



Politics & Democracy

Volume XII • Issue VIII
Septembe 2026
Pages 52 • Rs. 40/-



BRICS at 2026 : **India Champions**
a **More Inclusive, Resilient** and
People-Centric Global Order



Women at the Heart of India's
Rural Tourism Revolution



The **YOGI** **ADITYANATH** **ERA**

9

YEARS of TRANSFORMATION
in Uttar Pradesh





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Volume XII, Issue VIII | September 2026 | Pages 52 | Rs. 40

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When Yogi Adityanath took oath as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in March 2017, he inherited a state that was grappling with deep-rooted challenges. Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state with over 230 million residents, had long been synonymous with poor law and order, sluggish economic growth, inadequate infrastructure, and a pervasive sense of governance deficit...



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Tripura Opens New Pathways to Space-Tech Careers as India's Private Space Sector Expands

As India's private space sector enters a new phase of growth, young talent from Tripura is gaining direct access to opportunities in the country's rapidly expanding space-tech ecosystem. The initiative emerged from the 'Building a Unicorn in Tripura' workshop, organised by the Directorate of Information Technology, Government of Tripura, in association with T-Hub, and inaugurated by Shri Pranajit Singha Roy, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Government of Tripura. As part of the engagement, students and young professionals from the Northeast can connect with Skyroot Aerospace through a dedicated channel to explore potential career and professional opportunities in the private space sector.

The initiative reflects a broader effort to connect Tripura's young talent with high-growth industries and emerging technology companies. Skyroot Aerospace, one of India's leading private space-tech companies, has a team of more than 1,000 professionals and is developing advanced launch



vehicles, including the Vikram-S and Vikram-I. During the workshop, Tejaswi Bhagavatula, VP – Brand, Marketing & Communications, Skyroot Aerospace, shared insights into the company's entrepreneurial journey and the evolving opportunities in space technology with students, entrepreneurs and young professionals. The engagement highlights Tripura's focus on strengthening industry linkages, developing future-ready skills and enabling young people from the Northeast to participate in sectors shaping India's next generation of growth.

India Strengthens Its Position as a Global Defence Powerhouse Through Indigenous Manufacturing and Exports

India is rapidly emerging as a competitive force in the global defence ecosystem, driven by Atmanirbhar Bharat, indigenous manufacturing, advanced technology and rising defence exports. At a FICCI session on 'Catalyzing Bharat's Prowess in Defence Manufacturing & Exports: Make in India—Make for the World', industry leaders and government representatives highlighted the country's growing defence production capabilities and expanding international footprint. India's defence exports reached a record ₹38,424 crore in FY 2025–26, registering a 62.66 per cent increase over the previous year and a historic 56-fold

growth since FY 2013–14, with the private sector, including MSMEs and start-ups, contributing 45.16 per cent of total exports. The session brought together representatives from the Ministry of Defence, Armed Forces, Defence Attachés, Embassies and High Commissions, and the Indian defence industry to explore opportunities for international cooperation. Mr Vivek Virmani, Deputy Director General, Department of Defence Production, highlighted India's expanding capabilities across land, naval and air platforms and called on Defence Attachés to facilitate greater cooperation, co-development and technology partnerships.

Protein Emerges as a Key Pillar of India's Nutrition, Food Processing and Public Health Agenda

Protein is emerging as a critical component of India's nutrition and food-processing landscape, with the government calling for a broader approach that connects nutrition, agriculture, innovation, sustainability, business and public policy. Addressing the FICCI Symposium on 'Protein for India: Nutrition, Business, Sustainability and Policy Perspective', Mr Ranjit Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India, emphasised that protein is not a passing trend but a fundamental component of a healthy and productive population. He stressed the need to develop nutritious, safe, affordable, convenient and accessible protein-rich products that cater to diverse income groups, geographies and Indian consumption patterns.

The discussion also highlighted the potential of protein to strengthen India's wider food-processing ecosystem, from farmers and local enterprises to processors, technology providers, start-ups, logistics companies and retailers. Government initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana, PLI Scheme for Food Processing Industry and PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme are helping create opportunities across the sector, while investments in processing infrastructure, technology, food safety, quality systems and global compliance can help Indian companies move higher up the value chain. Experts also called for greater "protein literacy", emphasising balanced diets and evidence-based nutrition, while underlining the need to expand access to quality protein beyond premium markets and make nutrition security a broader national priority.

Vedanta Commissions India's First Portable Rig for Gold and Critical Mineral Exploration

Vedanta Limited has strengthened its technology-led exploration capabilities with the commissioning of India's first high-speed hydrostatic portable rig, designed to operate in challenging and inaccessible terrains. Deployed at two flagship exploration projects in Chhattisgarh, the advanced rigs will support gold exploration and the search for critical minerals, including nickel, chromium and platinum group elements. Capable of drilling to depths of up to 1,000 metres—significantly higher than the typical 300–400-metre range—the technology is expected to make exploration faster, safer, more



efficient and minimally intrusive.

The development reinforces Vedanta's role in India's critical minerals mission, with the company holding 10 critical mineral blocks across gold, manganese, copper,

nickel-chromium-PGE, tungsten, graphite, vanadium, rare earth elements and potash. Exploration is already underway across five blocks, while Vedanta has also been declared the successful bidder for the Punnam Manganese Block in Andhra Pradesh. As global demand for critical minerals is projected to nearly triple by 2030, Vedanta's technology-driven approach aims to unlock India's largely unexplored mineral potential, reduce import dependence and strengthen domestic capabilities across exploration, mining, processing, refining, recycling and manufacturing.

Education and Literacy Must Empower Citizens, Drive Creativity and Build a Stronger India: Jayant Chaudhary

Union Minister of State for Education and Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, has called for a renewed approach to literacy and education, describing them as powerful instruments of empowerment, dignity, creativity and active citizenship. Speaking at the national-level celebration of International Literacy Day 2026 in New Delhi, he said literacy must go beyond reading and writing to include comprehension, financial and digital literacy, and the ability to apply knowledge meaningfully. He highlighted the role of ULLAS in giving learners confidence, dignity and opportunities for greater participation in society.

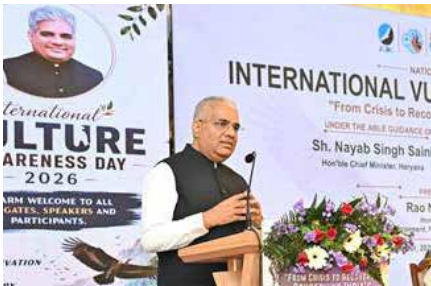
Shri Chaudhary also stressed the need to nurture curiosity,

critical thinking, creativity and risk-taking among young learners to prepare them for a rapidly changing world. The event highlighted Tripura's achievement of a 95.6% literacy rate, crossing the Government of India's benchmark for being declared fully literate. Organised under the theme "Literacy for people, the planet and prosperity," the two-day celebration includes an ULLAS Mela bringing together neo-literates, volunteer teachers and stakeholders from 29 States and UTs. The Ministry of Education is also observing Literacy Fortnight from September 1–14, with nationwide workshops, seminars, community programmes and outreach initiatives aimed at advancing the vision of "Jan Jan Saakshar" and making India fully literate.

'Sundays on Cycle' Promotes Drug-Free Youth and a Healthier India

Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya and Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Shri Harsh Sanghavi led the 89th edition of Fit India Sundays on Cycle in Surat, organised around the theme "Nasha Mukh Yuva for Viksit Bharat." The event brought together athletes, students, youth, fitness enthusiasts and citizens to promote an active, healthy and substance-free lifestyle. Participants took the Nasha Mukh Pledge, reinforcing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for collective action against substance abuse and encouraging young people to contribute to the vision of a drug-free India. The Surat edition featured fitness activities, yoga, zumba and a 6-km cycling ride from Mangadh Chowk towards Sarthana Zoo. Dr. Mandaviya highlighted cycling as an effective form of exercise that also supports the fight against substance abuse, reduces pollution and fuel consumption, and contributes to environmental sustainability. The nationwide 89th edition saw more than 5 million young people participate across 25,000+ locations, with leading athletes including Achanta Sharath Kamal, Sarita Mor, Harmeet Desai, Shivani Pawar and Rahul Mann joining the campaign. In New Delhi, the event at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium marked Teachers' Day, recognising the contribution of teachers and coaches in shaping young lives and sporting careers.

India Strengthens Vulture Conservation Efforts, Focuses on Recovery and Safe Landscapes



Union Environment Minister Shri Bhopender Yadav inaugurated the national workshop on International Vulture Awareness Day 2026 in Panchkula, Haryana, themed “From Crisis to Recovery – Conserving India’s Vultures.” He highlighted the crucial ecological role of vultures as nature’s highly efficient scavengers, helping recycle nutrients and maintain ecosystem balance. Emphasising India’s holistic, ecosystem-based approach to conservation, the Minister called for sustained efforts to protect the country’s diverse resident and migratory vulture

species and strengthen coordinated action involving government agencies, scientists, veterinarians, conservation experts and local communities. Shri Yadav stressed the need to expand Vulture Safe Zones, promote vulture-safe veterinary practices, ensure safe food availability and build technical capacity to support the recovery of species in the wild. The event also highlighted the work of the Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre (JCBC), Pinjore, which housed 356 vultures and successfully bred 35 chicks during 2025–26, while contributing to reintroduction and technical training programmes. Organised by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in collaboration with conservation partners, the workshop reaffirmed India’s commitment to combining science, policy, conservation breeding, safe landscapes and community participation to move vultures from crisis towards long-term recovery.

Goa Police Honoured with President’s Colour for Eight Decades of Dedicated Service

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah presented the prestigious President’s Colour to the Goa Police in Panaji, recognising more than eight decades of dedicated service, courage, discipline and commitment. Highlighting the force’s contribution to internal security and protection of Goa’s extensive coastline, Shri Shah praised its role in safeguarding tourists and supporting the state’s tourism-driven economy. He also paid tribute to police personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty and highlighted key achievements, including reducing the emergency 112 response time from 18 minutes to eight minutes and increasing the conviction rate from 23% to 53% in just one year. The Home

Minister also underlined the Goa Police’s growing role in adopting technology-led policing and combating emerging threats. An AI-based call agent for the 1930 cyber-fraud helpline has been launched in Goa to register complaints in all languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and route them to the appropriate authorities. Shri Shah said the new criminal laws are strengthening policing through technology, sensitivity and faster justice delivery, while Goa Police has achieved 93.38% progress in implementing the new criminal codes. He further outlined the government’s 2026–2029 roadmap for a *Nasha Mukta Bharat*, expressing confidence that Goa Police will emerge as a leading force in the fight against narcotics.

Ayurveda Day 2026 to Champion Holistic Health, Innovation and a Healthier Tomorrow

The 11th Ayurveda Day 2026 will be celebrated on 23 September in Nagpur, Maharashtra, under the theme “Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow” (स्वस्थ भविष्य के लिए आयुर्वेद). Addressing the Curtain Raiser Press Conference in New Delhi, Union Minister of State (I/C) for Ayush and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, said Ayurveda can play a significant role in addressing the growing global focus on preventive healthcare, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, wellness and holistic health. He emphasised the need to connect India’s rich traditional knowledge with contemporary healthcare needs through healthy habits, balanced diets, daily routines, mental wellbeing and harmony with nature.

This year’s nationwide campaign will focus on integrative healthcare, evidence-based research and innovation in Ayurveda, and community wellbeing and sustainable living. Shri Jadhav called for greater public access to accurate and evidence-based information, urging the media and other stakeholders to help take Ayurveda’s message to homes, educational institutions and communities across the country. The celebrations will also feature the National Dhanwantari Ayurveda Awards 2026, along with initiatives covering medicinal-plant safety, Standard Treatment Guidelines, Ayush services and Ayush Vision 2030. The Minister said Ayurveda Day should evolve beyond a government programme into a people’s movement and national health communication campaign, linking tradition with knowledge, evidence, innovation and public welfare.



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TOFT announces the 9th TOFT Nature & Wildlife Tourism Awards. Under the theme "Nature Positive Travel: Driving Conservation, Empowering People." The Awards recognise eco-lodges, wildlife guides, tourism operators, community initiatives, photography & documentary experts and Climate guardians in India and Nepal for their leadership in sustainable tourism and conservation. With over 250 global supporters, TOFT continues to advance a vision in which tourism actively supports the preservation of wildlife and natural heritage.

