have brought about a revolution in health and fitness.

And this is what we helped with. We planted seeds in the ground when nobody could see anything, not even a sapling. There were five things we wanted to reap out of the marathons: pride for the host city, a shift towards health and fitness, an element of charity because we wanted people to run not just for themselves but also for a cause, we wanted the marathons to foster communal harmony, and finally, we wanted our runners to run against the best in the world. Today, we are really happy that marathons across the country have become synonymous with these objectives. But not everyone thought it could be so when we started.

On the significance of the marathon in a young and restless nation

The 1600 distance races, I mentioned are not happening only in cities; they are happening in smaller cities and towns and really influencing the youth. One of the biggest reasons why there is a change in the ground is that the moment you run a distance beyond 10 kilometers, you become an influencer. Suddenly, others want to know what you eat and drink; they want your advice on how to prepare; and they look up to you for what you have achieved. And so just like that, you can no longer be the person who drinks, drives, and whiles away their time; you are the sportsperson with the power to influence other young people, and that's a transformative thought. It brings with it responsible and thoughtful behaviour, and

the change is irreversible. The feeling of having people look up to you is something else.

On the things that different stakeholders can do to mainstream the culture of sports and take India from a nerdy to a sporty nation

India needs to create thousands of sporting events for people to compete in. It needs coaches and trainers; it needs infrastructure. I am very encouraged by what the government is doing to bridge these gaps. But there's still some distance to go when it comes to an enabling sports ecosystem. Creating such an environment will need funds, and India Inc. can contribute significantly here.

While sponsorship is the conventional mechanism for funding sports, the scope is limited. Currently, any kind of association with sports is seen as a marketing investment, which fetches the sponsor an ROI. That's a valid point of view for international events because of the high eyeballs and footfalls. But there is little or no ROI for sponsors at the district-level, or even at the state level. Deployment of CSR funds can actually be the much-needed game-changer for sports in India. It's a much better funding mechanism for the grassroots sporting Industry; which is still dependent on Sponsor largesse or Association dole.

However, as per India's latest CSR reporting survey, only 1.9% of the 19,000 crore rupees that came to civil society via compulsory CSR in 2019 was for sports. This is largely because of the number of riders attached to funding projects related to sports. Removing these caveats would see more money coming in from businesses. Organisations prefer to make less complicated investments and therefore usually put their money in sectors such as education, the environment, and health which are easier to fund.

Also there exists a provision under GST, wherein Sponsorship has been placed under Reverse Charge and levied an 18 % GST. This actually brings the rate on sponsoring of sporting events to a whopping 34% and is crippling the sports management industry and the Promoters of Sports. If this aberration under GST could be addressed, we would see greater enthusiasm from sports promoters and more sporting IP's being created.

Both the government and the private sector have the same vision for India when it comes to sports. It is just a question of removing the speed bumps through communication and collaboration.

On sports as a soft power and the overarching narrative

Sports is definitely a soft power. Very few things can lift

the spirit of a nation the way six grammes of Gold in an Olympic medal can. It is a great unifier and cuts across boundaries; everyone is moving fair and square towards the same goals. However, the overarching narrative of sports should be more than just the sum of its parts.

Sports is much more than just health or discipline. You can go to a gym , train with a fitness expert and get the same results. Sport is purer, more holistic. It is about building a sporting mindset; it is about learning to take failure in your stride without being defined by it; it is about falling and getting up; it is about putting the collective goal before personal glory; it is about camaraderie, friendship, and having the back of your team mates. The tennis court or the football field can offer more lessons than classrooms can.

On the power of sports to catalyse equitable development

I believe in the power of sport. I'll just give you one small example: in 2005, we came to Delhi with a half marathon.

Back then, women just didn't run. If there were 10,000 people at an event, less than 1% would be women. And those that were there, would not be in sporting gear; they'd be running in jeans and a tee. Today, the change is incredible. You cannot imagine how the simple act of distance running has empowered women. It's incredible to see what's happening all over the country. Today my entire pacer squad for the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon will be women. Pacing is the highest form of running when you take the responsibility to lead a bus. Distance running is gender neutral today; in a gender-biased society, that is a nod to the incredible power of sports.

National Vision Document

India@100

The People's Agenda



Summary of the National Vision Document

India has started on its journey of 'Amrit Kaal', a quarter-century of rapid progress and prosperity, to usher in a Viksit Bharat by 2047, when it celebrates its 100th year as an independent nation.

In 2008, CII facilitated a public visioning exercise to seek thoughts on what India needs to do to become a morally, economically, and technologically advanced nation. This was synthesized into a vision document called India@75: The People's Agenda.

The strong legacy of India@75 sets the right platform

for India@100. To develop the vision of India@100, the following four principles were followed:

- Aspirations must be developed at scale and not constrained by available resources
- Progress should accelerate the path to the future
- Achievement of vision requires innovation and next practices
- Vision roadmap should be a living document, to be updated and refined periodically

For developing the India@100 vision document, CII

undertook a broad based and rigorous exercise for dialogue on aspirations through numerous ways:

- Conferences on National Visioning Exercise on India@100
- National Survey on India@100
- Exclusive interactions on India@100 with selected people and Industry Leaders through Fireside Chats, Panel Discussions, and Interviews
- Social media Campaign on #India@100
- Brainstorming Workshops with Industry across the country
- Competitions amongst Students for India@100 through painting, poetry, and essay in schools

More than 10,000 stakeholders have directly contributed to the vision. ~1.5 million people have connected through digital means.

The India@100 vision document aims to encapsulate



the aspirations of citizens for the next 25 years across 5 pillars covering 14+ diverse themes

The overarching aspiration is for India to secure global leadership, through economic, cultural, social, and developmental dimensions – Ascend to the peak of the New World Order. Reaching this peak will require fulfilling potential in multiple areas – Maximizing economic progress, Revitalizing its soft power, Innovating to stay ahead of the curve & Transforming holistically to unlock human potential.

Ascend

India as one of the world's top three economies will leverage its economic might for a leading role in the global institutions under the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. Its views will be sought after and respected for both emerging and advanced economies and working with all friendly nations.

Maximize

By 2047, we will maximize India's economic growth and progress to become the world's third largest economy. Growth will be driven by all the three sectors: Agriculture, Manufacturing and Services.

India is envisioned to be an integral part of the global value chains and rank among the top 5 exporters in the world across a diverse range of products ranging from superfoods to robotics to professional services.

The progression to top 3 economies will need focused efforts across all three sectors by use of technology, innovation & building unique set of capabilities. A big enabler to the growth aspirations will be unlocking our 'Nari shakti' by increasing female literacy levels and labor participation.

Agriculture: To lift 200 million people out of poverty, increase household income and improve standard of living, farmers will be equipped to use best-in-class technologies such as next-gen enhanced seeds, fertilizers, advanced equipment such as drones and IoT sensors to improve farm productivity.

Manufacturing: By 2047, it is envisioned that India will become a global manufacturing hub of low-cost products and high-tech products, with end-to-end supply chain. Products made in India will become a hallmark of high quality, affordability, and sustainability.

Services: Services exports in many emerging, high growth areas will expand to AI/ML, big data analytics, geospatial intelligence, visual effects & animation etc. India will become the global supplier of services such as animation, healthcare, professional services etc., leveraging our young and qualified workforce.

Revitalize

India will have a key position in global platforms and our rich ancient values, culture and history will be re-vitalized & celebrated across the world.

Tourism: India’s rich geographical diversity will make it a 12-month tourist destination, attracting people from around the globe for purposes ranging from leisure, spirituality, wildlife & medical tourism. India will be ranked among the top 3 most travelled countries in the world.

Culture: India will lead the world’s consciousness in the spheres of films, theater, dance, music, and literature, becoming the ‘story-teller’ to the world. In India@100, we will be closely engaging with our local art and culture, preserving it, and educating future generations about it.

Sports: India is envisioned to consistently rank among the top 10 nations in global sporting events such as the Olympics. We will be the go-to destination for wellness practices like yoga, ayurveda and naturopathy for the world’s good mental, physical and emotional health.

Innovate

People of India also aspire that India is at the forefront of fostering innovation, research, and development across sectors like manufacturing, defense, agriculture, services & climate. With use of transformative technologies, India will build high quality products for the world. We will bring inclusive growth across all sections

of society through extension of digital platforms across all sectors.

Energy: By 2047, India will meet near 100% of its energy requirements from renewable sources. India will take the lead in developing futuristic initiatives such as green hydrogen, carbon capture, water conservation & storage, sustainable packaging, and biodiversity preservation.

Technology: In the next 25 years, India is envisioned to lead the world in research and innovation of transformative technologies. India will be ranked among the top 10 countries on the Global Innovation Index. At the forefront of developing such technologies will be our start-up ecosystem, which will be the largest in the world, led by our entrepreneurial citizens.

Digitalization: By 2047, India will extend the power of digital platforms across all critical sectors of the economy. Continuing on our success of building the three largest public digital platforms in the world, Aadhar, UPI, and CoWIN, we will achieve success across other domains such as agriculture, logistics, MSMEs, education, e-commerce, law, and justice.

Transform

India’s ascent to new heights will require us to strengthen India’s foundation across 4 elements to unlock full potential: Education, Healthcare, Infrastructure and Governance. This will transform our social & physical infrastructure to unlock human potential.

Education: India will be home to the world’s largest skilled workforce with significantly higher women participation. This will enable ‘brain gain’ & tremendous socio-economic growth.

Healthcare: By 2047, India will be among the top 10 healthiest countries in the world with superior performance across all measurable health outcomes. India@100 will be free from preventable diseases, with high quality standards in nutrition, sanitation, and safe drinking water, creating a healthy ecosystem for its citizens. India will provide equitable, affordable, and accessible ‘healthcare to all’.

Infrastructure: The roadmap to 2047 envisions transformation of Indian cities to ‘smart cities’ with enhanced outcomes on livability, sustainability, and citizen-centricity to account for at least 10 of the top 50 cities in the world. It is also envisioned that there will be no slums in India by 2047 & we will have ‘R-urban’

growth clusters across the country to act as vehicles of distributed development. India will also have an integrated multi modal infrastructure to take our logistics efficiency to best in class.

Governance: Lastly, we will have a robust and transparent governance mechanism which imbibes India’s strong democratic values to empower its citizens. Reduction in duration of judicial procedures through adoption of technology will be a key enabler for time bound justice for all. All government services will be available to all citizens seamlessly through e-governance platforms & there is complete abolishment of corruption at all levels.

The path towards realizing many of these aspirations will depend on the progress made at the intersection of these themes since they are inter-linked and reinforce one another.

For example, a strong foundation of education will create a large pool of researchers, who in turn will

innovate and develop transformative technologies to be used by the manufacturing industry to build products e.g., medical devices, precision medicine. This will not only help India become a leading exporter of such products but also democratize healthcare by providing access to medicines and devices to all Indians at affordable prices.

Similarly, climate and sustainability will be an important element of all infrastructure and urban planning processes in India. Initiatives such as a strong public transport infrastructure powered by renewable energy, dedicated cycle tracks or efficient city planning to optimally utilize resources will help minimize emissions of greenhouse gases by 2047.

With high aspirations, the ‘India@100’ report will be a ‘live’ vision document, refreshed every five years based on the progress made and the prevailing global and local context. We will continue to think big, rollout scale and enfold all in the journey to India as a developed nation.

State Vision Exercise

In 2022, CII led a national visioning exercise for India@100 which was enthused with the experiential learnings of drawing the vision and implementation roadmap for India@75, the India@75 Foundation and CII collaborated with BCG to evolve the vision for India@100.

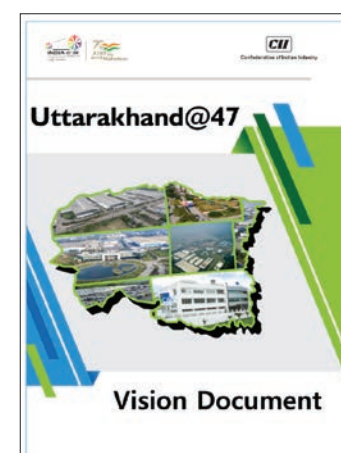
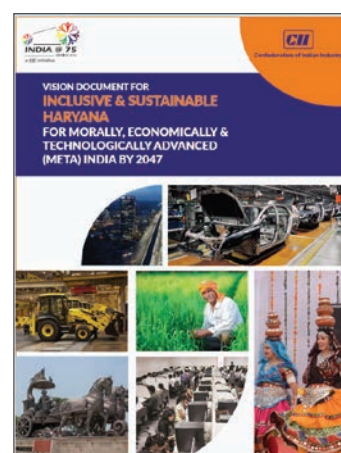
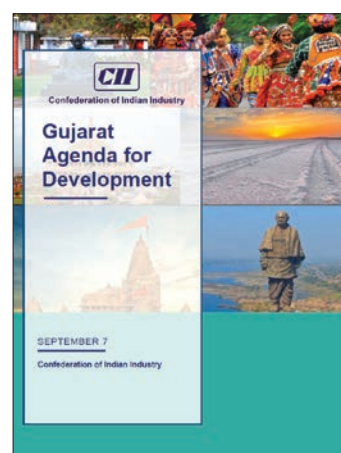
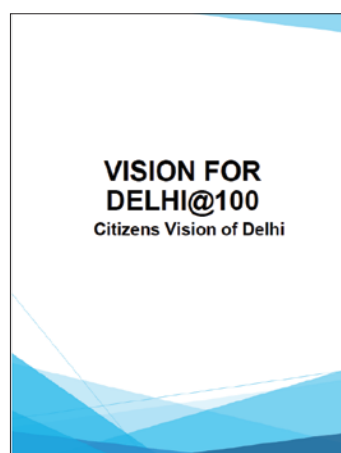
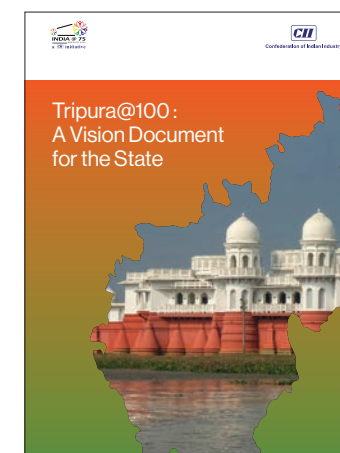
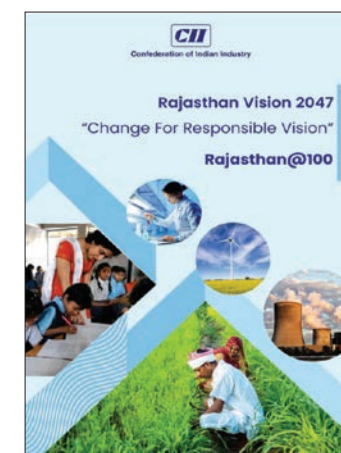
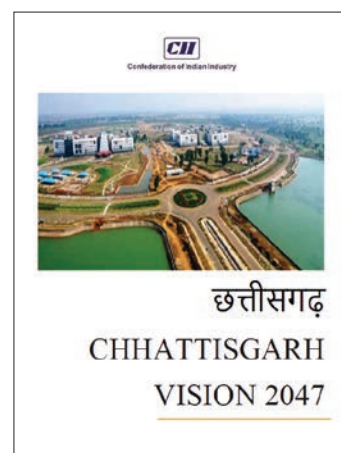
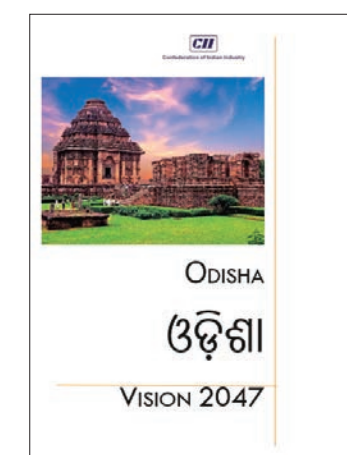
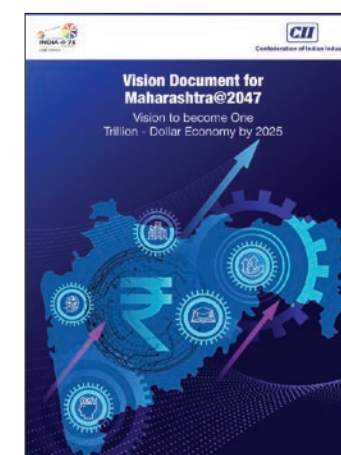
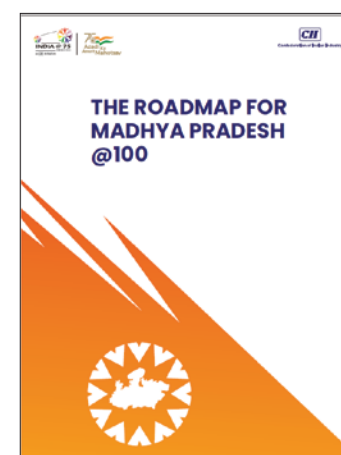
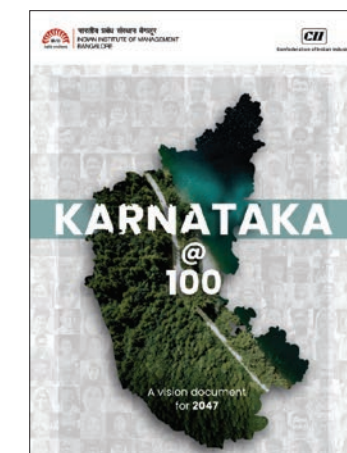
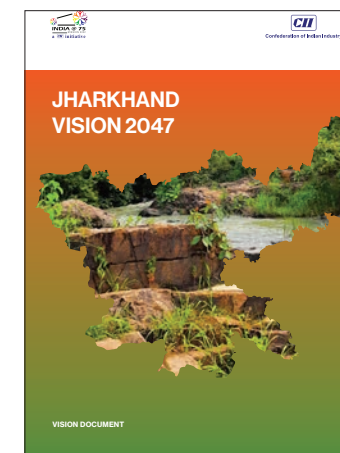
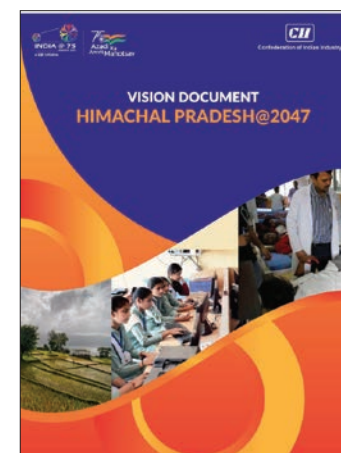
Similarly, the India@75 Foundation in collaboration with CII worked towards state visioning exercises to create State@100 vision documents and supplement the National Vision Document.

