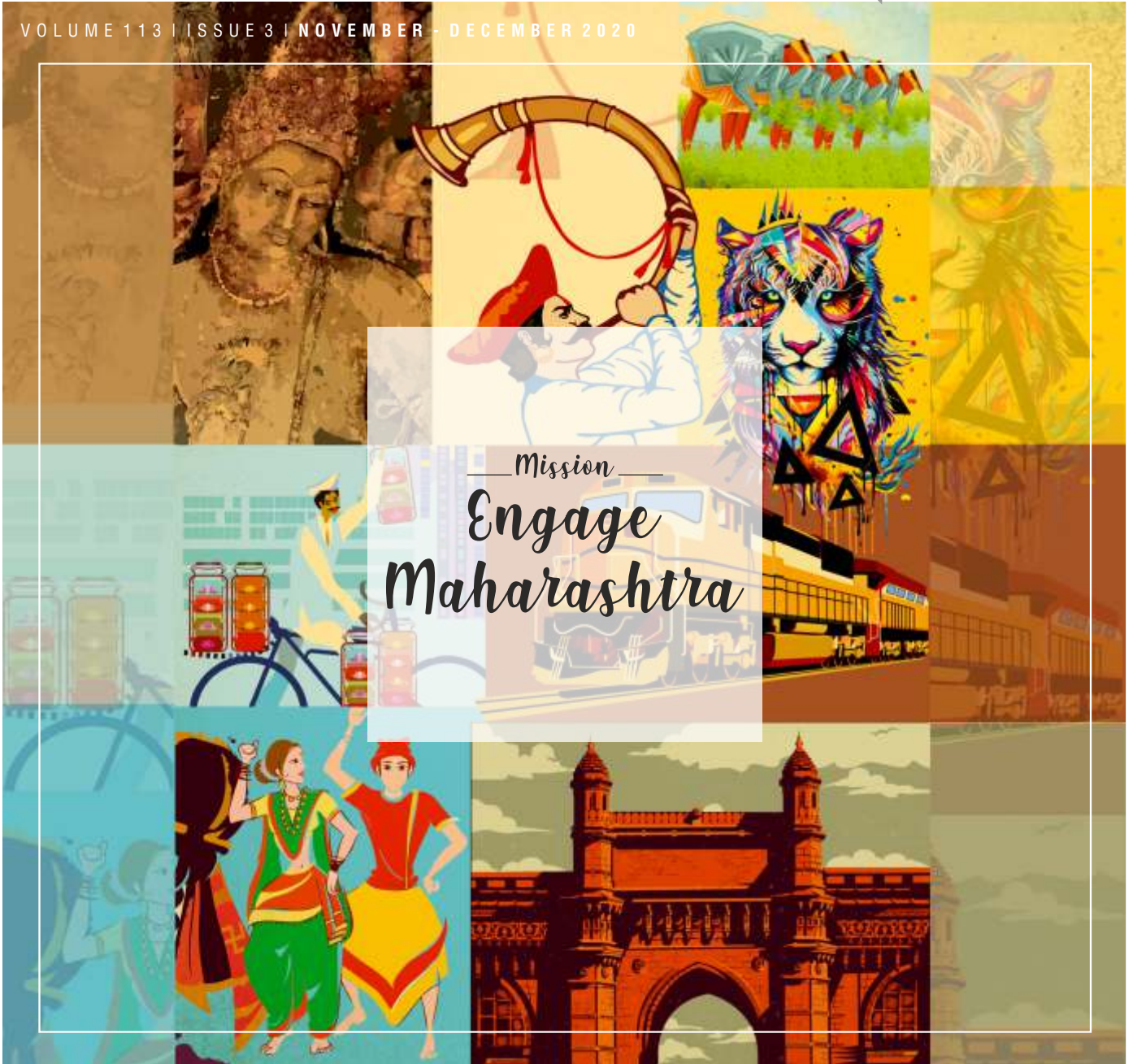


# IMC

Chamber of Commerce and Industry

# IMC JOURNAL

VOLUME 113 | ISSUE 3 | NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2020



Mission  
**Engage  
Maharashtra**

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December 2020

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Views expressed in the IMC Journal are not necessarily those of the Committees of the Chamber. Non-receipt claims will not be entertained after four months of the publication of the journal; six months in the case of overseas subscribers.

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*Single Copy Price*

₹ 50/-

*Annual Subscription*

(For 6 Issues)  
₹ 200/- (India) | \$ 30 (Abroad)

*Design & Printing:*

Finesse Graphics & Prints Pvt. Ltd.  
Tel: +91-022-4036 4600  
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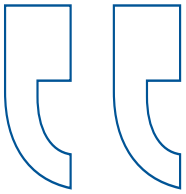
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## *From the President's Desk*

**Mr. Rajiv Podar**

Wishing you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

As we move from survival to revival phase, IMC along with our 26 specific-expert committees continues to work on range of programs and virtual events to galvanize, inspire and empower our members with a shared learning experience as we navigate through Covid crisis.

With the vaccine now being developed and approved by a few countries, we hope we can begin “normal living” in the coming months.

### **World Economy**

It is expected the decline in world GDP in 2020 to be less severe at -3.7% compared to -4.4% in the September Global Economic Outlook (GEO). The Fitch Rating Research Reports have also revised their annual world GDP growth forecast for 2021, upwards but only modestly, to 5.3% (from 5.2%), as the deteriorating outlook in the very near term partially is offset by a stronger outlook from the second half of the year. We are now significantly more optimistic for 2022, as we assume vaccine rollout will facilitate a material easing in social distancing and boosting economic activity. A significant uplift to Eurozone GDP growth in 2022 is expected from grant disbursements from the EU's Next Generation EU recovery fund (NGEU). The US and the Eurozone is expected to regain pre-pandemic (4Q19) GDP levels earlier than previously anticipated, by 3Q21 and 2Q22, respectively. Vaccine rollout problems or delays are the key downside risks and could result in repeated circuit-breaker lockdowns and extensive social distancing



through 2021, weighing heavily on GDP.

### **Indian Economy**

- India's GDP growth, while still in contraction, registered a shallower contraction of 7.5% YoY in Q2 FY21 *vis-à-vis* broad market expectation of 8-9% contraction.
- Q2 GDP data has pushed India into a technical recession. However, the economy has shown signs of reviving due to easing of supply disruptions as well as unlocking of pent-up demand.
- On the supply side, the noteworthy feature is the return of Manufacturing and Utilities GVA to expansion territory. Growth in manufacturing GVA has now turned positive after a gap of 4-quarters, upending the drag from both pre Covid and Covid related reasons. Further, healthy expansion in Agriculture and Allied activities on the back of a surplus monsoon is comforting. The drag in growth however came from the financial sector

(emanating from deceleration in credit offtake) and public sector (reflected in a contraction in government spending).

- GST collection touched Rs. 115175 Lakh Crores in December 2020. An all time monthly high since the implementation of GST.
- PMI for the December stood at 56.4 after reaching its peak of 58.9 in October 2020.
- Basis the recent elevated CPI inflation prints and expectations on evolving price pressures (food and cost-push), inflation trajectory for H2FY21; was revised by RBI projecting inflation at 6.8% for Q3 and 5.8% for Q4 (*vs. a range of 4.5-5.4% announced in Oct-21*). For FY22, it estimates a range of 4.6-5.2% in H1.
- Recovery in the manufacturing space in Q2 was driven by the sectors of Motor Vehicles and Transport Equipment, Electrical Equipment, Fabricated Metals, Tobacco, Textiles and Apparels,



# From the President's Desk

Leather, Electronics, Heavy Machinery, Furniture and Wood Products, Beverages, Basic Metals, among others.

- On demand side, while all key drivers continue to contract on annualized basis, the extent of contraction eased significantly in Q2 *vis-à-vis* Q1.
- Supported by expenditure rationalization and other sources of income, there is a sharp improvement in profitability of the domestic corporate sector in Q2 despite the overhang of contraction in sales.
- Pick-up in economic activity is getting reflected in improvement in tax collections - a breather for the government.
- RBI upped its FY21 GDP growth forecast to -7.5% *vis-à-vis* from earlier estimate of -9.5%. with the growth being positive in Q3 and Q4.

## Key Reforms

- The Government's recent announcements are focused on job creation and easing credit flow. The Union Cabinet has approved to introduce the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme in 10 more sectors like food processing, telecom, electronics, textiles, specialty steel, automobiles and auto components, solar photo-voltaic modules and white goods such as air conditioners and LEDs for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities and exports. These sectors had been identified on the basis of their potential to create jobs and make India self-reliant. Promotion of the manufacturing sector and creation of a conducive manufacturing ecosystem will not only enable integration with global supply chains but also

establish backward linkages with the MSME sector in the country. It will lead to overall growth in the economy and create huge employment opportunities.

- The cumulative Covid relief economic package announced so far by the central government and the RBI stands at Rs 29.88 lakh crore. The package are to boost job creation, provide liquidity support to stressed sectors and encourage economic activity in housing and infrastructure areas. The measures such as Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana, Additional Outlay for PM Awas Yojana – Urban, Relaxation of Earnest Deposit Money & Performance Security on Government Tenders, Income Tax relief for Developers & Home Buyers, Infra Debt Financing, Boost for Rural Employment, Boost for Project Exports, Capital and Industrial Stimulus, R&D grant for Covid Vaccine have been announced under Aatmanirbhar Bharat 3.0.

These measures create an ecosystem that aids domestic demand, incentivises companies to generate jobs and boost production, and simultaneously extends benefits to those in severe distress, be it firms or individuals. It is a multi-pronged approach, aimed at generating employment and encouraging formalisation of the workforce in urban areas, expanding the scope of distress employment provided in rural areas, easing the flow of credit to stressed parts of the economy, expanding the incentives offered to boost domestic manufacturing, and kickstarting the real estate cycle, among others.

## IMC Activities

- At the G20 Summit 2020, Prime Minister Modi emphasized

on multiskilling and reskilling to create a vast talent pool as a key element in New Global Index for post Corona World. IMC has been organizing INDCON Building Stronger Research and Development Ecosystem Enabling Saksham Bharat Abhiyan – a series of virtual conclave pan-India with a focus on industry-academia partnership. After Mumbai-Pune, INDCON Delhi-NCR has also received a resounding success with India's top educationist and eminent industry experts covering a wide range of issues. A robust collaboration between industry-academia will create an employment-ready workforce producing a vast pool of skilled talent.

- One of the tenets of good governance is the participation of its citizens in policy formulation and programme implementation to enable direct participatory democracy. We had remarkable session strategies for enhancing the participation of common citizen for Ease of Living by Mr. Abhishek Singh, CEO, MyGovIndia. He shared some valuable insights on leveraging technology & digitization in governance to establish innovative channels of interaction to engage with the citizens and making the service delivery seamless and pave a way for active citizen participation & facilitate ease of living.
- IMC partnered with Horasis for the Horasis Asia Meet. In the IMC Plenary Session on *Reboot Reform & Resurge* the Indian Economy we had the honor of having Hon'ble Shri Nitin Gadkariji, Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises,

GoI along with other eminent panelists.

- Indian retail industry is one of the fastest-growing in the world & on the other hand, Dubai is the number one retail destination in the world. IMC in collaboration with Dubai Chambers organized India-Dubai Retail Summit to capitalize on the huge opportunities in the space of retail and for a deepening economic and bilateral relations.
- Travel Tourism & Hospitality contributes 10% to India's GDP. As these sectors continue to struggle. IMC organized a timely online interaction on Travel Safe, Stay Safe and Dine Safe addressed by Smt. Valsa Nair Singh (IAS), Principal Secretary, Tourism, Excise & Civil Aviation, Government of Maharashtra and other eminent experts sparking a new dialogue to instill confidence, increase demand & to revive these sectors.
- Apart from the above IMC continues having various value added and information driven programs.

### **Engage Maharashtra**

IMC being one of the largest and oldest chambers in Maharashtra, we have always been in the forefront to support the state and work closely with the Government for promoting industrial and economic development. Due to the Pandemic, Maharashtra has been going through its worst crisis as it was the worst hit state. In these times the private sector has an important role to play to help the Government build capacity and resilience for future shocks. With this in mind, IMC has undertaken Mission Engage Maharashtra which was launched by our Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Uddhav Thackerayji in the august presence of Industry Minister Shri Subhash Desaiji.

IMC Mission Engage Maharashtra would entail its various committees working on this mission. In brief, our Agriculture & Food Processing Committee has planned a mega Conference to boost the sector; Industry and Trade Committee has proposed to work closely with the Industry Ministry to address problems, explore finance and provide mentorship to MSMEs; International Business Committee would like to

be actively involved with Magnetic Maharashtra and attracting FDI to the State; Mediation Committee would provide free mediation services for inter-governmental issues; Ease of Living Committee is working on a white paper to improve quality of life and living in the state; Health Committee is carrying out an extensive study on how to provide accessible and affordable health infrastructure; Startup Committee has planned "Spot On" an event to provide instant funding to selected Startups; Our Digital Committee has launched ART – a platform to Audit – Recommend and Train MSME in the New Digital World and our Tourism Infrastructure, Real Estate Development and Knowledge Committees are working on various recommendations for boosting the same in Maharashtra.

IMC's ART platform was launched by the Shri Subhash Desaiji, Hon'ble Minister of Industries and Mining for Government of Maharashtra.

Engage Maharashtra will continue to be a critical anchor that will drive our efforts and decisions to *Reboot Reform and Resurge* the Economy.

Stay safe and stay well.

# IMC's Mission Engage Maharashtra proposal being unveiled by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Uddhav Thackeray

Mumbai, December 1 2020: To Reboot, Reform and Resurge the economy of Maharashtra in wake of the Coronavirus pandemic, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized a virtual inauguration of its flagship initiative 'Mission Engage Maharashtra'.

This initiative was inaugurated by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Uddhav Thackeray in the presence of Shri Subhash Desai, Hon'ble Minister of Industries and Mining for Government of Maharashtra.

The Chamber has decided 'Mission Engage Maharashtra' to be its special focus and will work closely with the government to help its efforts to rebuild the economy post Covid as well as assisting in attracting more investments, supporting the medium and small enterprises (MSME) sector, boosting the agriculture sector and guiding on reforming (policy to enhance) 'Ease of Living' and 'Ease of doing Business' in Maharashtra.

Our major committees will work on this programme and conduct seminars to help achieve the goal of 'Mission Engage Maharashtra'.

Speaking on the occasion, Maharashtra CM, Shri Uddhav Thackeray said, "Maharashtra has been a business-friendly state for decades and despite many states trying to move factories out of it to their own states, the shift isn't going to happen."

"This is because our government doesn't just believe in signing MOUs but is also proactive about actually



translating it into meaningful employment opportunities. From last year's Rs. 60,000 crores, our goal this year is to sign MOUs worth Rs. 1,00,000 crores. For this to happen, we are also working on granting a single window clearance to all those who want to set up industries in Maharashtra state", he added.

Shri Thackerayji also outlined his government's efforts to attract more and more businesses post Covid.

"India grows when Maharashtra grows. Being one of the most important industrialized states in the country, the economic recovery of the country at large depends on how we bounce back. And we are hopeful that events such as this can send the right signals to the investors, strengthen the rural economies and galvanize the medium and small enterprises (MSMEs)", added Shri Subhash Desai, the Minister for Industries and Mining, Government of Maharashtra.

During the virtual ceremony, IMC's Digital Technology Committee also launched Assess, Recommend, Train (ART) Programme specially designed for MSMEs to help them assess and achieve digital readiness during such time of crisis.

Speaking at the event, Rajiv Podar, President, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry said, "Maharashtra is going through its worst crisis ever as it is the worst hit state by the Coronavirus outbreak and we admire the resolute fight that your administration has been giving to the pandemic and maintaining balance between life and livelihood."

"We believe that in times such as this, the private sector also should play its part to help the government build capacity and resilience for future shocks", he added.

He further stated, "There is a need to *Reboot Reform and Resurge* the economy. With this in mind, the Chamber has decided Mission Engage Maharashtra to be its special focus this year and will work closely with the government to help its efforts to revive the economy."

IMC's Expert Committees on Agriculture and Food Processing, Digital Technology, Ease of Living, Health and Fitness, Industry and Trade, International Business, Startups and Innovation and Travel, Tourism and Hospitality will work with the government of Maharashtra on programs and policies to achieve robust and sustainable growth for the state.



# Agriculture in Maharashtra: The Road to Development

## *Agriculture and Food Processing Committee*

**Chair: Mr. Aashish Barwale**

*Director,*

*Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company Pvt Ltd*

**Co-Chair : Dr. Sudhir Kumar Goel**

*Former Additional Chief Secretary,*

*Agriculture and Marketing, Government of Maharashtra*

Indian agriculture has transformed itself from the Pre-Green Revolution era of imports to basic food self-sufficiency EXCEPT IN EDIBLE OILS and even rising exports in some commodities. India today produces enough grains, milk, and sugar to not only serve the domestic market but also reach export destinations. Exports are of those crops/ processed food like rice and sugar which makes India a net virtual exporter of precious water, a big concern when only 40% area is irrigated. India may have achieved self-sufficiency in basic calorific requirement but it still lacks nutrition security. As per the WHO recommendations the consumption of fruits and vegetables is half the desired amounts and approximately one third of the world's stunted children are found in India. Since 45% of India's population still derives its livelihoods from agriculture, the sector will continue to have an important role to play in making India a developed and health country.