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2. The John Wakefield Award for Quality PUG Certified Lodge
3. The John Wakefield Award for Outstanding Footprint Certified Lodge
4. The John Wakefield Award for Quality Footprint Certified Lodge
5. Lodge Naturalist
6. Wildlife Promotion Company
7. International Wildlife Tour Operator
8. Wildlife Harmony Homestay Award

TOFT Wildlife Awards

1. "Rising Star" Lodge
2. Community Initiative
3. Wildlife and Tourism Initiative
4. Sustainable Homestay Award
5. Wildlife Conservation Photography
6. Wildlife Conservation Documentary

TOFT Jury Awards

1. Kailash Sankhala Visitor Friendly Wildlife National Park
2. Sanctuary Asia Award for "Best State for Sustainable Wildlife Tourism"

TOFT Environment & Forest Awards

1. The Billy Arjan Singh Wildlife Guide Award
2. Champion of the Forest
3. The Anne Wright Conservationist Award
4. Climate Guardian Award
5. Corridor Conservation Initiative Award

For Further information, visit:
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Nominations closing midnight 7th August 2026.



The **YOGI** ADITYANATH ERA

NINE YEARS of TRANSFORMATION in Uttar Pradesh

“

Rule of law is being implemented in Uttar Pradesh. If anyone attempts to challenge the law, the law responds decisively within its framework and in the same language."

— Yogi Adityanath

When Yogi Adityanath took oath as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in March 2017, he inherited a state that was grappling with deep-rooted challenges. Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state with over 230 million residents, had long been synonymous with poor law and order, sluggish economic growth, inadequate infrastructure, and a pervasive sense of governance deficit. The narrative was one of missed potential—a state rich in culture, history, and human capital, yet held back by systemic failures.



Nine years later, the story of Uttar Pradesh has been rewritten. Under Yogi Adityanath's decisive leadership, the state has undergone a metamorphosis that is being studied as a model of governance across India. From becoming the safest large state in the country to building the largest expressway network in India, from reviving agriculture to

transforming tourism through spiritual corridors, the Yogi government's tenure has been marked by ambitious vision, relentless execution, and an unwavering commitment to the common citizen.

This is not merely a political achievement; it is a civilisational resurgence. Uttar Pradesh, the land of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, and countless saints and scholars, is reclaiming its

rightful place as the cultural and economic heart of India. The work done by Yogi Adityanath and his government is a testament to what happens when political will meets administrative efficiency, when development is pursued without compromise on security, and when the welfare of the last person in the queue becomes the primary metric of success.

Law and Order: From "Jungle Raj" to the Safest Large State

Perhaps the most dramatic transformation under Yogi Adityanath has been in the realm of law and order. For decades, Uttar Pradesh was notorious for high crime rates, rampant extortion, and a police force that was often perceived as ineffective or complicit. The phrase "jungle raj" was not just political rhetoric; it reflected a lived reality for millions of citizens who feared stepping out after dark, doing business without paying protection money, or seeking justice through a broken system.

Yogi Adityanath changed this narrative with a simple but powerful doctrine: zero tolerance for crime and criminals. The results speak for themselves. According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, Uttar Pradesh's crime rate has fallen significantly below the national average. Against a national crime rate of 252.3 per lakh population, Uttar Pradesh now records a crime rate of only 180.2—a remarkable achievement for a state of its size and complexity.

The decline in serious offences has been even more striking. Data shows an 85% reduction in serious crimes since



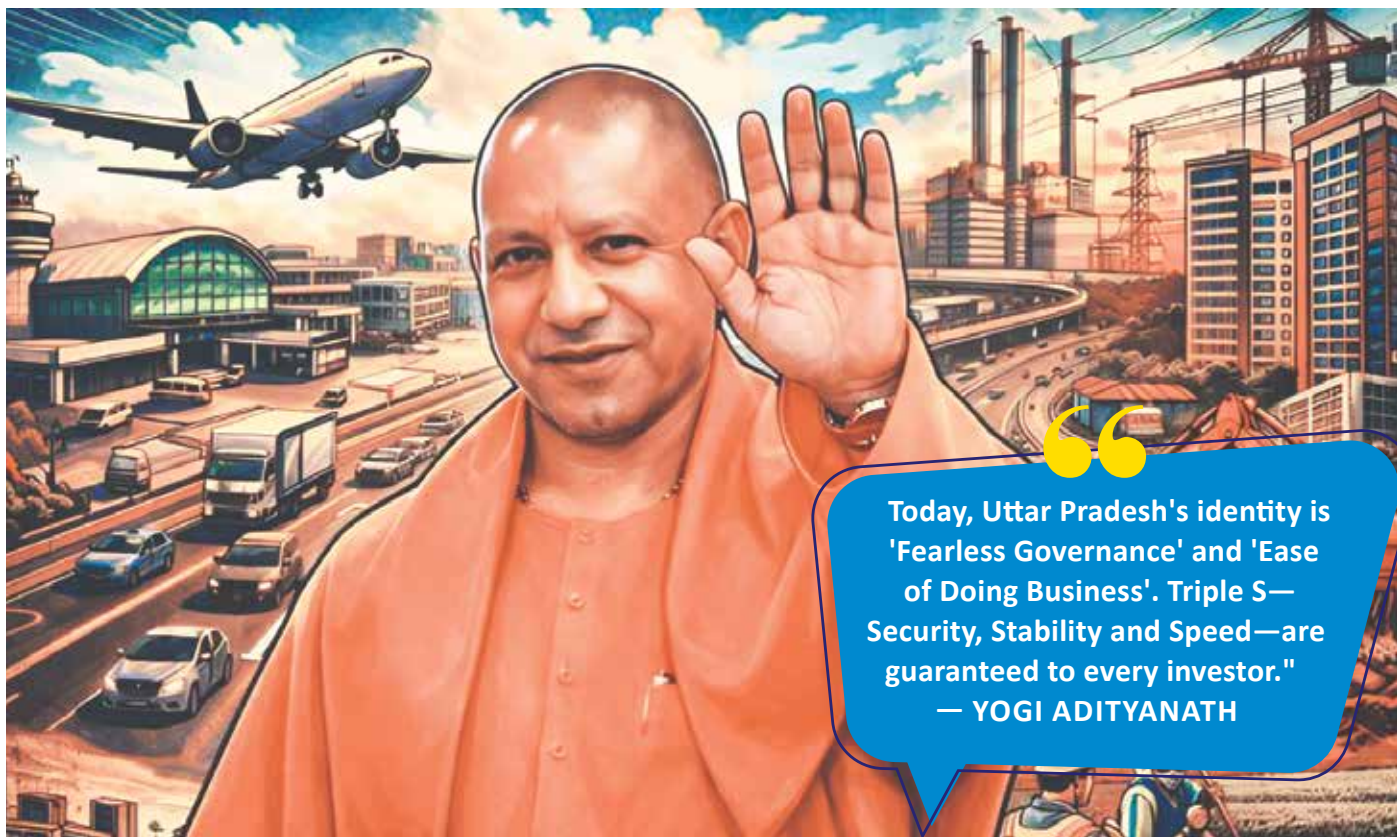
2017, with dacoity down by 70.1%, loot by 69.3%, murder by 29.1%, rape by 52%, and kidnapping by 41%. Rioting cases, once a frequent occurrence, have fallen by 41.7% between 2022 and 2024 alone, dropping from 4,478 cases to 2,610.

This transformation was not achieved through passive policing. The Yogi government empowered the police force with clear directives, modern technology, and the political backing to act decisively. Since 2017, the Uttar Pradesh Police have conducted over 17,043 encounter operations, arresting 34,253 criminals and neutralising 289 dreaded offenders. In 2025 alone, 48 alleged criminals were killed in encounters—the highest annual figure since Yogi took office—sending an unambiguous message that the state

“
Uttar Pradesh today has an environment of peace, security and stability—the strongest foundation for investment. All festivals are now celebrated peacefully. There are no riots, no extortion, no goonda tax.”
— Yogi Adityanath

would no longer tolerate those who prey on the innocent.

But the story is not just about encounters. It is about systemic reform. The government invested heavily in modernising the police force, introducing advanced surveillance systems, expanding forensic capabilities, and ensuring faster justice through dedicated courts. The result is a state where citizens feel safer, businesses can operate without fear, and the rule of law is no longer an abstract ideal but a lived experience.



Today, Uttar Pradesh's identity is 'Fearless Governance' and 'Ease of Doing Business'. Triple S—Security, Stability and Speed—are guaranteed to every investor."
— YOGI ADITYANATH

INFRASTRUCTURE REVOLUTION

Building the Backbone of a New UP

If law and order was the foundation, infrastructure became the engine of Uttar Pradesh's transformation. Yogi Adityanath understood a fundamental truth: development cannot happen without connectivity. A farmer cannot get his produce to market quickly without good roads. An investor cannot set up a factory without reliable power and logistics. A student cannot access quality education without the ability to travel.

When Yogi took office in 2017, Uttar Pradesh had a crumbling infrastructure legacy. Roads were potholed, airports were outdated, and the state lagged far behind in expressway connectivity. Today, Uttar Pradesh accounts for nearly 55% of India's expressway infrastructure—the largest network in the country. The Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway, and Agra-Lucknow

Expressway have slashed travel times across the state, connecting remote districts to economic hubs. The Ganga Expressway, one of the most ambitious projects, is nearing completion and will further revolutionise east-west connectivity.

The road construction statistics are staggering. Since 2017, more than 63,000 kilometres of roads have been widened or strengthened, while over 35,000 kilometres of new rural roads have been constructed. This is not just about concrete and asphalt; it is about connecting villages to markets, students to schools, and patients to hospitals. It is about ensuring that a farmer in Basti or a weaver in Varanasi has the same access to opportunity as someone in Lucknow or Noida.

Aviation has seen an equally dramatic expansion. From just a handful of airports in 2017, Uttar Pradesh now

boasts 16 operational domestic airports and four international airports. The Noida International Airport at Jewar, ready for inauguration, is poised to become a major hub for northern India, attracting investment and creating thousands of jobs. Metro networks are operational in seven cities, with rapid rail systems and inland waterways adding to the multi-modal connectivity.

This infrastructure push is not an end in itself; it is a means to unlock economic potential. By reducing logistics costs, improving market access, and creating an environment conducive to business, Yogi Adityanath has positioned Uttar Pradesh as one of India's fastest-growing state economies. The state has shifted from being perceived as a challenging investment destination to becoming a preferred choice for domestic and international investors.

ECONOMIC RESURGENCE

From Stagnation to Growth Engine



"In the past 9 years, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh has taken many important steps to eliminate inequality, backwardness, poverty and illiteracy."
— YOGI ADITYANATH

The economic transformation of Uttar Pradesh under Yogi Adityanath is nothing short of remarkable. When he took office, the state was struggling with industrial stagnation, agrarian distress, and high unemployment. The perception was that Uttar Pradesh was difficult to do business in—a place where red tape, law and order issues, and policy uncertainty deterred investment.

Nine years later, the numbers tell a different story. From just 14,000 industries in existence between 1947 and 2017, Uttar Pradesh now has more than 31,000 operational industries, employing over 65 lakh people. The

state has 96 lakh MSME units, making it one of the largest hubs of small and medium enterprises in India. Groundbreakings worth Rs 15 lakh crore have been announced, signalling strong investor confidence in the state's future.

The government's focus on ease of doing business has been central to this turnaround. Simplified approval processes, single-window clearance

systems, and proactive industry facilitation have made it easier for entrepreneurs to set up and expand operations. The result has been a surge in manufacturing, IT, and service sector investments across the state.

Employment generation has been a key priority. The Yogi government has provided government jobs to 9.5 lakh youth, a historic achievement that has brought stability and dignity to hundreds of thousands of families. Beyond government employment, the focus on skill development has equipped young people with the tools to succeed in emerging sectors. Training zones in robotics, artificial intelligence, and other advanced technologies are preparing Uttar Pradesh's youth for the jobs of the future.

The agricultural sector, which employs a significant portion of the state's population, has also seen robust growth. Agricultural growth rate has increased from 8.5% to 18%, reflecting improved productivity, better market access, and government support. Farmers have been paid Rs 316,895 crore for sugarcane, ensuring that those who feed the nation are not left behind in the development story.

Rural Renaissance: Building Atmanirbhar Gaon

While cities often grab the headlines, the true test of governance in India lies in the villages. Uttar Pradesh has over 107,000 villages, and their transformation is essential for the state's overall progress. Yogi Adityanath's vision of "Atmanirbhar Gaon" (Self-Reliant Villages) has been one of the most ambitious rural development



"Uttar Pradesh was never a 'Bimaru' state. It was the mindset of previous rulers that kept the state backward. Today, UP is New India's growth engine."