The majority of States already completed their exercises like Assam, Delhi, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Odisha, J&K, Punjab, Goa, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tripura,

Uttar Pradesh and Manipur.

The exercise recognized the country's diversity and sought to arrive at a national vision through a participatory approach. The approach recognized, each state, group and community as having a unique set of issues and solutions. India@75 Foundation also took the vision to several key stakeholders for their inputs. The India@100 vision aspires for a sustainable Morally, Economically and Technologically Advanced (META) India by 2047.

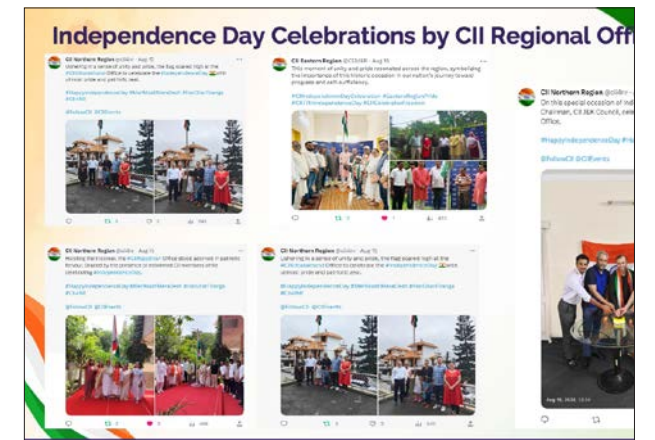
As we work with the Government and other stakeholders for India@100, India@75 Foundation would further intensify the role of the industry for national development and inclusive growth.



Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

The Confederation of Indian Industry and India@75 Foundation celebrated 76 years of Independence, under the aegis of Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Several celebratory events were held across the offices in the country. As part of the national celebrations, Ghar Tiranga and Meri Maati Mera Desh campaigns featured prominently on the event list of all the CII offices; these involved

hoisting the national flag and pledging to serve the country. Apart from this, civil society organizations associated with India@75 Foundation conducted multiple workshops, events and activities at village/district/state/national level to help celebrate the nation's progress and unity. The activities included – flag hoisting ceremonies, cultural programmes and competitions.



Volunteering

India@75 works actively to mainstream the culture of volunteering in the country through specially designed programmes and platforms. The National Volunteering Week, held between 18-24 January every year and the National Volunteering Grid, a digital volunteering ecosystem are cases in point. India@75 also advocates strongly for institutionalising volunteering in the country, often using the data from these assets to illustrate its argument.



National Volunteering Week: The Journey



68,466

VOLUNTEERS

8,66,083

HOURS

24.8 million+

BENEFICIARIES

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has been a strong proponent of volunteering, with many of its members actively building it into their corporate culture. The CII-led India@75 Foundation too has been working actively to mainstream volunteering in the country through multiple interventions, such as the National Volunteering Grid (NVG), an online platform to connect volunteers to opportunities, and a marquee annual event called the National Volunteering Week (NVW).

The National Volunteering Week (NVW), an annual event since 2014, builds the case for institutionalising volunteering by showcasing the potential of multi-stakeholder collaboration in meeting social goals. During NVW, corporations and NGOs open their ongoing projects for volunteer engagement. Allowing more people to engage with such projects not only brings grassroots issues to the mainstream but also strengthens the case for collective action in addressing social challenges.

Over the years, NVWs have logged millions of volunteer hours and positively impacted the lives of several million people. In 2024, NVW celebrated its 11th edition under the theme “Shaping India at 100 through Volunteer Engagement.” It drew strong participation from all stakeholder groups, especially the corporate sector. More than 68,466 volunteers from diverse backgrounds registered their interest and contributed 8,66,083 hours of their time to further causes such as child development, climate action, community development, education, healthcare, nutrition, road safety, rural development, skill development, social inclusion, sports, culture, and women empowerment. More than 24.8 million people benefited from these activities.

One of the important events of the week was a discussion-Dialogue on Volunteering: Leveraging People Power for Change – led by Jayanti Shukla, Chief Executive Officer, United Way India. The panel comprised esteemed dignitaries such as Preeti Khattri, Managing Director of Strategy & Consulting at Accenture in India; Chetan Kapoor, CEO, Tech Mahindra Foundation; Abhimanyu Sahu, COO, Schneider Electric; and Dr. Vinita S. Sahay, Director, IIM Bodh Gaya.

The discussion yielded valuable insights: educational campuses serve as nurturing grounds for volunteers, necessitating the integration of volunteerism into academic programmes; there’s a pressing need to institutionalise philanthropy within organisational structures; and concerted efforts are required to establish a conducive ecosystem for volunteering, involving collaboration across various sectors.

The 2024 edition marked the 11th anniversary of the National Volunteering Week. Here’s a walk down the memory lane.

- 2014

This was the inaugural year. 3,200 volunteering hours impacted nearly 46,000 people.
- 2015

Volunteers put in more than 7,525 hours to help more than 0.13 million people.
- 2016

Volunteering hours increased three folds to almost 25,000 and the number of beneficiaries climbed to 0.3 million..
- 2017

This year saw engagement increase manifold – volunteers clocked 2,50,000 hours and helped over 1.2 million people.
- 2018

Volunteers put in more than 3,00,000 hours to make a difference to nearly 1.65 million lives.
- 2019

This year saw among the highest numbers of volunteering hours – about 20,00,000 – affecting 2 million people.
- 2020

The pandemic had just begun to raise its ugly head. Over 95,000 volunteering hours saw over 10 million people being helped.
- 2021

Volunteers proved their mettle in this crucial year. More than 75,000 volunteering hours helped over 11.3 million people.
- 2022

Digital and physical volunteering together added up to over 1,70,000 hours and helped over 11.5 million people.
- 2023

This edition clocked more than 1,98,000 hours and helped over 17.5 million people.
- 2024

NVW saw volunteers contribute more than 8,66,083 hours and help over 24.8 million people.



Annant Unnati Foundation

To celebrate International Volunteer Day, India@75Foundation in association with Annant Unnati Foundation organized an awareness campaign in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, titled “Samvaad: India@100 Future Forward Series”. The initiative aimed to raise awareness among underprivileged children and impacted the lives of 100+ underprivileged students. the session delved into crucial aspects of their well-being, including health, hygiene, understanding the concepts of good touch and bad touch, and enhancing digital literacy.



Brillio

710 volunteers
2,530 hours
9,803 people impacted

Brillio Technologies organized multiple activities across India. The volunteers were involved in activities which ranged from organizing online sessions for the National STEM Program, frontline staff thanksgiving, digital literacy sessions, science expo and science competitions.



Birlasoft

6,162 volunteers
10,255 hours
42,970 people impacted

Birlasoft is committed to making a meaningful impact on communities and positively transforming the lives of individuals. Projects like Shodhan:Crop Residue Management initiative and plantation drives promote environment sustainability. Projects like Disha, e-vidya, cyber safe, and joy of giving focus on holistic development and skill-building for women and children. Programs such as Rural Mental Health, Cervical Cancer Awareness, and I-pledge address healthcare and community development issues.



CGI

5,100 volunteers
16,200 hours
80,000 people impacted

Driven by passionate volunteers, CGI’s impactful initiatives span across diverse domains like STEM education, environmental sustainability, community development, and social inclusion. These dedicated efforts positively touch the lives of thousands, leaving a lasting impact and building a brighter future for all.



Blind People’s Association

120 volunteers from the ‘Young at 60’ campaign donated used items, benefiting 380 people while also illustrating the scope of recycling and reusing in society.



Cognizant

3,515 volunteers
1,335 hours
5,575 people impacted

Cognizant engaged in different activities including teaching coding by using programe kit, basics of ai sessions, urban farming and conservation of water bodies.



Dhenum Ashray Sadnam

2,000 volunteers
4,200 hours

The dedicated effort of the volunteers helped provide meals to attendees of patients at the government hospitals in Himachal Pradesh. This initiative showcased a remarkable display of community spirit and solidarity for those in need.



Firstsource

3,563 volunteers
13,913 hours
36,556 people impacted

Volunteering opportunities included visiting children’s homes, helping the Chennai flood relief efforts, marking the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, and participating in the Seva Chef Activity under the Give Where You Live (GWYL) Campaign.



Earth Focus Foundation

A six-hour customised training course was delivered to the Shiksha Preraks (Community Youth Leaders), Mata Samitis (Women Communities), and farmers to train them on multiple aspects of digital and financial skills such as banking, internet and social media, online payments, safe use of digital devices and applications, and accessing social welfare schemes. The programme touched the lives of more than 1,500 people through its innovative training methodology.



Forests by Heartfulness

1,300 volunteers helped impact the lives of 7,500 beneficiaries through activities such as ecosystem restoration, creation of biodiversity zones, avenue and roadside plantation, and dense forest establishment.



Ekal

A total of 1,200 rural children from 25 states participated in the various sports competition including wrestling, kabaddi, running, high jump, long jump, and yoga. These competitions were organized across India covering 1 lakh gram panchayats, 410 districts, and 28 regions. Over 32 lakh players participated.



iVolunteer

117 volunteers
244 hours
1,243 people impacted

Volunteers helped launch the Climate Action Campaign, advocated for organ donation, and conducted winter clothes distribution drives.



Jakson
352 volunteers
613 hours
3,918 people impacted

Volunteers helped run self defence training program, organize blood donation camps, commemorate International Girl Child Day, facilitate Joy Of Giving events, conduct awareness sessions on organ donation and participating in the National Cleanliness Day.



Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd
540 volunteers
3,155 hours
3,600 people impacted

Mahindra organized multiple volunteering initiatives across the country. These ranged from organizing free eye check-up camps, skilling classes for youth, distribution of warm clothes, awareness rallies on road safety, free health check-up camps and blood donations drives. Through these initiatives, the volunteers reached out to around 3,600 beneficiaries.



Jeevan Asha Hospital & Rehabilitation Center
180 volunteers put in 360 hours to give individuals with disabilities an opportunity to display their skills, their talents and their passion for sport.



Nayara Energy
Employees of Nayara Energy Book organized a book distribution drive in Mumbai by involving 400 volunteers.



Lets Give Hope Foundation
62 volunteers
156 hours
271 people impacted

Volunteers signed up to help with Youth Day celebrations, camps for dental and eye health and awareness sessions on domestic violence.



Nirbhed Foundation
450 volunteers coordinated awareness events on health and environment, helmed tree planting initiatives, conducted employment education workshops, held banking and financial literacy sessions. Over 4000 people were impacted by these activities.



Niveda Foundation

15 volunteers, joined hands to hold extra classes in school to help 400 underprivileged students catch up with their peers.



Shikhar Dhawan Foundation

Over 500 volunteers participated enthusiastically in plantation drives, the Miles for Smiles campaign, and a large-scale donation event spanning three cities across two days. They also coordinated eye checkup camps and helped the foundation..



Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS)

Volunteers held basic literacy classes for 200 children from slums and also worked with girls from rural areas to help them grasp vital exam topics.



Standard Chartered Bank

323 volunteers collectively dedicated 969 hours to various endeavours, including providing financial literacy, participating in the Social Mobility Initiative, and engaging in activities with students from a government school in Maharashtra.



Robin Hood Army

12,350 volunteers
1.68 million people impacted

The Robin Hood Army successfully organized food distribution drives for those in dire need.



Startek

3,208 volunteers
4,046 hours

Volunteers helped conduct CPR Training on World Heart Day, held sessions to promote vote casting, organized awareness sessions on AIDS, helped with blanket distribution drives, blood donation camps and Joy of Giving events.