Maharashtra has several agriculture development milestones to its credit. It is the leading producer of many horticulture crops including but not limited to tomatoes, bananas, mangoes, pomegranates and grapes in the country and the leading exporter in some. The private sector seed industry was founded in Maharashtra. Farmers in Maharashtra lead the country in terms of protected cultivation under greenhouses and polyhouses.

Despite the many accomplishments to its name, the state suffers from several issues. The most important

of which is the low percentage of irrigated land. More than 80% of the land under cultivation is still dependent on an unpredictable rainfall regime. To add to this the focus on public investment in agriculture has moved away from R&D and support for innovation. India's investment in agriculture R&D is 0.6% of GDP compared to 2.8%, 2.1% and 4.3% of the USA, China and South Korea respectively. It is proven that agriculture R&D has the biggest return on investment of any spending undertaken in agriculture and the lower percentage is a cause for concern (Bhaskar, 2018). This is reflected in the reduction in public spends on agriculture in general from 3.9% in 1980-81 to 2.2% in 2014-2015. Public spending is increasingly being diverted to enhancing input subsidies which have risen from 2.8% to 8% in the same period (Ashok Gulati, 2018). Although these are national figures, the figures for Maharashtra would not be much different. There is also a general lack of market orientation in production. Massive marketing reforms and a robust FPO movement, most aggressive in the country, is slowly changing the scenario. Farmers are perceived to be weak and helpless and rather than empower them, Governments have tried to appease them through handouts. Nothing could be more evident of this behaviour than the recent bans on exports of onion. Farmers stand to gain if prices increase and export bans have a negative effect. Not only do farmers lose out, market intermediaries are weary to invest due to the ad hoc

nature of such bans. This continues despite the recently announced changes in the marketing and essential commodity laws by the central government. While there are innumerable agri-verticals, horizontal integration into agri-value chains connecting farmers to consumers is still missing in Maharashtra as well as the entire country.

Maharashtra has been blessed by a bounty of resourceful and enterprising farmers. It is a large consumer of agriculture commodities and is also linked to international markets easily through its port and road infrastructure. The Government must focus its investment on increasing the percentage of irrigated land. In addition, focussed investments in agriculture infrastructure, R&D and roads to establish end to end value chains can help. An approach that encourages private participation in development of new seed varieties, latest inputs both biological and chemical and encouragement of digital tools for horizontal integration in value chains can help the development of industry that can both create jobs and add meaningfully to the development of the sector in the state.

Finally, an approach towards creating market- oriented value chains connecting FPOs to market players and consumers that respond to market needs can truly make Maharashtra a powerhouse not just for supplying Indian markets but also dominating exports. More importantly it will help raise the incomes of the poorest of its citizens and contribute to the health of its children.

# Impact of Covid on Travel Tourism and Hospitality Industry

*Travel, Tourism & Hospitality Committee*

**Chair: Mr. Farhat Jamal**  
Consultant

**Co-Chair : Mr. Sushil Bhatt**  
Chief Executive Officer, Forvol International Services Ltd.

**Mr. Param Kannampilly**  
Chairman and Managing Director  
Fern Hotels & Resorts Concept Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.

COVER STORY

This has been perhaps the most difficult time for the world in living memory. The Covid 19 impact has caused huge damage to economies around the world, lives and health of humanity and sense of hopelessness we have never seen before. The lockdowns came fast and furious over the past ten months and left nations totally unprepared, shocked and struggled to handle the new state that were thrown in. The sudden harsh reality that we will no longer be able to continue the life that we had lived all these years and we have to suddenly prepare ourselves to an environment that was totally unfamiliar and abnormal. The fear of death and disaster was real. The medical teams were unfamiliar on how to handle the

colossal load of patients affected by the virus and hospitals simply ran out of bed capacities and cemeteries and crematoriums were besieged with dead bodies waiting to be disposed of with or without last rites in some cases. All this may sound very morbid but over the past few months things have started to look little easy as the virus hopefully eases out in some parts of world for sure.

One of the biggest casualty and sufferer of this deadly virus has been the travel and tourism industry. We have read many wistful stories of prominent, iconic hotels and restaurants closing shop or very near to winding up business in many parts of the world and India is no exception.

The global impact of the pandemic throws up some very disturbing figures. The demand has fallen to a new low and keeps changing month on month. According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) figures the world would see 700 million less arrivals compared to 2019, a loss of 730 billion (could be higher by the end Dec) US \$ in export revenues from tourism, a loss 8 more than losses during the financial crisis of 2009 and about 70% drop in overnight visitors globally over the last year. A financial blow to the industry of US\$ 22 billion and 55 million job losses globally and counting as predicted by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). All this has come as a result of restrictions on cross border



travel, domestic traveler's lack of faith to venture out freely yet and the pandemic far from over in many parts of the world.

In India the contribution of the travel tourism sector to the overall economy is significant. It accounts for 12.5 % of total employment and 9.2% of the total GDP. Just the branded and organized hospitality sector generates Rs. 38,000 crores annually and the restaurant industry contributes around Rs. 4 lac crores per annum and provides direct employment to 7 million people. Around 87 million are directly or indirectly employed with the Travel sector as data from the Ministry of Tourism in 2019/20. India's airline workforce is estimated at Rs. 4 lacs directly and close to million in the related supply chains.

From the above it is evident that survival and revival of Travel, Tourism & Hospitality sector is integral and critical for the economic recovery of our nation. The sector was already facing a mild crisis pre Covid times due to slow down in global economies and travel across the globe was tepid. This was accompanied by many geo political tensions which also impacted the travel negatively.

The growth is largely pegged on hope in growth of domestic tourism in India through all quarters of 2021 and 2020. Many leisure destinations within motorable distances are already reaping the upside of this new trend. Goa, hill destinations in Himachal and Uttarkhand, resorts and homestays around Mumbai in locations such as Khandala, Lonavala, Pawna, Mahabaleshwar, Panchgani and Alibagh are seeing great occupancies particularly over the weekend. There is similar trend in other leisure locations around the big metros across states.

This holds true for the entire Asia Pacific as a region. UNWTO has indicated this region was most optimistic (47% in favor) that domestic tourism will help the industry rebound

Close to home tourism Maharashtra is also in dire straits and Covid impact has been felt across direct and

indirect revenue generators for the state. Tourism industry contributes to about 10% of GSDP of Maharashtra and like rest of the country one the highest employer. Hon'ble Tourism Minister of Maharashtra Mr. Aditya Thackeray has rolled out a spate of very exciting initiatives that have brought cheer and hope to the industry. Caravan Tourism, Agri Tourism, new beach shack policy and above all granting the Hospitality sector industry status and reduction in number of licenses to set up new business from 70 to 10 to enable ease of doing business and encouraging investment into the state. Hospitality industry had been waiting for industry status for the longest and this announcement will have a very positive impact on economizing operational costs with rebate on property taxes, electricity tariffs and water charges.

MTDC in collaboration with Mothom (Moving Hotels on Wheels) will encourage and excite travelers to explore the beautiful landscapes and wildernesses on their own at various locations within the state.

The Agro tourism idea rolled out by the Govt is very ingenious and appealing. This will help farmers and other stake holders in the rural sector to generate an alternate source of income, lead to increased employment opportunities, encourage reverse migration from urban centers by showcasing farm to table cuisine, farm stays and experience of local culture. I am sure there will be many takers for this.

Most of the above initiatives were also shared recently by Mrs. Valsa Nair Singh, Principal Secretary, Tourism, Civil Aviation and Excise at the recent on line programme conducted by the Travel Tourism and Hospitality Committee of the IMC Chamber of Commerce. The Committee is in the process of drafting its white paper on Spiritual Tourism to be presented to the Hon'ble Minister Mr. Aditya Thackeray very soon.

The biggest challenge the industry is facing is building confidence and adapting to the new normal. The stringent implementation of hygiene and safety norms across all levels of hospitality and travel sector need validation. The fear still lurks somewhere about travelling too far from home. Hence hotel and resorts in motorable distances, shorter flights stand a great chance of an early revival.

Tourism is a resilient industry and has emerged from several past crises. With the vaccine now on the horizon most travel gurus and industry experts are pegging their hopes for business to bounce back to pre Covid levels around late 2022 early 2023. Covid 19 has forced the industry to rethink, reimagine and challenge the status quo. Today it is not a matter of restarting tourism engine but getting all the stakeholders to understand the change that has taken place and how they can collectively put the power of tourism back on track in a world full of many definitions of the new normal.





# IMC’s ‘Engage Maharashtra Mission’ Role of Industry and Trade

## Industry and Trade Committee

**Chair : Mr. Anant Singhania**  
Chief Executive Officer  
JK Enterprises

**Co-Chair : Mr. Dhiraj Mehra**  
Managing Director, Subhash Silk Mills Ltd.

**Mr. Siddharth Desai**  
Vice President, Hindustan Electric Motors

COVER STORY

The Chamber has embarked upon ‘Mission Engage Maharashtra’ as its focus objective this year. Under this mission, Industry & Trade Committee will work closely with the Government of Maharashtra to address problems, explore finance and provide mentorship to MSMEs and SMEs. The objective is to support the industry and trade Sector to sustain in challenging times.

IMC had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Industries, Government of Maharashtra to have regular interactions with its members. The Industry and Trade Committee will revive the said MoU with Government of Maharashtra to have regular interactions. The initiative will help the MSMEs, SMEs to interact and put forth their issues to the Government officials. The interaction will also help to solve the queries of industry and trade community without any hassle.

Government of Maharashtra has come up with many policies which are beneficial for industry and trade sector. Most of the MSMEs are not aware about such Government policies or schemes. The Industry and Trade Committee will work to create awareness and provide clarity on such policies. The Committee would like to take an initiative to digitally compile all policies, schemes and compliances and share it with the members of IMC.

Financial support plays an important role in the success of any business. It is very essential to support the MSMEs in terms of finance as most of the private banks are not lending to MSMEs due to current pandemic situation. We would work with the State Government of Maharashtra to support MSMEs to fulfill their financial needs through the Government’s own vehicles like Maharashtra State Finance Corporation. MSMEs require support in terms of securing their own funds. The committee will be happy to take initiative to help MSMEs to get their fund invested on time which may help them to regularize their working capital.

The State of Maharashtra is one of the most industrialized states in our country. Many foreign companies have its setup in the state. These foreign companies are well equipped with the latest technologies. It is important for local companies to upgrade themselves in terms of technologies. As a committee we feel that, it is required to help and advise the small companies in terms of technology transfer i.e. transition from manual work to automation. This will help them to sustain in future considering the upcoming revolutions’ like Industry 4.0, IoT, etc in India. This will also help them to compete at International level.

Infrastructure plays an important role in the success of industry and trade.

The Industry and Trade Committee would like to take an initiative to work on infrastructure projects with Government of Maharashtra. The infrastructure projects like upgradation of Rabale Industrial Estate, creating special corridor for few countries which prefer Maharashtra as a business destination, development of Mumbai – Pune – Nasik – Aurangabad corridor where maximum business in Maharashtra happens, development of the Trans-harbour link which connects Sewri to Nava-Shiva, development of connecting link between Panvel Airport to JNPT, etc., are amongst the suggestions which will help the growth of industry in Maharashtra.

Industry and trade determines the economic health of the State. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted every sector of the economy, particularly the MSMEs. To boost business and encourage growth, the Government has undertaken various initiatives to revive the stressed MSMEs. In this unprecedented scenario, IMC’s Industry and Trade Committee would like to work in association with the Government bodies to assist its Members through various initiatives under *Engage Maharashtra Mission*. We are confident that the mission will help not only to reform the economy but also to resurge industry and trade in the State of Maharashtra.

# Late but it is there – Consolidated Foreign Investment Policy 2020

CA. Sudha G. Bhushan, International Transactions Advisory, Tax Expert Professionals

Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) is considered as a major source of non-debt financial resource for the economic development by bringing in long term sustainable capital. India is playing an increasingly more important role in global economic growth and has emerged out as one of the most beneficial and safe destinations in the whole world for FDI. As per quarterly fact sheet on FDI published quarterly by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India during the fiscal year ended March 20, India received the highest-ever FDI inflow of \$72.39 billion (as per international best practices). There has been constant increase in the FDI inflows over the years from USD 44.14 billion (including reinvested earnings) to USD 72.63 billion for the year ending 31 March 2020.

From the perspective of Act that regulates the FDI i.e. Foreign Exchange Management Act, 2000

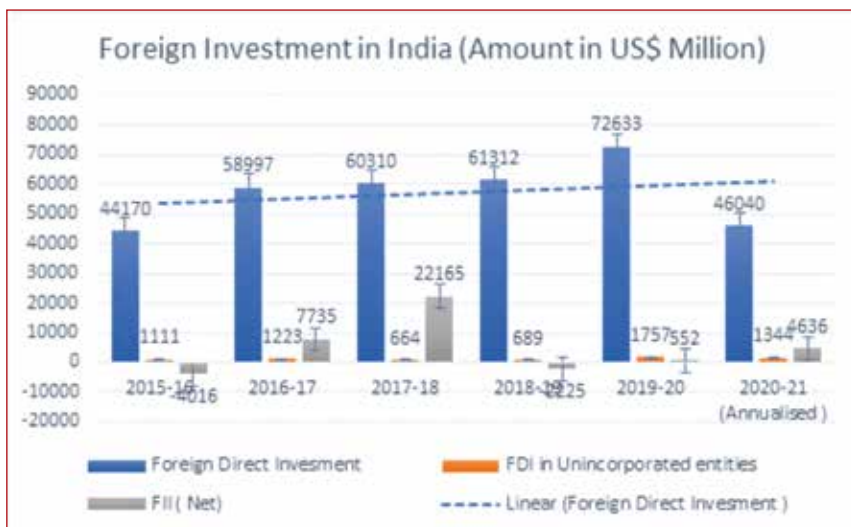
(FEMA) FDI is the capital account transaction. India presently has fuller convertibility w.r.t current account transactions and partial convertibility w.r.t. Capital account transactions. With the relaxation and liberalization of capital account transactions, India is systematically moving towards fuller account convertibility w.r.t Capital account transactions as well (though it may be too far away!!).

With effect from 15th October 2019, powers to regulate capital account transactions with regard to “Non-debt Instruments” have been transferred from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to the Central Government. Pursuant to the transfer of powers, the Government has issued Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules, 2019 (NDI Rules) with effect from 17th October 2019. The NDI rules have replaced Foreign Exchange Management (Transfer or Issue of Security by

a Person Resident Outside India) Regulations, 2017 I.e. FEMA Notification no. 20(R) dated 7th November 2017 and also FEMA Notification No. 21(R) dealing with Immovable property in India by non-residents.

The present regulatory framework of FDI in India constitutes of Rules framed by the central government under Section 46 of the FEMA, Foreign Exchange Management (Mode of Payment and Reporting of Non-Debt Instruments) Regulations, 2019 issued by the RBI and the Consolidated FDI Policy issued from time to time. The Government has put in place a policy framework on FDI, which is transparent, predictable and easily comprehensible. This framework is embodied in the various circulars on Consolidated FDI Policy, which may be updated on an annual basis, to capture and keep pace with the regulatory changes, effected in the interregnum. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India is entrusted with the task of policy pronouncements on FDI through Consolidated FDI Policy Circular/Press Notes/Press Releases which are notified by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance, Government of India as amendments to the NDI Rules under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (42 of 1999) (FEMA). These notifications take effect from the date of issue of Press Notes/Press Releases, unless specified otherwise therein. Foreign Exchange

LADIES' WING



Management (Mode of Payment and Reporting of Non-Debt Instruments) Regulations, 2019 issued by the RBI. In addition to Rules and policy the total regulatory framework of FDI in India, over a period of time, thus, consists of FEMA and Rules/Regulations thereunder, Consolidated FDI Policy Circular, Press Notes, Press Releases, Clarifications, etc.

The first consolidated FDI Policy was issued in April 2010, it consolidated all the prior policies/regulations under FEMA, Press Notes/Press Releases/Clarifications issued by DIPP and regulations by RBI under FEMA and reflected the then current policy framework on FDI. Subsequently, government issued the Consolidated FDI Policy in October 2010, April 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, May 2015, June 2016 and August 2017. Post the Consolidated FDI Policy 2017 after the gap of three years the consolidated FDI policy of 2020 has been issued. Between this period 10 press notes were issued. Two Press Notes were released in 2018 and four of them in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

The consolidated FDI policy/NDI Rules read with press notes issued by DPIIT from time to time reiterates the entity which can receive FDI, entities which can make investment in India, pricing guidelines etc. For the purpose of FDI in India, there are sectoral caps defined for each sector. Sectoral cap is the threshold limit till which the FDI can come in India in a particular sector. First the sector is specified and then the route through which the FDI can come is specified.