YOGI ADITYANATH

programmes in the state's history.

The focus has been holistic: improving rural infrastructure, expanding irrigation, strengthening agriculture and animal husbandry, enhancing sanitation, empowering Panchayats, and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities. Over 40 lakh rural houses have been provided in the last nine years, including over 36 lakh under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) and the rest under the Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana (Gramin). Uttar Pradesh became the first state in India to mandatorily provide housing land leases to every beneficiary who did not own land, ensuring that the poorest have a stake in their own homes.

Irrigation has been a game-changer for rural Uttar Pradesh. Since 2017, the government has completed 29 major irrigation projects, along with 16 medium and six small projects. Long-pending projects like the Bansagar Canal, Arjun Sahayak, Pahari Dam, Jamrar Dam, and Rohin Barrage have been completed or substantially advanced. The total irrigated area has increased from around 8.258 million hectares in 2017 to approximately 13.3 million hectares, extending irrigation coverage to nearly 86% of the state's cultivable land.timesofindia.indiatimes.com

This irrigation revival has transformed agriculture. Farmers who once depended on erratic monsoons can now plan their crops with confidence. Crop yields have increased, farmer incomes have risen, and rural distress has diminished. The government's support for animal husbandry, dairy development, and food processing has created additional income streams for rural households.

To ensure balanced regional development, the government identified 100 development blocks as Aspirational Blocks and deployed Chief Minister's Fellows to monitor activities, identify gaps, and ensure effective delivery of schemes. This targeted approach has brought resources and attention to the most backward areas, ensuring that development is inclusive and no region is left behind.

SPIRITUAL TOURISM: Reviving the Cultural Heart of India

Uttar Pradesh is the spiritual capital of India. It is home to Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Rama; Varanasi, the eternal city on the banks of the Ganga; Mathura and Vrindavan, associated with Lord Krishna; and countless other sacred sites. For centuries, these places have drawn pilgrims from across India and the world. Yet, for decades, the infrastructure around these sites was inadequate, and the potential for tourism-led economic development remained untapped.

Yogi Adityanath, a yogi and a scholar of Sanatan Dharma, understood the civilisational significance of these sites. His government has undertaken an unprecedented effort to revive and rejuvenate Uttar Pradesh's spiritual heritage, transforming it into a catalyst for tourism, employment, and economic growth.

The crowning achievement of this effort is the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. After centuries of waiting, the temple was inaugurated in January

"Aastha ko samman dene wali sarkar hogi to wo hi vikas kara payegi. Jinke mann mein aapke prati aastha ke bhaav ka samman nahi ve, vikas bhi nahi kara sakte."
(The government that respects faith will bring development. Those who don't have respect for your faith cannot bring development.)
— Yogi Adityanath

2024, marking a historic moment in India's cultural renaissance. The government's development of Ayodhya as a world-class pilgrimage destination has attracted millions of devotees, boosting local businesses, creating jobs, and putting the city on the global map.

In Varanasi, the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor project has transformed the experience of pilgrims visiting one of Hinduism's holiest shrines. The corridor provides a spacious, secure,



and aesthetically pleasing pathway for devotees, enhancing both the spiritual experience and the city's appeal as a tourist destination. Similar efforts are underway in Mathura, Vrindavan, Prayagraj, and other sacred sites, creating a network of spiritual destinations that draw visitors year-round.

The results are evident. Uttar

Pradesh has seen a surge in domestic and international tourists, with spiritual tourism becoming a major economic driver. Hotels, restaurants, transport services, and handicraft businesses have flourished, creating livelihoods for thousands. The government's focus on cleanliness, security, and visitor amenities has ensured that pilgrims have a dignified and memorable

experience.

But this is not just about economics; it is about cultural pride. For generations, the narrative around Uttar Pradesh's spiritual sites was one of neglect and decay. Yogi Adityanath's government has reversed this, restoring these places to their rightful glory and ensuring that future generations inherit a living tradition, not a faded memory.



"I am happy that our Uttar Pradesh today is becoming an excellent example of the mantra of 'development as well as heritage'. Through its strength and talent, Uttar Pradesh has always accelerated the nation's development."

— PM Narendra Modi

Farmer Welfare: Putting Annadata at the Centre

Agriculture is the backbone of Uttar Pradesh's economy, and the farmer is the state's most important stakeholder. Yogi Adityanath has consistently emphasised that the prosperity of Uttar Pradesh is inseparable from the prosperity of its farmers. His government has implemented a comprehensive suite of measures to support agriculture, improve farmer incomes, and ensure that the "annadata" (food provider) is honoured and empowered.

The irrigation revival discussed earlier has been a cornerstone of this effort. By expanding irrigation coverage to 86% of cultivable land, the government has reduced farmers' dependence on monsoons and enabled multiple cropping cycles. This has directly translated into higher yields and increased incomes.

The government has also focused on

ensuring timely and fair payments for agricultural produce. The payment of Rs 316,895 crore to sugarcane farmers is a testament to this commitment. Sugarcane farmers in Uttar Pradesh had long suffered from delayed payments and arrears, but the Yogi government made it a priority to clear dues and ensure that farmers receive their money on time. This has restored trust and financial stability in the rural economy.

Beyond irrigation and payments, the government has invested in agricultural infrastructure. Cold storage facilities, warehousing, food processing units, and market linkages have been expanded to reduce post-harvest losses and ensure that farmers get better prices for their produce. The promotion of organic farming, horticulture, and high-value crops has diversified income sources and reduced dependence on traditional

staples.

The government's support for animal husbandry and dairy development has also been significant. Uttar Pradesh is one of India's largest milk producers, and the dairy sector provides livelihoods to millions of rural households. Schemes for breed improvement, veterinary care, and milk procurement have strengthened this sector, ensuring that farmers have multiple income streams.

Perhaps most importantly, the Yogi government has treated farmers with respect. In a political landscape where farmers are often taken for granted or appeased with short-term measures, Yogi Adityanath has engaged with the farming community as partners in development. His government's policies reflect a deep understanding of agricultural challenges and a genuine commitment to farmer welfare.



"The government that respects faith will bring development. Those who don't have any respect for your faith in their hearts cannot bring development."

—YOGI ADITYANATH

Women's Empowerment: Building a Safer, More Equitable UP

No society can progress if half its population is left behind. Yogi Adityanath's government has placed women's empowerment at the centre of its development agenda, recognising that the safety, education, and economic participation of women are essential indicators of a state's progress.

The improvement in law and order has had a direct impact on women's safety. With a 52% reduction in rape cases and a significant decline in other crimes against women, Uttar Pradesh has become a safer place for women to live, work, and travel. The government's zero-tolerance policy towards crimes against women, combined with faster justice through dedicated courts and enhanced police sensitivity, has created an environment where women feel more secure.

Beyond safety, the government has focused on education and economic empowerment. Scholarships, hostels, and skill development programmes for girls have been expanded, ensuring that education is accessible and affordable. The government's emphasis on digital literacy and technology training has equipped young women with the skills needed for modern employment.

Economic empowerment has been pursued through microfinance, self-help groups, and entrepreneurship support. Women across Uttar Pradesh are starting small businesses, from handicrafts to food processing, with government backing. The expansion of banking services and digital payment systems has made it easier for women to access credit and manage their finances.

The government has also taken steps to improve women's health and nutrition. Maternal healthcare, child nutrition programmes, and awareness campaigns have been prioritised, leading to better health outcomes for women and children. The focus on sanitation and clean drinking water has had a particularly positive impact on women, who traditionally bear the burden of fetching water and managing household hygiene.

While challenges remain, the trajectory is clear. Uttar Pradesh under Yogi Adityanath is becoming a state where women are safer, more educated, and more economically empowered than ever before. This is not just a moral imperative; it is an economic necessity. When women thrive, families thrive, communities thrive, and the entire state prospers.

Education and Healthcare: Investing in Human Capital

Infrastructure and economic growth are essential, but the true measure of development lies in the health and education of a state's people. Yogi Adityanath's government has made significant investments in both sectors, recognising that human



capital is the foundation of long-term prosperity.

In education, the government has focused on expanding access, improving quality, and ensuring that no child is left behind. Thousands of new schools have been built, existing infrastructure has been upgraded, and teacher training programmes have been expanded. The focus on digital education has brought technology into classrooms, preparing students for a rapidly changing world.

The government has also prioritised higher education and skill development. New universities, colleges, and technical institutions have been established, while existing ones have been strengthened. The focus on emerging technologies

The Yogi Model: Lessons for Governance

like robotics, artificial intelligence, and data science is ensuring that Uttar Pradesh's youth are competitive in the global job market.

In healthcare, the government has expanded the network of hospitals, primary health centres, and community health facilities. Ayushman Bharat and state health schemes have provided health insurance to millions, ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent people from accessing medical care. The focus on maternal and child health, immunisation, and disease prevention has led to better health outcomes across the state.

The COVID-19 pandemic tested Uttar Pradesh's healthcare system, and the government's response was widely praised. From setting up dedicated COVID hospitals to ensuring oxygen supply and vaccine distribution, the administration demonstrated capacity and commitment. This experience has strengthened the state's healthcare infrastructure, making it better prepared for future challenges.

The transformation of Uttar Pradesh under Yogi Adityanath offers important lessons for governance in India and beyond. It demonstrates that development is possible even in the most challenging contexts, provided there is political will, administrative efficiency, and an unwavering commitment to the public good.

The Yogi model is built on several pillars. First, law and order is non-negotiable. Without security, development cannot take root. Second, infrastructure is the backbone of economic growth. Connectivity, power, and logistics must be prioritised. Third, agriculture and rural development cannot be ignored. The prosperity of villages is essential for the prosperity of the state. Fourth, cultural and spiritual heritage is an asset, not a liability. Leveraging this heritage can drive tourism, employment, and pride. Fifth, women's empowerment and human capital development are essential for long-term

progress.

But beyond these policy pillars, the Yogi model is defined by a certain ethos: decisive leadership, accountability, and a focus on outcomes. Yogi Adityanath has not been afraid to take tough decisions, whether it is cracking down on criminals, pushing through ambitious infrastructure projects, or challenging entrenched interests. He has held his administration accountable for results, ensuring that schemes reach beneficiaries and promises are kept.

This is not to say that there have been no challenges or criticisms. Governance in a state of 230 million people is inherently complex, and not every initiative has succeeded without hiccups. But the overall trajectory is undeniable. Uttar Pradesh is safer, more connected, more prosperous, and more confident than it was nine years ago.

The Road Ahead: A State Poised for Greatness

As Yogi Adityanath enters his next term, Uttar Pradesh stands at a pivotal moment. The foundations have been laid: law and order is strong, infrastructure is expanding, the economy is growing, and the spirit of the people is uplifted. The question now is not whether Uttar Pradesh can progress, but how fast and how far.

The government's vision for the future is ambitious. Plans for additional expressways, airports, and industrial corridors are in the pipeline. The focus on renewable energy, electric mobility, and sustainable development is ensuring that growth is environmentally responsible. The push for digital governance and e-services is making the administration more efficient and citizen-friendly.

But the ultimate measure of success will not be in statistics or infrastructure projects. It will be in the lives of ordinary citizens: the farmer who can irrigate his field with confidence, the

student who can access quality education, the woman who can travel safely, the entrepreneur who can build a business without fear, and the pilgrim who can worship with dignity.

Yogi Adityanath's work in Uttar Pradesh is a story of transformation—a story of how a state once written off as ungovernable has become a model of development and security. It is a story of what happens when leadership meets vision, when administration meets accountability, and when the welfare of the common citizen becomes the sole metric of success.

Nine years ago, Uttar Pradesh was a state in search of direction. Today, it is a state setting the direction for others to follow. The Yogi era has not just changed Uttar Pradesh; it has redefined what is possible in Indian governance. And as the state continues on this trajectory, one thing is certain: the best days of Uttar Pradesh are not behind it—they are ahead.

From chaos to confidence, from stagnation to surge—Yogi Adityanath has not just governed Uttar Pradesh; he has resurrected its destiny.

**"In Uttar Pradesh today, not only are expressways being built, but the overall development of the state is progressing at an even faster pace."
— PM Narendra Modi**



BRICS AT 2026

INDIA CHAMPIONS A MORE INCLUSIVE, Resilient and People-Centric Global Order

As BRICS marks two decades of cooperation, India's 2026 chairship places people, innovation, sustainability and a stronger voice for the Global South at the heart of its next chapter.