Tata Consultancy Services
23,903 volunteers, 7,48,177 hours
780,000+ people impacted

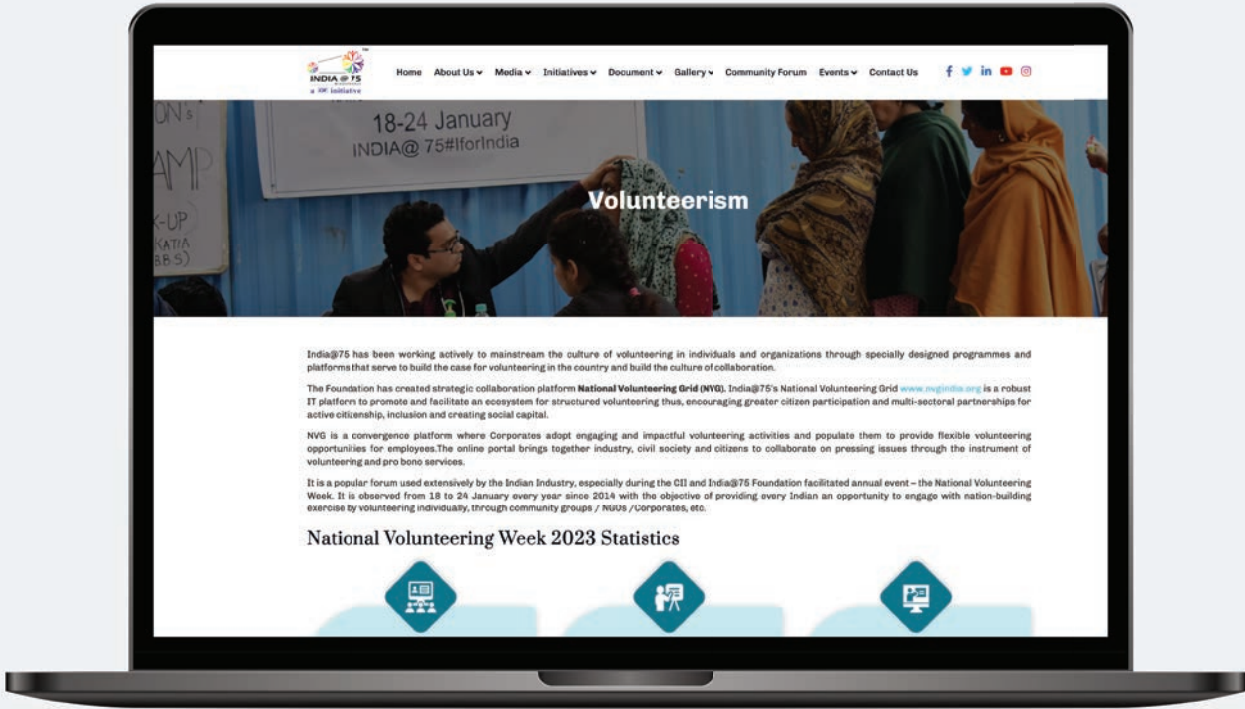
TCS CSR #Hope (Hours of Purpose by Employees), an employee volunteering program provides TCSers with volunteering opportunities in themes that are closer to their heart. Aligning with the UN SDGs, focusing on Youth, Women & Marginalized group to create generational improvement. With HOPE, volunteers have a choice of events to choose from Do-it-Yourself, in-person or virtual, aligning to their interest. Also developing volunteering by emphasizing skill-based Programs like Employability, Education & Skill development, and Pro Bono programs.



The Kind Citizen
128 volunteers impacted the lives of 10,930 beneficiaries by involving in activities related to community development, Art and Culture and Education.



Voice
1,128 volunteers participated in numerous tree plantation drives, collectively dedicating 2,256 volunteering hours to sow 1600 saplings and collect 300 kg of waste, including rubber and glass materials.



Have you registered on the National Volunteering Grid?

India@75, a flagship initiative of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), aims to propel India towards a transformative future by 2047, grounded on the pillars of economic strength, technological vitality, and moral leadership. Central to this vision is the reformation of the volunteering landscape, necessitating a robust infrastructure that binds together all volunteering endeavours across the nation. This undertaking culminates in the creation of the National Volunteering Grid (NVG), an innovative IT platform (<https://www.nvgindia.org/>) engineered to catalyze structured volunteering.

Under the auspices of India@75, concerted efforts have been directed towards instilling a culture of volunteering among both individuals and organizations. Through meticulously crafted programs and platforms, the case for volunteering is ardently advocated, fostering a spirit of collaboration and civic engagement. Notably, the annual National Volunteering Week stands as a testament to this commitment, serving as a rallying point for stakeholders to fortify the call for a structured volunteering ecosystem.

The National Volunteering Grid emerges as a convergence platform, where corporations converge to partake

in impactful volunteering activities, thereby nurturing a culture of active citizenship and forging multi-sectoral partnerships. With 4,967 non-profits, 31 corporates, and 58 volunteering networks already enrolled, the NVG exemplifies a burgeoning network poised to drive social change.

At the heart of India@75's endeavour lies its ProBono volunteering initiative, empowering corporate employees and domain experts to contribute their time and expertise towards national development. Complemented by insightful audience engagement sessions on impactful virtual volunteering, India@75 has spearheaded efforts to elevate volunteering practices to new heights.

Indeed, the India@75 Foundation, buoyed by the institutional support of CII, has been at the vanguard of advocating for volunteerism. Their advocacy, including the call for a dedicated National Volunteering Week, underscores the pivotal role of volunteering in the nation-building narrative, epitomizing the ethos of active citizenship and collective progress.

National Volunteering Week 2024 statistics

FOCUS	VOLUNTEERS	VOLUNTEERING HOURS
Art and Culture	295	2,505
Child Development	678	275
Community Development	30,704	76,94,88
Education	5,136	8,156.5
Financial Literacy	1,600	8,829
Gender Equality	216	232
Healthcare	4,170	1,740
Nutrition	15,306	48,101
Rural Education	50	100
Skill development	106	275
Social Inclusion	1,025	3,854
Sports	1,200	5,000
Urbanisation	7,947	12,455
Women Empowerment	28	62

Corporate Partners



Non-profit Partners



Through the year

SHRAMDAAN FOR SWACHHATA : India@75 Foundation has been working towards mainstreaming volunteering in India for more than a decade. To this end, it creates volunteering opportunities, through the year, for people across all walks of life. Shramdaan for Swachhata, held in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, was one such opportunity. It was aimed at getting people to lend a hand to the cause of a garbage free India. On 1 October 2023, India@75 Foundation organised a

cleanliness drive at Shakti Khand, Ghaziabad. 60 volunteers signed up for the drive. They were oriented to the larger purpose of the drive and provided with masks and gloves. The Shramdaan for Swachhata event concluded with a session on "Health & Hygiene" for children aged 6 –15 years. The session covered concepts like hand washing, oral hygiene, healthy eating habits, clean surroundings, good manners, and health and well-being.

INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY : India@75 organized a yoga session on the International Yoga Day 2023. The event drew enthusiastic participation from over 90 participants thanks to the collective efforts of India@75,

Annant Unnati Foundation, and the dedicated volunteers. The event was not just a celebration of yoga and all that it stands for, but also of the power of volunteering and collective action.



SAMVAAD: INDIA@100 FUTURE FORWARD SERIES
On 5 December 2023, India@75 Foundation conducted an awareness session for underprivileged children in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, in December. The session was

designed to equip underprivileged children with life skills needed to navigate current times. The session addressed their well-being, focusing on health, hygiene, good touch and bad touch understanding, and digital literacy.



List of activities

	ACTIVITY	FOCUS AREA	ORGANISATION	LOCATION
1.	Awareness drive with underprivileged students	Education	Annant Unnati Foundation	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
2.	Project Disha	Skill Development	Birlasoft	Noida, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru
3.	Cervical Cancer Awareness	Healthcare	Birlasoft	Alwar, Karauli, Kotlputli, Hindaun, and Jaipur (All Districts in Rajasthan)
4.	Project Shodhan: Crop Residue Management initiative	Environment and Sustainability	Birlasoft	Nabha, Sangrur, Dhuri, Patiala (All in Punjab)
5.	Tree Plantation Drive	Environment and Sustainability	Birlasoft	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
6.	Strike Green	Environment and Sustainability	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
7.	Try to Fight Pledge	Education	Birlasoft	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
8.	I-Pledge	Healthcare	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
9.	Food that unites	Holistic Child Development	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
10.	Joy of Giving fair	Community Development	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
11.	Miles for Smiles Campaign	Holistic Child Development	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
12.	Gift a Smile	Holistic Child Development	Birlasoft	Noida, Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bengaluru
13.	Project e-vidya	Skill Development	Birlasoft	Delhi/NCR
14.	Project Cyber safe	Education/Awareness	Birlasoft	Delhi/NCR
15.	Rural Mental Health Program	Healthcare	Birlasoft	Odisha
16.	Young at 60	Social Inclusion	Blind People's Association	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
17.	National STEM Competition	Education	Brillio	Pan India
18.	Digital Literacy Program	Skill Development	Brillio	Pan India
19.	TGIF	Education	Brillio	Pan India
20.	Mentorship for STEM Scholarship Students	Education	Brillio	Pan India
21.	E-Teaching in Rural Schools	Rural Education	Brillio	Pan India

22.	Phone Mentoring	Education	Brillio	Pan India
23.	Life skills workshop	Skill Development	Brillio	Pan India
24.	Vacation Donation	Education	Brillio	Pan India
25.	Wishing Tree	Community Development	Brillio	Pan India
26.	Audio Book recording for Visually Impaired Students	Social Inclusion	Brillio	Pan India
27.	Virtual Mentoring for college grads	Education	CGI	Pan India
28.	Blood Donation Drive	Healthcare	CGI	Pan India
29.	Public Space Beautification	Urbanisation	CGI	Pan India
30.	Tree Plantation drive	Urbanisation	CGI	Pan India
31.	Creating leaning materials for children with autism	Social inclusion	CGI	Pan India
32.	STEM learning for Children	Education	CGI	Pan India
33.	Group mentoring – for adults, youth, women and students who are underprivileged	Skill development	Cognizant	Pan India
34.	Helping children in academics	Education	Cognizant	Pan India
35.	Basics of AI Sessions	Education	Cognizant	Pan India
36.	Teaching Coding by using Programme kit	Education	Cognizant	Pan India
37.	Plantation Drive	Urbanisation	Cognizant	Pan India
38.	Urban farming	Urbanisation	Cognizant	Pan India
39.	Conservation of Water Body - Jakkur Lake	Urbanisation	Cognizant	Pan India
40.	Public Place Restoration	Urbanisation	Cognizant	Pan India
41.	CRY_Walk to EmpwHER 2024	Community Development	Cognizant	Pan India
42.	Eye-Camp	Community Development	Cognizant	Pan India
43.	Climate education awareness course	Urbanisation	Cognizant	Pan India
44.	Food distribution drive in Government Hospital	Nutrition	Dhenum Ashray Sadnam	Tanda, Himachal Pradesh
45.	Flip on Wheels	Financial Literacy	Earth Focus Foundation	Kanha, Madhya Pradesh
46.	Sports Activities	Sports	Ekal	PAN India
47.	Christmas celebrations in Children home	Community Development	Firstsource	Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad
48.	International Day for PwD: Tactile Mural Art	Social Inclusion	Firstsource	Mumbai, Bangalore & Hyderabad
49.	Chennai Flood Relief Support	Community Development	Firstsource	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
60.	International Men's Day Celebration	Gender Equality	Firstsource	Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Trichy, Pondicherry, Vijayawada,

61.	Festive Gift Card Making	Art and Culture	Firstsource	Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore
62.	Seva Chef Activity - Give Where You Live (GWYL) Campaign	Nutrition	Firstsource	Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Trichy, Pondicherry, Vijayawada,
63.	Volunteering for special children carnival and para sports tournament	Social Inclusion	Firstsource	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
64.	Ecosystem restoration and biodiversity zones	Urbanisation	Forests by Heartfulness	Chegur, Telangana
65.	Ecosystem restoration and biodiversity zones	Urbanisation	Forests by Heartfulness	Chegur, Telangana
66.	Avenue and Roadside Plantation	Urbanisation	Forests by Heartfulness	Chegur, Telangana
67.	Dense forest creation	Urbanisation	Forests by Heartfulness	Chegur, Telangana
68.	Stationery4All Happy Pariksha for each student!	Education	iVolunteer	Mumbai, Maharashtra
69.	Walking Project Community Walk	Community Development	iVolunteer	Mumbai, Maharashtra
70.	Winter clothes distribution drive	Community Development	iVolunteer	Delhi
71.	Sandwich Making and Distribution Drive	Child Development	iVolunteer	Delhi
72.	Write a Thank you Letter to the College Staff	Community Development	iVolunteer	Chandigarh
73.	'Inspire to Science' Campaign	Education	iVolunteer	Bangalore, Karnataka
74.	'Time well spent' with Bala Mandira/CCI (Government orphanage) Children		iVolunteer	Bangalore, Karnataka
75.	Climate Action Campaign	Urbanisation	iVolunteer	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
76.	Organ Donation Campaign	Healthcare	iVolunteer	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
77.	Origami Workshop	Child Development	iVolunteer	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
78.	TAS Campaign	Child Development	iVolunteer	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
79.	Model Sustainable Villages – Phaltan	Urbanisation	Jakson	Phaltan, Maharashtra
80.	Self Defence Training Program	Women Empowerment	Jakson	Aliganj, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
81.	Blood Donation Camp	Healthcare	Jakson	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
82.	International Girl Child Day	Women Empowerment	Jakson	Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh
83.	Joy Of Giving	Community Development	Jakson	Phaltan, Maharashtra, and Noida, Uttar Pradesh
84.	Awareness Session On Organ Donation And Transplant	Healthcare	Jakson	Noida, Uttar Pradesh

85.	National Cleanliness Day	Urbanisation	Jakson	Kalsar – Gujarat, Jakson Inn – Phaltan and Phaltan Plant – Maharashtra
86.	SAKSHAM- Empowering Persons with Disabilities	Social Inclusion	Jeevan Asha Hospital & Rehabilitation Center	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
87.	Youth Day Celebration	Community Development	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
88.	Dental Checkup Camp	Healthcare	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
89.	Awareness on domestic Violence	Women Empowerment	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
90.	Mahotsav	Community Development	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
91.	Eye Checkup Camp	Healthcare	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
92.	Republic Day Celebration	Community Development	Lets Give Hope Foundation	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
93.	Road Safety Week	Road Safety	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
94.	Free eye check-up camps	Healthcare	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
95.	Skilling classes for youth	Skill development	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
96.	Distribution of warm clothes	Community Development	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
97.	Awareness rallies on Road Safety	Road Safety	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
98.	Free health check-up camps	Healthcare	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
99.	Blood donations drives	Healthcare	Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd	Pan India
100.	Book Donation Drive	Education	Nayara Energy	Mumbai, Maharashtra
101.	Teaching Awareness Sessions, financial literacy sessions for older people	Skill Development	Nirbhed Foundation	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
102.	Schools sessions for underprivileged kids	Education	Niveda Foundation	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
103.	Education Rural & Slum Children	Education	Rajasthan Samgrah Kalyan Sansthan (RSKS India)	Ajmer, Rajasthan
104.	Distribution of Meals	Nutrition	Robin Hood Army	New Delhi, Gurugram, Noida, Bangalore, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Pune, Chandigarh, Patna, Bhopal, Indore, Jammu

105.	Miles for Smiles campaign & Eye Check up Camp	Community Development	Shikhar Dhawan Foundation	Amritsar, Punjab; Agra, Uttar Pradesh; Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi
106.	Kite Making for Government Students	Community Development	Standard Chartered Bank	Mumbai, Pune, Maharashtra
107.	Financial Literacy	Financial Literacy	Standard Chartered Bank	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
108.	Social Mobility initiative	Skill development	Standard Chartered Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra
109.	Ni-Shay Mitra	Healthcare	Startek	Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
110.	CPR Training On World Heart Day	Healthcare	Startek	Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
111.	Mera Vote-Mera Adhikar Promote Vote Casting	Community Development	Startek	Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
112.	World AIDS Awareness	Healthcare	Startek	Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
113.	Share The Warmth - Blanket Distribution	Community Development	Startek	Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh
114.	Blood Donation Camp	Healthcare	Startek	Pan India
115.	Daan Utsav (Voluntary contribution)	Community Development	Startek	Gurgaon, Haryana
116.	Joy of Giving (Clothes distribution)	Community Development	Startek	Gurgaon, Haryana
117.	Blood Donation Drive	Healthcare	Startek	Pune, Maharashtra
118.	Joy of Giving	Community Development	Startek	Pune, Maharashtra
119.	Rice Donation	Nutrition	Startek	Pune, Maharashtra
120.	Winter Clothes Donation Drive	Community Development	Startek	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
121.	Free eye check up camp	Healthcare	Startek	Noida, Uttar Pradesh
122.	Winter Clothes distribution & Vegetable Garden Drive	Community Development	Tata Consultancy Services	Indore, Madhya Pradesh; Chennai, Tamil Nadu
123.	Paint a School	Art and Culture	The Kind Citizen	New Delhi
124.	Motivation sessions for children in orphanages	Education	The Kind Citizen	New Delhi
125.	Art for Kindness	Art and Culture	The Kind Citizen	New Delhi
126.	Matching Skilled Volunteers with NGOs	Community Development	The Kind Citizen	New Delhi
127.	Tree Plantation	Urbanisation	Voice	Khandelwal, Rajasthan
128.	Tree Plantation	Urbanisation	Voice	Khandelwal, Rajasthan
129.	Tree Plantation	Urbanisation	Voice	Manesar, Haryana
130.	Collection of Plastic, Glass and Rubber Waste	Urbanisation	Voice	Gurugram, Haryana



Functional Literacy Programme (FLiP)

India@75 Foundation launched the Functional Literacy Programme (FLiP), in 2018, to strengthen India's drive for inclusive digitalization. FLiP, an internet-based literacy programme, focusses specifically on helping the informal sector be digitally literate so that it can avail the opportunities in the digital world to lead a better life. In 2023, the India@75 Foundation created a version specifically for rural India called FLiP-On-Wheels (FoW). FoW uses a mobile digital hub (a van) equipped with teaching aids, to reach communities at places and times convenient to them.