The Route may be Automatic or Approval. Automatic route means that investment does not require prior approval of the Government, (however the sectoral conditions are required to be fulfilled) and only involves intimating to the RBI post the inward remittances While

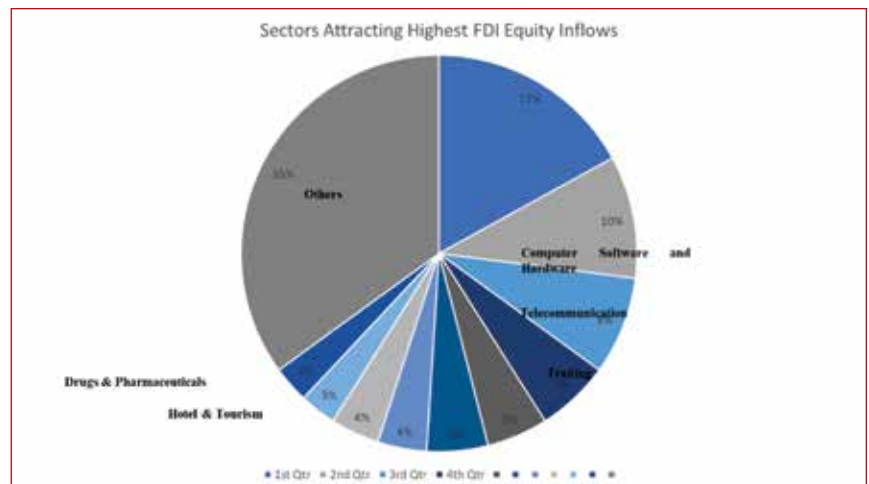
under approval route the prior approval of Government is required before making investment in India. Such an application for approval is made to the respective Ministry in which the sector might fall. The application under Approval route can be made online at Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal, DPIIT and respective government ministry is mandated to clear the proposal of investment within the specified time.

Apart from few expressly prohibited sectors in which FDI cannot come in India like Lottery business, Chit funds etc. and the sectors for which the FDI limit is prescribed like multibrand retail almost all the sectors fall under Automatic route. The sectors listed in FDI policy works like negative list i.e. all the sectors which have not been specifically mentioned in the FDI policy fall under Automatic route. Automatic route includes industries like mining, petroleum, other financial services, real estate construction and development, wholesale cash and carry trading, pharmaceuticals in greenfield projects. Approval route includes industries like mining of titanium bearing minerals, defence production, multi-brand retail trading, pharmaceuticals (in existing companies) etc. For the purpose of FDI there are 3 categories

with different sectoral caps – upto 26%, upto 49% and upto 74%. Apart from this limits there are two more limits i.e. 51% under Government route in multi brand retail trading and 20% in Government route in Banking – Public sector.

Different sectors have received different amount of FDI over the period of time also the state wise distribution of FDI is skewed towards metro cities. 17% of the FDI equity inflows have been received in the service sector, 10% in computer software and hardware followed by 8% in telecommunications, 6% in trading, 5% in construction development and automobile industry, 4% in chemicals (other than fertilizers) and construction (infrastructure) activities and finally, 3% in drugs & pharmaceuticals and hotel & tourism. 28% of FDI equity inflow is attracted by Maharashtra, 19% by Karnataka, 16% by Delhi, 10% by Gujarat, 9% by Jharkhand and a minor share of 5%, 4%, 3%, 2%, and 1% by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Haryana, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh respectively.

Over the years government have been liberalising the sectoral caps as well as the route under which the investment can come in





various sectors. Recently through various press notes the government has relaxed the sectoral caps in various sectors like defence which is 100% sectoral cap is liberalised to Automatic route up to 74% and Government route beyond 74% from 49% under automatic route. Also, Private Security Agencies has been liberalised to sectoral cap of 74% wherein entry route is Automatic up to 49% and Government route beyond 49% and up to 74%.

Single Brand Product Retail Trading is fully through Automatic route. Intermediaries or Insurance Intermediaries including insurance brokers, re-insurance brokers, insurance consultants, corporate agents, third party administrator, Surveyors and Loss Assessors and such other entities have % of Equity/FDI Cap at 100% . There can be FDI in Digital Media upto 26% under the government approval route in entities that are engaged in uploading / streaming of news & current affairs through digital media.

As specified above the government through the FDI policy prescribes

how and in what manner the investment can be made in India. To protect Indian companies from hostile takeovers by foreign entities to take advantage of situation arising of Covid 19, *vide* Press Note No. 3 (2020 Series) dated April 17, 2020 the curb on “*opportunistic takeovers/acquisitions of Indian companies*” was introduced. The curb extends the list of countries whose investors are no longer eligible to invest in India under the automatic route. In terms of the Press Note, all investments by entities incorporated in a “*country which shares land border with India or where the beneficial owner of an investment into India is situated in or is a citizen of any such country*” requires prior approval of the Government of India now; and in the event of any transfer of ownership of any existing or future FDI in an entity in India, directly or indirectly, resulting in the beneficial ownership falling within the above restriction, such change in beneficial ownership will also require prior government approval. The countries which share a land border with India

are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

India has robust and dynamic FDI policy which balances the facilitation of FDI on one side to reap in the benefits of foreign funding and keeping a check on the sector which are greater national interest or are speculative in nature to be prohibited from FDI on the other.

The New consolidated FDI policy 2020 subsumes and supersedes all Press Notes/Press Releases/Clarifications/Circulars issued by the DPIIT, which were in force as on October 15, 2020 and reflects the FDI Policy as on October 15, 2020. It brings in clarity and ease of reference of all the regulations at once place. As clarified in the policy, and it is worthwhile to be reiterated here, in case of conflict between the consolidated FDI policy, 2020 or NDI Rules, the relevant Notification under NDI Rules will prevail (to rest the disputes and confusion arising of so many rules, regulations, clarifications etc.)

LADIES' WING



# Direct-Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act 2020

## – Settling the Unsettled!!

CA Pranay Gandhi and CA Jinal Shah

The Central Government's focus on providing a business-friendly environment in the country has helped enhance ease of doing business, promote a non-adversarial tax regime and maintain a tax-friendly atmosphere.

Over the past few years, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has been proactive towards releasing circulars/instructions to make the tax administration's view clearer and to avoid possible litigation due to interpretation issues. The Ministry of Finance has also come up with the Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) process with a view to provide certainty to multinationals doing business in India.

The Government has also substantially increased the monetary tax limit for tax departments to file appeals before the appellate authorities such as the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT), High Courts (HC) and the Supreme Court (SC), which has helped in the reduction of disputes/litigations.

In wake of the motto of the government and looking at the success of the **Sabka Vishwas Scheme** announced earlier for indirect-tax laws, the Finance Minister announced the **Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme (VSV Scheme)**, which literally translates into **'From Dispute to Trust** scheme, for resolving pending litigations under the Income-tax Act, 1961 before Appellate Forums (*viz.* Commissioner of Income-tax (Appeals) (CIT(A)) and ITAT), as well as High Courts and the Supreme Court. The Direct-

tax Vivad Se Vishwas Bill, 2020 was announced on 5 February 2020.

To make VSV Scheme a success, the government has been undertaking continuous conversations with stakeholders and taxpayers after the bill was introduced. Based on the suggestions and representation received from the stakeholders and taxpayers, the government introduced the amended bill in Lok Sabha on 4 March 2020, which was later approved by both the houses of Parliament and became an act on the receipt of President assent on 17 March 2020.

CBDT, on 4 March 2020, issued 55 FAQs on the scheme through Circular no 7/2020 to clarify open concerns pertaining to the scheme. Further, procedural rules, including the forms for making declaration under the VSV Scheme and the format of certificate to be issued by the Designated Authority (DA), were released on 18 March 2020. Also, CBDT on 22 April 2020 re-issued the 55 FAQs announced in Circular no 7/2020 through Circular no 9/2020 so as to align the same with the approved 'The Direct-tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act, 2020'. Further, CBDT on 4 December 2020 issued another set of 34 FAQs to further clarify various issues raised by the stakeholders.

In order to have interaction with the top government officials (CCIT's) IMC along with other organizations, had organized a webinar on 17 December 2020. Recorded video link is available at - [https://youtu.be/ws3\\_PTj2q04](https://youtu.be/ws3_PTj2q04). In addition to this, the PPT containing queries and replies by

the department link [Webinar on The Direct-tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act For Dispute Resolution](#).

*As requested by Chambers, Department has setup clinic at various locations for providing clarifications and helping the taxpayers in filing VSV applications. The Email-id and Whats-App number of Mumbai clinic is [vsv2020mum@gmail.com](mailto:vsv2020mum@gmail.com) and 7208300457 respectively. Also, to assist the taxpayers in withdrawal of appeals before CIT(A), withdrawal requests can be uploaded online at the e-filing portal or emails can be sent National Faceless Appeal Centre (NFAC) to the following email-ids:*

- a) [delhi.pccit.nfac@incometax.gov.in](mailto:delhi.pccit.nfac@incometax.gov.in),
- b) [delhi.cit.nfac@incometax.gov.in](mailto:delhi.cit.nfac@incometax.gov.in)
- c) [delhi.addl.cit.nfac@incometax.gov.in](mailto:delhi.addl.cit.nfac@incometax.gov.in)

As requested by many members, on behalf of direct tax committee, we are contributing this article.

- A) Key features of the scheme
  - It can be availed by taxpayers to settle the appeals relating to tax arrears (including interest and penalty levied in respect, thereof), that are pending as on 31 January 2020.
  - It grants complete immunity from prosecution and substantial relief from payment of interest and penalty.

- It can be availed to settle appeal filed by taxpayers or tax departments.
- The entire appeal will need to be settled if the taxpayer wishes to avail the scheme for any issue which is related to the appeal and cherry-picking of issues would not be allowed.
- The FAQs issued by CBDT also clarified that where an appeal involves various issues, and some are ineligible, the scheme cannot be applied.
- Taxpayer to withdraw appeal pending before CIT(A), ITAT, HC and SC (with leave of the court), or any arbitration, conciliation, mediation claim and submit its proof with the DA before a certificate is issued
- The scheme is applicable whether the tax is payable or not. Excess amount paid over the disputed tax will be refunded without consequential interest on refund.
- In case of loss returns, where losses have been reduced due to addition made by the tax department, the taxpayer will have the option to either accept the reduced loss (and not pay any amount) or pay notional tax on amount by which loss has been reduced and carry forward the full loss. The same principle is also applied for MAT credit as well as depreciation and to carry forward the losses.
- Filing of declaration will not set any precedence. Neither the department nor the taxpayer can claim in any other proceedings that the taxpayer or department has conceded its tax position by settling the dispute.
- The settling of issue containing transfer pricing adjustment would not have any effect on secondary adjustments and taxpayer would be required to bring the amount in India in respect of settled transfer pricing adjustment.
- VSV Scheme will be completely web-based, and thereby, is likely to be easily accessible to the taxpayers as well as the department.
- Appeals before the SC, HC, ITAT or CIT(A)<sup>1</sup>
- Writ petitions pending before HC/SC
- Special Leave Petitions (SLPs) pending before the SC
- Cases where the time limit for filing appeal against an order has not expired as on 31 January 2020
- Cases where objections filed by the taxpayer against draft order are pending with Dispute Resolution Panel (DRP)
- Cases where DRP has given the directions but the assessing officer (AO) has not yet passed the final order
- Cases where the taxpayer decides not to file application before DRP but is waiting for a final assessment order to be passed by the AO against which the taxpayer can appeal before the CIT(A)
- Search assessments where dispute tax is up to INR 5 crores for each year
- Cases where revision application is pending before the principal CIT
- Disputes pertaining to Tax Deducted at Source (TDS)/Tax collected at Source (TCS)

**B) Eligibility to avail VSV Scheme**

The following matters/cases pending as on 31 January 2020 shall be eligible for admission under the scheme:

<sup>1</sup> including matters before CIT(A) where enhancement notices have been issued



CBDT also clarified on certain eligibility scenarios in the FAQs issued under the scheme. These include:

Sr. No.	Particulars	Eligibility
1	Matters under arbitration, conciliation or mediation, although there is no appeal pending.	Yes
2	Assessment set aside for fresh examination to the AO (except where –the assessment has been cancelled and ordered to be framed de novo)	Yes
3	Matters heard by the appellate authorities on or before 31 January 2020 whose order is awaited (CBDT has clarified that for computing disputed tax, position as on 31 January 2020 will be considered even though appellate order has been passed)	Yes
4	Disputes pending before Authority of Advance Ruling (AAR) (except writ petition pending before HCs against AAR’s order will be covered. CBDT has also clarified that in such cases, if the quantum of disputed tax is not determinable, the cases would not be eligible for the scheme).	No
5	Notice issued under section 148 (reassessment) without passing an assessment order	No
6	Appeal filed against intimation u/s 143(1)	Yes
7	Cross objections and Miscellaneous applications (main appeal also needs to be settled)	Yes

### Cases that fall short of eligibility criteria

- Cases where prosecution has been initiated under the prescribed laws or where tax arrears include undisclosed income from source located outside India or asset located outside India or where assessment is initiated based on information received under Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement.
- Taxpayers against whom detention order is made under Conservation of

Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 (subject to specified conditions), Taxpayer is notified under section 3 of Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Act, 1992, prosecution is launched under various laws (including initiation of prosecution by income tax authority for offence punishable under India Penal Code or for the purposes of enforcement of civil liability or where taxpayer is convicted

by such offence consequent to prosecution initiated by income tax authority).

### C) Due dates

**Last date of filing of declaration by the taxpayer - 31 January 2021**

**Last date for passing of orders by the DA - 31 January 2021**

**Payments to be made under the scheme is as under:**

Types of matters	Amount payable on or before 31 March 2021	Amount payable after 31 March 2021 till the last date*
<b>Assessees’ appeal</b>		
Matters involving disputed tax, interest and penalty thereon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entire amount of disputed tax only (complete waiver of interest and penalty levied/ leviable)</li> <li>Search cases – 125% of disputed tax</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entire amount of disputed tax plus 10% of disputed tax</li> <li>Search cases – 135% of disputed tax</li> </ul>
Matters involving disputed penalty, interest and fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% of the disputed penalty/ interest/ fee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30% of the disputed penalty/ interest/fee</li> </ul>

\*Last date of payment is yet to be notified

#If department has filed an appeal or where the issue has been decided in favor of the taxpayer by the ITAT/HC/SC then in any year and the same has not been reversed by a higher forum, the amount payable under VSV Scheme shall be 50% of the abovementioned amounts..

**D) Key issues and clarifications**

Key issues	Clarifications given by CBDT in the FAQs
Whether proceedings before Income tax Settlement Commission (ITSC) or writ filed against the order of ITSC, eligible for VSV?	The same is not eligible for VSV. Writ has been filed before the Delhi HC against this FAQ as it is ultra-vires the provisions of the VSV Act, 2020
Whether belated filing of appeal is eligible for VSV?	Yes provided that the time limit to file appeal has expired from 1 April 2019 to 31 January 2020 and application for condonation is filed before 4 December 2020 and appeal is admitted by appellate authority before the date of filing declaration, then the same will be deemed to be pending as on 31 January 2020.
Whether appeal or writ against 263 order is eligible for settlement under VSV?	If order u/s 263 contains general directions and <u>income is not quantifiable</u> , appeal against such order is not eligible for VSV. However, if it contains only specific directions and <u>income is quantifiable</u> , appeal against such order is eligible under VSV. In such a case, assessee is required to settle all the issues in the order, which are subject matter of order u/s 263 as well as issues pending in appeal (or in respect of which time to file appeal has not expired on 31 January 2020), if any, with reference to the said order.
Appeal has been set aside to CIT(A)/ DRP and is pending as on 31 January 2020. Whether such appeal is eligible?	Yes, such appeals are eligible and set aside issues will be deemed to be pending as on 31 January 2020. However, all issues which are either pending in appeal (whether set aside or not) or in respect of which time limit to file appeal has not expired as on 31 January 2020 needs to be settled.
Whether enhancement notice issued by CIT(A) post 31 January 2020 is to be taken into account for computing disputed tax?	Where CIT(A) has issued a notice for enhancement, the disputed tax shall be increased by the amount of tax pertaining to issues covered in the enhancement notice Enhancement notice issued post 31 January 2020 but before 4 December 2020 will be taken into account for computing disputed tax while enhancement notice issued post 5 December 2020 will not be taken into account.
TDS was not deducted, and section 201 order was passed in the hands of the deductor. The said income was assessed in the hands of the deductee. Both deductor and deductee have filed appeal. What will be the amount payable if a) Deductor settles his appeal under VSV b) Deductee settles his appeal under VSV	<b>Deductor settles his appeal under VSV</b> Since deductor his settling his appeal, he will get immunity from interest and penalty. Deductee will get credit of such TDS paid and hence, no tax payment is required. However, deductee will be required to pay interest/ penalty (which can be settled by paying applicable amount ie 25%/30%) <b>Deductee settles his appeal under VSV</b> Since deductee his settling his appeal, he will get immunity from interest and penalty. Deductor will not be required to pay any tax. However, deductor will be required to pay interest/ penalty (which can be settled by paying applicable amount ie 25%/30%)

## E) Open issues

Few of the issues that needs clarifications are as under:

Sr. No	Particulars
1	The AO has made addition on account of closing stock valuation. Where the taxpayer accepts the addition under VSV, will the opening stock of the next year be automatically increased? Will DA order itself be sufficient or whether suitable directions need to be issued?
2	Taxpayer has claimed revenue expenditure and department has treated it as capital expenditure. If the appeal is settled in VSV, then whether depreciation on such capital expenditure will be automatically available in subsequent years (though not specifically allowed by AO/ CIT(A)). Will DA order itself be sufficient or whether suitable directions need to be issued?
3	Assessee's appeal is pending before the appellate authority. One of the issues in appeal is covered by a SC order or jurisdictional HC order (though not in assessee's own case). While computing the disputed tax, whether tax on such covered issue is to be computed at 0% or 50%?
4	ABC Ltd has got merged into XYZ Ltd on 1 April 2010 (appointed date). Whether XYZ Ltd will be entitled to benefit of concessional rate (ie 50%) of disputed tax for those issues which are decided by higher authority in favour in the case of ABC Ltd for earlier year-more particularly, where such appellate order is passed post the appointed date in the name of XYZ Ltd (as a successor)?
5	As per FAQ 30 dated 22 April 2020 (as confirmed by FAQ 84), deductee will get credit of TDS paid by deductor on the date of settlement of dispute. Payee will get TDS credit when payer will file TDS statement u/s. 200(3). Issues to be answered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) In case of NR payer having one off transactions in India, what will be the procedure to settle the TDS appeal under VSV and how will credit be given to the payee?</li> <li>b) Since 26AS of NR payee will take time to reflect the TDS paid by NR payer and considering the time left to file VSV declaration, can NR payee (who filed nil return of income and is in appeal in quantum proceedings) simultaneously file VSV application for taking TDS credit for taxes paid by the NR payer under VSV?</li> <li>c) When payer files the TDS statement after settlement of TDS appeal under VSV, it may be levied mandatory fees u/s. 234E. Whether in such situations, fees u/s 234E is payable or it is covered for waiver under VSV?</li> </ul>
6	What is the time limit for granting refund due under VSV to declarant? Whether such refund can be adjusted against outstanding demands under ITA?
7	In matters before High Court which are 10/12 years old, in most cases, full tax has been paid. Now since these are old cases, taxpayer as well as department does not have copies of challans etc and other records. Considering the time left to file declaration, it is difficult to get old records. How to proceed in such cases?