The 18th BRICS Summit in New Delhi on 12–13 September 2026 marked a defining moment for a grouping that has evolved significantly since its formation two decades ago. As BRICS celebrates 20 years of cooperation, India's chairship has sought to position the platform not simply as an association of emerging economies, but as a broader force for a more representative, resilient and inclusive global order.

Under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," India placed a people-centric and humanity-first approach at the heart of the BRICS agenda. From global governance reform and economic cooperation to technology, healthcare,

sustainability and people-to-people exchanges, the focus was increasingly on translating collective strength into practical outcomes.

Opening the session on Inclusive Global Governance and Strengthening Multilateralism, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described BRICS as being at a "coming of age" moment. After two decades of cooperation, the challenge, he emphasised, is no longer simply to strengthen dialogue but to convert shared principles into meaningful action.

From Two Decades of Dialogue to a New Era of Action

India's BRICS chairship was marked

by extensive engagement across the country, with more than 400 meetings and engagements involving ministers, parliamentarians, officials, experts, businesses and civil society across 30 cities. This broad outreach reflected an effort to take BRICS beyond high-level diplomacy and connect its priorities with wider communities, institutions and economic sectors.

The New Delhi Declaration reaffirmed the grouping's commitment to sovereign equality, solidarity, inclusiveness, collaboration and consensus, while strengthening cooperation across three broad pillars: political and security cooperation, economic and financial cooperation, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

The declaration also recognised the contribution of Partner Countries and called for deeper, mutually beneficial engagement with emerging markets and developing economies. The BRICS Plus and Outreach Dialogue further expanded the platform's engagement with countries beyond its core membership.

As BRICS enters its third decade, its evolution is increasingly about moving from dialogue to delivery.

Turning the “Pyramid of Privilege” into a “Platform of Partnership”

One of the strongest messages from India's chairship was the need to reform global governance so that international institutions better reflect today's economic and political realities.

Prime Minister Modi argued that the Global South is often at the front row when global crises unfold but remains at the back row when decisions are taken. He called for the existing “pyramid of privilege” to be transformed into a “platform of partnership”, giving countries a greater voice in shaping the decisions that affect them.

India proposed the development of 10 proposals for global governance reform, with the possibility of evolving them into a BRICS Reform Roadmap for consideration at the next summit. The framework would focus on three principles: Representation, Responsiveness and Rule-making.

Representation would mean giving developing countries a more meaningful role in international decision-making. Responsiveness would require global institutions to deliver faster and more effective solutions. Rule-making would ensure that countries of the Global South are not merely recipients of international norms but active participants in shaping them.

The New Delhi Declaration reinforced the call for a more democratic, representative, effective and accountable multilateral system,

including reform of the United Nations and greater representation of developing countries in international institutions.

Strengthening the Voice of the Global South

The Global South was at the centre of India's BRICS vision.

Emerging markets and developing economies are confronting interconnected challenges—from inequality and climate change to technological disruption, trade





uncertainty and geopolitical tensions. BRICS, therefore, is increasingly being positioned as a platform through which these countries can articulate shared concerns and participate more actively in shaping the international system.

The grouping reiterated the need for greater representation of developing countries in global institutions, including at senior and decision-making levels, while also highlighting the importance of equitable geographical representation and increased participation of women in international leadership.

BRICS also called for greater reform of global financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and other Bretton Woods institutions, making them more representative, transparent and accountable to today's global economic

realities.

The grouping reaffirmed support for a fair, open, inclusive and rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization at its core, while expressing concern over rising protectionism, unilateral trade restrictions and measures that could disrupt global supply chains.

From Rule-Takers to Rule-Shapers in Technology

Technology is rapidly changing the global economy, and BRICS is increasingly seeking a stronger voice in shaping the rules governing emerging technologies.

Artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, biotechnology, outer space and other critical technologies are influencing development, economic

competitiveness and national security. India's chairship emphasised that developing countries must have the capabilities and institutional capacity to participate meaningfully in these discussions.

Prime Minister Modi proposed supporting young diplomats and policymakers from the Global South through negotiation training, practical exposure and legal expertise. Such initiatives could help developing countries move from being rule-takers to rule-shapers.

The New Delhi Declaration also highlighted the importance of responsible digital transformation, cybersecurity and data security, supporting an open, safe, secure, stable, accessible and interoperable information and communications technology environment while respecting national sovereignty and security.

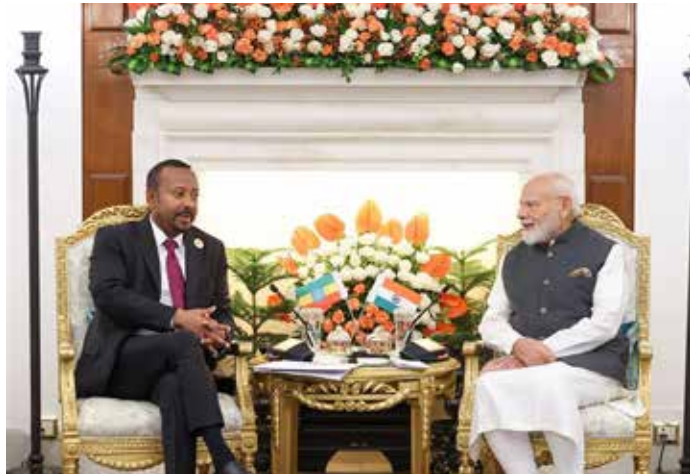
The message was clear: technological progress must be accompanied by inclusion, responsibility and equitable participation.

Making BRICS More People-Centric

India's chairship also sought to strengthen the institutional continuity of BRICS.

Prime Minister Modi proposed a BRICS Continuity and Implementation Mechanism to ensure that annual changes in chairship do not interrupt institutional momentum. Working through the BRICS Troika, such a





mechanism could help maintain systematic follow-up on decisions and initiatives.

India also proposed a secure digital repository recording decisions, nodal agencies, timelines and implementation status. Such a system could improve coordination, transparency and accountability.

Another people-focused proposal was the creation of a Seafarers Emergency Support Network.

Seafarers are essential to global trade, yet they can face serious challenges during emergencies. The proposed network could connect maritime authorities and diplomatic missions to facilitate distress alerts, medical assistance, communication with families and evacuation support.

It is a reminder that behind global trade figures, shipping routes and supply chains are millions of people whose safety and dignity keep the global economy moving.

BRICS Gives Traditional Medicine a Global Platform

Healthcare emerged as another important dimension of India's BRICS chairship, particularly through the recognition of Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine (TCIM).

The New Delhi Declaration welcomed the proposed establishment of a BRICS Expert Working Group on TCIM under the BRICS Health Track, creating a



structured platform for dialogue, research, knowledge exchange and cooperation among member countries.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush and Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, described the recognition of TCIM as an important step towards strengthening global cooperation in traditional medicine, with opportunities to share knowledge, strengthen research and advance evidence-based approaches.

The proposed Expert Working Group could enable BRICS countries to cooperate in medicinal plant research, herbal preparations, pharmacopoeial standards, quality assurance, regulatory frameworks and scientific validation.

This is particularly significant because traditional systems of medicine have

evolved over generations across many BRICS countries. Their medicinal plants, herbal preparations and traditional knowledge represent an enormous body of experience—but one that increasingly requires rigorous research, documentation, safety standards and scientific evidence.

The New Delhi Declaration therefore places emphasis not simply on traditional knowledge, but on evidence, quality, safety and efficacy.

From Traditional Knowledge to Evidence-Based Healthcare

The development follows the BRICS Meeting on Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine held in Chandigarh on 21 July 2026 under India's chairship. Senior officials, technical experts and delegates from BRICS countries discussed cooperation in research, education, knowledge exchange and regulatory frameworks, while reaching consensus on the Terms of Reference for the proposed Expert Working Group.

For India, the development reinforces efforts to advance Ayurveda and other Ayush systems through scientific research, evidence generation, quality assurance and international cooperation.

The focus on medicinal plants and herbal preparations also creates opportunities for deeper scientific collaboration among BRICS countries.

Coordinated research could improve documentation of medicinal resources, strengthen pharmacopoeial knowledge and support the development of quality-assured therapeutic products.

The wider global context is also important. The WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 places emphasis on strengthening evidence, ensuring safety and quality, and supporting the appropriate integration of traditional medicine into health systems.

By bringing TCIM into the BRICS Health Track and connecting it with Universal Health Coverage, India's chairship has helped move traditional medicine cooperation towards a more structured and evidence-informed framework.

Economic Cooperation for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

Economic resilience remained a core pillar of the summit.

The New Delhi Declaration reaffirmed that BRICS cooperation must contribute to sustainable development, inclusive growth and stronger economic

resilience. The grouping recognised persistent development gaps and called for practical responses that take account of different national priorities and stages of development.

Strengthening economic and financial cooperation, improving representation in global financial institutions, supporting resilient supply chains and expanding technological capabilities were closely connected with the broader BRICS priorities of innovation and sustainability.

The objective is increasingly to build an international economic system in which developing economies are not simply markets or suppliers, but active contributors to growth, innovation and global value chains.

India-UAE Partnership Gains Fresh Momentum

The summit also provided an opportunity for India to deepen strategic partnerships with participating countries.

Meeting Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed the importance of the

India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, built around strong political, commercial, cultural, energy and people-to-people ties.

The leaders welcomed the UAE's active participation in BRICS under India's chairship and discussed opportunities to advance shared interests.

A significant development was the announcement by the UAE's International Holding Company of an investment of US\$11.5 billion in an integrated greenfield aluminium project in Odisha. The project is expected to strengthen India's manufacturing capabilities and contribute to positioning Odisha as a major global aluminium production hub.

The two sides also discussed cooperation in strategic sectors including defence, space, nuclear energy, technology and innovation, highlighting the expanding scope of India-UAE relations.

India and Vietnam Deepen Strategic Engagement

Prime Minister Modi also met Le Minh Hung, Prime Minister of Vietnam,





on the sidelines of the summit.

The meeting followed the elevation of India-Vietnam relations to an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit of Vietnam's General Secretary and President To Lam to India in May 2026.

India and Vietnam share longstanding civilisational links and a relationship based on mutual trust. Vietnam remains an important pillar of India's Act East Policy and a key partner in its engagement with Southeast Asia.

The two leaders discussed bilateral, regional and global developments and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation. Vietnam's participation as a BRICS Partner Country also provides an additional multilateral dimension to the relationship.

The defence relationship received further attention on 13 September, when Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh met Vietnam's Deputy Minister of National Defence, Senior Lieutenant General Nguyen Truong Thang, in New Delhi.

The discussions focused on joint initiatives, technology sharing and defence industrial cooperation, with

both sides reaffirming the importance of stronger maritime and defence ties for a peaceful, stable and rules-based regional security architecture.

India and Vietnam also emphasised cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, and agreed on the next Defence Policy Dialogue to be hosted by India on the sidelines of Aero India 2027.

India-Malaysia Partnership Expands Across Sectors

Prime Minister Modi's meeting with Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, reviewed progress in the India-Malaysia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

The discussions covered trade and investment, defence and security, semiconductors, infrastructure, the digital economy, energy, fintech, education, tourism and people-to-people ties.

Malaysia's participation as a BRICS Partner Country and its support for stronger ASEAN-India relations added further significance to the engagement.

A notable development was

Malaysia's concurrence to the establishment of an Indian Consulate General in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, which is expected to strengthen consular services, connectivity and engagement with the region.

The discussions reflected the growing importance of India-Malaysia cooperation at a time when economic, technological and regional partnerships are becoming increasingly interconnected.

India and Ethiopia Reaffirm Strategic Partnership

Prime Minister Modi also met Abiy Ahmed Ali, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, to review the India-Ethiopia Strategic Partnership.

The discussions covered economic cooperation, defence and security, capacity building and regional and international developments.

India appreciated Ethiopia's participation in the 18th BRICS Summit, recognising its contribution to strengthening the collective voice of the Global South.

Ethiopia's engagement with BRICS reflects the grouping's growing



relevance to emerging economies seeking stronger platforms for cooperation, development and greater representation in global affairs.

Commemorating 20 Years of BRICS

The 20th anniversary of BRICS was marked through the release of two commemorative postage stamps on 12 September on the sidelines of the New Delhi Summit.