Inclusive digitalization: The magic potion for rural growth

Industry collaboration: The key to inclusive digitalization



farming and storage models, food products and food processing and distribution systems. Cottage industry too is set to see significant changes linked to digitalization.

The government launched the Digital India Programme in 2016 to fast track India's transformation into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge economy. Since then, several significant steps have been taken to put a strong digitalization ecosystem in place. Resultantly, digital adoption is on the rise. An expanding portfolio of tech-enabled citizen services, increased use of online payment mechanisms and the use of online education resources, point to the fact that Indians are leveraging the power of digital technologies to lead better lives.

But a country as socio-economically diverse as India, can truly reap the benefits of a digital revolution only if its entire population has unconditional access to the digital world. Digital divide should therefore be tackled on a war footing lest India miss the opportunity to leapfrog into the future.

Inclusive digitalization: the key to social and financial inclusion in rural India

For India, the pandemic was a boon in disguise. It brought about a rapid rise in the adoption of digital technology at different levels. While before the COVID-19 outbreak, technology adoption and digital consumption was on the rise with around 100 million people online, the pandemic accelerated adoption and brought on board the next 100 million consumers. This effectively doubled the online market of consumers.

This momentum needs to be extended to the marginalized rural communities. It will among other things, fuel the country's inclusion programmes. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Atal Pension Yojna, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojna, MUDRA Bank and direct transfer of government benefits and subsidies will gain significantly by digitalization.

Bringing rural India aboard rural India is now an economic imperative. The question is no longer about how to bring about inclusive digitalization but how to do so quickly.

Digital transformation is at the core of India's growth strategy. Rapid and homogenous digitalization is therefore an economic imperative for the country. India Inc has much to gain from the proposed transformation, especially in rural India. It is therefore in the industry's interest to help accelerate the process. Some sectors are already seeing industry engagement, fintech being a good example.

Several fintech companies are working with local organizations to make digital services available in rural India by deploying kiosks, PoS devices, and mobile vans to collect bill payments digitally. The payments are facilitated through UPI, net banking, mobile banking, debit or credit cards and even cash.

They are also investing in literacy programmes, infrastructure and innovative programmes to increase consumption of their financial products and wean the rural population from informal credit systems. Interventions like these by the private sector will go a long way in helping bridge the digital gap in the country. Importantly they will help address the all-important trust deficit that is a major obstacle in credit absorption. The government is also

working to eliminate multiple layers of governance and improve delivery infrastructure in rural India.

Since the digital divide between the urban and rural is too wide, it will take more than just fintech companies and the government to build bridges. There has to be multi-stakeholder collaborations between policymakers, regulators, industry bodies, civil society and service providers to create an enabling ecosystem for inclusive digitalization.

Industry with its reach and resources can play an important role in bringing together relevant stakeholders to target specific roadblocks and smoothen the road to Digital India.

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India has a large and robust rural economy. In 2019-2020, it contributed nearly half the nation's overall GDP and employed about 350 million people (68% of the total workforce). Over the last five years, the rural ecosystem has grown by about 10% per annum and there's room for much more.* While all sectors that make up India's rural economy are growing steadily, the agricultural economy, especially, is on the cusp of disruption.

Technology is playing an increasingly important role in the value chain, especially in the post-harvest space. Multiple players are already disrupting the status quo and replacing traditional agriculture practices with new

*<https://tinyurl.com/2n6p7yrp>

FLiP-on-Wheels: An industry initiative to make rural India digitally literate

The informal sector, which constitutes the majority of India's workforce, has little knowledge of how to leverage digitalization for its economic, social and physical well-being. Consequently, it is vulnerable to exploitation, has limited market participation and unable to realize its economic potential. India can gain significantly by accelerating digital adoption in this sector.

In 2018, India@75 Foundation launched the Functional Literacy Programme (FLiP) to help the unorganized sector navigate the digital space. FLiP is essentially a three-module programme scientifically designed for easy dissemination and absorption. It includes a trainer's manual and can be downloaded free of cost from the India@75 Foundation website. Anyone keen to help digitalization in India, can download the FLiP modules and run it for workers in their vicinity. India Inc. will find it especially useful to run FLiP for the informal sector in their vicinity.

FLiP-on-Wheels: Widening the road to inclusive digitalization

FLiP proved scalable. India@75 Foundation decided to take it to rural India given both the need and opportunities there. The FLiP programme was modified for a rural India and thus was born FLiP-on-Wheels. The key objective of the FLiP-on-Wheels (FoW) pilot was to reach the vulnerable sections that lack the awareness and knowledge to access digital devices and technologies, and make them digitally literate.

The FoW model is unique in its approach as it takes the learning to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries. Convening the rural population for extended period of times is often a deal breaker because most are daily wagers who cannot take time off from work without losing some earning. The FLiP-on-Wheels pilot uses a van, equipped with teaching aids and manned by a facilitator and a mobilizer. The van tours villages, stopping by each at a designated time every day for six days.



Each village stop is for two hours and during this time the villagers are introduced to digital and financial literacy concepts. A loudspeaker plays audio content in the local language. Teaching aids such as sliding posters and audio visuals are used to cover topics such as banking, internet and social media, online payments, safe use of digital devices and applications, social welfare schemes and other useful subjects.

Highlights of the pilots

- The pilot programmes were very well-received by the target populace. The villagers showed interest in schemes related to social welfare, senior citizens, agriculture, loan for micro entrepreneurs/SHG women,

education scholarship opportunities and career counselling for young people.

- The pilot programmes helped the villagers understand these schemes in detail and also how to access them. The digital literacy van visited the villages in the early morning hours and late evening hours, when the target group was not at work.
- The training aids included poster sliding frame and audio content.
- An audio system was built in the van to help in mobilisation. Announcements related to the programme, short byliners on digital literacy, and awareness content

on essentials of safe banking and online transaction were played on the system. This helped in broadcasting basic information to the public in general even if they did not have time to sit for the training session. or were passing by the village through the awareness audio content that was being played while the van was in a particular village as well as while it was on the road.

- FoW impacted 4000+ people across 12 villages of Parbhani District in Maharashtra and 18 villages of Balaghat District in Madhya Pradesh.

Ground Zero: Parbhani district, Maharashtra

FLiP-on-Wheels was piloted in 12 villages of Parbhani District in Maharashtra from 26 March 2023 to 1 April 2024, in order to help people understand how their phones and other digital devices around them could be a ticket to a better life. Rural India has mobile phones. What it lacks however is a clear understanding of how it can change their lives for the better. To demonstrate its power the FLiP-on-Wheels sought to show participants how they could use their mobiles to:

Know more about and access welfare schemes

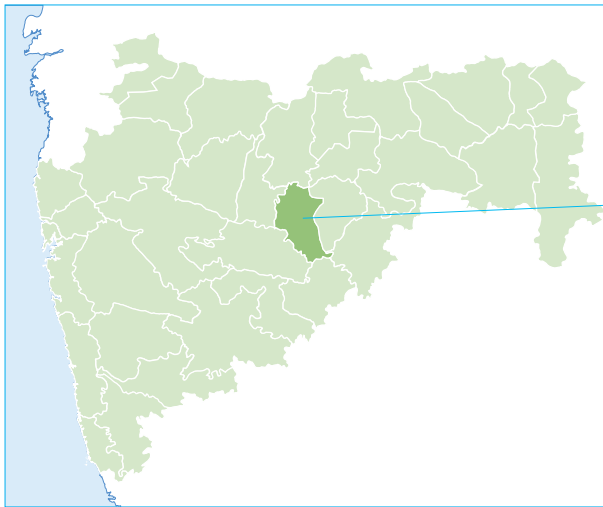
Most of the popular schemes of state and central governments can also be availed online. However most of rural India has poor access and understanding of the internet and therefore use offline processes to avail benefits. There is often social and political bias in rural societies because of which information around the scheme is not shared freely. A majority of the intended beneficiaries therefore have little or no knowledge of their entitlement. FLiP-on-Wheels helped the participants find flagship schemes on the internet. Helping this target group learn how to use the internet would reduce their dependence on externalities and help them access the benefits that is their rightful due.

Access information on critical issues related to agriculture

The agriculture and food processing industry is moving at a rapid pace. Farmers can increase their income considerably by being an active part of the supply chain. However, many do not get information around market prices and inputs. The FLiP-on-Wheels sought to explain to the farmers the new age opportunities and how the internet could help them do better.

Enhance the level of education in rural area by use of tools

Most of rural India still visits Common Service Centres (CSCs) for something as simple as filling up exam forms online. Digital literacy can take care of not just operational issues such as these but also considerably enhance the learning experience of children in villages by connecting them to free online learning resources. FLiP-on-Wheels also focussed on these aspects to encourage digital adoption by the youth in these villages. This initiative impacted around 2,000 people in Maharashtra directly and indirectly by upskilling them in digital and financial literacy skills.



- Dharmapuri
- Takli
- Parwa
- Jamb
- Nandkheda
- Sanpuri
- Samsapur
- Bramhangaon
- Bramhapuri
- Sonna
- Mandakahli



Ground Zero: Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh

FoW was piloted in 18 villages near the Kanha National Park, in Balaghat District of Madhya Pradesh, from 18 to 30 December 2023. These villages, which lie in the buffer zone, house the Baiga and Gond tribal communities who were resettled here in 1970s. The consequences of the resettlement continue to manifest in the form of poor access to quality healthcare, education, and social rights.

Increased pressure on local biodiversity for communities’ needs and livelihoods have led to land degradation. Invasive species, crop destruction by wild and domestic animals, and inadequate perennial water sources have also contributed to poor food security and low-income levels. Resultantly, tribal families are often stuck in poverty traps because of limited livelihood options. Most tribal adults lack formal education and are limited to subsistence farming on small farms with limited yields. With a lack of access to the forest for livelihoods, food, and medicine, many families become part of the migrant economy and slip further into disempowerment.

The Digital opportunity

Smartphone penetration in India is high. This was evident in the course of the FoW programme; every household had one basic smartphone which was used for making phone calls, saving phone numbers and using WhatsApp and YouTube. The phone was owned by the head of the family which was usually a man; the women and girls in the family had little or no access to it. The programme therefore focussed on creating a broad platform that would make the case for democratic and gainful use of the device. The classes revolved around using their smartphones to access information related to welfare schemes, communication, sharing of maps and location and where relevant, using emails and other communication methods. The intent was to raise their levels of interest in the possibilities of the digital world so that

they would venture into the space on their own.

Learnings from the ground

The FoW provided useful insights for those planning to run it in the future:

- The attendees requested for the modules to be completed in 1-2 hours instead of 3 hours, since longer sessions would affect their work.
- Most beneficiaries couldn’t relate to high level digital literacy, the trainers had to improvise frequently to keep the training at a level where it could be easily absorbed.
- There was a certain level of inhibition when it came to devices with bigger screens like laptops and projectors. The groups were more comfortable with mobiles. The women in fact were most receptive to oral communication.

Achievements & outcomes

The outcomes and achievements surprised us immensely, we weren’t expecting this level of impact, mentioning a few of them below:

- This initiative impacted more than 2,000 people over 10 days in Madhya Pradesh. This included farmers, outreach workers and youngsters.
- Follow up sessions attracted more attendees as word of mouth spread.
- One important impact indicator was the attendees themselves asking for more sessions after the designated number were over.

Villages covered

Lagma	Santapur	Bandariyatola	Dodiyatola	Manjitola	Chuchrangpur
Baigatola	Sahegoan	Bhima	Mukei	Bharda	Samnapur
Bandhatola	Bamhini	Gudma	Parsatola	Baherakhar	Basinkhar



The Response: Stories from the ground

Kirti Sakharwad, 24 years, Civil Service aspirant, Nandkheda



Kirti was preparing for competitive exams when FLiP-on-Wheels rolled into her village. She was quick to understand how the programme could help her community, so when the FoW team sought her help as a volunteer outreach worker, she was quick to agree. Kirti along with the programme team mobilised the women SHGs in the vicinity for training sessions. The women would gather at her house go through the training sessions. Kirti was an especially keen student. She asked questions on how to access the study material required for exams. The team taught her how to use search engines effectively to access relevant sites and portals that could help her prepare better. She also asked questions related to health and nutrition. The team was able to teach her and the group how to look for government sites and find out about the available schemes. The women decided that SHGs would include information on digital tools in their regular meeting agenda. The team also invited Kirti to come to the office and use the computers there to improve her digital skills.

"I am happy that this programme helped me to learn and use new digital tools for getting appropriate information, articles, audio books and latest guidelines on the examination patterns as they will be very useful for me in my studies."

Baba Lad, 45 years, graduate, land owner, Jamb



"As a horticulturist, I wanted to know if the internet could help my pre and post-harvest operations and boost my earnings. The FLiP-on-Wheels team directed me to the National Horticulture Mission website. It proved to be a goldmine of information. During the training sessions, I also discovered the PMFME scheme, that provides financial aid to small entrepreneurs like me. One aspect that truly stood out to me on the PMFME site, was the information on how to design projects, secure funds, and establish market connections. I would never have known about all this had it not been for Flip-on-Wheel."

Prakash Pradhan, 43 years, agriculturist, Sonna



"I wish to start a small shop of my own in the village but don't have money or resources to do so. In the FLiP-on-Wheels Training program, I came to know about the Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) which helps people like me get loans to start their business. Thanks to the Flip-on-Wheels training program, I was able to fill in my PMEGP form. I think I will now be able to start my business. Many people in my community, like me, do not know how technology works and how we can use it to live better. Programmes like Flip-on-Wheels will help people like me grow both financially and socially."