If there are any other issues, please feel free to write to us.

## F) Concluding remarks

The announcement of VSV Scheme is a welcome move aimed at settling direct tax disputes. Certainly, this would help in reducing pending litigations, and to some extent, may help in ease of doing business in India. Such a move is likely to help the taxpayers focus their time, efforts and resources in doing business rather than fighting tax disputes. The scheme is also a one-time opportunity for taxpayers to clean up their balance sheets and to prepare themselves for the right cases.

For issues which are covered by higher forums, 50% of the disputed tax needs to be paid. For settling department appeal, 50% of the disputed tax needs to be paid. For balance issues, 100% of the disputed tax needs to be paid. For search cases, 125% of the disputed tax needs to be paid. Given the above, calculation of disputed tax becomes crucial to decide whether to avail the scheme or not.



# The Trade Office of Ecuador : Strengthening the commercial ties between India and Ecuador since 2013

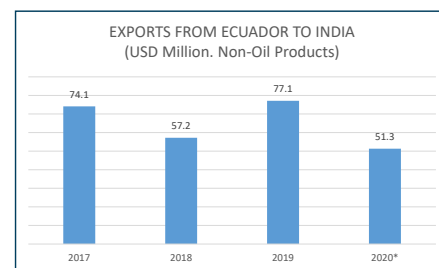
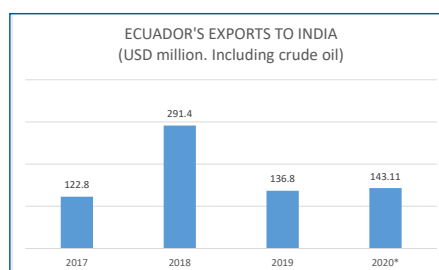
The Trade Office of Ecuador in Mumbai, entity part of the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade, Investment and Fisheries, under the Government of Ecuador, started operations in India in 2013. The role of the trade office is to facilitate trade between India and Ecuador, by positioning Ecuador as a provider of high quality and value added products and services, with an emphasis on the diversification of products, markets and the attraction of foreign investment, as well as promoting the rich and diverse culture and tourist attractions of Ecuador.

Ecuador, a small country located in South America, has a wide variety of products and services to offer to India. At present, there are various Ecuadorian products present in the Indian market. For a few years now, Ecuador has been the top supplier of teak wood to the Indian market; around 95% of teak that Ecuador exports has India as destination. Ecuadorian teak wood is extensively

used in India for the construction of door and windows frames and panels and for making furniture. Other Ecuadorian products already present in India are cocoa beans, preserved roses (natural roses that look and feel fresh for 1 year), corozo blanks (intermediate material to make ecofriendly buttons), balsa wood (used for the blades of windmills), metal scrap, leather, to name a few. Over the past 7 years, the Trade Office of Ecuador in Mumbai, has collaborated with various strategic partners in India and has carried out various promotional activities aimed at creating awareness about Ecuadorian products, investment opportunities in Ecuador and tourist attractions. Thanks to these initiatives there's more awareness of what Ecuador can offer to India. Furthermore, thanks to these promotional activities various Ecuadorian companies have strengthen their presence in the Indian market and several others

have exported their products to India for the very first time.

Currently, the Trade Office of Ecuador in Mumbai is further researching on other products and services that have an interesting potential in the Indian market.



\*Includes data until October 2020  
**Source:** Banco Central del Ecuador

\*Includes data until October 2020  
**Source:** Banco Central del Ecuador

### Unique Ecuadorian products in the Indian market

Is noteworthy to mention the story behind two unique Ecuadorian products already available in the Indian market.

#### Preserved Roses

Ecuador is known to grow the best roses in the world. Due to its spring-like weather throughout the year and natural sunlight, Ecuador can offer around 500 varieties of roses in the most amazing colors textures and



Cocoa from Ecuador



sizes. Ecuadorian Roses are known for their large size and vibrant colors. Farms in Ecuador have developed and perfected various techniques in order to preserve these fresh roses to have a shelf life of more than 1 year. These roses are already available in the Indian market and can be purchased in various cities.

Ecuador's Trade Office has worked with various strategic partners in order to create awareness about this unique product. Recently, the trade office partnered with a cab booking service in India in order to promote preserved roses from Ecuador. Thanks to this campaign it is estimated that more than 500,000 people in Mumbai viewed the ad of the Ecuadorian product.

**Tagua (Corozo)** - Tagua (known in India as Corozo) comes from a native wild palm that grows in the Ecuadorian rainforest. Ecuador is the only country in the world that produces and exports corozo blanks, which is the intermediate material

to make a variety of eco-friendly buttons. The corozo nut is also used to make jewellery, embellishments, handicrafts and if powdered is used as a natural exfoliant (replaces the plastic microbeads). Due to its color and malleable and resilient nature it is known as the vegan ivory. Corozo, as an intermediate material to make buttons has been used since 1860s, its durability, malleability, light weight, beautiful effects when dyed have attracted button manufacturers from Italy, Turkey, China and more recently India. And the most important highlight, its eco-friendly and its use contributes to the protection of the rainforest.



*Corozo blanks from Ecuador*

With regards to the promotion of this product, Ecuador's trade office has partnered with Indian fashion designers, who have used this product in their collections. Various international and Indian brands are already using corozo buttons and many others are keen on incorporating eco-friendly elements to their garments, and therefore a collaboration between India and Ecuador offers an alternative for these companies.



*Corozo buttons made in India*

**Attracting Indian investment to Ecuador**

The Trade Office also works on the attraction of Indian investment into Ecuador. The trade office provides to potential investors useful information regarding advantages and investment opportunities in Ecuador, incentives, regulations and other relevant information about the investment climate in Ecuador. Recent investments in the country show the confidence of foreign investors and the great opportunities that Ecuador can offer. Currently, the Government of Ecuador, through its trade offices around the world, promotes an investment portfolio that includes projects in sectors such as agroindustry, aquaculture, tourism, technology, among others.

Ecuador is a country of opportunities, with safe public policies and a solid

legal framework for investments. Indian companies such as Tata Consultancy Services and Tech Mahindra have already started operations in Ecuador.

**Tourism in Ecuador**

Ecuador is a destination for all types of travellers. It offers adventure activities, culture, nature and varied gastronomy in each one of its “Four Worlds”: Highlands, Amazon region, Coastal Region and the Galapagos Islands.

Any tourist arriving in the country for the first time, cannot miss the incredible Galapagos Islands, Natural Heritage of Humanity. Another place not to be missed is the Chimborazo, the closest point on Earth to space. Another must see place in Ecuador is Quito, the capital, where tourists can find themselves in two hemispheres of the planet at the same time in the Middle of the World. Visiting the Yasuní, one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, in the Amazon region is also a must.



*Chimborazo, the closest point on Earth to space*

With regards to the gastronomy, Ecuador offers its visitors an infinity of dishes prepared with ancestral recipes and with high quality products. Ecuador is known to be the home of the best bananas, shrimp and chocolate in the world.

Ecuador is ready to welcome visitors 365 days a year. Its spring like weather, sea currents and diverse geographical conditions, create wonderful landscapes, that offer unlimited adventures all year round.

During the year, the country has two seasons: winter and summer. Each one of them gives way to natural events that cannot be missed. For example, from June to August it is the ideal time to visit what is called the “Avenue of Volcanoes”. Between June and September, whale watching is an exciting option for the visitors.

As of now no direct flights connect India to Ecuador; however, there are various routes available via Europe and the United States.

**Towards the signing of a trade agreement**

In a short period of time India and Ecuador have come a long way with regards to strengthening their commercial ties. The first step was taken back in 2013, when the Governments of India and Ecuador signed an MoU for Economic Cooperation. Two years later, in 2015, India and Ecuador signed the protocol to set up Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO), which is established as the primary forum for discussion on trade and investment matters. Till date JETCO has met twice and the third meeting may be held on the first half of 2021.

With the purpose of capitalizing on the complementarity of the two economies, in 2018 India and Ecuador initiated the joint studies to identify the feasibility of the signing of a partial scope trade agreement. In early 2019 the two countries concluded the joint studies. These studies established that the signing of a partial scope trade agreement could signify an additional USD 2.5 billion in the bilateral trade. The protocol for the acceptance of the joint studies was signed by the governments of India and Ecuador on September 2019. The next step in this regard is the setting up of a date for the first round of negotiations.

The relationship between India and Ecuador has an enormous scope for growth and Trade Office of Ecuador in Mumbai looks forward to continue contributing to strengthening the ties between the two countries.

GLOBAL CONNECT



September 24, 2020

**Shri Shaktikanta Das**

Governor

Reserve Bank of India

Central Office Building

Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg

Fort, Mumbai 400001

Dear Sir,

On the behalf of IMC and my own, I thank you for inviting us to the pre-policy consultation today. We are indeed grateful for the opportunity to put across our views.

We would like to compliment the efforts of RBI for supporting the economy with Rate cuts, Liquidity infusion and regulatory easing.

We enclose herewith below recommendations for your kind consideration:

1. With inflation expected to ease towards 4% levels by Mar-21 and Covid crisis likely to set Indian economy two years behind in terms of overall GDP, there is a need for further extension of policy support from the RBI to avoid permanent loss of potential output. While we acknowledge that room for direct monetary easing is limited, we suggest another 25-50 bps cut in Repo and Reverse Repo Rates. While Oct-20 policy review might not have that window yet on account of recent experience with elevated and sticky inflation, but the RBI could consider utilizing the next available window in Dec 20 policy review.
2. Market participants are anxious with respect to the extent of additional fiscal borrowing required in FY21 by both central and state governments. As such, the 10Y government bond term premium (spread over Repo Rate) is currently at quite elevated levels (~200 bps above Repo Rate) despite the Repo Rate itself being at all-time low. This is having a cascading impact on state government bonds as well as corporate bonds. Given the unprecedented situation on account of Covid, the RBI could consider purchasing government securities and communicate accordingly so as to drive yields lower. Net OMO purchase was instrumental in supporting yields during FY19 - a similar bold exercise is now warranted for FY21. This is something which would be in line with what systemically important central banks (like the US Fed, European Central Bank, Bank of Japan, etc.) in the world are currently doing to lower long term interest rates in their respective regions.

### 3. **Introduce Retail Participation in Gsec at Face Value :**

The interest outflow of GoI is more than or equal to net debt raised every year. The investors in Gsec are seeing limited headroom for incremental investment in Gsec. This has pushed yields higher. In fact sub sovereigns such as SBI is raising deposits cheaper than GoI. This clearly speaks of the stress on headroom available for investing in Gsec across all classes of investors such as banks, insurance cos., EPFO, NPS, FPIs etc. There is, therefore, need to increase absorption of Gsec by new set of investors for effective transmission of rate cuts. And the need to bring in Retail Participation. Retail investors would benefit on multiple fronts by investing in Gsec viz. Higher risk protection, better yield, liquidity assurance etc.

We can create a "safety net" for retail investors to ensure liquidity at all times. We at IMC will be happy to present a paper on operationalizing the above including SGL cum settlement related concerns.

4. As of Jul-20, bank credit to MSMEs contracted at a pace of 2.2% YoY compared to 0.8% YoY expansion seen in Jul-19. While the credit guarantee scheme (under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan) has been announced, the central bank could nudge banks to expedite disbursements to meet liquidity mismatches for MSMEs on priority basis. In addition, to encourage credit flows to viable MSMEs, the central bank could consider prudent and time bound reduction in their risk weights (this has been done in few Asian countries).
5. Basis recommendations from the UK Sinha Committee Report, the ceiling for collateral free loans for MSMEs can immediately get adjusted upwards to Rs 20 lakhs from Rs 10 lakh now. The same should be applicable to MUDRA scheme as well to support micro enterprises.
6. In a bid to widen the pool of financiers on the TReDS platform, entities other than banks/NBFCs also may be allowed to participate. HNIs may be included as an eligible category. Additionally, Urban Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks could also be allowed to participate with adequate safeguards in order to further facilitate prompt settlement of invoices at competitive rates for MSME suppliers.
7. From a longer-term perspective, the RBI in consultation with the Ministry of Finance can come out with special bank licenses for entities who display niche expertise in the area of MSME financing. This would be similar to the concept of 'Shinkin Banks' in Japan, which are deposit-taking cooperative banks that specialize in financing SMEs within a region.

### 8. **Two Year Moratorium**

In view of the deep distress in the Textile Sector, a two-year moratorium for the repayment of all loans is essential for all the textile units that failed to qualify under the Covid-19 relief package as the sector is also both labour and capital intensive and provides large scale employment in the country.

### 9. **Upward Revision in the financial ratios prescribed by the Kamath Committee**

The majority of the units are finding it very difficult to satisfy TOL/Adjusted TNW and Total Debt/EBITDA ratios as recommended by the Kamath Committee.

### 10. **Benefit of ECLGS should be extended without linkage with the existing loans**

In order to resolve the financial crisis faced by the weak industries, RBI may advise the banks to sanction the loan under ECLGS immediately without linking it to general loan assessment and financial scrutiny and also not to adjust any other dues from the proceeds of the loan as the main purpose behind the scheme is to help the struggling industries to tide over the financial crisis.

#### 11. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Subordinate Debt (CGSSD)

Credit Guarantee Scheme for Subordinate Debt(CGSSD) is a good scheme which will help many of the MSMEs to recover from the difficult times which they are passing through on account of the situation arising on account of Covid 19. However, the scheme is being operated through Scheduled Commercial Banks. Most of the MSMEs are having their accounts with Co-operative banks which are outside the purview of the scheme. If Co-operative banks are included under the scheme then it will benefit a large number of MSMEs. Secondly, it has been reported by MSMEs that it is not very easy to get the benefit under the scheme as the banks are adopting an extra cautious approach in deciding the eligibility of the MSMEs under the scheme and are seeking too much of details. Since the Govt is offering guarantee coverage on the loans extended by the banks under the scheme, banks should be more flexible in extending the benefits to the MSMEs under the scheme.

However, the ceiling for aggregate exposure for restructuring of advance from Rs.25 crores to Rs.50crores for MSME is yet to be enhanced and communicated by RBI. As a result, MSME's having more than aggregate exposure of Rs.25 crores but up to Rs. 50 crores are unable to avail the restructuring program announced by the government for the MSME units on account of the fall out of Covid 19 and to tide over the financial crisis.

These are our humble submissions for your kind consideration.

With kind regards,

**Rajiv Podar**  
President-IMC

**November 26, 2020**

**Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman**  
*Hon'ble Union Minister for Finance*  
*Ministry of Finance*  
*Room No. 134, North Block*  
*New Delhi 110 001*

**Respected Smt. Nirmala Sitharamanji,**

**Sub: Pre-Budget Memorandum on Indirect Taxes – 2021-22**

Warm Greetings.

We are enclosing herewith the detailed Pre-Budget Memorandum [covering Customs law and the Foreign Trade Policy), based on the inputs received from our members, for your kind consideration while formulating Union Budget proposals on Indirect Taxes for the year 2021-22.

We trust our recommendations would be considered favorably.