Bearing the inscription “BRICS: Two Decades of Cooperation, 2006–2026,” the stamps celebrate the evolution of BRICS from an economic concept into a wider platform for dialogue, partnership and cooperation.

They also reflect the priorities of India’s 2026 chairship, including mutual respect, solidarity, a humanity-first approach and the theme of resilience, innovation, cooperation and sustainability.

Beyond their commemorative value, the stamps symbolise two decades of an evolving partnership and the grouping’s expanding role in addressing global

governance, development and shared challenges.

A Shared Future Requires Shared Responsibility

The 18th BRICS Summit ultimately delivered a message that went beyond institutional reform, economic cooperation or diplomatic engagement.

It was a call for a global system that is more inclusive, representative and responsive.

For India, the summit demonstrated that international cooperation must connect global priorities with the everyday realities of people. Whether through stronger economic partnerships, support for seafarers, digital innovation, sustainable development, traditional medicine or greater representation in global institutions, the emphasis remained on practical outcomes.

As BRICS enters its third decade, its influence will depend not only on its collective economic weight but on its

ability to convert shared principles into meaningful action.

The central message of India’s chairship was expressed clearly by Prime Minister Modi:

“If our future is shared, then the right to shape that future must also be shared.”

That idea captures the larger ambition of BRICS at 20—from voice to impact, from privilege to partnership, and from dialogue to delivery.

The next chapter of BRICS will ultimately be judged by how effectively it can help build a world where developing nations have a stronger voice, technology serves people, growth is more inclusive, traditional knowledge is strengthened by evidence, and international cooperation becomes more responsive to the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

For India, the 2026 chairship has been an opportunity to place people, partnership and shared progress at the centre of that journey.



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From Made in India to Global Markets

How India's Exporters Are Building the Next Growth Story

With merchandise and services exports touching a record US\$863.1 billion in FY2025–26 and the government setting its sights on US\$1 trillion in exports, India's next economic chapter is increasingly being written beyond its borders. From electronics and engineering to pharmaceuticals, textiles, food, defence, technology and services, Indian businesses are moving from being suppliers to becoming global partners.

India's export story is entering a new phase.

For years, the country's international trade narrative was shaped largely by traditional strengths such as textiles, gems and jewellery, petroleum

products, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods and agricultural commodities. Today, the export basket is becoming broader, more technology-intensive and increasingly integrated into global value chains.

The numbers underline the transformation. India's total exports of merchandise and services reached a historic US\$863.1 billion in FY2025–26, comprising US\$441.8 billion in merchandise exports and US\$421.3



billion in services exports. The latest government data also shows that the momentum has continued into FY2026–27: total exports during April–July 2026 were estimated at US\$316.42 billion, up 13.16% from the corresponding period a year earlier. Merchandise exports during the period rose 17.04% to US\$173.78 billion.

The scale of the opportunity is reflected in the government's ambition. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said India is targeting US\$1 trillion in exports this year and US\$2 trillion over the next five years.

For Indian exporters, therefore, the question is no longer simply how to sell more abroad. It is how to build products, brands, supply chains and capabilities that can compete consistently in some of the world's most demanding markets.



The Prime Minister's export-first message

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has increasingly placed exports at the centre of India's manufacturing and growth strategy.

Addressing a post-Budget webinar in March 2026, the Prime Minister summed up the direction in four words: "Build more, produce more, connect more, and export more." He also said that the world is looking for reliable and resilient manufacturing partners and that India has an opportunity to fulfil that role.

The message is significant because it moves the export discussion beyond



trade figures. For India to become a global manufacturing and services hub, companies must produce at competitive prices, meet international quality standards, develop scale, innovate continuously and establish dependable delivery networks.

The Prime Minister has also stressed that quality cannot be compromised as Indian companies enter global markets. In his Independence Day address in August 2026, he called for India to develop complete value chains—from components and design to finished products—and become a trusted centre of global supply chains. He also emphasised the need for cost competitiveness, quality, scale, attractive packaging and zero-defect manufacturing.

That is perhaps the most important shift in the Made in India story: from manufacturing for India to manufacturing for the world.

From US\$468 billion to US\$863 billion

The transformation is visible over the longer term.

According to the Department of Commerce, India's total exports increased from around US\$468 billion in FY2014–15 to US\$863 billion in FY2025–26, representing a 5.7% CAGR. Merchandise exports increased from

about US\$310 billion to US\$442 billion, while services exports expanded from US\$158 billion to more than US\$421 billion, with services recording a much faster 9.3% CAGR.

This diversification matters.

India is no longer dependent on one or two export engines. Electronics, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, textiles, agricultural products, marine products, chemicals, automobiles, defence equipment, IT and business services are increasingly contributing to the country's international trade.

The June 2026 government assessment highlighted particularly strong growth in electronics, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, spices, coffee and marine products. Electronics exports, for example, have emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments, while engineering goods reached a record value of US\$122.4 billion in FY2025–26.

Electronics: from assembly to global supply chains

Few sectors illustrate India's changing export ambitions better than electronics.

Electronics goods exports achieved 20.3% growth and reached US\$47.96 billion in FY2025–26, according to the Department of Commerce.

The opportunity is larger than simply



exporting finished devices. The next stage involves components, semiconductors, design, testing, packaging and specialised manufacturing.

India's growing semiconductor ecosystem is therefore not only an investment story—it is an export story.

The same logic applies to automobiles, renewable-energy equipment, engineering products, defence systems and industrial machinery. The more components and intellectual property that are developed domestically, the greater the potential for India to capture a larger share of the value generated by global supply chains.

Engineering and pharmaceuticals strengthen the export base

Engineering exports are another pillar of India's global competitiveness.

Engineering goods touched a record US\$122.4 billion in FY2025–26, while pharmaceutical exports reached US\$31.1 billion after registering 7.4% growth.

India's pharmaceutical industry has long demonstrated its ability to compete internationally on scale and cost. The

next opportunity is to move further up the value chain through research, specialty medicines, biotechnology, medical devices and advanced manufacturing.

Engineering companies, meanwhile, are increasingly serving international markets across automobiles, industrial equipment, electrical machinery, infrastructure and specialised manufacturing.

This is where the idea of “Made in India” becomes more meaningful. A product may be designed in Bengaluru, manufactured across several Indian industrial clusters, financed through Indian institutions and sold to a customer in Europe, Africa, the Middle East or Southeast Asia.

States become the new export engines

India's export story is increasingly a story of states and districts.

The government's Districts as Export Hubs (DEH) initiative has established State Export Promotion Committees and District Export Promotion Committees across all 36 States and Union Territories. Draft District Export Action Plans have been prepared for 590 districts, with

249 formally notified.

The idea is straightforward: identify what each district does best and connect those products with international markets.

Sabarkantha and Aravalli in Gujarat, for example, have identified products ranging from ceramics and tiles to minerals and agro-processing. Jalgaon in Maharashtra is associated with bananas and Bharit brinjal, while districts in Madhya Pradesh are being mapped for products including onions, pharmaceuticals and oranges. Chhattisgarh has identified rice, maize, mango and Bastar iron craft among its export-potential products.

This model could fundamentally change India's export geography.

Instead of exports being concentrated around a handful of major industrial centres and ports, smaller cities and districts can become specialised production and export clusters.

Gujarat: infrastructure meets export ambition

Gujarat remains one of the country's most powerful export platforms.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel has highlighted the state's ports, logistics infrastructure, industrial corridors and manufacturing ecosystems as the foundation of its export strength. In a recent interview, he noted that Gujarat handles about 39% of India's cargo and contributes nearly 25% of India's merchandise exports.

The state has also been expanding its



presence in future-oriented industries such as semiconductors, fintech, renewable energy and advanced manufacturing.

The broader Gujarat model demonstrates why logistics matter as much as factories. Ports, dedicated freight corridors, expressways, inland container depots and multimodal connectivity can determine whether an Indian product reaches an overseas customer competitively.

Maharashtra: scale, services and manufacturing

Maharashtra is another major pillar of India's export economy.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has described Maharashtra as a potential global growth platform, noting the state's approximately US\$67 billion in exports, strong FDI position and large MSME ecosystem.

The state's strength lies in its diversity: automobiles, pharmaceuticals, engineering, chemicals, financial services, IT, food processing and a large network of MSMEs.

Fadnavis has also argued that the implementation of the India-UK trade agreement can create new opportunities for Maharashtra's industries, exporters, MSMEs and farmers by expanding access to international markets.

The message from Maharashtra is clear: exports are no longer solely a manufacturing issue. Services, innovation, finance and



entrepreneurship are equally important.

Uttar Pradesh: taking local products global

Uttar Pradesh offers perhaps the clearest example of the "local to global" strategy.

The state's One District One Product programme has been designed to turn region-specific products into scalable commercial brands. Under its next phase, ODOP 2.0, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasised technology, packaging, quality and market reach as priorities for strengthening exports.

"The aim of ODOP 2.0 is to ensure that the state's traditional products become a strong foundation for

larger markets, increased exports and sustainable livelihoods," Yogi said.

The state's proposed export policy for 2025–30 aims to raise goods and services exports to US\$50 billion by 2030, while expanding support for export-oriented projects, international trade fairs and overseas marketing.

For handicrafts, carpets, leather, food products, textiles and other traditional industries, the challenge is to move from being known products to becoming recognisable international brands.

Karnataka and the rise of services exports

India's export story cannot be understood through merchandise alone.

Karnataka's technology sector illustrates the power of services exports. The Commerce Ministry has highlighted Karnataka's position at the forefront of IT services exports, while India's overall services exports have grown at a 9.3% CAGR over the past decade.

The state's technology ecosystem demonstrates a different kind of export model: the product may not leave an Indian port at all.

Software development, cloud services, financial technology,



engineering design, consulting, global capability centres and business-process services can all be exported digitally.

That gives India an unusual advantage. It can participate in global value chains through both physical manufacturing and digitally delivered services.

Trade agreements open new doors. Free Trade Agreements are becoming an increasingly important part of the export strategy.

India's recent agreements and trade engagements with markets including the UAE, Australia, the UK and other partners are designed to reduce barriers and improve market access.

During FY2025–26, merchandise exports to FTA partners included about US\$37.36 billion to the UAE, US\$13.44 billion to the UK, US\$11.86 billion to Singapore, US\$7.28 billion to Australia and US\$6.04 billion to Japan, according to the Department of Commerce.

But signing an agreement is only the first step.

The real challenge is utilisation. Indian businesses—particularly MSMEs—need to understand rules of origin, standards, certifications, documentation and preferential tariff mechanisms.

That is why the government's recent emphasis has shifted from simply negotiating FTAs to ensuring that exporters actually use the market access they create.

Piyush Goyal: the \$1 trillion challenge

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has described the export target as a national mission, with India aiming for US\$1 trillion in exports this year and US\$2 trillion over the next five years.

The government's Export Promotion Mission is intended to help make that ambition achievable.

Approved with an outlay of ₹25,060 crore for FY2025–26 to FY2030–31, the mission focuses particularly on MSMEs,



first-time exporters and labour-intensive sectors. It seeks to address issues such as expensive trade finance, compliance costs, inadequate export branding and fragmented market access.

The mission also aims to bring more non-traditional districts and sectors into

India's export network.

This is crucial because the next phase of export growth will have to be broader than the traditional large exporters.

Nirmala Sitharaman: finance is part of competitiveness

Export competitiveness is not only about production. It is also about finance.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has highlighted the importance of export financing and Exim Bank's role in helping Indian companies enter higher-risk markets. At an Exim Bank trade conclave, she noted that the bank's Trade Assistance Programme had partnered with more than 100 overseas banks and facilitated over 1,100 export transactions across 51 countries since its introduction.

For smaller exporters, access to affordable working capital can



determine whether an international order becomes a business opportunity or a missed opportunity.

The Export Promotion Mission and the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters are designed partly to address this challenge.

Defence: a new Made-in-India category

India's export ambitions are also moving into strategically important



sectors.

Defence exports reached a record ₹38,424 crore in FY2025–26, up 62.66% over the previous year. Private-sector companies contributed 45.16%, while defence public-sector undertakings accounted for 54.84%.

The growth demonstrates the increasing ability of Indian manufacturers to serve international defence markets.

The same trend is visible in aerospace, drones, electronics, naval equipment

an Indian export.

An exporter can produce a world-class product, but if logistics are expensive or unpredictable, the product loses its advantage in global markets.

The MSME opportunity

The most important test for India's next export phase may be whether smaller businesses can participate.



and specialised engineering.