Mushtaq, 55 years, civil contractor, Parbhani



"I know the government has schemes for us but it is difficult to learn about them. And it is more difficult to avail the services because one has to travel to the Block Office for paperwork. It's only after attending the Flip-on-Wheel programme that I came to know how much everything has changed. During a training session I came to know about the the MGNREGA website. The trainers helped me understand and access information related to rules and regulations of the employment guarantee scheme, villages covered, the duration of employment opportunities, and the benefits available for the unorganized sector. I learnt about my rights and entitlements. Going forward, I will be able to spot and question unfair practices in the implementation of these schemes. I also had multiple concerns regarding income certificates, caste certificates, and changes in Aadhaar cards and all of them were clarified by the team. I have also started visiting Vikalp Foundation's (the NGO partner implementing FoW) office to ask for their help in such matters."

Sanjay Ragade, 52 years, service center employee, Zari



"I work at a gas agency and have to deal with multiple transactions through the day. When Flip-on-Wheel spoke of how digital and financial literacy could better our lives, it struck a chord and I decided to attend their training sessions. I am glad I did. I learnt how to transact online, I learnt about different financial instruments and most importantly I learnt that it is possible to manage your finances and your life by clicking a few buttons. You just have to know which. I am proud to say that today I have started assisting my community members in the village in their daily financial matters. I am also committed to honing my own digital literacy skills by working on computers at the NGO office. I firmly believe that digital literacy can empower the village economy. We need more programmes like Flip-on-Wheels to bring our villages aboard Digital India."

Interest to Impact: Help scale FLiP-on- Wheels

The people impacted during the campaign were from agriculture, micro enterprises, educated unemployed youth, women in SHGs, and unorganized labour. The programme generated considerable interest amongst the larger rural population as well. The partner organisations received several calls from villagers wanting to know more about schemes, digital devices and their use, financial literacy applications and the precautions to be taken during online transactions. Visitors and callers requested for a rerun of the programme possibly for a longer duration so that more people could benefit from the course.

FLiP-on-Wheels is a programme with considerable potential for scale and impact. It can transform the digital literacy landscape of India and give the development in the country the much needed momentum to leapfrog into the future as a powerful whole.

Addressing the rural digital divide is crucial for inclusive and equitable development. It requires concerted efforts to bridge the gap, ensuring that rural India can match the pace of digitalization happening in the rest of the country. By extending internet connectivity, providing digital skills training, and promoting the use of technology in rural areas, we can empower communities, enhance access to education and healthcare, facilitate e-commerce and market linkages, and unlock opportunities for economic growth.

Closing the rural digital divide is not just about access to technology; it is about empowering individuals and communities to leverage digital tools effectively. It involves fostering digital literacy, creating relevant content and applications tailored to rural needs, and encouraging the active participation of rural populations in the digital ecosystem.

India Inc. can play a crucial role by partnering the intervention in geographies of their choosing. This intervention can be undertaken under CSR because it adheres to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).



Workshop on Corporate Volunteering: Better Social Capital. Stronger Business

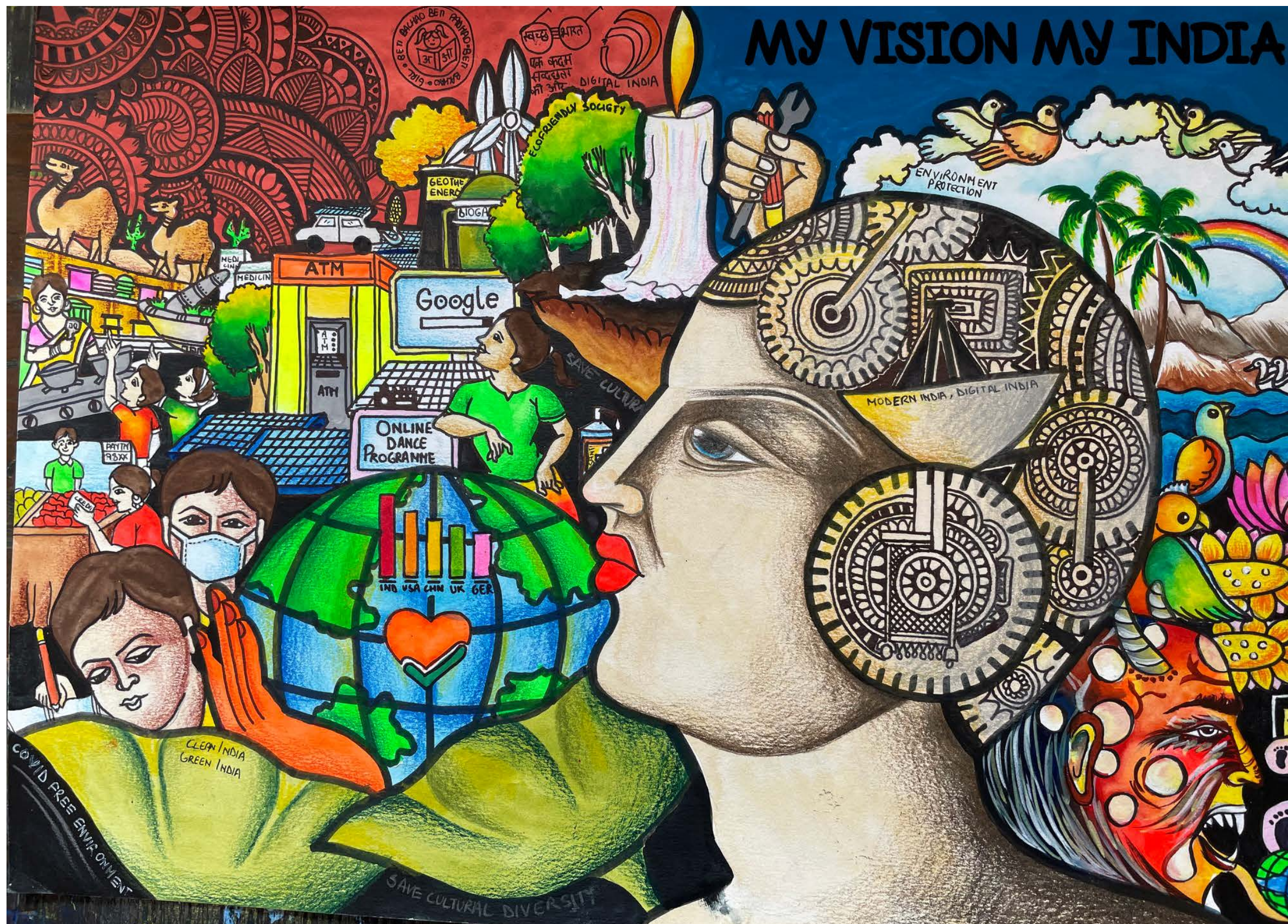
In March 2023, India@75 organized a workshop on corporate volunteering. It brought together corporates and civil society to help each understand the other's perspective on the role that corporates can play in helping increase impact on the ground. In India, non-profits often form the last mile in service delivery.

These organizations, while being extremely committed often lack core skill sets needed to run efficiently. Corporate volunteers can play a key role by stepping in to fill these skill deficits and building the capacity of these organizations to deliver better. The workshop included a panel discussion and group activities.

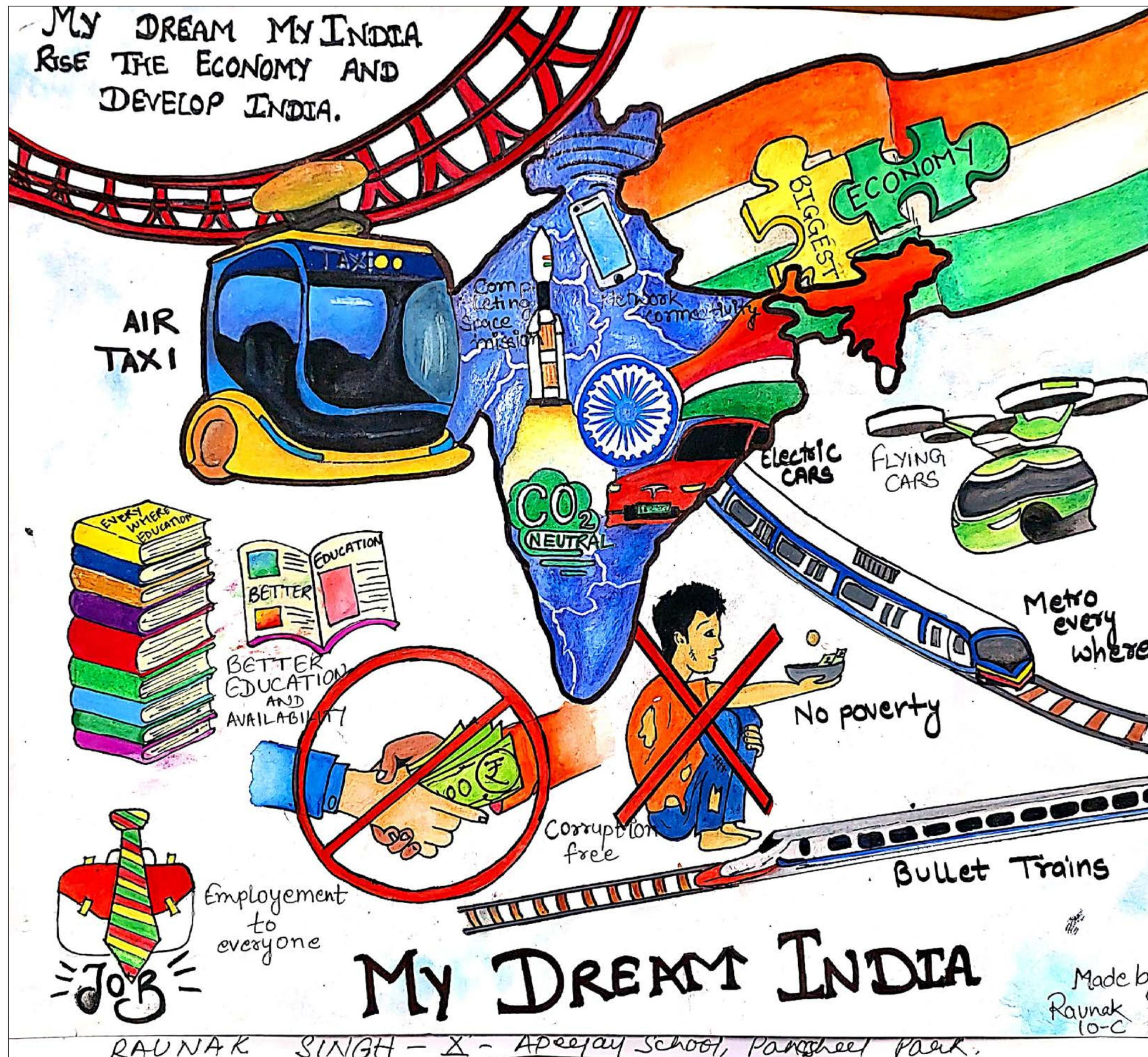


Dreamscapes

India@75 Foundation engaged with different stakeholders to arrive at the people's vision of an inclusively developed India@100. For students, specifically, it conducted a school competition themed 'My Dream. My India'. Students of age group 10-18 years shared their dreams and visions for their country through poster designs, poetry, short essay. The competition drew creative and forward-looking ideas for India's journey towards its centenary year.



Poster designed by **Harshvardhan Dhala**, student of Std XI, Apeejay School Saket. It depicts India as a vibrant country that is a tapestry of cultures, and defined by technology advancements, economic growth and environmental sustainability. The artist makes a point of illustrating India's position as a global leader committed to peace, equality, and cognizant of its rich cultural heritage.



Raunak Singh, a student of Class X, Apeejay School, Panchsheel Park, won a prize for his vision of "India@100.". His poster captures an India that takes the moral high ground and pursues economic advancement ethically, keeping the larger good in mind. What makes this artwork especially interesting is its strong comment on corruption and poverty.

मेरा भारत

अभिमान है मैं भारतीय हूँ, यह हिंदुस्तान है मेरा

यहाँ घंटियों की गूँज से होती संध्या, शंख नाद से होता नित सुबह सवेरा

मातृभूमि माँ की गोद सी, नदियों का जल है पावन

ऋतुएँ भी त्योहार यहाँ, सीख सभी से लेते यहाँ चाहे राम हो या रावण

एकता के भाव ने सबको बांधा है एक दौर से

दुश्मन भी थर-थर काँपे हैं चाहे आए किसी ओर से

शहीदों की शहादत को यहाँ पल पल याद किया जाता है

जब आन पड़ी देश को ज़रूरत, क्रांति का नाद किया जाता है।

किसान भी है देशभक्त यहाँ, और देशभक्त जवान है

अहित देश का ना हो मुझसे, यही मेरी देशभक्ति का प्रमाण है

माना मेरा देश देवभूमि है और है गुरु-भूमि पर अपवाद यहाँ भी है

राम-राज यहाँ है, तो वो राक्षस राज यहाँ भी है

मृदुल व्यावहार विशेष यहाँ, पर भ्रष्टाचार यहाँ भी है

सभ्यता-संस्कार देश की नींव है, पर अत्याचार यहाँ भी है

जिस कन्या को देवी तुल्य माना है, उसी को बेआबरू करने का रिवाज़ यहाँ भी है

ये कमियाँ है मेरे देश में, इन्हें दूर करना चाहूँगा

अहिंसा है मेरे संस्कारों में, पर इन बुराइयों का खून करना चाहूँगा

अब बदलाव ज़रूरी है, सिर्फ़ सीमा पर लड़ना ही नहीं है देशभक्ति

देश के लिए प्यार, देश-हित के लिए जीना मरना भी है देशभक्ति

मात्र वीर जवान ही नहीं, जन जन में होना चाहिए देश हित का भाव

आत्मनिर्भर होगा देश मेरा, नहीं रह जाएगा किसी भी प्रकार का अभाव

रानेश चौदना

India of My Dreams (India@100)

A golden hour, lightening skies, With the nightingale’s silver tongue Awakes a nation, young and bright, And a million dreams are sung.

Dewy green lands, far and wide, A breath of sweet fresh air. Healthy food, bodies and minds, Rivers with nectar - crystal clear.

Nature basks in its glory,

Spotless roads sparkle with pride. Days shine with peace, harmony, Not an empty stomach at midnight.

Climbing towards the peak of advancements, A thousand pauses and rewinds.

Golden words edging us on;

“Made in India” etched in our minds.

United by our diversity, differences, Prospering past our boundaries; Everyone is equal, beautiful, content, Love is what everyone gives and seeks.

Every day we take a step closer to

The sky – its limits beckon to us,

We hold our hands together

And reach for the moon, the stars above us.

From ashes of past failures,

Rise tall the monuments of our triumph, Our victories – we learn,

We grow and mould our future bright.

At the golden hour, dawning skies,

She lives in the past, present and future;

A thousand years old, or just a hundred,

Dwelling in our hearts, in our dreams she’s nurtured.

A perfect world, a perfect vision. Let’s build our own utopia.

It’s our mission.

ISHITA SONI,
Class XIB, Apeejay School, NOIDA

Essay: India of My Dreams

Jeff Bezos once said, “ I predict that the 21st century will be India’s century.” This is certainly a wonderful thing to hear as an Indian. We are the most populated country in the world and there are a lot of talented people in our country. We are also the biggest democracy. But,we are not the most advanced country in the world. We are also not the best democracy. We rank only 131 out of the 188 countries in the Human Devel- opment Index. Clearly, there are a few problems.

India has a few internal problems which act as an obstacle on its way to becoming one of the most developed countries. We have great education institutions. However they are few in number and not available to the masses. India has a literacy rate of 77.7%. People have to be educated for the country to progress.The lack of funds and opportunities in India makes all the top students of our country go abroad and to earn a living there. Right now we are lacking in the research de- partment. We buy all the technology from foreign countries.