With regards,

**Rajiv Podar**  
President – IMC



December 15, 2020

**Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman**

*Hon'ble Union Minister for Finance*

*Ministry of Finance, Room No. 134, North Block, New Delhi 110 001*

Respected Smt. Nirmala Sitharamanji,

**Sub : Representation for extension of time-line of 31st December 2020 for filing of Declarations under The Direct-tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act, 2020**

Warm Greetings.

The Direct-tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act, 2020 ('VSV Scheme') is an extremely thoughtful scheme and goes a long way in demonstrating Government's sincere intent to reduce pending litigation and to promote a non-adversarial tax regime under its motto of easing of doing business.

However sufficient time needs to be given to taxpayer to understand and take benefit of the scheme.

For the reasons set out below, **we earnestly request for extension of time-line of 31st December 2020 for filing declaration under the scheme to 31st March 2021** to enable taxpayers to take full benefit of this exemplary scheme :

1. As you are aware, the debilitating situation faced by tax payers on account of **Covid-19 Pandemic** still continues in large part. Metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore etc. – where a majority of the large taxpayers like MNCs are situated – still are facing the brunt of the impact and do not have offices functioning to full capacity. Further, taxpayers all over India are presently focused on resuming their business operations to the fullest extent and hence, have not been able to look into the VSV Scheme and understand its intricacies to the full extent possible.
2. Too many deadlines are there for taxpayers to comply by 31st December 2020 like finalising of accounts for year ending March 2020 for corporate tax payers, filing of Returns for non-corporate taxpayers and completion of Tax Audits and Transfer Pricing Audits being also 31 December 2020, therefore all the taxpayers and consultants are busy with the same and have not been able to study and digest the nuances of the Scheme and Clarifications issued there under to the fullest.
3. Though further clarifications have been issued on 4th December 2020, there are various contradictory positions been adopted by the CBDT from the earlier circular issued on 22nd April 2020. For e.g. :
  - a. FAQ 84 clarifies that a payee needs to bear 25% of disputed interest or disputed penalty upon settlement of quantum appeal under VSV Scheme. This appears to be contrary to provisions of Section 3 of VSV Act and FAQ 56.
  - b. FAQ 31 clarified that deductor (payer) shall be entitled to get consequential relief of allowable expenditure under proviso to s. 40(a)(i)/(ia) in the year in which the tax was required to be deducted. However, now FAQ 86 clarifies that aforesaid benefit of FAQ 31 is not available where payer has already claimed deduction under proviso to s.40(a) in a subsequent year when TDS was deposited. Such FAQ is causing hardship to taxpayers, as despite settlement of TDS dispute under VSV Scheme, payer may continue to be exposed to risk of such interest and penalty – unless appeal involving disallowance u/s. 40(a) is separately settled under VSV Scheme.
4. It is to be noted that the Clarifications issued by CBDT vide circulars dated 22nd April 2020 and 4th December 2020 are far from satisfactory, which is one of the reasons why large taxpayers like MNCs are not comfortable to come forward and settle issues under VSV Scheme.
5. In-spite of several requests being made, by various Industry and Professional- Associations and Forum, clarifications on VSV Scheme were not forthcoming from CBDT as well as Tax Offices and has started coming in only during this week. Hence, it would be very difficult for large taxpayers like MNCs having multiple years and multiple issues under litigation, to understand and digest them and take a call on how to opt for VSV scheme.
6. Also, as you are aware, that many large MNCs having headquarters in US, UK, Germany etc. are operating in India. The Headquarters of these MNCs are severely impacted by the Covid pandemic and also, the headquarters will be shut on account of Christmas Holidays from next week onwards, hence, getting directions from Headquarters has been even more difficult.

On account of above-mentioned issues, not enough number of large taxpayers like MNCs, whose huge tax amounts have been locked in litigations, have not come forward settle dispute under VSV Scheme.

We hereby request you to extend the timeline to file declaration under the VSV Scheme at the earliest. We also request you to inform the CBDT officials and CCIT's across locations to be receptive and resolve taxpayers' grievances on a timely basis, so that taxpayers have full confidence for coming forward to settle disputes under the VSV Scheme.

We trust that the issues highlighted above would draw your kind attention and necessary measures would be taken at the earliest to make VSV Scheme a grand and deserving success by extending the deadline for filing of declarations under the VSV Act to 31st March 2021.

With regards,



**Rajiv Podar**

*President - IMC*

**Similar Representation sent to following dignitaries:**

**Shri Anurag Singh Thakur**

*Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance, Ministry of Finance, Room No. 138, North Block, New Delhi 110 001*

**Shri Ajay Bhushan Pandey**

*Revenue Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Room No. 128 A, North Block, New Delhi-110001*

**Shri Debashish Panda**

*Finance Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Jeevan Deep Building, Sansad Marg, New Delhi 10001*

**Shri P C Mody**

*Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Room No. 150, North Block, New Delhi – 110 001*



December 17, 2020

**Honourable Shri Narendra Modi ji**

Prime Minister of India  
South Block, Raisina Hill  
New Delhi-110011

**Respected Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji,**

We extend compliments.

We are writing this letter to express solidarity with the government of India on three Farm Laws that were recently legislated. The IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry firmly believes that the three farm laws will transform agriculture sector in India and the lives and livelihood of farmers.

The Chamber has been conducting regular interaction on various aspects of agriculture wherein we have been promoting understanding of new farm laws and how it will hugely benefit farmers.

By their very nature, the three agricultural market reform laws are farmer-friendly, industry-friendly and export-friendly. The laws will increase the degrees of marketing freedom for growers, ensure adequate availability of raw material for processors and high quality agri-produce for exports. The impact of the reform laws will be felt across the country.

Setting up of private markets in addition to the State-regulated APMC Mandis is sure to allow growers more marketing freedom. Growers are free to choose the market they wish to go to - APMC market or private market. Removal of marketing restrictions in terms of inter-State and intra-State movement seeks to unify the country and will advance the idea of 'One-nation One-agri-market'. This is not the end of APMCs, but will put pressure on APMC markets to infuse more transparency and efficiency in functioning. APMC markets have their own strengths and can compete with private markets. The State governments have a significant role in reforming the APMC system and make them more user-friendly or farmer-friendly.

Legal framework for contract farming is a progressive legislation intended to ensure groups of growers and entrepreneurs come together in a contractual relationship which will provide a ready market for growers for their produce and ready access to raw material for the entrepreneurs (sponsors). This will help advance the interest of both parties. As produce price will be decided in advance, there will be no uncertainty of price or risk of price volatility. There are scientific methods of fixing the price of the produce. Futures market too can provide a clue. Both parties to the contract will be winners. In case of disputes, the District Administration may not be well equipped to settle disputes. A more robust and timely dispute resolution mechanism is needed.

Amendment to the Essential Commodities Act 1955 seeks to encourage processors, exporters and large retailers to build inventory. This again will prevent a glut during harvest, ensure accelerated marketing of harvested produce and benefit the growers.

All these are indeed welcome measures as they allow growers greater freedom, improve the marketability of growers' crops, make agriculture more competitive and farming more remunerative.

Given the progressive nature of the agriculture reforms and its potential benefits to the farmers and the sector, IMC wholeheartedly supports the new legislation and will continue to work towards creating right understanding about the laws amongst the stakeholders so that the game-changing reforms are not derailed by vested interest.

With kind regards,

**Rajiv Podar**  
President-IMC

**Similar representation sent to the following Hon'ble Ministers:**

**Smt Nirmala Sitharamanji**

Hon'ble Union Minister for Finance, Ministry of Finance, Room No. 134, North Block, New Delhi 110 001

**Shri Nitin Gadkari ji**

Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Room No 501, Transport Bhawan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001

**Shri Piyushji Goyal**

Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce & Industries, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Railways Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi 110 011

**Dr. Jitendra Singh**

Hon'ble Ministers of State (IC) of Development of North Eastern Region, Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, South Block, Raisina Hill New Delhi-110011



# LEARNERS LICENCE ISSUED AT WIAA



WIAA has 100 years of existence. WIAA is authorized by RTO to conduct the test and issue Learners Licence for all RTO offices in Mumbai - RTO (Central Zone), RTO (Western Zone), RTO (Borivali) and RTO (Eastern Zone). also test for Permanent Licence.

## THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT (IDP)

The International Driving Permit (IDP) is recognized worldwide as a valuable document identifying motorists as legally-licensed drivers, in the country they are travelling.

### Who can Apply :

Indian driving license holders intending to drive in a foreign country can apply for an IDP. An IDP is valid only for one year from the date of issue.



**W I A A**  
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for more details  
please contact

 **022 2204 1885**  [wiaalicense@gmail.com](mailto:wiaalicense@gmail.com)

# Interaction with the Industry Stalwarts on Bounce Back and Thrive: Turning Adversity into Growth Opportunity

09th November 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry through its Forum for Affiliated Associations (FAA) Committee organized the Online Interaction with the Industry Stalwarts on 'Bounce Back and Thrive: Turning Adversity into Growth Opportunity'.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC welcomed the panellists and spoke how the pandemic had affected life, but the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan has opened a door to help the economy to bounce back. He cited the example of how India manufactured 15 lakh PPE suits to combat Covid-19 during the pandemic in May.

Mr. Suresh Kotak, Chairman, FAA Committee IMC opined that a crisis situation is to be capitalised rather than wasted. Mr. Kotak stated that there is a necessity that has arisen because of the situation that demands to become Atmanirbhar and become one of the best countries for export.

Further, he stated that agriculture accounts for 16 per cent of India's GDP and 40 per cent of employment. Agriculture has the longest supply chain, and India has the chance of becoming the food basket of the world. He also highlighted that there is a need to find and seek strengths and what Industry stalwarts can do together to ensure that their sector becomes profitable and takes India to greater heights.

Mr. Rasesh Doshi, Vice President, Federation of Association of Maharashtra said that the sentiment is more upbeat than it was in April. The Trade Community needs to

convert this into results. Some trades such as steel are booming, while trades such as textile are slowly recovering. He also shared that the government is proactive and takes plenty of inputs. There

is a sentiment of nationalism, and an anti-China sentiment, which prompts us to become more 'Atmanirbhar'.

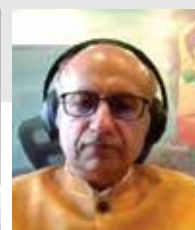
Mr. Sudhir Kapadia, President of Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry addressed that sectors like retail and recreation will take time to bounce back. Mr. Kapadia also informed that the Government's fiscal condition implies limits to its capex boost. Private investment will lead to sustainable long-term growth.

Adding that reforms will make sectors more attractive, Mr. Kapadia added that there are production-linked incentives in smartphones and medical devices, as well as reforms under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Package under coal, agriculture, education, and airport privatisation labour laws.

The first panel discussion on Reboot – Reform – Resurge of Agricultural Sector was moderated by Mr. G. Chandrasekhar, Director, IMC Economic Research Training Foundation, with panellists Dr. Sudhir Kumar Goel, former additional Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, Mr. Pradeep Ghorade, CEO, India Pulses and Grains Organisation, Mr. Khushwant Jain, Chairman India Oilseeds and Produce Export Promotion Council, Mr. K. K. Ravindran, MD, National



Mr. Rasesh Doshi



Mr. Sudhir Kapadia



Mr. Suresh Kotak

Cooperation Agriculture and Rural Banks Federation, Mr. Sharadkumar Devraj Maru, President, Grains and Oilseeds Federation and Mr. Lalit Sakalchandji Gandhi, Western Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Agro and Education.

The second Panel discussion on Reboot – Reform – Resurge of Manufacturing Sector was moderated by Mr. Dhiraj Mehra, MD, Subhash Silk Mills Ltd, Co-Chairman IMC. Panelists included Mr. Yogesh Mandhani, President, Steel Manufacturers Association of India, Mr. Ajit Panicker, President, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Trades Association, Mr. Bipin Shah, President, Thane-Belapur Trade Association, and Mr. ND Mhatre, Director General (Tech), Indian Textile Accessories and Machinery Manufacturers Association.

The industry stalwarts representing agriculture, commodity and manufacturing sector addressed the following issues during the online interaction:

1. Government should look at food security on par with national security.
2. India is missing a farmer's association. There is a

- possibility of contract farming, electronic trade farms, that can be looked at the modified essential commodities act.
3. The pandemic has affected the trade and the traders struggle to meet clients and have lost 30% of their turnover. The trade community has been affected intensely by the APMC act.
  4. Focus on storage facilities and prevent crop wastage, thereby improving the farmer's income.
  5. Need to think of value addition to ensure that agriculture export is sustained.
  6. 80% of the farmers who were marginalised did not have enough credit, with only 40% receiving credit, therefore there is a need for more liberal policies.
  7. The government may consider bringing certain pulses into the public distribution system (PDS) to ensure that people get to have the required daily amount in their diet.
  8. Manufacturing sector should not rely on a particular supply chain, and rather focus on alternate manufacturing.
  9. The refrigeration industry in India is at a nascent stage, but will play a role in storage of agricultural commodities. India Cooling Action Plan that will see the industry grows multiple times in the next two decades.
  10. The challenges faced by the pharmaceutical industry is that it takes a long time to set up an API manufacturing company, which includes hindrance such as environment clearance, construction and so on, therefore the sector is heavily dependent on China for raw materials. However, under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', the pharma sector can reduce its dependency on China.
  11. The Textile industry have 83% imports out of \$4689 million and it is the need of the hour for the nation to come together to encourage local businesses and products, coining Prime Minister's Mantra 'vocal for local'.
  12. Considering the Indo-China conflict, the smart thing would be learning the methods of our neighbours. This can be done with government institutes and R&D centres and will help and make the manufacturing sector a leading sector.

The session concluded with a presentation on Digital Art to enable MSMEs to analyse their digital readiness and the way forward that was presented by the Chair and Co-Chair of IMC Digital Technology Committee.

The program was well attended and the online interaction was interactive and interesting. This thought-provoking interaction ended with a vote of thanks by Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar, Director General, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Participants representing MSMEs from Agro, manufacturing, services, corporate, logistics and related industries attended and benefited from the online interaction.

## E-Dialogue on Ease of Living & SDGs - 2020-21

10th November, 2020

**E**ase of Living Committee of IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry under its series of "e-Dialogue on Ease of Living & SDGs-2020-21" had organised an event with a theme "Strategies for enhancing participation of common citizen for Ease of Living" on November 10, 2020. The e-Dialogue was addressed by Mr. Abhishek Singh, CEO MyGov; MD & CEO, Digital India Corporation (DIC), President &

CEO, National e-Governance Division (NeGD) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Government of India. The idea of this e-Dialogue was to foster a trilateral dialogue between International Speakers, Indian Government Officials & Members of the Chambers to synthesise some ideas for improving Ease of Living of Indian cities.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC, in his welcome address, said that "It is time for the people of the country to inspire, contribute and build New India.



**Mr. Abhishek Singh**

There should be an emphasis on new reforms that benefit society with a



focus on ease of living. Where there is ease of living, there is ease of doing business.”

Mr. M. K. Chouhan, Chairman, IMC’s Ease of Living Committee and Chairman, Mahendra & Young Knowledge Foundation, moderated the event and explained vision of IMC- Ease of Living Committee. He said that improving quality of life and Ease of Living for millions of citizens is not small task and it requires multiple partnerships. Partnership between Government, Business and Civil Society.

Mr. Abhishek Singh, CEO, MyGov briefed about how IT and technology have been used to improve the lives of citizens of India. He said, “In the last few years, huge platforms have been built and new steps have been taken which enables seamless communication of the citizens with

the government. This shows our growth in e-Governance and has revolutionised communications in the country.” The scale at which the projects are been taken today is massive and has not been done in any other country, he added.

Mr. Singh stated that, “MyGov is basically a bridge which delivers government announcements, decisions and moves in a simplified and in an infographic manner. Moreover, the portal also come up with various challenges to meet the requirements of the government and in turn, the winners are recognised.” Hence, MyGov is using various communication challenges to bridge the communication gap between the government and the citizens. Apart from that, it is acting as a talent hunt portal where through challenges the Indian innovators are called for

building and developing various government solutions to improve governance and life of citizens.

Mr. Singh briefed about other major projects like the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Aarogya Setu mobile application which are enabling the citizens and the government authorities to cope up in times of Covid crisis. He also explained about, “The three major moves by the Government of India which is giving a facelift to the country’s systems and processing. The Aadhaar resolves the identity issues and is a single ID for every requirement for age, residence, unique ID, facial recognition, etc., whereas UPI is driving towards a cashless economy. Similarly, Digilocker is a major move to make processes paperless.”

The discussions were interactive. The seminar ended with the vote of thanks by Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar, DG, IMC.

## Commodities : Options in Goods Contract-Gold & Gold Options in Goods Contract – Investment Tool

11th November, 2020 & 26th November, 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry has signed an agreement with BSE Ltd. to promote Commodity Derivatives Trading by conducting awareness, training and education program amongst value chain participants and investors. Beginning November, two events were organised one on **Commodities: Options in Goods Contract- Gold** on (November 11, 2020) and other on **Gold Options in Goods Contract- Investment Tool**

(November 26,2020).