For a country that historically relied heavily on defence imports, becoming an exporter represents not just commercial growth but strategic positioning.

The maritime link: making the export chain Indian

A strong export economy also requires a strong logistics ecosystem.

In July 2026, India unveiled its first Made-in-India EXIM shipping container for global shipping major Maersk. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal described the initiative as part of a broader effort to create a globally competitive maritime manufacturing ecosystem.

The significance goes beyond the container itself.

Ports, ships, containers, warehousing, cold chains, freight corridors, customs systems and digital trade platforms all determine the final competitiveness of

Large corporations already possess international networks, compliance teams and access to capital. MSMEs often do not.

The government's Export Promotion Mission therefore places significant emphasis on MSMEs and first-time exporters. The objective is to reduce the barriers that prevent small businesses from entering international markets and to help them meet global standards.

Digital platforms are also changing the equation.

Trade Connect, Trade Intelligence and Analytics, e-IEC generation, online certification systems and other digital initiatives are intended to make international trade more transparent and easier to navigate.

For a small manufacturer in a district far from Mumbai, Chennai or Ahmedabad, the combination of e-commerce, digital payments, online certification, improved logistics and government trade intelligence could

potentially turn a local enterprise into an international supplier.

Agriculture: from farm to global brand

Agriculture presents another enormous opportunity.

India already exports rice, spices, marine products, coffee, fruits, vegetables, processed food and other agricultural products.

But the next opportunity lies in value addition and branding.

Instead of exporting raw agricultural commodities, India can increasingly export packaged foods, ready-to-eat products, premium spices, branded beverages, processed seafood and specialised food products.

The Prime Minister has specifically called for moving "from the farm to the export market" and turning traditional foods, millets, spices, fruits and flowers into global brands.

That approach could increase farmer incomes while also allowing India to capture a greater share of the value chain.

The green export opportunity

Sustainability is becoming a commercial requirement in global trade.

European and other advanced markets are increasingly paying attention to carbon footprints, environmental standards and sustainable production.

Prime Minister Modi has warned that global markets are looking beyond cost to environmental impact and has urged Indian industries to invest in clean technologies. He noted that companies investing in clean technology in time will have better access to new markets in the future.

This creates both a challenge and an opportunity.

Indian companies that invest early in renewable energy, energy efficiency, green hydrogen, sustainable packaging, low-carbon manufacturing and traceable

supply chains could gain an advantage as environmental standards become more stringent.

The voice of exporters

Industry sees diversification and value addition as essential to the next stage.

FIEO President S.C. Ralhan, commenting on India's April 2026 export performance, said: "India must continue focusing on export diversification, value addition, trade facilitation and strengthening of strategic trade partnerships to achieve sustained export growth and improve global competitiveness."

That assessment captures the central

manufacturing and services, Karnataka's technology ecosystem, Tamil Nadu's industrial clusters, Uttar Pradesh's ODOP network and the export-oriented capabilities emerging across other states show that India does not have one export model.

It has many.

The Department of Commerce's state-level export data underlines the concentration as well as the opportunity. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and other major states account for substantial shares of India's merchandise exports, while initiatives such as Districts as Export Hubs are intended to bring more regions into the system.

better standards and certification infrastructure, skilled workers, innovation and deeper integration into global value chains.

The policy architecture is already moving in that direction.

The Export Promotion Mission, Districts as Export Hubs, new and expanded FTAs, digital trade platforms, manufacturing initiatives, logistics investments and support for MSMEs all point towards a more decentralised and diversified export economy.

But policy can only create the platform.

The final transformation must come from Indian businesses.

From "Made in India" to "Trusted Worldwide"

The most important change in India's export story may ultimately be psychological.

"Made in India" once carried an association primarily with cost competitiveness. The next generation of Indian exporters has an opportunity to make it synonymous with quality, reliability, innovation, sustainability and scale.

The Prime Minister's call for India to become a trusted global manufacturing partner captures that ambition.

The government wants US\$1 trillion in exports in the near term and US\$2 trillion over the next five years.

The numbers are ambitious, but India's expanding export base shows that the foundations are already being built.

From a pharmaceutical plant in Hyderabad to an electronics factory in Tamil Nadu, from an engineering cluster in Gujarat to an ODOP artisan in Uttar Pradesh, from a software company in Bengaluru to a marine exporter on India's eastern coast, the next chapter of India's growth story is increasingly connected to customers beyond its borders.

The future of "Made in India" is not simply about what India makes. It is about how confidently India can make for the world.



challenge.

India cannot rely only on volume. It must increase the value embedded in every shipment.

A global India needs globally competitive states

The export story ultimately depends on what happens on the ground.

States must compete for investment, build industrial infrastructure, improve logistics, develop skilled workforces and help companies access international markets.

Gujarat's port-led industrial model, Maharashtra's combination of

The next phase will therefore require greater coordination between the Centre, states, exporters, financial institutions, logistics providers and industry associations.

The road to \$1 trillion

India's journey from US\$863 billion to US\$1 trillion in exports is not simply a matter of adding another US\$137 billion.

It requires a structural change in how India participates in the global economy.

The country needs more globally competitive manufacturing clusters, stronger domestic supply chains, faster logistics, greater access to trade finance, internationally recognised brands,



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Vedanta Aluminium, V-Spark Accelerate Deep-Tech Innovation

Vedanta Aluminium, in collaboration with V-Spark, India's manufacturing deep-tech incubator, is scaling the adoption of advanced technologies across its aluminium operations, with initiatives expected to unlock up to ₹2,100 crore in value. The partnerships were announced at MetALverse, an immersive technology showcase held in Jharsuguda, Odisha, bringing together global technology leaders, emerging start-ups and industry experts.

As part of the initiative, Vedanta Aluminium has announced collaborations with technology providers including OpenAI, Microsoft and SAP to explore and deploy AI, digitalisation and automation solutions across its integrated value chain. The initiatives will focus on improving plant productivity, optimising costs, enhancing asset reliability and supporting sustainability, while accelerating the adoption of next-generation technologies across large-scale industrial operations.

The MetALverse platform reflects the shared vision of Vedanta Aluminium and V-Spark to bridge the gap between breakthrough deep-tech innovation and real-world industrial deployment. By evaluating, piloting and scaling promising technologies in live operating environments, the collaboration aims to transform innovative solutions into

industry-ready applications. Vedanta Aluminium's integrated operations, spanning mining, alumina refining and aluminium production, will serve as a large-scale "mega incubation environment", enabling V-Spark and its technology partners to co-create a robust, AI-led manufacturing ecosystem.

Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Limited and Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc, said "India's manufacturing sector is entering a defining decade. The future will belong to companies that combine scale with intelligence, sustainability and the courage to rethink what is possible. At Vedanta Aluminium, we see AI as a catalyst for that transformation, with human intelligence providing the judgement and direction behind it. We are bringing together the best minds across industry and technology because we don't want to simply make today's plants better. We want to build the metal of the future, using the technologies of the future."

Akarsh Hebbar, Non-Executive Vice Chairman, Vedanta Aluminium and Chairman, V-Spark DeepTech Ventures, said "The greatest opportunity in industrial innovation lies in deploying new technologies at scale to create measurable business value. Vedanta Aluminium, as one of the top producers of the metal of the

future globally, provides the expansive operating footprint, technical depth and determination to industrialise breakthrough solutions, while V-Spark is the engine that identifies, validates and accelerates these technologies from concept to enterprise-wide deployment. We aim to partner with several industrial solutions to scale and transform creative innovation into tangible productivity gains, stronger sustainability, enhanced reliability and significant value creation."

Pinak Dattaray, Founder & CEO, Ripik.

AI, said "AI is creating new opportunities for industrial organisations to transform how knowledge is accessed, decisions are made and operations are managed. At Ripik.AI, we are focused on making advanced AI capabilities accessible through tools that help people and organisations solve complex problems and work more effectively. We are excited to collaborate with Vedanta Aluminium as it explores new applications of AI across its business. The company demonstrates how leading manufacturers can combine deep operational expertise with cutting-edge AI to unlock innovation, improve performance and create meaningful value at scale."

At MetALverse, Vedanta Aluminium announced collaborations with leading technology companies and deep-tech innovators to accelerate AI-led transformation, smart manufacturing and operational efficiency across its operations. Partners include OpenAI, Microsoft, SAP, AVEVA, Rockwell Automation, Thoughtworks and Fives, alongside innovators such as Ripik.AI, XYMA, Faclon, DesignX, DigitalPaani, AutoVRse, Enmovil and ideaForge. The collaborations will focus on technical evaluation, data integration, pilot deployment and scaling of solutions across productivity, safety, sustainability, asset reliability and decision-making. Through the V-Spark innovation ecosystem, Vedanta Aluminium is currently working with nearly 70 start-ups across its major operations in Lanjigarh and Jharsuguda in Odisha, and BALCO in Korba, Chhattisgarh.

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From Tradition to Enterprise

How Bamboo Is Creating Modern Livelihoods Across India

A bamboo bag displayed at a city market may look like a simple handcrafted product. But behind it lies a far more significant story—of traditional knowledge, women-led enterprise, policy reform and the growing economic potential of one of India's most versatile natural resources.



At the SARAS Aajeevika Mela 2026 in Gurugram, bamboo bags created by Vishakha Didi of Assam captured this transformation. After joining a Self-Help Group in 2014, she revived her father-in-law's bamboo craft enterprise by introducing contemporary designs. With government support and access to exhibitions, her products reached new markets. At the India International Trade Fair 2025, her bamboo creations generated sales of ₹2 lakh.

Her journey reflects a wider change taking place across India. With design, technology, training and market access, bamboo is moving beyond traditional handicrafts to become the foundation for new businesses, employment opportunities and sustainable development.

From regulation to opportunity

For generations, bamboo has been central to traditional livelihoods across India. Yet an outdated regulatory framework once limited its economic potential. Under a British-era law, bamboo was classified as a tree, making its harvesting and transportation difficult for the very communities that depended on it.

In 2017, the government removed bamboo grown outside forests from this classification, easing restrictions on its cultivation, harvesting and movement. The reform encouraged greater innovation, entrepreneurship and value addition across the sector. Its impact is especially visible in the Northeast, where bamboo is driving new forms of employment, manufacturing and enterprise.

Near Gangtok in Sikkim, fashion designer and sustainable innovator Chimi Ongmu Bhutia's Lagstal Design Studio is taking bamboo into the world

of contemporary design. The women-led enterprise creates handicrafts, incense sticks, furniture and interior décor products, combining local craftsmanship with modern aesthetics.

Elsewhere in the region, similar initiatives are broadening the scope of bamboo-based enterprise. In Tripura, Bijoy Sutradhar is using technology to improve product manufacturing. In Nagaland, Self-Help Groups around Dimapur are adding value to bamboo-based food products, while enterprises such as Khorolo Creative Crafts are producing furniture and handicrafts. In Mizoram's Mamit district, bamboo tissue culture and poly-house management are supporting more scientific cultivation practices.

Together, these efforts reveal the emergence of a more diverse and value-driven bamboo economy.

Strengthening the value chain

Building a successful bamboo sector requires more than skilled hands. It calls for quality planting material, processing facilities, technology, training and dependable market linkages.

The National Bamboo Mission focuses on cultivation, processing and market access for farmers, manufacturers and sellers. It also supports nurseries that produce quality planting material, helping to strengthen the sector from the farm upwards.

In Madhya Pradesh, Vijay Patidar



turned to bamboo after facing repeated losses from conventional farming in 2019. With support from the bamboo mission, he planted approximately 4,000 bamboo saplings. Within two years, he earned around ₹75,000 from selling bamboo poles. He was also able to grow chilli, capsicum, ginger and garlic between the bamboo plants, creating an additional source of income while the crop matured.

His experience demonstrates how bamboo can support farm diversification while developing into a long-term livelihood asset.

Technology opens new possibilities

The North East Centre for Technology Application & Reach has supported bamboo-based technologies across a range of commercial applications, including food and agro-processing, construction materials, manufacturing machinery, renewable energy and industrial products.

These interventions have generated approximately 30 million man-days of employment annually and increased value addition in bamboo commodities from around 10 per cent to as much as 70 per cent.

Engineered bamboo is among the most promising areas of growth. Created by binding and compressing bamboo fibres, strips or particles, the material can be used to produce furniture, buildings and interior elements. Improved processing and contemporary design are attracting the attention of architects, designers and interior decorators.