People can’t afford proper food, education, homes, etc. due to their poor financial conditions. There is a lot of garbage and dirty water lying in the country. The hygiene is poor. There are not enough hospitals which provide people with the care they require. Politics is also a cause. The politicians just want power and money. They make empty promises just to gain support. Corruption in the government is preventing them from introducing good policies. People are also highly underpaid for their work. There is no shortage of labour in India so the employers get away with paying less than the minimum wages.

But, ignorance of the people is the biggest one. Some people are resistant to change. There are numerous social evils present in the society. The whole society is divided on the basis of caste and religion. The religious groups fight amongst themselves. People still discriminate against the untouch- ables and the lower caste people. They are denied the rights they deserve. Gender inequality still exists. Women are paid less than men for the same work. Some families provide their daughters with minimal education and stop them from working. These are all issues which need to be tackled.

We have made a lot of progress in our 75 years of indepen- dence. We need to continue on this path and eliminate all the issues which we are facing. In the next 25 years, I would like to see more than 95% of the country literate and everyone under the age of 20 to be educated. This will make sure that we can identify the talented students and provide them with the aid they need. They will be our future and take our country to new heights. With computers being the future of the world,

a lot of funds have to be invested to make sure that India becomes one of the biggest if not the biggest technology centre of the world. India would be the leading country in research and development and we would not have the need to buy technology from other countries.

This will increase job opportunities for the students which will reduce the number of people going to foreign countries for jobs and in turn help in improving our economy. The Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna does provide people with ration. It has been successful till now but a lot more families need the ration to survive. I would like to see all the people who require the ration get it when they need it. The hygiene conditions will have improved. Diseases like Typhoid, Cholera, etc. which are spread due to consumption of contaminated food and water

should become minimal. Everyone in India should be able to get free healthcare as soon as it is required. Ambulances reach your homes in under 10 minutes. This will reduce the number of deaths.

Corruption should no longer exist. The politicians will be thoroughly investigated and if they are found guilty of unfair practices they will not be allowed to contest elections. The salaries of the citizens will be fair and they will not be un- derpaid at all. The caste system would have been completely eradicated in the country. Nobody would be denied their fun- damental rights just because of their caste. Everybody would be living in harmony and nobody would be forced to follow any religion. Gender equality would have been achieved. Men and women will be treated as equals and families would not favour their sons over their daughters. This is what India will look like 25 years in the future.

We have a lot of work to do if we want to become one of the most advanced countries. It will not be easy to reach our final goal. This will require a lot of detailed planning. Money will have to be invested in it. This will take a lot of resources but it is the goal we should strive for. If all this works then we can become one of the best democracies of the world. Everyone in our country will be happy. People will not shift to other countries for job opportunities. Our cultures will spread across the world. Our ideology of peace and diplomacy will be known by others. This will be the India which I would like to see 25 years in the future.

SHLOK SINHA,
Class IXA, Apeejay School, Panchsheel Park

Essay: India Of My Dreams

India’s road to freedom was undoubtedly not a simple one. Beginning withAlexander the Great in 320 BCE and continuing through the invasions of theMongols, Mughals, Persians, and Europeans, India has been invaded nearly 200times.

After a brutal and heartbreaking partition between India and Pakistan, weeventually attained our hard-earned in- dependence in 1947. Since then, India hasundoubtedly progressed and has had become much more democratic.

But what are the insights I, as the future of my country, have some insights abouthow india would look after 25 years in the year 2047.

In the India of my dreams, there will be peace and harmony. Every citizen will beliterate. India will reach great heights. It will be free of violence, terrorism, hungerand suffering. It will be filled with compassion, peace and happiness.

Every Indian will be happy. Every type of work will be respected. Higheststandards of cleanliness and hygiene will be maintained in the India of my dreams.

This is India, a land of peace, prosperity, and honesty where telling the truth is notfrowned upon and where there is no corruption. It will be a nation where everyoneis pleased to be an Indian, where women are respected, and where people of allreligions coexist.

How will this happen? Is it even realistic to achieve such a goal? Can we achieve itin a time period of 25 years? These are some questions that pop up in my headwhen I think of the India of my dreams...

Our constitution has laid down many provisions to achieve if not all then most ofthese goals for a better and brighter india. Then where does the problem occur?

The thing is that according to me it’s really difficult to get these provisions ontothe ground level. Therefore to start the development of india to become like mydream india we have to work on to eradicating few of these aspects

- Corruption
- Gender and caste discrimination
- Inequality
- Education System
- Basic Sanitation
- Healthcare System

- Poverty
- Pollution
- Women’s Safety

After focusing on all these factors, we would be able to observe changes in boththe India of today and the India of 25 years from now. To achieve each of ourindividual ambitions, we must all work together.

AASHINI SAMEER,
XA, Apeejay School, Panchsheel Park

India@75 Newsletters

Moving Towards India@100

March 2023

IN FOCUS

Workshop on Corporate Volunteering: Better Social Capital. Stronger Business.



India@75 Foundation organised a workshop on “Corporate Volunteering: Better Social Capital. Stronger Business” on 24th March 2023 at The Lalit, New Delhi, to bring together industry and civil society for a discussion on how to make corporate volunteering a business imperative for stronger social impact.

The workshop drew participation from many business and civil society organizations. The Inaugural Panel session on “Creating Equitable Workplaces and Influencing Social Impact through Corporate Volunteering” deliberated on how workplaces can be shaped into agents of social change.

The panel discussion was followed by the breakout group discussions, where

Moving Towards India@100

May 2023

VOLUNTEERING / PARTNERSHIPS / CONVERSATIONS

#IHaveADream



Fireside chat with Ajay Piramal: India@100 – Charting the Path for Growth and Development



The conversation with Mr Piramal, a business icon known for his inclusive worldview, was the latest in the series “I Have a Dream”.

This series features eminent Indians from different walks of life

Moving Towards India@100

August 2023

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and Har Ghar Tiranga celebrated during Independence Day across CII Offices




Moving Towards India@100

September 2023

FOCUS

Shramdaan for Swachhata: Towards a Cleaner India



India@75 Foundation has been working towards mainstreaming volunteering in India for more than a decade. Recently, it contributed to the ‘Garbage Free India’ drive by organising the **Shramdaan for Swachhata** event in Ghaziabad. The Shramdaan event encouraged communities to voluntarily clean public spaces and contribute to the vision of Clean India.

Moving Towards India@100

June 2023

CHANGESPEAKE

India@75 brings you #CHANGESPEAKE, a series of conversations with people who are creating the language of change. These individuals are shaping India@100 by the dint of their perseverance and vision. We hope these conversations leave you encouraged about the India in the making and inspire you to act on your beliefs.

“Very few things can lift the spirit of a nation the way six grammes of Olympic gold can.”

— Vivek Singh Co-Founder and Jt. Managing Director, Procam International



Procam International is a pioneer in the Sports Management industry in India. Since its inception in 1988, Procam has conceptualized and promoted over 100 international events across a variety of sports, that have elicited the participation of the highest caliber of athletes, as well as huge public interest and attendance. In a free flowing conversation with India@75 Foundation, **Vivek Singh**, Co-Founder and Joint MD of Procam International, talks about the potential sports to shape a nation and how the government and India Inc. can collaborate to change the sports narrative in India.

Snippets

“90 percent of people today have no idea how sports were conducted back in the day. Sports people were not given due recognition and the entire experience of playing was a poor one. My brother Anil and I wanted to change that.”

“By the end of 2023, India will have 1600 distance races, run annually. There were less than 20,000 registered runners in

Moving Towards India@100

July 2023

I HAVE A DREAM

As we move towards India@100, the years ahead are an opportunity to shape the nation that we aspire for. To explore what such an India could be, the Foundation hosts *I Have a Dream* – a fireside chat series. The chat features remarkable people, who the country looks up to. The conversations reflect on the personal journeys of the speakers, their vision for India@100 and what the country could do to reach this goal.

“If you can view innovation and sustainability together, you are built for the future.”

— Jamshyd N. Godrej, Past President, CII; Chairman & MD, Godrej & Boyce Mfg Co. Ltd




Moving Towards India@100

October 2023

FOCUS

DIALOGUE ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SHAPING AN INCLUSIVELY DEVELOPED INDIA@100



India recognizes that gender equality is key to inclusive growth and is working to give women a bigger role in the Indian economy. India@75 Foundation organised a panel discussion titled – “The Role of Women in shaping Inclusively developed India@100” – to have a conversation on what this entails.

Smita Agarwal, Director & Chief Financial Officer, PTC Industries Limited; **Vanitha Datla**, Vice Chairperson and Managing Director, Elco Ltd; **Anavila Misra**, Sustainable Fashion Designer; **Shruti Pandey**, Founder, Strawstare Eco. and **Rumjhum Chatterjee** (Chair), Co-Founder & Managing Trustee, The Infravision Foundation formed the panel.


The discussion threw up the need to increase women’s participation in the workforce, find ways to empower them socially and economically, the importance of male allies in dismantling gender stereotypes, and the need to promote female role models.

Moving Towards India@100

November 2023

I HAVE A DREAM

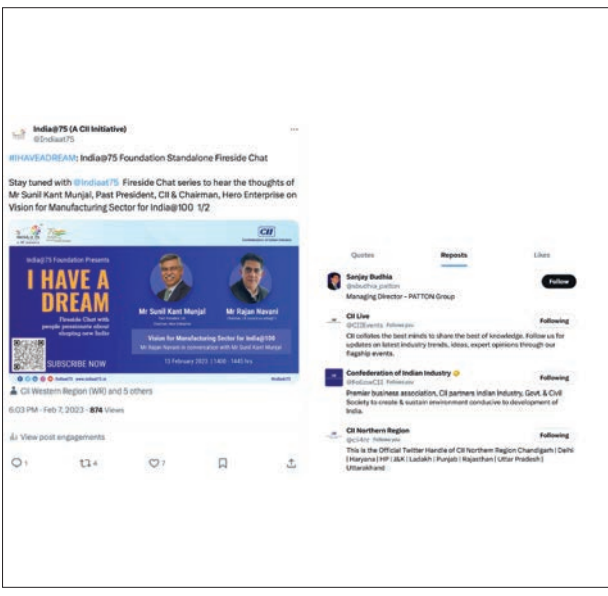
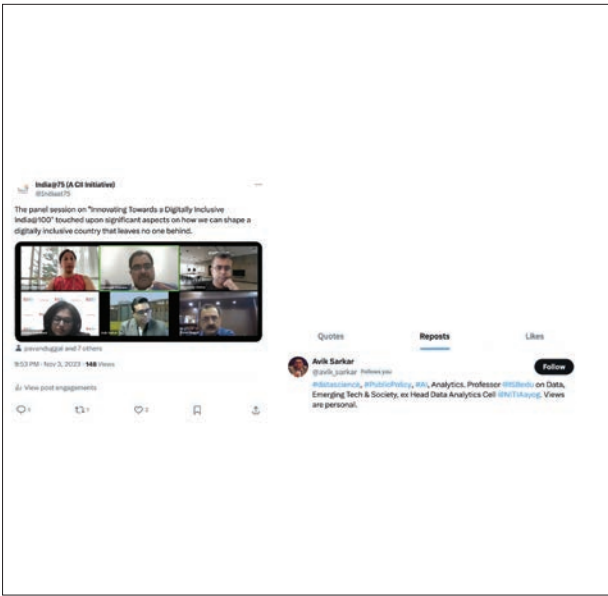
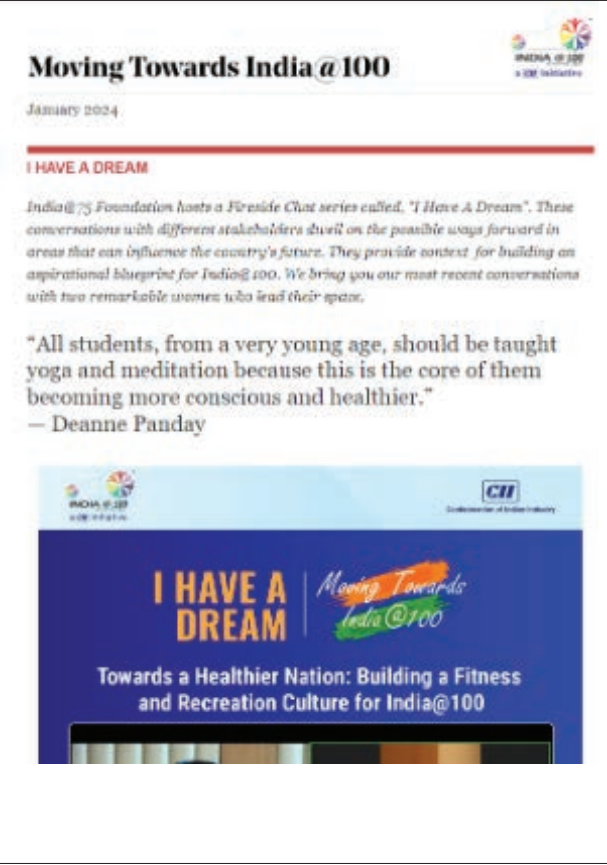
“Education and art go hand in hand. What we achieve in education has a big role to play with respect to art and culture. If we can merge both the aspects, it will be a great step forward.”