Commodities are now an accepted asset class in which investors are interested. Often, investment in commodities has outperformed investment in other asset classes such as equities. Gold and silver are classic examples. Options Contract in Gold offers an excellent investment opportunity for investors or acts as insurance for those in physical bullion business. The focus of the program was on educating the stakeholders about the dynamics of the

bullion market for the most cost-efficient buying/ selling/ trading decisions. The key speakers were Mr. G. Chandrasekhar, Economic Advisor, IMC & Director, IMC ERTF and Mr. Pinakin Dave, Deputy General Manager, Business Development and Marketing, BSE Ltd.



Mr. Pinakin Dave

## The Companies Amendment Act, 2020 Understanding Decriminalization of Offences

19th November, 2020

The IMC's Corporate Law Sub-Committee organised an Online Digital Session on 'The Companies Amendment Act, 2020 - Understanding Decriminalization of Offences' on Thursday, November 19, 2020 from 5pm to 7pm.

Bharat Diamond Bourse was the sponsor for the Webinar.

Mr. M. P. Shah, Regional Director - West, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, started the session with opening remarks sharing the ethos behind the amendments brought in by Companies (Amendment) Act, 2020 and gave a broad overview of the amendments that have been brought about.

The panelists for the Webinar comprised of esteemed illuminaries, Mr. Manoranjan Das, Registrar of Companies, Mumbai; Mr. Shardul S. Shroff, Executive Chairman, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co; and Senior Advocate Mr. Amit Desai, who enthralled the audiences with their

indepth knowledge and free flowing discussion on the finer nuances of the amendments implemented through CAA 2020 and their impact.

The session was dynamic and interactive through question and answers moderated by Ms. Radhika Dudhat Pereira, Partner, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co and Chair, Corporate Sub-Committee IMC & Mr. Saurabh Shah, IMC Managing Committee Member.

The Moderators questioned the Panelist in regard to the various aspects of the amendments. Mr. Manoranjan Das gave regulator's perspective on various facets and aspects relating to the Amendment. Mr. Shardul S Shroff, with his multi dimensional approach was able to bring to the forefront the finner aspects of the amendments which are not apparent but will have to be kept in mind by the companies to avoid serious ramifications under the CAA 2020. He also shared case studies to show how the law has evolved

and the triggers that brought about the changes. Senior Advocate Mr. Amit Desai, shared the application of the criminal law to CAA 2020, the continuing criminal offences under CAA 2020 and the practical realities to be kept in mind by Indian and foreign companies and their management. The panelists and the moderators made the session very engaging and insightful.

In addition to the Q & A by the Moderators, Mr. Suresh A Kotak, Mr. Shailesh Haribhakti and Mr. Narayan Shankar joined the session as industry experts, and raised a few practical issues and interesting questions to our Panelist, that brought about an engaging discussion amongst the panelists about clarifications that will be needed to successfully implement CAA 2020 and it's impact on other legislation which will be impacted and which will impact CAA 2020.

The Webinar was very well received by the audience.

## Farm Outlook and Price Risk Management

23rd November, 2020

IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Agriculture and Food Processing Committee organized online seminar on "**Farm outlook and Price Risk Management**" on Monday, November 23, 2020

Mr. Aashish Barwale, Chairman, Agriculture and Food Processing Committee, IMC, in his welcome address stated that Agriculture sector has emerged as the star performer in

India's pandemic-hit economy by recording 3.4% growth during the first quarter of 2020-21. Yet, it operates under multiple challenges in production, processing, marketing and trade. It is necessary to manage their



Mr. S. K. Goel



Mr. Manish Daga



Mr. Aashish Barwale

price risks through hedging which is an insurance against adverse price

movement

Mr. G. Chandrashekhar, Economic Advisor, IMC and Director, IMC-ERTF highlighted the current scenario of the agricultural economy and how the reforms, when implemented effectively, are expected to benefit growers and other stakeholders.

Mr. S.K. Goel, Former Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture and Marketing, Government of Maharashtra, pointed out about availability of the government schemes for rural people. He also mentioned that the current policies would have an immediate intervention in market extension and reduction in supply chain disruptions.

It would also incentivise corporates for developmental activities in rural areas.

Mr. Manish Daga, MD, Cotton Guru, explained about how farmers can have Atmanirbhar Krushi. He explained about benefits of MahaFPO for members FPO's & Farmers. He also highlighted about Cotton revolution.

## Meeting between Indian and Turkmen Business Entities

26th November, 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Embassy of India in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan in association with Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan and Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan organized a video conference between business entities from Textile, Cotton and Leather Industry of India and Turkmenistan on November 26, 2020. The objective of the video conference was to provide a platform for Indian businesses from Textile, Cotton and Leather Industry to meet and interact with Turkmen businesses to explore commercial alliances.

During the meeting, H.E. Dr. Vidhu P. Nair, Ambassador of India to Turkmenistan delivered the Welcome Address and gave an overview on the India-Turkmenistan bilateral

and trade relations. Mr. Saurabh Shah, Co-Chairman, International Business Committee of IMC gave Introductory remarks and assured Chamber's support to the Entrepreneurs in enhancing their business in global markets. Mr. Dovletgeldi Rejepov, Chairman of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan gave the opening remarks at the Conference.

During the meeting over 40 Indian and Turkmen Businesses gave presentation /overview on their business and areas of cooperation



Mr. Saurabh Shah



Dr. Vidhu P. Nair



Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar

that they would like to explore with the relevant counterparts. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of Ministry of Textile, Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic relations of Turkmenistan.

The Presentation was then followed by Q&A session and concluded with a Vote of thanks by Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar, Director General, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



# INDCON 2020-21 – Building Stronger Research & Development Ecosystem - Enabling Saksham Bharat Abhiyaan

26th to 28th November, 2020

## Day 1 - Session 1 : 26th November, 2020



**Dr. Geetanjali Batra**



**Dr. Sudhir Gavane**



**Ms. Roopam Jha**



**Dr. Samarth Patwardhan**



**Dr. Niranjn Hiranandani**



**Mr. Subodh Sachan**

## Day 1 - Session 2 : 26th November, 2020

IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in association with MIT World Peace University, inaugurated INDCON 2020-2021 – Industry Academia Conclave (Online) - Series of Virtual Conclaves on “BUILDING STRONGER RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM - Enabling Saksham Bharat Abhiyaan” comprising of 11 conferences spread over 11 cities.

The second conclave of the series was inaugurated on 26th November 2020 at 10 focusing on Delhi - NCR region. The event was spread over 3 days- starting from 26th Nov. to 28th Nov., 2020 during which 9 virtual sessions were held with active participation from all stakeholders – Industry, Academia and R&D experts.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President of IMC, while speaking at the event said, “There is a need for an extensive collaboration between corporate

industry, academia, and governments at the village, district, state and central levels to synergize and rely on each other to provide a sustainable future”

According to Mr. Shailesh Shrivastava, Secretary, DPE Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Government of India “Value will not only be created by mass production or scale production but also by improving research design and engineering activities in our own country and for this government Industries and Academia should come together. “

At the end of the Inaugural session Mr. Juzar Khorakiwala, Vice President, IMC, gave vote of thanks.

Session on “Role of Educational Institutions in Research and Development Initiatives in India”

was moderated by Mr. Samarth Patwardhan, MIT-WPU. The key speakers were Dr. Geetanjali Batra, Associate Professor, Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Management and Entrepreneurship, JNU, Delhi, Ms. Roopam Jha, Consultant, Corporate Relations, IIT Delhi, Prof. Dr. Sudhir Gavhane, Vice Chancellor, MGM University

Moderator Mr. Pravin Patil, CEO, CIAP MITWPU, facilitated the session on “Industry – Academia Knowledge collaboration, role of corporates in India”. Dr. Niranjn Hiranandani, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Hiranandani Group of Companies, Mr. Subodh Sachan, and Director at Software Technology Parks of India, MeitY, GOI and MD & CEO of AIC STPINEXT INITIATIVES, Dr. Samarth Patwardhan, Professor and Head, CSER, MIT-WPU, were the key speakers for the session

## Day 2 - Session 1 : 27th November, 2020



**Mr. Brig S. K. Kakar**



**Mr. S. Roy**



**Mr. Sanjeev Ahluwalia**



**Dr. Ravikumar Chitnis**



**Mr. Durgamohan**



**Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe**

## Day 2 - Session 2 : 27th November, 2020

Day 2 started with a Session on “Opportunities and Challenges

for sustainable R & D initiatives in India” The key speakers

were Mr. Brig S. K. Kakar, Director, CDC, Maharaja



Agrasen Institute of Technology, Mr. Sanjeev S. Ahluwalia, Advisor, Observer Research Foundation, Mr. Soumendra Roy, Dean of Academics, Brijmohan Institute of Management and Technology. The session was moderated by Dr. Anjali Sane, Dean-School of Commerce, MIT-WPU.

“Will the NEP-2020 be helpful in promoting Research and Development culture in India?” session was moderated by Dr. Prasad Khandekar, Dean - Faculty of Engineering and Technology - MIT-WPU. The key speakers were Prof. Anil D.

Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, AICTE, Mr. M. Durgamohan, Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan’s Usha and Lakshmi Mittal Institute of Management, Dr. Ravikumar Chitnis, Pro VC- MIT WPU.

Moderator, Dr. Rajiv Thakur- Prov VC, MITWPU, moderated the session “Scope for innovations in Research and Development in India: Role of Higher Education and Industries”.

### Day 2 - Session 3 : 27th November, 2020



**Mr. Ravi Nandan Sinha**



**Mr. Tilak Seth**



**Mr. Nikhil Malhotra**

The Speakers were Mr. Nikhil Malhotra, Chief Innovation Officer, Tech Mahindra, Mr. Ravi Nandan Sinha, Director, MSME Business Forum India, and Mr. Tilak Seth, Executive Vice-President, Siemens Ltd.

### Day 3 - Session 1 : 28th November, 2020



**Dr. Ritu Bajaj**



**Dr. Shailendra Goswamy**



**Mr. Kapil Gandhi**



**Mr. Jasvir Singh**



**Mr. Purshottam Darshankar**



**Mr. Vikram Saraph**

### Day 3 - Session 2 : 28th November, 2020

### Day 3 - Session 3 : 28th November, 2020



**Ms. Bhumika Gupta**



**Dr. Mallika Mishra**



**Mr. Kuldeep Varma**

**Day 3** started with session on “Identifying the potential of R & D in India and understanding the challenges faced by the academic institutions to strengthen R & D within the university”. The spokespersons for this session were Mr. Kapil Gandhi, Vice-President – Digital Strategy and Innovation, Genpact Digital and Dr. Shailendra Goswamy, MD, Pushkaraj Industries. The session was moderated by Dr. Haridas, Dean - School of Law, Economics and Commerce- MIT-WPU

Session on “Challenges and opportunities in setting up technology/Incubation centres in private universities and Role of industries and Government” was moderated by Dr. Gautam Bapat, HOS - Management (UG), MIT-WPU. The key speakers were Dr. Jasvir Singh, Regulatory, Scientific and Government Affairs Leader-South Asia, DuPont Nutrition and Biosciences, Mr. Vikram Saraph, Group Director, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Architect and Planner Development and Mr. Purshottam Darshankar, Digital Transformation and

Innovation, Persistent Systems

“Best practices in Research and Development: India and other top 10 countries in R & D” session was moderated by Ms. Bhumika Gupta. The key speakers were Mr. Kuldeep Varma, Founder/Consultant Carbon and Sulphur Technologies and Dr. Mallika Mishra, Head of Analytical R & D - Hygiene, Home and Health, Reckitt & Benckiser India

The seminar was very interactive, and all the speakers provided invaluable insights. The seminar ended with a vote of thanks.

## Martyr's Day

26th November, 2020

On November 26, IMC observed Martyr's Day by offering flowers at the memorial and remembering those who lost their lives to senseless violence. The Foundation Stone of this Memorial was laid by the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Ashok Chavan on November 26, 2009, and the Memorial was formally inaugurated by the Governor of Maharashtra, in May 2010.

Floral tributes were offered and a wreath was laid by the IMC President Mr. Rajiv Podar and IMC Director General, Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar.

The memorial represents the sincere endeavor of the IMC to promote peace and goodwill throughout the land.



IMC Leadership team paying floral tribute to Martyrs' Memorial.

## Commodity : Importance as an Asset Class

27th November, 2020

To celebrate World Investor Week 2020, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry in association with MCX- IPF organized Online Seminar on "Commodities: Importance as an Asset Class".

IMC President Mr. Rajiv Poddar in his welcome address stated that the government recently announced a series of reforms for the agri-markets which will help advance the objective of doubling farmer's income. In his opinion, these reforms will provide an impetus for the agriculture sector while in the long run they will ensure India's food security and efficient supply chain in a self-sufficient manner.

Mr. G. Chandrashekhar, Economic Advisor IMC and Director IMC-ERTF, described the current scenario of the economy. He highlighted how Commodity Markets are driven and what are the various drivers of the domestic and global commodity market. He explained how Indian commodity market will grow bigger and highlighted investment opportunities. According to Mr. Gnanasekar, Owner, Commtrendz Research, Commodities have evolved as an asset class since 1990s, with the development of commodity futures indexes and subsequently, investment vehicles that benchmark against these indices. He also explained who should invest, what are the primary drivers to understand



Mr. Rishi Nathany



Mr. Gnanasekar

Commodity Futures and approaches to analyse the commodity prices.

Mr. Rishi Nathany, Head Business Development and Marketing, MCX explained about primary ways for investors to invest in Commodities. He also described about the role played by Commodity Futures and Commodity related Equities. He stated that commodities are in the same league as Equities and Bonds.

## Horasis Asia Meeting 2020

30th November, 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry co-organised the Horasis Asia Meeting on November 30, 2020 on a virtual platform.

The annual Horasis Asia Meeting is Asia's premier gathering of the region's most senior leaders from business and government.

During the meeting IMC organized a Special Indian Plenary session on the topic Reboot, Reform and Resurge the Indian Economy. The session was moderated by IMC President, Mr. Rajiv Podar. While welcoming the dignitaries on the panel to share their views on the topic, he gave an update on the Indian economy during his opening remarks.

Present on the occasion, Shri Nitin Gadkari, Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Government of India delivered the keynote address. During his speech he said that the Covid 19 has disturbed the economic structure of the whole world and our government is focusing on boosting the temperament and confidence of Indian businesses to overcome the pandemic crisis.

There are lots of opportunities in trade and business sector and India has got huge potential. With the availability of young talented manpower, raw material and favorable Policies of the Central and State Government, this is the appropriate time for investors to



*Mr. Rajiv Podar*



*Mr. Nitin Gadkari*



*Ms. Bindu Dalmia*



*Mr. Dinesh Joshi*

invest in India, he said.

He mentioned that the automobile industry is performing excellent and has the potential to create maximum employment. India will soon become the top automobile manufacturer in the world.

The government is also focusing to diversify agriculture into energy sector in order to reduce the country's dependence on petroleum products.

Speaking on the occasion he said that the Ministry also targets to take the MSME contribution to the economic growth from 30% to 40% and increase the MSME export from 48% to 60% and the government is also planning to create 5 crores new jobs from the MSME sectors. The Government is also concentrating in promoting the village and rural industry and focusing on encouraging

the Agro-Processing Industry in agriculture sector.

Water, power, transport, infrastructure and communication are given highest priority by the government. He gave an update on the development of the infrastructure sector and mentioned that the government is focusing on reducing logistics cost by developing green highways, waterways, railways for transporters, he added.

Also present on the panel were Ms. Bindu Dalmia, National Chairperson- Financial Inclusion Committee, Niti Aayog, Mr. Dinesh Joshi, Chairman- IMC International Business Committee, Mr. Shailesh Haribhakti, Chairman, Shailesh Haribhakti & Associates and Mr. Anant Singhanian, CEO, JK Enterprises who expressed their views on the topic.





30th November 2020

**I**MC Ramkrishna Bajaj National Quality Award (RBNQA) Trust organized a webinar on 'Adopting Performance Excellence - a Conversation' on Monday, 30 November 2020.

IMC RBNQA has been promoting the Performance Excellence Model for the past 24 years amongst Indian organizations. Over the years the IMC RBNQA Performance Excellence Model has captured the interest of organizations across various sectors of Manufacturing, Service, Small Business, Education, Health Care, and NGOs.

On the occasion of World Quality Month, the trust organized a panel discussion to bring forth an insightful conversation from some of our winning organizations of 2019. Our eminent speakers shared their valuable insights about this model and how the RBNQA Performance Excellence Model has shaped the excellence parameters in their approach. They also shared their experience and challenges while adopting the RBNQA Excellence Model.

We had wonderful speakers from the winning organizations sharing their thoughts on the excellence journey. Mr. Suresh Lulla, Co-Chairman, of the IMC Quality Improvement and Technology Committee set the stage for the program with his guiding words on Performance Excellence.

Mr. Manish Sinha, Asst. Vice President, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd., Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, stated that adopting this model helped them during the pandemic. Earlier their domain of innovation was more

focused on process or product improvement by virtue of delighting readers and advertisers, however after adopting this model they realized that there was a strong need to connect with internal customers i.e. editing and distribution team. With pandemic the engagement with internal customer was already high, which helped them to generate lot of business proposition *viz-a-viz* with their competitors.