More than 42 lakh square feet of engineered bamboo structures have

been built for disaster relief and rehabilitation. In Chhattisgarh, 576 school rooms made from engineered bamboo are providing learning spaces for approximately 20,000 children. These projects show how bamboo is entering construction applications once associated almost exclusively with conventional industrial materials.

Women at the centre

The expanding bamboo value chain is also creating meaningful opportunities for women's groups.

In Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, the Gadchiroli Agarbatti Project established bamboo-based incense-stick production centres across the district in 2012. By 2020, the initiative had 32 centres employing approximately 1,100 people, nearly 90 per cent of them women.

Monthly earnings reached around ₹5,000 per woman, while the number of working days increased from approximately 45–60 days a year to more than 225 days. Employment became available closer to home and was less physically demanding. Women gained new skills, confidence and opportunities for leadership, while communities reduced their dependence on forests as a source of income.

Building skills for the future

Capacity building remains essential to the continued growth of the bamboo economy. In June 2026, the CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur, conducted a five-day bamboo handicrafts training programme

for women's Self-Help Groups.

Titled "Empowering Women SHGs through Bamboo Handicrafts from Bamboo Grown on Fly Ash Dumps", the programme provided hands-on training in bamboo harvesting, treatment and processing. Participants were also introduced to handicraft production, value-added product development, entrepreneurship, branding, marketing and product design.

The initiative demonstrated how reclaimed fly ash dump sites can be transformed into productive landscapes, delivering both environmental and socio-economic benefits for local communities.

A resource for transformation

India's bamboo story is increasingly becoming a story of people, enterprise and possibility. From Assam's craft groups and Sikkim's design studios to Madhya Pradesh's farms, Maharashtra's women-led production centres and Chhattisgarh's engineered schools, bamboo is supporting livelihoods across multiple sectors.

Its promise lies not only in the products created from it, but also in the opportunities generated along the way. When traditional resources are connected to technology, training, design and markets, they can help communities build stronger, more resilient and sustainable livelihoods.

The story of bamboo in India is therefore no longer simply about what the green stem can become. It is about what communities can achieve when tradition is connected to enterprise and opportunity.

Air India and Drukair Strengthen India–Bhutan Connectivity with New Interline Partnership

Seamless Single-Ticket Travel Opens Wider Access Between India, Bhutan and Global Destinations

Air India and Drukair, Royal Bhutan Airlines, have announced a new interline partnership aimed at enhancing seamless travel between India, Bhutan and destinations across the global network. Under the agreement, passengers can travel on a single ticket combining Air India and Drukair flights, with coordinated baggage handling and through-transfer services via key Indian gateways including Delhi, Guwahati and Kolkata. Expanding Access to Bhutan and

Beyond

The partnership will enable Air India passengers from its expanding international network to travel seamlessly to Paro via Delhi, with convenient onward connections to Bumthang, Gelephu and Yonphula within Bhutan. Reciprocally, Drukair passengers will gain access to Air India's extensive domestic and international network, including destinations such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kochi, London, Paris, Frankfurt, New York,



San Francisco, Sydney, Melbourne, Toronto and Vancouver. The new partnership is expected to support tourism and business travel while giving passengers greater convenience, connectivity and value. By linking Drukair's Bhutan network with Air India's extensive domestic and international network, the agreement further strengthens travel opportunities between the two neighbouring countries and connects Bhutan more closely with major global markets.



Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial Officer, Air India

Our partnership with Drukair reinforces our commitment to strengthening connectivity across the SAARC region, which we consider our extended home market. Bhutan is a valued part of this region, and we are happy to enable easy access to Bhutan for our guests and look forward to welcoming Drukair's passengers onto Air India's extensive domestic and global network.



Tandi Wangchuk, Chief Executive Officer of Drukair

This partnership marks a significant milestone for Drukair as we continue to strengthen our global connectivity and enhance the travel experience for our passengers. Through this interline partnership with Air India, our customers will benefit from seamless journeys, expanded access to key international markets, and improved connectivity across India and beyond.

IndiGo Connects Bihar to Thailand with New Gaya–Bangkok Flights

IndiGo will launch non-stop, twice-weekly flights between Gaya and Bangkok from 26 October 2026, strengthening air connectivity between Bihar and Thailand while supporting Buddhist pilgrimage, tourism and cultural exchange.

The new route will create a direct air link between Gaya, home to Bodh Gaya and the revered Mahabodhi Temple, and Bangkok, offering a convenient travel option for pilgrims, leisure travellers and tourists. The service is expected to support Bihar's tourism ecosystem, including hospitality, transport and other local businesses.



Thailand remains a popular destination for Indian travellers, with IndiGo operating more than 140 weekly flights between India and Thailand. The addition of Gaya further expands IndiGo's network in

Thailand and strengthens international connectivity to one of India's most important spiritual and cultural destinations.

Lifestyle



Support in India is no longer confined to stadiums, medals and scoreboards. It has become a powerful expression of the country's changing aspirations—a space where young talent, technology, private investment, better infrastructure and an increasingly confident sporting culture are coming together. From athletics and shooting to badminton, wrestling, hockey, cricket and emerging disciplines, Indian athletes are steadily building a stronger presence on the global stage.

At the heart of this transformation is a simple but powerful idea: sport can change lives. It teaches discipline, resilience, teamwork and the courage to

compete. For millions of young Indians, access to sport is increasingly becoming a pathway not only to professional achievement but also to education, employment, better health and personal confidence. As India looks towards a more active and ambitious future, sport is emerging as an important part of the country's broader development story.

From Participation to Performance

For decades, India's sporting conversation was often dominated by a handful of disciplines. Today, that landscape is changing. Athletes from smaller towns, rural communities and non-traditional sporting backgrounds

are breaking through, demonstrating that talent exists across the country when opportunities, coaching and infrastructure come together.

The transformation is particularly visible in Olympic and Paralympic sports. Indian athletes are competing with increasing confidence against the world's best, while sports such as shooting, badminton, wrestling, boxing, athletics, archery and weightlifting have created new sporting heroes and inspired another generation.

"A champion is afraid of losing. Everyone else is afraid of winning," legendary American athlete Billie Jean King once said. The quote captures an important shift in Indian sport:

Sporting India: The New Powerhouse of Performance, Passion and Possibility

From Olympic dreams and world-class performances to grassroots transformation, sports in India is evolving into a powerful engine of ambition, opportunity, tourism and national pride.



the ambition is no longer simply to participate, but to compete, challenge and win.

Behind every medal, however, is a much larger ecosystem-coaches, physiotherapists, sports scientists, nutritionists, psychologists, administrators, families and increasingly sophisticated training systems. The modern athlete is no longer preparing alone; performance has become a multidisciplinary science.

The Rise of the Sporting Ecosystem

India's sporting revolution is also being driven by investment. Public programmes, private academies, corporate initiatives, leagues and professional sporting organisations are creating opportunities that were difficult to imagine a generation ago.

The growth of professional leagues has played a particularly important role. They have given athletes greater visibility, created commercial opportunities and introduced millions of young viewers to sports beyond cricket. More importantly, leagues have helped build professional ecosystems around athletes-from coaching and scouting to sports medicine, broadcasting, sponsorship and digital engagement.

This commercialisation has also opened doors for careers beyond the playing field. Sports management, sports marketing, event production, broadcasting, content creation, analytics, fitness, physiotherapy and sports technology are becoming increasingly attractive professional sectors.

As former basketball great Michael Jordan famously observed, "Talent wins



games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships." India's sporting future will depend on precisely that combination-not only talented athletes, but an ecosystem capable of nurturing them over the long term.

Technology Changes the Game

Technology is rapidly redefining athletic performance. Data analytics, wearable devices, artificial intelligence, video analysis, biomechanics and performance tracking are allowing coaches and athletes to understand performance at a level that was previously impossible.

Every movement can be analysed. Training loads can be monitored. Recovery can be measured. Nutrition

can be personalised. Opponents can be studied through data. Even small technical adjustments can make a difference at elite level.

Artificial intelligence is likely to become an increasingly important part of this ecosystem, helping teams analyse performance, identify patterns and personalise training. At the same time, advances in sports equipment, smart wearables and recovery technologies are making high-performance training more scientific and accessible.

The real opportunity lies in ensuring that these technologies do not remain limited to elite athletes. Bringing sports science and technology closer to schools, academies and grassroots programmes could help India build a deeper talent pool.





Sport as a Health Movement

The importance of sport extends far beyond medals.

In an era of increasingly sedentary lifestyles, physical activity has become an essential component of public health. Encouraging children and young people to participate in sports can contribute to physical fitness, mental wellbeing, social development and healthier lifestyles.

The sporting field can also become a powerful classroom. Winning teaches confidence, while losing teaches resilience. Competition teaches discipline, and team sport teaches cooperation. These qualities remain valuable long after an athlete leaves the playing field.

As American football coach Vince Lombardi famously said, “The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.” For young people, sport provides perhaps one of the clearest demonstrations of this principle.

The New Business of Sport

Sport is also becoming an important economic sector. Sponsorships, broadcasting rights, sports tourism, merchandise, fitness businesses, academies, technology companies and sporting events are creating a broad commercial ecosystem.

For India, this presents an opportunity



to develop sport as an industry while retaining its social purpose. Better stadiums and training centres can become venues for international competitions. Sporting events can attract visitors, create local employment and showcase destinations to global audiences.

This connection between sport and tourism is particularly significant. Major sporting events can generate demand for hotels, restaurants, transportation, entertainment and local experiences. Smaller sporting destinations can also benefit by combining competitions with adventure, wellness, culture and hospitality.

India’s diverse geography offers enormous potential—from high-

altitude training and cycling in the Himalayas to water sports along the coast, golf tourism, adventure sports and wellness-focused sporting retreats.

Women Redefining the Sporting Narrative

Perhaps one of the most inspiring developments has been the growing visibility of women in Indian sport.

Indian women athletes have repeatedly demonstrated that sporting excellence has no gender barrier. Their achievements are challenging stereotypes, inspiring young girls and creating new conversations about opportunity, equality and ambition.

The significance of this movement goes beyond medals. When a young girl watches an Indian woman athlete compete on the world stage, she sees a possibility for herself.

That is one of sport’s greatest strengths: it makes ambition visible.

The Grassroots Will Decide the Future

Elite success ultimately begins at the grassroots.

India’s long-term sporting ambitions will depend on discovering talent early and providing consistent access to facilities, coaching, nutrition, competition and education. Schools can play a crucial role by treating sport not as an extracurricular afterthought

but as an integral part of a child's development.

Local clubs and academies can become talent pipelines, while technology can help identify promising athletes beyond major cities. Equally important is creating pathways that allow young athletes to balance sporting ambitions with education and career development.

The objective should not be to produce only a few champions. It should be to create a sporting culture in which millions participate and thousands have the opportunity to pursue excellence.

A Nation Learning to Dream Bigger

The most significant change in Indian sport may therefore not be found in a medal tally. It may be found in the changing mindset of the country.

Young Indians are increasingly seeing athletes as role models, sport as a career and physical fitness as a lifestyle. Parents are becoming more willing to support sporting ambitions.

Businesses are recognising the commercial potential of sport. Cities are investing in facilities. Technology is making training more sophisticated.

And every victory—whether at a global championship or a school-level competition—adds another layer to this transformation.

As tennis legend Serena Williams put it, "A champion is defined not by their wins but by how they can recover when they fall."

That may be the defining lesson for India's sporting journey as well. The road to becoming a global sporting

The country does not need to choose between mass participation and elite performance. It needs both. It needs children playing in neighbourhoods, schools with functioning sporting facilities, professional academies, world-class coaches, sports science laboratories, competitive leagues and athletes who can dream of standing on the world's biggest podium.



powerhouse will not be measured only by medals. It will be measured by participation, infrastructure, professionalism, inclusion, investment and the ability to create opportunities for the next generation.

The Road Ahead

India stands at an exciting point in its sporting journey. The foundations are stronger, aspirations are higher and the ecosystem is becoming increasingly professional. But the next chapter will require patience and sustained investment.

The country does not need to choose

between mass participation and elite performance. It needs both. It needs children playing in neighbourhoods, schools with functioning sporting facilities, professional academies, world-class coaches, sports science laboratories, competitive leagues and athletes who can dream of standing on the world's biggest podium.

Sport has always been about more than winning.

It is about the courage to begin, the discipline to continue and the resilience to rise after defeat. For India, the sporting revolution is ultimately a story about possibility—of a young generation that is fitter, more confident and willing to compete with the best in the world.