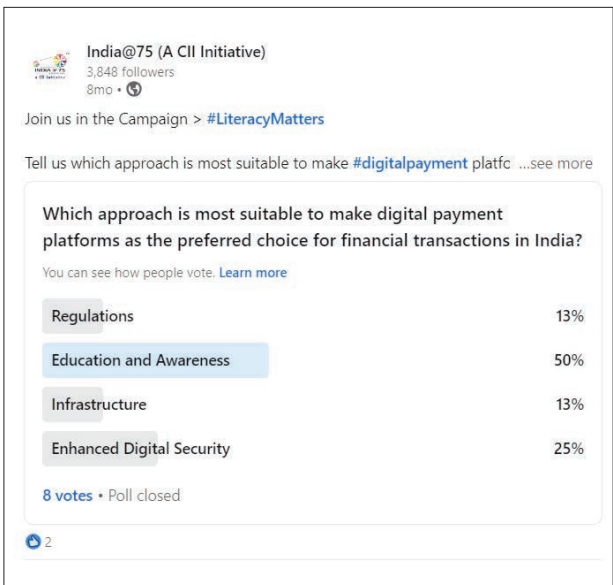
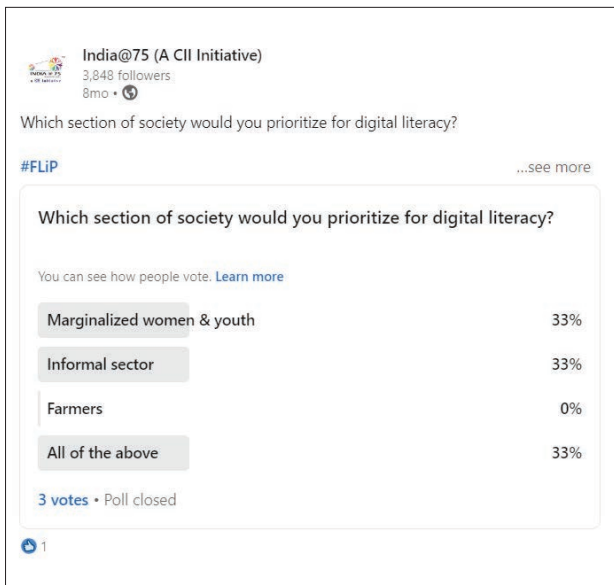
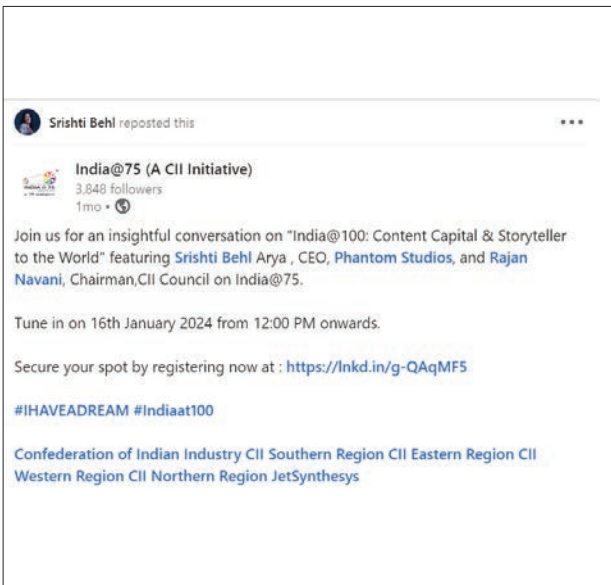
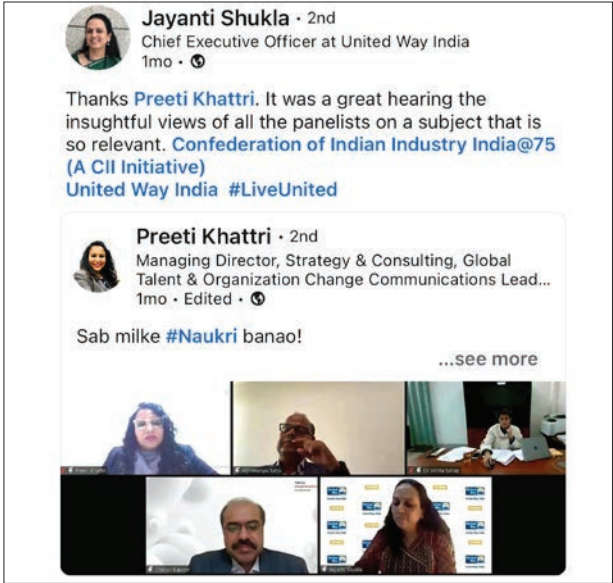
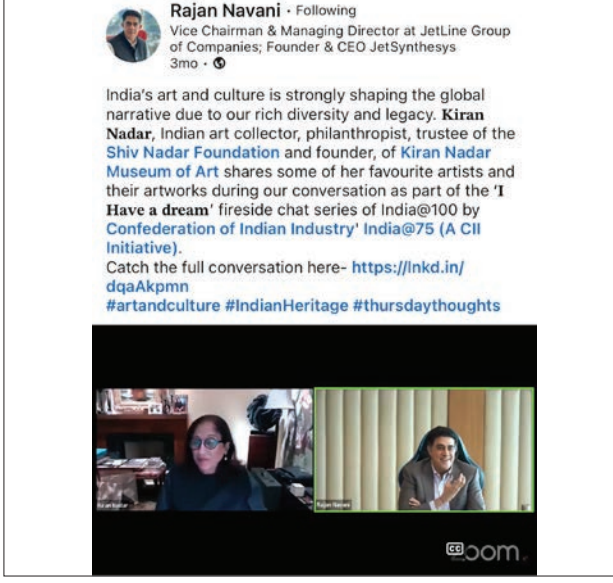
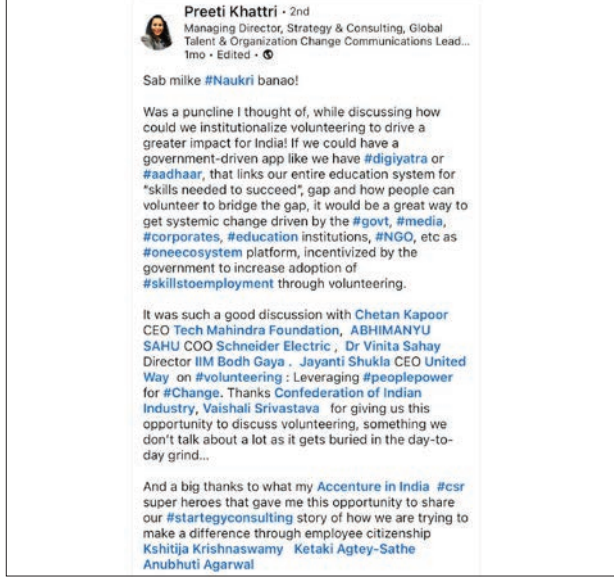


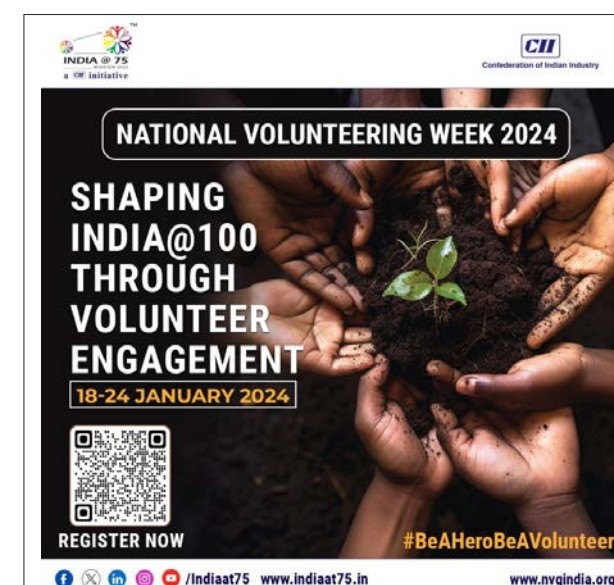
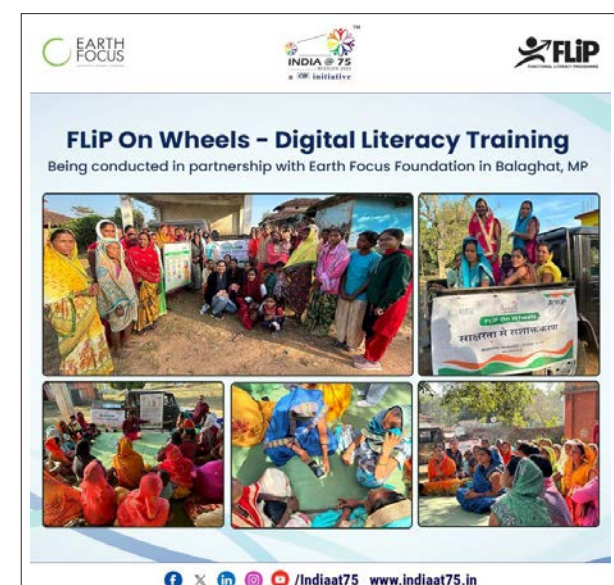
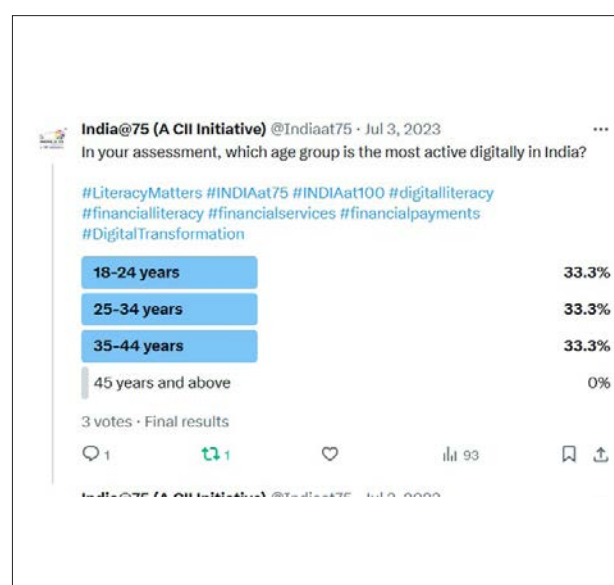
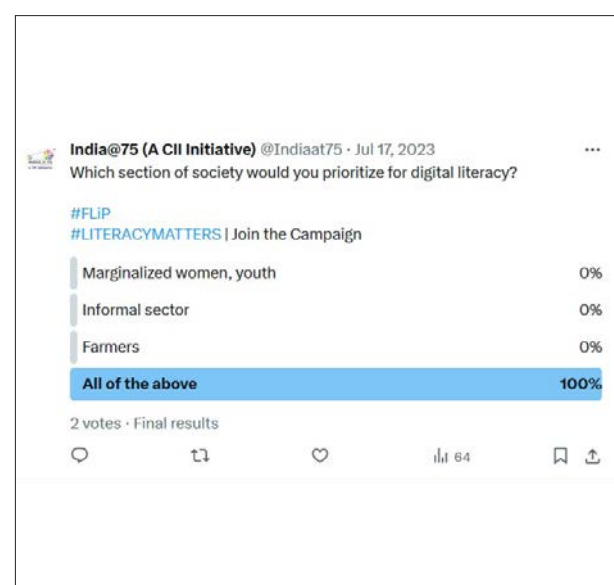
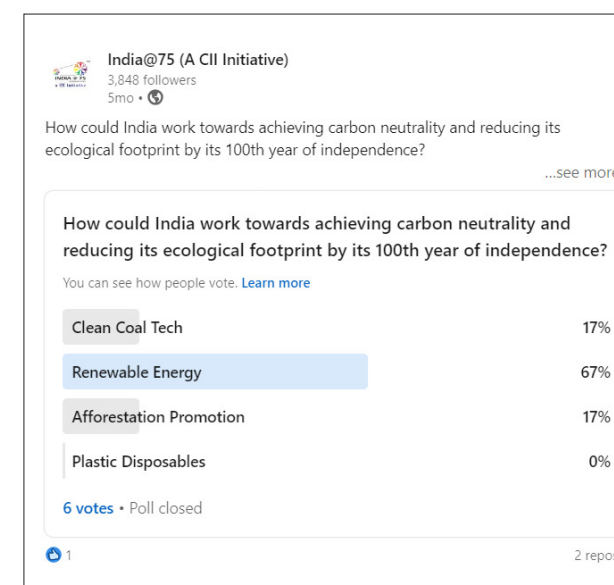
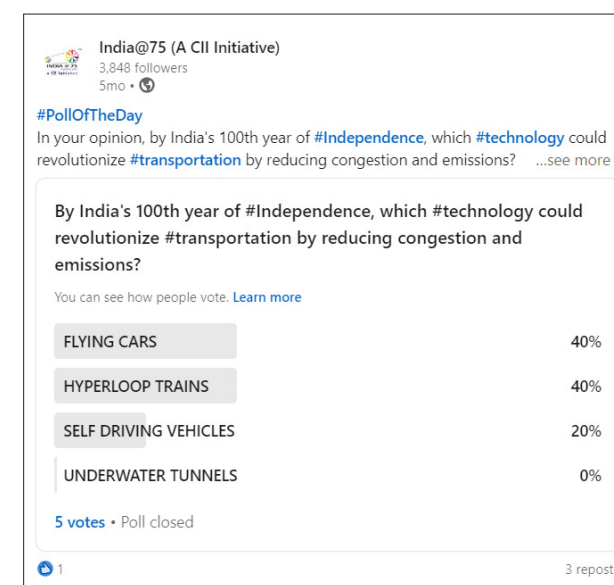
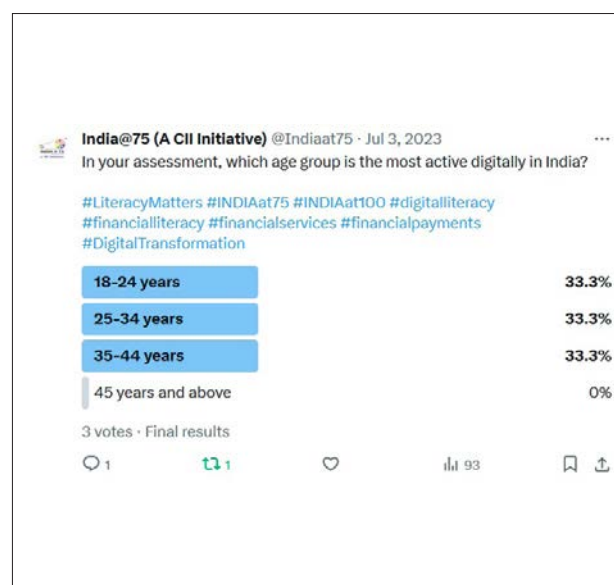
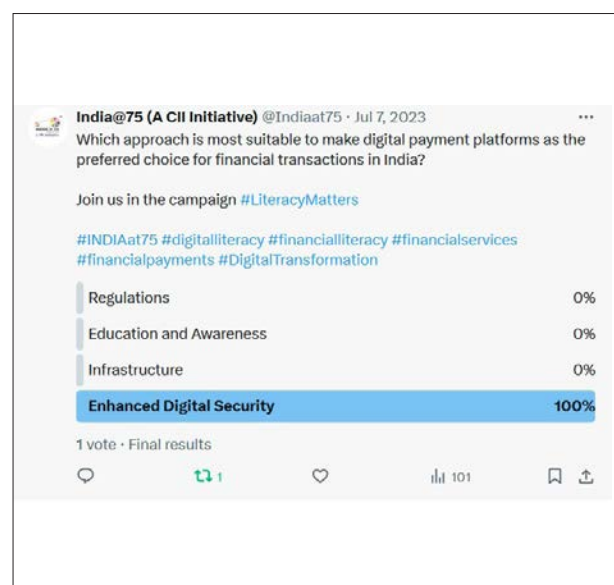
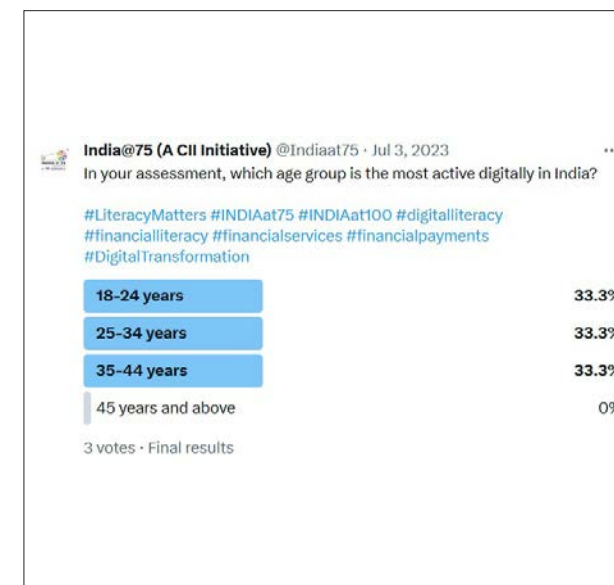
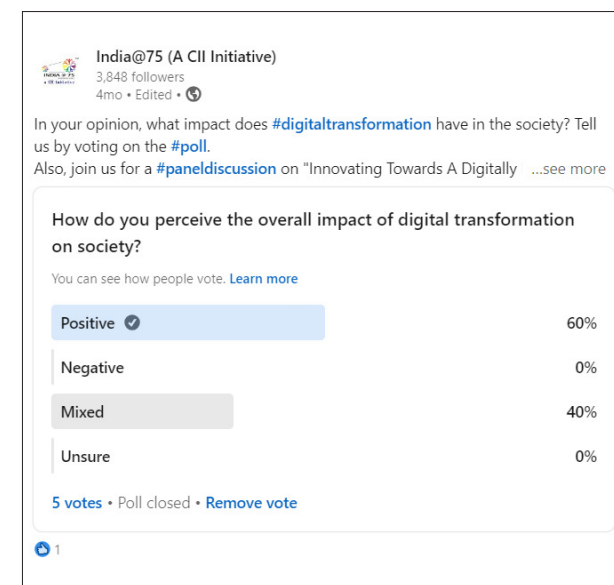
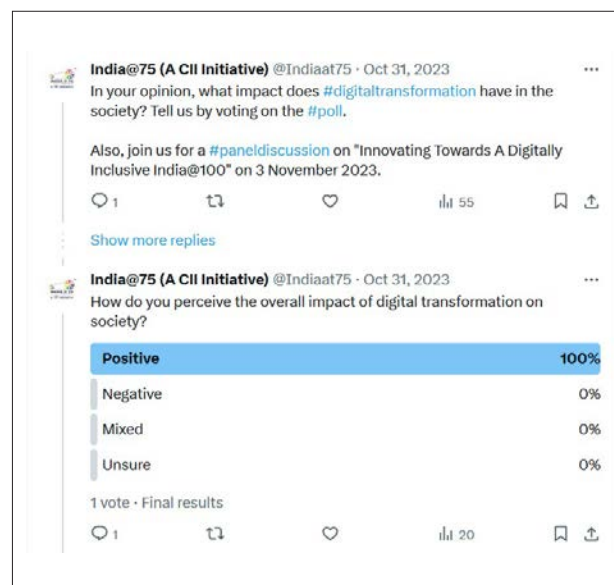
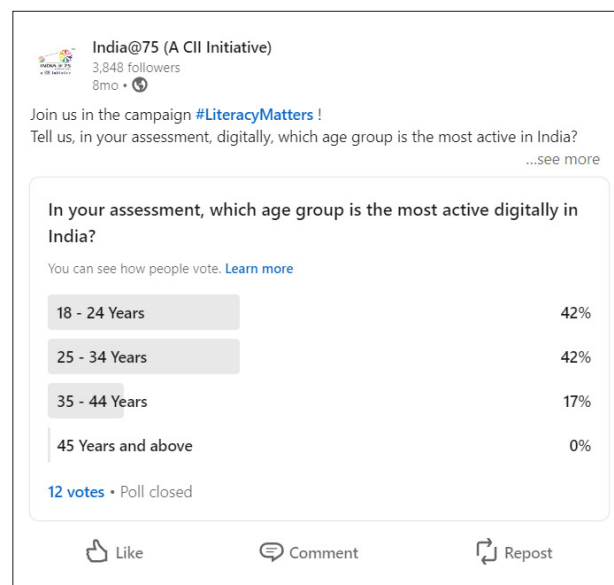
India@75 Foundation hosts a Fireside Chat series called, “I Have A Dream”. These conversations with different stakeholders dwell on the possible ways forward in areas key to country’s future. They provide context for building an aspirational blueprint for India@100.