Mr. Girish Iyer, Cluster Head - CNO, Marico Ltd., stated that due to the long association with RBNQA, they were able to ingrain RBNQA Core Values and Criteria in four areas – Leadership, Customer Focus, Sustainability and System Driven perspective. RBNQA gave them a framework for achieving sustainability across their units.

Dr. C. Palanisamy, Principal, Bannari Amman Institute of Technology, Sathyamangalam, stated that when they applied for RBNQA the best thing was the feedback report which was received after the assessment process mentioning the strength and opportunities for improvement of the institute. They developed and moved from teaching centric to learning centric institution. A highly decentralized culture amongst teachers was developed with a high level of transparency, outcome based education, and overall development of student, sustainability and working on an eco-friendly environment. Adopting this model helped them increase their Performance.



Dr. Rama Rajasekaran, Director, Ganga Medical Center Hospital Pvt Ltd stated that the RBNQA criteria emphasizes on the importance of senior leader. The IMC RBNQA model helped in understanding the various nuances of leadership. And working on various parameters to measure leadership performance. The focus on strategic planning helped in further developing goals, measures, and implementation of the various action plans. Customer focus and workforce focus also got highlighted in the various activities of the organization.

Mr. Rathin Khandhadia, Associate Director, Global Center for Education Excellence, GIIS, stated that the beauty of the model defines the way of life. During the pandemic all the 11 core values were focused upon. As participants in the award process writing an application itself helps organizations to take a deep dive to understand the strength and gaps of the organization.

The program received a positive response with 82 participants and was appreciated by all.

You can view the Conversation on Youtube : [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_QCuhrSKgc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_QCuhrSKgc&feature=youtu.be)



# How Indian Economy could Reboot, Reform, Resurge

03rd December 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized an interactive meeting with Dr. K V Subramanian, Chief Economic Advisor, Government of India on How the Indian Economy could Reboot, Reform, Resurge on November 3, 2020.

Dr. Subramanian was speaking of the potential rise in India's economic growth thanks to the Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme, and also spoke of the importance of raising wealth in an ethical manner.

Welcoming Dr. Subramanian, Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC said, "The Indian economy has undergone its worth growth patch, thanks to the pandemic and the subsequent nationwide lockdown. India's policymakers have been taking steps to provide relief to the economy. The launch of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan has shown India's potential in reviving its economy."

Speaking about How Indian Economy could Reboot, Reform, Resurge, Dr. Subramanian said that he was optimistic about the economy recovering, particularly in the manufacturing sector. "The concern about the second wave of Covid-19 should keep us focused about not becoming complacent. However, if there is no second wave, then this economic recovery will be in the right direction. However, I am being cautiously optimistic about this." He added that while the economy was recovering recovery, India could not be complacent, given the fact the pandemic was still not over and could worsen during the festive season and the winter. "We must be cautious until the vaccine is out," he added.

On Atmanirbhar Bharat, Dr. Subramanian provided his perspective stating that one of the key ideas that has underlined the Atmanirbhar Bharat push is the Indian economic

history, which dates back millennia. "Research by Dr. Angus Madison has shown the economic trajectory for the past 2000. Until 1750 AD, India accounted for 33% of the global GDP," he said, adding that the US, which is recognized as the world's economic superpower, has contributed 15 to 16% the world's GDP at its peak, which is half a century. "Such kind of dominance doesn't happen through accident. It comes through ideas that result in economic prosperity," he added.

While speaking of the success, Dr. Subramanian said that the success is due to India's respect for private enterprise. "By contributing to society and becoming profitable has been the way India has benefitted for those 17.5 centuries," he explained.

On land, labour and law, Dr. Subramanian said that the labour reforms had finally been implemented. "This implementation will see a rise in jobs. Even the agricultural reforms will enable growth in the agricultural sector. This will create jobs and enable demand creation in the economy," he explained.

Dr. Subramanian also spoke on the Indian consumer, stating that the reforms have been intended to tap into the huge population and the consumer power. "In the past three decades, the products and services have been focused on the top 15% of the income pyramid. However, in an economy such as India's, there is also the opportunity to play the volume game where products to scale at an India scale," he said, citing India's retail and FMCG sector where the products have targeted for everyone across the income pyramid.

FMCG and finance need not be the only sectors that cater to the Indian population. This is where the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme

comes into play and will impact all sections of society. "Nations that became advanced grew by building on a large middle-class, which is what India needs to do as well.

Going forward, the medium to long-term prospects are good for the Indian economy. Currently, China and India are the only two nations that can generate growth of 6-7% per annum. With the world looking at China in a negative light, India has an opportunity to push. And the Atmanirbhar Bharat will help India in that light," he added.

He then answered a few questions by the audience, including how the urban poor is more vulnerable than the rural poor because the latter is eligible for various schemes, which the urban poor is not. "We're looking to enable to fix the vulnerabilities of the urban poor," he added.

While speaking on the job market, he said that as long as the fear of the pandemic is there, social distancing would have to be observed as well as wearing mask. "The food sector is seeing an improvement, but the gig economy will take time to see an improvement. I see it returning to full throttle when the pandemic is fully over. With the vaccine coming by May 2021, I see Q1 of next year, witnessing the resumption of the gig economy, which will see a full-scale reopening by Q4. However, I am an economist, not an astrologer, so this is just an assumption," he added.

He concluded that the private sector and the government need to work on a relationship of trust.



**Dr. K V Subramanian**

# Get Fit with IMC - A Comprehensive Series on Physical and Mental Health and Wellness

## Eye for an I

5th December 2020

**Y**our eyes and your overall health, are all connected

It's important to remember that the eyes are connected to many other systems in the human body. That makes routine eye exams an important part of preventative healthcare—regardless of your age or physical health. Comprehensive eye exams not only test your vision, but also give doctors of optometry a close-up look at the inside of the eye, including blood vessels, veins and nerves, all of which may contain clues to conditions that affect your overall health.

IMC's Health and Fitness Committee organized a session on Eyecare with Prof. Juzer Surka, MBBS : DOMS:MS(OPHTH), FCS(SA) OPHTH to create an awareness about how one can protect their eyes and keep them safe from various issues like blindness, glaucoma, cataract and other eye diseases.

Prof. Juzer Surka, who is currently in private practice as an Ophthalmologist in South Africa, joined us live from Cape Town and gave everyone a very comprehensive presentation on various ailments that

can cause sight impairments, He explained the reasons and causes behind those ailments and how one can protect their eyesight.



**Prof. Juzer Surka**

The participants asked a variety of questions that were affecting them on a personal level and they were guided accordingly.

KNOWLEDGE SERIES

# India-Dubai Retail Summit

9th December, 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry organised an 'India Dubai Retail Summit' on December 9, 2020 where experts from the industry expressed optimism at the future of retail at the India-Dubai Retail Summit. The event was supported by Mitchell Fair and White Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry delivered the welcome address during the inaugural session of the Summit. Speaking on the trade between India and UAE centuries old that began with dates and pearls, which only increased after the discovery of oil in the Arab Peninsula. "India-UAE

trade that was valued at \$180 million in the 1970s is a \$60 billion industry today. This will only increase over the years as both nations enjoy a healthy relationship," he said.

Mr. Omar Khan, the Director, International Offices, Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the Indian retail market is valued at \$1.1 trillion and Dubai itself is a



**Mr. Omar Khan**



**Mr. J.P. Shukla**



**Ms. Mira Kulkarni**



**Ms. Haani Khorakiwala**



**Mr. Pankaj Kumar**



**Mr. Paul Marks**



**Mr. Rajneesh Mahajan**



**Mr. Chirag Vora**



**Mr. Dalip Sehgal**



**Mr. Rajiv Podar**



**Mr. Ramesh Cidambi**



**Mr. Sameer Tapia**

great market for brand penetration. “It is a great place to grow your retail to wider regions and to test waters in the world of retail, as the industry is fast-moving. There have been disruptions such as e-commerce, and the Covid-19 pandemic,” he said, adding that there were several aspects to learn from the panel of experts regarding the future of retail.

While delivering the keynote address at the inaugural, Ms. Mira Kulkarni, Founder of Forest Essentials, said that growing India-Dubai commercial relations will only improve the bilateral relationship between both India and the UAE. “The UAE is featured as one of India’s top-10 investment sectors. India, too, is the one of the largest trade partners with the UAE, which continues strengthening India-UAE ties. India being the fastest growing economy has become a business case for global retailers. The sector is expected to grow at a rate of 20-25 per cent in the years and there is a need for innovative solutions to ensure this growth is possible. India is also expected to become the world’s fastest e-commerce market, with an increase in internet users in the country, she added.

Mr. Dinesh Joshi, Chairman – International Business Committee, IMC Chamber of Commerce & Industry gave an overview on the theme. Retail industry in India is undoubtedly one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Robust Demand, Innovation, increasing investment and Government support are the major factor that develops India Retail Industry, he said.

The inaugural session was followed by the first session titled ‘Reimagining the retail infrastructure of the future,’ moderated by Mr. Sameer Tapia, Founder and Senior Partner ALMT Legal and had experts Mr. Rajneesh

Mahajan, CEO – Inorbit Malls, Mr. Dalip Sehgal, CEO – NEXUS Malls and Mr. Paul Marks, Managing Partner – Retail Management Solutions.

Mr. Tapia introduced all the panellists, each of whom have spent decades in the retail industry, and asked them how they managed to survive during the pandemic.

Mr. Dalip Sehgal admitted that the nine months was an experience. “We divided the nine months into three parts – the first part was completely closed. The second part had some places opening. We had to ensure that all the SOPs were in place, so that business ran smoothly. We had to ensure people felt safe and secure. It was also a gradual opening and it also helped us understand better how controls were in place and our retailers and customers were safe,” he said, adding that in November, we crossed 100% compared to November from the previous year.

Mr. Rajneesh Mahajan added that when the lockdown began, there were three uncertainties, which began with timelines, the restrictions when the unlock began, and the final was the consumer behaviour. “What helped us was standing by our partners, and assuring them that the future was bright. We also wanted to see if we were agile enough to adapt to the ever-changing consumer behaviour. We bounced back in November this year, and we will end the financial year on a high, and begin the next year with growth and not recovery,” he said.

Mr. Paul Marks added that it was a time of uncertainty for smaller companies that are reliant on clients. “Covid-19 has affected people and businesses, but from a professional point of views, life has to go on. We are still to figure what the retail landscape is going to be post Covid-19. We have to closely examine

this post retail and malls. We’re looking at India, where the market continues to grow,” he added.

Mr. Mahajan, while speaking on the evolution of malls in India, said that the consumption base of Inorbit began with a tier-1 city, but has now spread to smaller cities. However, Mr. Sehgal added that NEXUS has established in places that has a large young population that could be the ‘next set of customers’. Citing an example of a mall in Chandigarh, he said that the mall there has people coming from Haryana, Punjab and Himachal, as well as a significant NRI population.

Both gentlemen believe that India has not reached its saturation point when it comes to purchasing power. Citing an example of IKEA that opened in Hyderabad, the Swedish furniture brand, only will see an increase in the micro-market in Navi Mumbai.

Mr. Marks opined that opening new malls means that looking at new ways of running the same thing to engage the customer. While speaking of the e-commerce industry and how it has ruled during the pandemic, the panellists said that while it will continue, in a market in India, all channels, including malls and shopping centres will grow. “We are social and will continue to meet,” said Mr. Sehgal.

Mr. Mahajan added that there was a romance to shopping and interacting with the sales representative. “We have also seen a rise in people getting fitter, which takes away the theory that people are getting lazy. Also, India doesn’t have museums and parks and running spaces. The only outdoor spot is the mall, which will see growth,” he said.

Mr. Marks also believes that online shopping will not kill the mall. “People had not switched to online shopping only when the Covid-19

pandemic broke out. Customers and retailers had become lazy because online had grown so fast. Retailers had become complacent and customers didn't see a need a reason to visit a store. This pandemic has taught us not to be complacent and take anything for granted," he said.

The trio also said that the industry needs to be more proactive than reactive in order to thrive.

The second session, titled, "Enhancing Customer Experience and Convenience" was moderated by Ms. Umme-Haani Khorakiwala, Director, Akbarallys Men, and had experts such as Mr. Ramesh Cidambi, COO - Dubai Duty Free, Mr. Chirag Vora, Partner - Amarsons Collection, Mr. J. P. Shukla, Co-Founder & CEO - 1-India Family Mart, Mr. Pankaj Kumar, Head: OmniChannel Retail - Jumbo Electronics giving their expert opinions.

After introducing the panellists, Ms. Khorakiwala asked how 2020 was doing. Mr. Chidambi, said that it was a disaster. "Dubai Duty Free has never shut down in a 36 year period, and this was unheard of.

Mr. J.P. Shukla said that the four-month period between March and June was locked down. "It was only since September 15 that we were able to re-open all 92 stores. We had managed to recover 75 per cent of our business thanks to the festive season. The impact is lesser in smaller towns, so we didn't see as much as of an impact compared to urban India. The good news is that our winter sales have made 120 per cent of the sales in November compared to last year," he said.

Mr. Kumar said that a bulk of business in Dubai happens in brick and mortar stores, which saw an impact during the lockdown. "The Dubai government slowly reopened the malls in the second quarter, but we didn't see too much business

during the second quarter. We have seen a rise since September, and November turned out to be a good month for us," he said.

Mr. Vora said that from January to March, business did well. "We had sales thanks to the e-commerce site even during the lockdown. We saw a huge shift of sales during the lockdown. And we saw the demand for Covid-19 related products. We launched sanitiser foot stands that we sold at luxury stores as well," he said, adding that sales in physical stalls would go back to normal once people start getting injected with the vaccine.

Mr. Cidambi said that the biggest challenge for retailers was adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic. "We had to follow WHO protocols, and tried to make the customer experience as contactless as possible. The other aspect was to be more aggressive in an online environment.

Mr. Shukla added that before Covid-19, they weren't worried about when the customer would come back. "However, we did installed a CRM tool to understand the customer buying pattern. We began interacting with them, so that they would not crowd in a particular area," he explained.

While speaking on the role of improving the interaction with customers, Mr. Kumar said that products that weren't available in a physical store could be available in that store. "We have something called an endless aisle that helps retailers having various store sizes. There are certain products that you need to see and experience for which a brick and mortar store is essential," he said, adding that even a company like Amazon has realised the need for a physical store, which they have opened in the United States.'

While speaking of the rise on social media and influencers, Mr. Vora

said that you need to be smart on choosing the right type of influencer for your brand. "You have micro-influencers who have better reach than a macro-influencer," he said, adding that you need to see the right fit for your brand before choosing the right influencer.

Mr. Vora added a good combination should be a mixture of influencer marketing, Google ads, as well as FB\ IG ads.

Mr. Chidambi said that historically the customer has not been seen as someone you want to exchange a conversation with in airport retail. However, this has changed when it comes to interacting with the customer. "We are enhancing a customer base and introducing a customer relationship management programme. This has also been due to brands interacting more with the customers. As a result, retailers are getting pushed into the background. We need to start working closely with brands and improve our own relationship with customers," he said.

While speaking of the new norm, Mr. Kumar said that due to new lifestyle changes, particularly those working from home and learning from home, has seen a rise in purchase of laptops or tablets. "We have also seen a rise in purchase of routers, smart security cameras, entertainment. However, this is temporary and once things return to normal, we may see a change," he said, adding that safety of customers and staff will be a normal thing.

The panelists believe that there will be recovery in 2021, and that they feel that the year will be a make up for what happened in 2020.

Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar, Director-General, IMC Chamber of Commerce & Industry proposed the vote of thanks for the insights that the experts had shared.



## Commodities : Options in Goods Contract- Gold and Gold Options in Goods Contract – An Investment Tool

10th December, 2020 &  
23rd December, 2020

**O**ptions Contract in Gold offers an excellent investment opportunity for investors or acts as insurance for those in physical bullion business. To advance the idea of hedging for price risk management and/ or investment in gold, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with BSE Ltd. organized a Seminar on “Commodity GOLD: Options in Goods Contract” on December 10,

2020 and “Gold Options in Goods Contract- Investment Tool” was organised on December 23, 2020.

Gold investment is an excellent portfolio-diversifier and is an integral part of everyone’s investment strategy. The program focused on educating the investors about the dynamics of the bullion market so that buying/ selling/ trading decisions are well informed, scientific and cost-effective. The key speakers were Mr. G Chandrashekhar,

Economic Advisor, IMC & Director IMC ERTF and Mr. Ranjith Singh, Deputy GM, Products & Business Development, Currency -Commodity Derivatives at BSE Ltd.



Mr. Ranjith Singh

## Travel Safe, Stay Safe and Dine Safe

11th December, 2020



Smt. Valsa Nair Singh



Mr. Himanshu Jain



Mr. Rohit Khosla



Dr. Pasupathy Venkat



Mr. Homa Mistry

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry through its Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Committee organized the Online Interaction on Travel Safe, Stay Safe and Dine Safe on December 11, 2020. The online interaction was organised with a focus to instil confidence and increase demand to bolster hotel occupancies and increase footfalls in restaurants & bars.