Our most recent guest was **Kiran Nadar**, Chairperson, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Trustee, Shiv Nadar Foundation. She joined **Rajan Navani**, Chairman, CII Council on India@75.

Snippets







INDIA @ 75
a SR Initiative

JOIN THE SQUAD

DONATION DRIVE FOR THE UNDERPRIVILEGED SECTIONS OF SOCIETY ACROSS THE STATES OF GUJARAT, UTTAR PRADESH, MAHARASHTRA AND WEST BENGAL

FROM 01/10/2023 - 14/10/2023

TIME 11:00 AM - 05:00 PM

PLACE NOIDA

EXECUTION PARTNER JAKSON

JAKSON

REGISTER NOW

#BeAHeroBeAVolunteer

INDIA @ 75
a SR Initiative

WE OWE HER THE WORLD

Let's bring it to her. Join us virtually to discuss how.

INNOVATING TOWARDS A DIGITALLY INCLUSIVE INDIA@100

3 November 2023 1500 - 1600 Hrs

INDIA @ 75
a SR Initiative

JOIN THE SQUAD

CALLING ALL COMPASSIONATE CHANGEMAKERS!

WE'RE EMBARKING ON A MISSION TO UNDERSTAND AND ASSESS THE STATUS OF LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS IN THE LEPROSY COLONIES OF JANJIR-CHAMPA DISTRICT

PLACE JANJIR-CHAMPA DISTRICT, CHHATTISGARH

ORGANIZED BY SASAKAWA- INDIA LEPROSY FOUNDATION

REGISTER NOW

#BeAHeroBeAVolunteer

FLIP INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

DIGITAL FINANCIAL PAYMENTS ON CONTINUOUS RISE IN INDIA

THE TOTAL UPI TRANSACTION VALUE ACCOUNTED FOR NEARLY 86% OF INDIA'S GDP IN FY22

#LITERACYMATTERS | JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

Source: National Informatics Centre

INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

SESSION ON ANCIENT WISDOM FOR MODERN INDIA

20 DECEMBER 2023 | WEDNESDAY, 1500-1600 HRS

INDIA

Register

/Indiaat75 www.indiaat75.in

INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

WEBINAR 11 OCTOBER 2023 • 1500-1600 HRS

The Role of Women in shaping an Inclusively Developed India@100

Register

FLIP INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

DIGITAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN INDIA

DID YOU KNOW ? BETWEEN 2014 AND 2017, THE PROPORTION OF THE ADULT INDIAN POPULATION WITH AN ACCOUNT AT A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION INCREASED FROM 52.8% TO 79.8%

#LITERACYMATTERS | JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

FLIP INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

CHECKLIST FOR SAFE ONLINE TRANSACTION

DO'S

- Be cautious when downloading apps
- Consider using private browsing windows
- Select a strong and unique pin code for your accounts
- Enhance the security using two-factor authentication

#LITERACYMATTERS | JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative

JOIN THE SQUAD

REGISTER NOW TO VOLUNTEER FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION DRIVE

JOIN THE TEAM OF ROBIN HOOD ARMY TO DISTRIBUTE FOOD AT SLUMS IN DELHI

16/07/2023

TIME 04:00 PM - 07:00 PM

PLACE NEW DELHI (110017)

ORGANIZED BY ROBIN HOOD ARMY

REGISTER NOW

#BeAHeroBeAVolunteer

FLIP INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

DIGITAL DIVIDE IN RURAL INDIA

60% of the internet users in rural India i.e. 352 million people are not digitally active

DIGITAL FINANCIAL LITERACY WILL HELP BRIDGE THE GAP

#LITERACYMATTERS | JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

FLIP INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative CII Confederation of Indian Industry

ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL LITERACY

Information Literacy, Internet Literacy, Media Literacy, Critical Thinking, Digital Security

#LITERACYMATTERS | JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

INDIA @ 75 a SR Initiative

JOIN THE SQUAD

REGISTER NOW TO VOLUNTEER FOR OUR UPCOMING YOGA DAY CELEBRATION

21st June, 2023

TIME 09:00 AM - 12:00 PM

PLACE GHAZIABAD (201014)

ORGANIZED BY Annant Unnati Foundation

REGISTER NOW

#BeAHeroBeAVolunteer

Way Forward



India has been taking huge strides towards becoming a superpower on the global stage throughout this time, and Indian Industries are working towards ensuring that India stands on its strength when we celebrate our centenary year in 2047.

CII and India@75 Foundation commenced the National Visioning Exercise to create a National Vision Document, India@100: The People's Agenda, with a focus on being future-ready while strengthening the core. The visioning exercise has undergone a rigorous input gathering exercise, encapsulating the aspirations of the citizens from a large cross-section of society for the next 25 years.

The Indian Government is collaborating with businesses to create India's progressive economic growth narrative for India@100. In the next 25 years, the aggro-tech industry will not only achieve self-sufficiency in agriculture but will strive to become the 'food basket for the world.

We will continue to drive large-scale job creation, combined with gainful income and social security. The 2047 vision for India is to attain the stature of becoming the global supplier of services such as animation and visual effects, further leveraging a young and skilled workforce.

India envisions ranking among the top 5 exporters in the world. India has already made great strides under the 'Make in India' and Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' initiatives and will strive to become a global manufacturing hub, focusing on expanding beyond cost-efficiency towards rapid innovation, high quality standards, and sustainability.

In addition to economic growth, revitalising India's soft power in sociocultural domains such as art and culture, tourism, and sports is of utmost importance.

Critical areas where India aims to innovate to stay ahead of the curve include climate and sustainability, transformative technologies, and digital platforms. These areas will provide unique opportunities where India can pioneer and collaborate with other nations for shared development. As the world's fastest-growing economy, the focus of India@100 will be on developing futuristic technologies such as green hydrogen, carbon capture, utilisation, and storage, sustainable packaging, and so on.

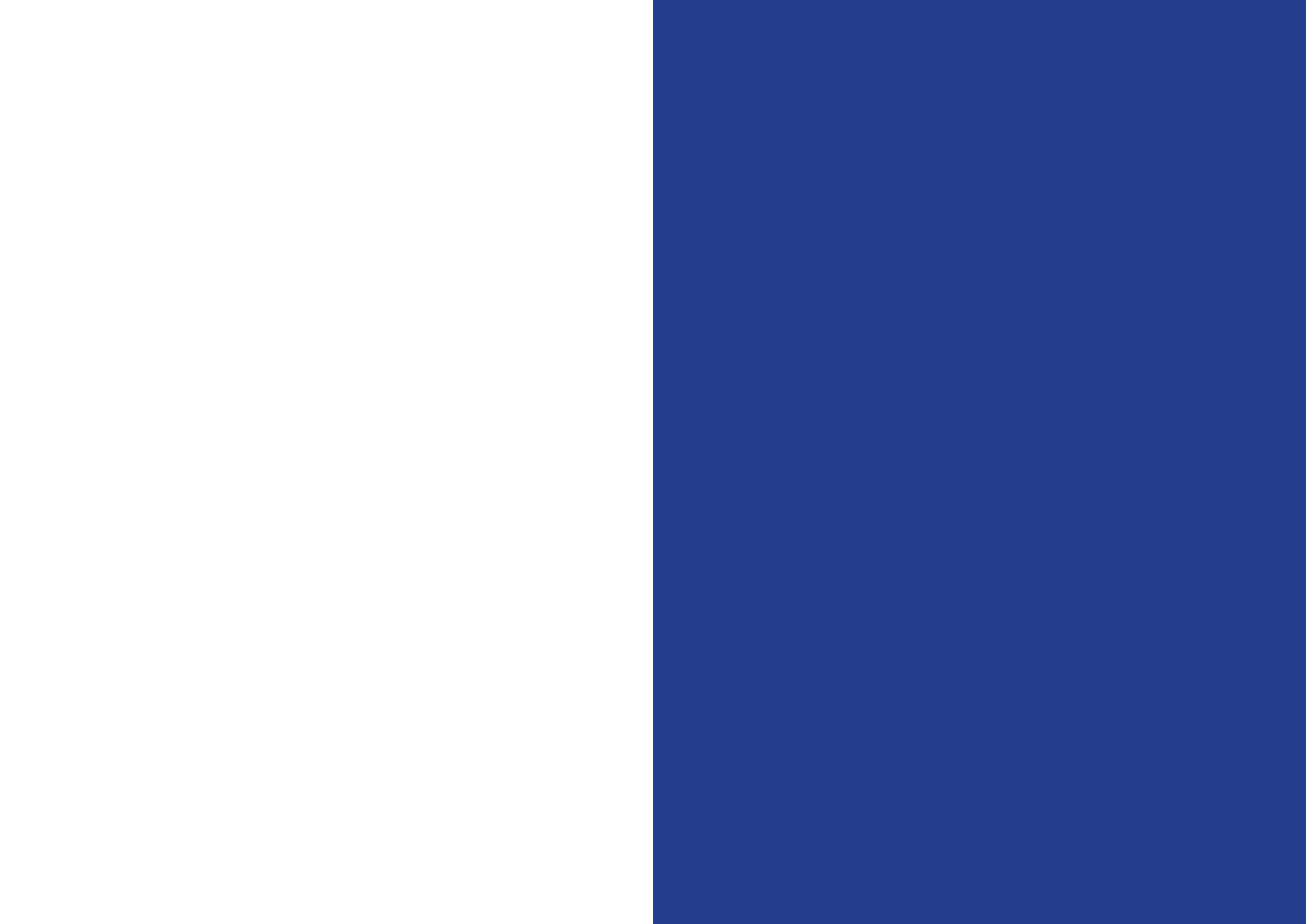
To build a roadmap on the value system of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam for an inclusively developed India at 100, focusing on the following broad vision elements is essential:

- Achieving holistic leadership in the new world order
- Maximising equitable economic progress
- Revitalising soft power
- Innovating to stay ahead of the curve
- Transforming India's core to unlock its full potential

India@100 will pave the way not only towards a significant improvement in the Human Development Index but also towards becoming a growth engine for the world economy.

Moving towards India@100, the India@75 Foundation is deeply engaged in working on intersectoral, inter-sectional, and interlinked facets of nation-building through collaboration with diverse stakeholders such as the government, think tanks, academic and research institutions, industries, thought leaders, visionaries, and civil society experts. The India@100 visioning exercise is aimed at weaving citizen aspirations into a single thread that works as a roadmap for individuals, associations, industries, government institutions, and civil society to work towards an inclusively developed nation.

The way forward now, beyond India@75, is to continue working towards nation-building but with a renewed approach for shared, sustainable, and inclusive development through an increased focus on establishing intersectoral synergies and linkages between the national vision and the state vision set out for an inclusively developed India@100 by 2047.



The India@75 Foundation Journey

India@75 was taken up by CII as the flagship initiative toward its Nation Building agenda. In order to give it a larger mandate, India@75 was instituted as a Foundation Trust on 13 July 2012.

CII's work on India@75 started when India turned 60 in 2007. Enthused with the thoughts shared by late Prof CK Prahalad at the India@60 celebrations in New York, CII adopted the idea since then under India@75 has been working on what India needed to do to shape up as a Morally, Economically and Technologically Advanced Nation.

In 2008, 14 years ago, CII facilitated a public visioning exercise, led by experts, and interviewed over 6000 people from 17 states to find out what they thought India needed to do to become such a country. These people ranged from simple fisherfolk to Ministers and Bureaucrats. The findings were synthesized into a vision document called India@75: The People's Agenda.

This vision gave rise to an eponymous movement called India@75. This was an industry-led, multi-stakeholder movement that sought to catalyze strategic collaborations between groups on issues critical to the holistic development of the country. One of the first people to understand and appreciate the intent of the movement was the Honourable Prime Minister, who was then the CM of Gujarat. Many of the India@75 vision elements found their way into the development discourse under his leadership. Skill India, Digital India, Smart Cities Mission and Startup India are some examples.

India@75 Foundation is extensively working towards seven vision elements – Skill Development, Urbanisation, Healthcare, Inclusive Development, Technology, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Business and Economy.

India@75 Foundation has been working to accelerate India's development journey by catalysing important collaboration between Industry and other stakeholder groups in areas critical to the nation's development such as the Volunteering initiative, Functional Literacy Programme (FLiP) and Aspirational District Programme etc.

It started working extensively to establish the culture of both general and pro-bono volunteering. Technology was seen as a vital enabler to scale up people engagement by catalysing more collaboration and thereby elevating the pursuit of India@75 to a movement mode. This led to the development of robust online platforms like the National Volunteering Grid (NVG) to connect NGOs with citizens and Industry so that they could collaborate on issues of common interest.

CII has aggressively advocated the India@75 vision on strategic platforms. This has contributed to a conducive environment for indigenisation, skilling, digitalisation and financial inclusion.



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