The online interaction was addressed by Smt. Valsa Nair Singh (IAS), Principal Secretary, Tourism, Excise and Civil Aviation, Government of

Maharashtra, and our esteemed Guest Speakers Mr. Himanshu Jain, President - Indian Subcontinent, Diversey, Mr. Rohit Khosla, Executive Vice President – Operations, North & West India, The Indian Hotels Company Limited, Dr. Pasupathy Venkat, Lead Expert, Food Safety Training and Certification (FOSTAC), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Mr. Homa Mistry, Chief Executive Officer, Trail Blazer Tours India Private Limited.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC, in his welcome address shared insights into the industry before Covid-19,

and the measures that could be taken in a world that is currently recovering from the pandemic.

While addressing the audience, Mrs. Valsa Nair Singh stated that the pandemic has given the state the opportunity to fix several missing cogs in the travel and tourism industry. She briefed that the government has come out with policy initiatives, which will be seen when the industry reopens in the state. Some of the policies include the beach-shack policy that have been created by the state government, which ensures local employment, as well as the

agro-tourism policy. It is a win-win for the farmer and the government. She said that the state is also focusing on caravan tourism in a post Covid-19 Maharashtra. Mrs. Valsa also shared that the number of licences required to start a hotel has come down from 70 to 10, which shows the way the government has moved in the right direction.

Mr. Farhat Jamal, Chairman - Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Committee, IMC moderated the session and shared that it was one of the darkest hours for the travel and tourism industry across the world. Fortunately, with the vaccine on the horizon that has given a hope. The human desire to travel and dine out will continue to stay and the industry will be returning to its normal pace but it will take time.

While speaking of the procedures, Mr. Himanshu Jain said that while

the SOPs were in place, people needed to be more mindful about their well-being, with wearing a mask properly being a start. He also stated that we need to educate people about the real risk and revive the large sector of the economy rather than wait for the vaccine.

While speaking on the safety of hotels, Mr. Rohit Khosla said that the pandemic has made it necessary to relook at the SOPs that focus on the safety of customers who live in hotels. He also said that while there are standards, there is a need to adhere to the standards. He also shared that in their hotels, they have Covid-19 marshals, who keep a watch on staff and guests.

Dr. Pasupathy Venkatraman, while speaking on the situation said that a lot of thought has gone with regard to the directives. 99 per cent of the directives are being followed by the

hotels, and there has been a cultural change due to the pandemic. There is anxiety that things must come to normal, but if we don't follow protocol, then the normalcy will take time to return. The experts believed that the client is the top priority and a safe and secure environment was the road ahead to ensure the revival of the industry. The program was well attended and the online meeting was interactive and interesting. This thought-provoking session ended with a vote of thanks by Mr. Ajit Mangrulkar, Director General, IMC and he expressed confidence that the industry would soon see an upward trend.

Around 250 participants representing Members of the Hotel, Restaurant and Travel business and civil society representatives and stakeholders attended and benefited from the Session.

## Revised Consumer Protection Act (Amended Act)

14th December, 2020

The IMC's Law organized an Online Digital Session on 'Revised Consumer Protection Act ("Amended Act")' on Monday, December 14, 2020 from 5pm to 7pm.

The said online event was sponsored by JIMBRIC CONSULTING OPC PVT LTD.

The Panelist for the webinar comprised of esteemed illuminaries, Mr. Anand Patwardhan, Former President, Consumer Bar Association; Mrs. Rajyalakshmi Rao, Former Member Judge, National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission; Mr. Shekhar Prabhavalkar, Advocate,

Mr. Vijay Subramaniam, CEO, Kwan Talent Management.

Mr. Swapnil Kothari, IMC Law Committee Member, Chairman & Managing Partner, S Kothari & Co. (Advocates & Solicitors) welcomed and introduced the speakers of the first session, Mr. Anand Patwardhan, and Mrs. Rajyalakshmi Rao. Mr. Kothari moderated the session. The panel discussed the various aspects of Features of the Amended Consumer Protection Act, its impact on the peoples complaints and grievances and whether a swifter resolution of the disputes would be possible, and the corresponding

changes in other legislations would be necessary and fruitful.

Mr. Anand Desai, Chairman, IMC Law Committee, Managing Partner - DSK Legal, welcomed and introduced the speakers of the second session, Mr. Shekhar Prabhavalkar, Mr. Vijay Subramaniam, Mr. Desai moderated the session.

The panel discussed the various aspects of Discussion on Impact and Implementation of the key Amendments, covering important topic: Advertising Endorsements by Celebrities. The panelists and the moderators made the session very engaging and insightful.

# The Direct-Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act for Dispute Resolution

17th December, 2020

**I**MC Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Direct Taxation Committee, jointly with Bombay Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Bombay Chartered Accountants' Society and Chamber of Tax Consultants, organized a webinar on 'The Direct-Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Act for Dispute Resolution' (VSV Scheme) with experts from the department led by Mr. Patanjali Jha, Principal Chief Commissioner of Income-tax along with Ms. Lekha Kumar, Chief Commissioner of Income-tax-5 and Mr. Abhay Damle, Pr. Commissioner of Income-tax (Central) -1, all from Mumbai. The webinar aimed at getting clarifications in relation to the Scheme as well as on the FAQs issued by CBDT vide circulars on 22 April and 4 December 2020.

Mr. Rajiv Podar, President, IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed the experts to the webinar which was attended by around 400 participants from all across India. He also mentioned that there are various points pertaining to the VSV Scheme on which clarifications would be helpful and one such issue is the withdrawal of appeals in view of the appeal process becoming faceless.

Mr. Rajan Vora, Chairman, IMC's Direct Taxation Committee, said that it was the right time to seek the expertise of Mr. Jha, Ms Kumar, and Mr. Damle over the queries coming from the scheme and its FAQs. "This is one of the best schemes to resolve disputes. He quoted statistics put forward by the Finance Ministry which stated that Rs. 4.83 lakh crore is locked up in dispute over Rs. 9.32 crore cases. As of 3rd of November, Rs 1.19 lakh crore has been settled of which Rs. 0.14 lakh crore has been declared by the private sector, which shows that majority of declarations

are from PSUs and much more can be done to resolve the private sector disputes too."

Prior to the panel discussion, Mr. Patanjali Jha briefly discussed the scheme highlighting that the intention is to resolve disputes and address as well as mitigate litigation, thus giving an impetus to ease of doing business. Ms. Lekha Kumar and Mr. Abhay Damle also gave their comments regarding the Scheme and Ms. Lekha Kumar addressed Mr. Rajiv Podar's point regarding withdrawal of appeals for which the assessee has opted to settle under the Scheme by informing the participants that in such a case, they can write to NFAC with a request for appeal withdrawal. Three email addresses were shared for this purpose: *delhi.pccit.nfac@incometax.gov.in*, *delhi.cit.nfac@incometax.gov.in*, *delhi.addlcit.nfac@incometax.gov.in*.

Subsequently, the departmental experts answered almost two dozen questions curated by the Members of the host organisations from those received from its vast membership, moderated by Mr. Rajan Vora. Important clarifications on key concerns were provided during the webinar:

- In case of appeals whose time limit has expired during the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 January 2020 and they have been filed with application for condonation of delay before 4 December 2020, such appeals should be eligible to opt for the scheme even if
- the condonation application is pending and the appeal has not been admitted. It was clarified that the taxpayers should write to the NFAC for getting the appeal admitted. (Pertaining to FAQ 59)
- In case order u/s 263 is passed with general or specific directions and ITAT appeal is filed against such order before 31 January 2020, then as long as the income is quantifiable, it should be eligible for the Scheme even if it is quantified by the AO after 31 January 2020, say, in March 2020. (Pertaining to FAQ 58)
- Where an issue is covered by a SC or a jurisdictional HC's decision but not in assessee's own case, disputed tax cannot be considered at a concessional rate of 50%. 50% benefit will only be available in case of a SC or HC order in assessee's own case. (Pertaining to FAQ 37)
- In case of certain additions that are present across several years such as capital versus revenue expenditure, if the appeal is withdrawn, the assessment order would stand and hence, the taxpayer should be eligible to depreciation on the expenditure treated as capital expenditure by the AO.



Mr. Patanjali Jha



Mrs. Lekha Kumar



Mr. Abhay Damle

However, this will not have any bearing on the subsequent years where no appeals were pending.

- Where a taxpayer settles proceedings u/s 201 and there is also a consequential addition u/s 40(a) and no appeal has been filed against that, the taxpayer should file a rectification for the same u/s 154. (*Pertaining to FAQ 31*)
- In case of a merger where amalgamating/ transferor

company as well as amalgamated/ transferee company both have pending litigations, the declaration under VSV Scheme should also include PAN of the transferor company while the signatory of the declaration would be the transferee company.

On the whole, the clarifications provided by the panel of experts were quite lucid and proved helpful to the participants in understanding the scheme and the FAQs. The

department experts indicated that they are open to receiving suggestions of the stakeholders and more details and clarifications will be issued by Central Board of Direct Taxes soon. The hosting Chambers reposed their commitment to see that the Scheme is a success while pointing out that a separate representation was made for seeking an extension for filing of the declaration to 31st March 2020 due to the prevalent Covid-19 situation and various other conflicting deadlines.

## In Conversation with Mr. Steve Waugh on his book - Spirit of Cricket - India

19th December, 2020

The Australian cricket legend, Mr. Steve Waugh has published yet another book under the series of "Spirit of Cricket". This time the photo book covers the spirit of cricket in India.

A beautiful photo book of images capturing the passion and sentiments towards cricket across the length and breadth of India was captured

by Mr. Steve Waugh as he travelled extensively across the country. Mr. Pranav Gandhi, Sports Journalist and Writer, Co-Chair of the Entertainment Media and Sports Committee of IMC, moderated the event and engaged Steve in a very candid conversation about not only his new launch but also about cricket, which is not only sport in

India but a religion

The attendees asked many questions regarding Steve's experience running upto publishing the book and also about his overall experience of playing cricket in India.



Mr. Steve Waugh

## Mediation in IT

### 15th Session of M & C Study Circle — 22nd December 2020

The M & C Study Circle is a series of "Interactive Sessions focused on Dispute Resolution Processes" intended to introduce different aspects of Mediation and Conciliation in the Indian Context. The sessions are periodically organized and conducted under the auspices of IMC's Mediation & Conciliation Committee that is chaired by Mr. Prathamesh D. Popat.

15th Session of the said series was held online on Tuesday, 22nd December 2020; the topic of the Session was "Mediation in IT"

The august speaker for this session was Mr. Subramaniam Vutha (Mani) who is a Founder Member of the Technology Law Forum, [www.techlawforum.org], a member of the International Technology Law Association [www.itechlaw.org], a Past President of Licensing Executives Society, India, an affiliate of the Licensing Executives Society, International. [www.lesi.org]. Mr. Vutha is a Former Lecturer on IT Laws at the University of Mumbai - Department of Law, for LLM students. With over 40 years of experience, Mr. Vutha has provided, in the

last 15 years, consulting and training services to leading companies, in the development and implementation of Corporate IPR Frameworks [IP

strategies, policies, processes and roadmaps], ecommerce laws, information technology laws and complex licensing transactions. Recently Mr. Vutha was featured in a list of the World's Leading IP Strategists 2017 by IAM Magazine of London.



Mr. Subramaniam Vutha



It was discussed during this interactive session that how the information technology and the internet are getting so inextricably connected to our lives and why we need to take them seriously. Not only do we interact with technology daily but we even increasingly interact with others through it. This dependence increasingly raises several social and legal concerns and disputes. Participants in this session got an

exposure to the nature of disputes in the IT field, some of the options available to address them and a discussion on the ways dispute redressal can get more efficacious for the stakeholders in this field.

This session was useful for advocates, counsels, in-house lawyers, business owners, managers involved in managing business disputes, parties and their representatives who intend

or expect or hope to seek early and efficacious resolution of pending their commercial and IT related disputes.

The entire session turned out to be very interesting as it was supported by a presentation as well as Questions & Answers between the speaker and participants. Participants were benefited by the session and gave thanks and appreciated IMC for organising such an informative session.

## Conversation with Celebrity Fashion Stylist Ms. Shayal Sheth

6th November, 2020



Ms. Shayal Sheth



Ms. Paulomi Dhawan

**M**s. Shayal Sheth - celebrity fashion stylist and consultant shared her erudite thoughts on the efforts and the innovation that goes behind the scene for the celebs to look appropriate and stylish. From television to films, she spoke about

her work of enhancing the style quotient of many in the showbiz industry. She also gave the audience various fashion and posture tips.

The session was curated and moderated by Ms. Paulomi Dhawan, Strategic Advisor on perception image management.

## A Virtual journey to Peru

10th November, 2020



Mr. Luis Cabello



Mr. Aakash Shah

**M**r. Luis Cabello, the head of The PROMPERU India with his 35 years of experience gave the audience an insight of Peru's culture, people, gastronomy and history.

The virtual presentation gave a wonderful experience of Peru's

various tourist destinations for those seeking once-in-a-lifetime experiences of the richest destination in the world.

The session was curated by Mr. Aakash Shah, Founder - LUXETROT a boutique travel agency, based in Mumbai.

## Hakuna Matata... Don't Worry, Be Happy

11th November, 2020

**T**o uplift the subdued vibe and energy in this festive season, Mr. Bharat Dabholkar, the doyen of Indian Advertising with his unmatched wit and felicity of expression shared his various life

experiences and trivia to understand the important quotient required in our life - "The Humour".

He also shared his thoughts and wisdom on how one can have a

humoristic approach in life albeit surviving in this pandemic



Mr. Bharat Dabholkar

## Be Prepared in Uncertain Times... Your legacy handbook

21st November, 2020



Hon'ble. Mr. Justice G. S. Sistani (Retd.)



Ms. Salonee Sanghvi

Hon'ble. Mr. Justice G. S. Sistani (Retd.) and Ms. Salonee Sanghvi – CFA and Founder, My Wealth Guide, gave valuable insights on a simplified and complete transparent system to organize one's life with a legacy

record handbook – that can help to consolidate not only valuable papers, important information, records of possessions but also determine what is important to an individual or a family and also most importantly the legal acceptance attached to it.

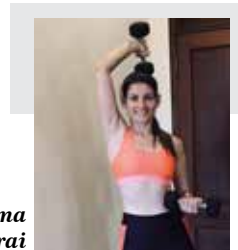
## StayFit@Home

25th November, 2020

Ms. Bhavna Harchandrai, an Internationally Certified Fitness Instructor and writer for over 2 decades took audience through a full-body fitness session using things commonly found

at home to address these issues.

The workout session was followed by FAQs addressing concerns and giving practical solutions on how one can stay fit at home.



Ms. Bhavna Harchandrai

## Women Weavers & India's Rich Textile Heritage

9th December, 2020



Mr. Gaurang Shah



Ms. Swati Khandelwal

Master, a pioneer and a visionary, Mr. Gaurang Shah highlighted his journey towards the revival of hand-woven textiles in India. He highlighted the potency of Khadi and Jamdani from their loom to luxury journey.

Through a virtual tour Mr. Shah showcased his timeless masterpieces,

Jamdani sarees, the skills of the master women weavers and their intent towards modernization and redesigning of the basic looms under the guidance of Mr. Shah.

The event was moderated by Ms. Swati Khandelwal, Executive Editor, Zee Business

## Women behind the scenes

10th December, 2020



Ms. Fazila Allana



Ms. Farhana Vohra

Ms. Fazila Allana, Founder and Producer of SOL Production Pvt. Ltd., spoke about her journey from overcoming the challenges as a woman producer to successfully leading a trend setting production house that churns out content for multiple genres.

She highlighted that the entertainment industry relies on a record number of women who work tirelessly, sometimes invisibly, to keep the world's largest dream factory buzzing.

The talk was moderated by Ms. Farhana Vohra, a successful, self motivated entrepreneur.

# A Christmas Delight

23rd December, 2020



Ms. Aparna Somani



Ms. Kairavi Shetty



Ms. Manisha Pamnani

To make Christmas more memorable, a special cooking demonstration session was hosted. Chef Ms. Aparna Somani and Ms. Kairavi Shetty taught members to make some scrumptious tarts and mousses.

Ms. Manisha Pamnani took the audience through beautiful décor 'Audio Visual' in order to get some amazing décor ideas to celebrate and lift up the spirit of the season.

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A) Turnover less than 5 Crore	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
B) Turnover between 5 Crore to 10 Crore	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
C) Turnover between 10 Crore to 20 Crore	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
D) Turnover between 20 Crore to 50 Crore	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
E) Turnover between 50 Crore to 100 Crore	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
F) Turnover more than 100 Crore	55,000	55,000	55,000	55,000
<b>Private Limited Company/LLP</b>	16,500	16,500	6,600	6,600
<b>Partnership Firm</b>	6,600	6,600	4,000	4,000
<b>Sole Proprietor</b>	6,600	6,600	4,000	4,000
<b>Associate Individual</b>	6,600	6,600	4,000	4,000
<b>Association / Co-operative Society/Trust/ Edu.Inst.</b>	4,400	4,400	3,000	3,000
<b>Associate Association Member</b>	—	5,500	—	5,500
<b>Young Leaders' Forum</b>				
Individual Membership	1,000	3,000	1,000	3,000
Couple Membership	1,000	5,000	1,000	5,000
Student Membership	—	2,000	—	—
<b>Annual Patron Membership</b>				
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