The next great Indian sporting story may already be training somewhere: on a school ground, in a small-town academy, on a village field or inside a modest community stadium.

The opportunity now is to make sure that talent gets its chance.

WOMEN

at the Heart of India's Rural Tourism Revolution

From homestays and heritage experiences to local food, crafts and nature trails, women across India are turning village life into meaningful tourism experiences while creating livelihoods along the way.



In many Indian villages, tourism begins not at a hotel reception but at the doorstep of a family home—with a warm welcome, a traditional meal, a local story or an invitation to experience village life. Increasingly, women are at the heart of this transformation, opening their homes to travellers, managing homestays, preparing regional cuisine, guiding visitors, reviving traditional crafts and turning local knowledge into meaningful experiences. In doing so, they are creating new livelihoods while showcasing an India beyond conventional tourist routes. For these women, tourism has become a powerful bridge between tradition and enterprise, community and opportunity, and local identity and the wider world.

Hospitality Begins at Home

For generations, rural women have been custodians of skills that are now emerging as valuable tourism assets. Cooking, farming, weaving, storytelling, traditional architecture, knowledge of local landscapes and community hospitality can all be transformed into authentic visitor experiences. A homestay, for instance, is far more than a room for the night—it can create demand for locally grown vegetables, dairy products, spices, handicrafts, transport, guiding services and cultural experiences, allowing tourism income to reach multiple households.

The Ministry of Tourism has developed national strategies and roadmaps for rural tourism and rural homestays, while initiatives such as

Paryatan Mitra & Paryatan Didi are helping build the capacity of women and young people as homestay owners, culinary experience providers, cultural and nature guides, and adventure hosts. The philosophy is simple but powerful: rural communities should not merely be places for visitors to observe; they should be active participants in shaping tourism, preserving their identity and sharing in its economic benefits.

The New Power of Self-Help Groups
One of the most important forces behind the transformation of rural tourism is the Self-Help Group (SHG). Across rural India, women's collectives are moving beyond traditional savings and credit activities to build enterprises around food, handicrafts, agriculture, accommodation and local experiences. By pooling resources, members can purchase equipment, manage homestays, create local menus, organise village walks, conduct craft demonstrations and market their products through digital platforms. This collective approach makes entrepreneurship more accessible, giving women opportunities to gain training, financial support, peer networks and access to new markets.

In Himachal Pradesh, Chamunda SHE HAAT is an example of women-led enterprise bringing together accommodation, local food, hospitality services and products created by Self-Help Groups. Such initiatives allow visitors to stay, eat and shop locally while generating direct economic opportunities for women and strengthening the surrounding community. The model demonstrates that rural tourism can evolve beyond a single homestay or business into a community-driven ecosystem where multiple livelihoods grow together.

From Cuisine to Cultural Connection

Food is often the most intimate introduction to a destination, offering travellers a taste of its agriculture, climate, festivals, traditions and way

of life. For rural women, traditional cooking is becoming an opportunity to turn knowledge once considered household work into meaningful tourism experiences—from cooking demonstrations and village lunches to traditional recipes and locally made food products. The benefits extend beyond the kitchen, creating demand for farmers, dairy producers, spice growers, local artisans, transport providers and other community businesses. In this way, food tourism does more than satisfy a traveller's appetite; it creates a deeper connection with how a community lives, works, celebrates and preserves its cultural identity.

Preserving Craft, Protecting Identity

Rural tourism is creating new opportunities for India's women artisans by turning traditional skills into meaningful visitor experiences. Travellers increasingly want to know not just what they buy, but who made it, how it was created and the cultural story behind it. Weaving, embroidery, pottery, bamboo craft, basketry, natural dyes and traditional painting can become part of village visits, live demonstrations and hands-on workshops, giving artisans additional income while encouraging younger generations to value their heritage. Direct interaction with visitors can also help artisans move beyond dependence on intermediaries, share their own stories, receive feedback and develop contemporary products without losing their cultural identity. For many communities, tourism is therefore about much more than selling handicrafts—it is about keeping traditional knowledge alive.

Tribal Tourism and Community Ownership

Women-led rural tourism holds particular promise in tribal areas, where distinctive landscapes, traditional architecture, indigenous cuisine, crafts and cultural practices can create rich opportunities for responsible



experiential tourism. The Ministry of Tourism's Development of Homestays in Tribal Areas initiative aims to support 1,000 homestays through assistance for community infrastructure, room construction or renovation, and training and skill development for homestay owners. Such programmes can strengthen local tourism infrastructure while ensuring that communities retain ownership and women gain pathways to formal entrepreneurship without leaving their villages.

However, growth must be guided by respect for culture and community rights, ensuring that traditions are not reduced to performances created solely for visitors. Local communities should have a meaningful say in what they share, how they share it and how tourism benefits are distributed. The goal should be cultural exchange, not cultural exploitation.

Creating Livelihoods Beyond the Tourist Season

Seasonality remains one of the biggest challenges for rural tourism, with destinations often experiencing strong demand during festivals, holidays or favourable weather while remaining relatively quiet during other periods. Women-led enterprises can make rural tourism more resilient by diversifying

the experiences they offer—from farm visits during harvest and seasonal nature walks to craft workshops, winter food experiences and festival-based cultural programmes. When accommodation demand slows, income can continue through handicrafts, local food products, guiding, workshops and agricultural experiences. This diversification is particularly important for rural communities as it creates multiple income streams rather than placing the entire burden on accommodation. In the Himalayan states, community-based tourism is increasingly being linked with farming, local enterprise, environmental conservation and homestays, creating more sustainable opportunities for communities throughout the year.

Training: From Host to Entrepreneur

Good intentions alone cannot create a sustainable tourism enterprise. Women need practical training in hospitality, hygiene, accounting, digital payments, online promotion, photography, storytelling, customer service and visitor safety, along with knowledge of pricing, booking platforms, permits, registration, insurance and financial planning. The goal should go beyond teaching women to cook or manage rooms;

it should empower them to become entrepreneurs, experience designers and destination ambassadors.

Digital skills are equally important. A smartphone can become a powerful business tool, allowing rural entrepreneurs to showcase their homestays, connect with potential guests, accept digital payments and promote local experiences. However, access to technology must be complemented by support in creating engaging content, understanding online markets, responding to customers and building a strong identity for their destination.

Finance Can Unlock the Next Chapter

Access to finance remains a crucial factor in enabling women-led rural tourism enterprises to grow. Tourism



businesses require investment in sanitation, accommodation, kitchens, water supply, safety equipment, digital infrastructure and basic visitor facilities, yet many rural women still face challenges in accessing formal finance. Government-backed credit and livelihood programmes can help bridge this gap, enabling women to move from informal activities to structured and sustainable enterprises.

An additional guest room, an upgraded kitchen or new equipment for a craft or food business can create benefits far beyond the individual entrepreneur—generating employment, supporting local suppliers and strengthening the wider village economy.

Tourism With Responsibility

The success of rural tourism should not be measured by visitor numbers alone, but also by its impact on local communities and the environment. Responsible tourism requires careful attention to water, waste, energy, construction, natural resources and visitor behaviour, particularly in rural destinations with fragile ecosystems and limited infrastructure. Women can play an important role in promoting sustainable practices through local food, traditional architecture, low-waste initiatives, rainwater harvesting and the use of locally sourced materials.

At the same time, travellers must respect local customs, privacy and community ownership. The objective is not to commercialise every aspect of village life, but to create meaningful

of tourism as a tool for inclusive development, where a homestay becomes a livelihood, a traditional meal becomes cultural exchange, a craft becomes an enterprise, a village becomes a destination and a woman becomes the entrepreneur at the centre of it all.

The Future of Rural Tourism Is Local

India's rural tourism story is entering an important new phase. The next generation of destinations may be defined not by luxury resorts or large-scale infrastructure, but by villages that understand the value of their culture, nature, food and traditions and know how to share them responsibly with the world.

Women will be central to this journey: as hosts welcoming travellers, cooks preserving family recipes, artisans carrying traditional



experiences that benefit both travellers and the communities that welcome them.

The New Rural Host

The women shaping rural tourism are doing far more than providing accommodation—they are curating a sense of place. They introduce travellers to family recipes, forgotten trails, local legends, traditional crafts, indigenous crops and seasonal celebrations, transforming spare rooms into welcoming homestays, kitchens into culinary experiences, farms into learning spaces and traditional skills into sustainable businesses.

Their work highlights the power

skills forward, guides interpreting landscapes and entrepreneurs creating new livelihoods. Their contribution extends far beyond tourism; it is about economic independence, cultural preservation, community resilience and pride in place.

The most memorable journey may not always be the one that takes a traveller farther, but the one that takes them deeper—into a village kitchen, across a mountain trail, into a craft workshop or around a family table.

And increasingly, the person opening that door is a woman.

She is not simply welcoming tourists; she is helping reimagine what tourism can mean for rural India.

Why the Honeymoon Matters

More Than Just a Post-Wedding Vacation

There are journeys we take to discover a place, and then there are journeys that become part of our story. A honeymoon belongs to the latter. More than a holiday after the wedding, it is the first journey of a new chapter—a chance for couples to pause, reconnect and begin their married life together.

Wedding planning can be exciting, but it can also be exhausting. Months may be spent managing guest lists, budgets, family expectations, ceremonies and countless details. By the time the celebrations end, couples often need time to step away from the noise and simply enjoy being together. A honeymoon provides that much-needed pause. Away from work, responsibilities and social commitments, couples can relax, recharge and transition naturally into married life.

The First Journey as a Married Couple

Every couple may have travelled together before, but travelling immediately after marriage carries a special meaning. It becomes the first shared adventure of a new chapter. Whether it is a peaceful beach escape, a mountain retreat, a cultural journey or a city break, the destination becomes part of the couple's story.

Simple experiences can become treasured memories: discovering a new restaurant, watching a sunset, exploring an unfamiliar street or even getting slightly lost together. These moments may seem ordinary at the time, but years later they can become some of the most meaningful memories of the beginning of married life.

A Chance to Pause and Reconnect

Modern life often leaves little uninterrupted time for couples. Work, household responsibilities, family commitments and digital distractions can easily take over daily routines. A honeymoon creates space to slow down.

There is no need to follow a busy schedule. Couples can enjoy a leisurely breakfast, take a long walk, sit together by the sea, explore a new place or simply spend an afternoon talking. Sometimes, the greatest luxury after a busy wedding is having nothing that needs to be done.

This uninterrupted time also creates an opportunity for deeper conversations. Couples can talk about their hopes, dreams, values and plans for the future. They can listen to each other without the distractions of everyday life and strengthen their emotional connection.

Creating a Shared Story

A strong relationship is built not only through everyday experiences but also through shared memories. The first dinner overlooking the sea, a sunrise from a mountain, a boat ride, a spontaneous road trip or an unexpected travel experience can become stories that couples remember for years.

These memories form the early chapters of their shared narrative. When life becomes challenging, remembering the happiness and teamwork experienced during their first journey can remind couples of the bond they share.

Setting the Tone for the Future

A honeymoon can also set a positive tone for married life.

Travelling together requires communication, patience, compromise and cooperation. Even small decisions—where to eat, what to explore or how to spend the day—give couples opportunities to understand each other better.

More importantly, choosing to spend meaningful time together establishes an important principle: the relationship deserves attention and care. The honeymoon can inspire couples to continue making time for one another even after returning to busy routines.

It Does Not Have to Be Extravagant

A honeymoon does not need to be expensive or luxurious to be special. It could be a weekend at a beautiful resort close to home, a road trip, a peaceful stay in the mountains, a beach holiday or an international adventure. Even a short “minimoon” can provide the same sense of togetherness.

What matters most is not the price or destination, but the intention behind the journey. The perfect honeymoon is different for every couple. It should reflect their personalities, interests and idea of happiness.

The Beginning of New Traditions

The first journey can also become the beginning of traditions. Couples may return to the same destination on an anniversary, recreate their first honeymoon dinner or choose a new place to explore every year. In this way, one journey can inspire many more adventures throughout a marriage.

Ultimately, a honeymoon is more than a holiday. The wedding celebrates the commitment; the honeymoon gives couples time to live in that commitment—to talk, laugh, explore, rest and create their first memories together.

Years from now, the smallest details of the wedding may fade, but the feeling of waking up together in a new place, sharing a special meal or discovering something beautiful side by side can remain. That is the real value of a honeymoon: it is not simply a holiday after the wedding. It is the first journey of the marriage.



HOROSCOPE

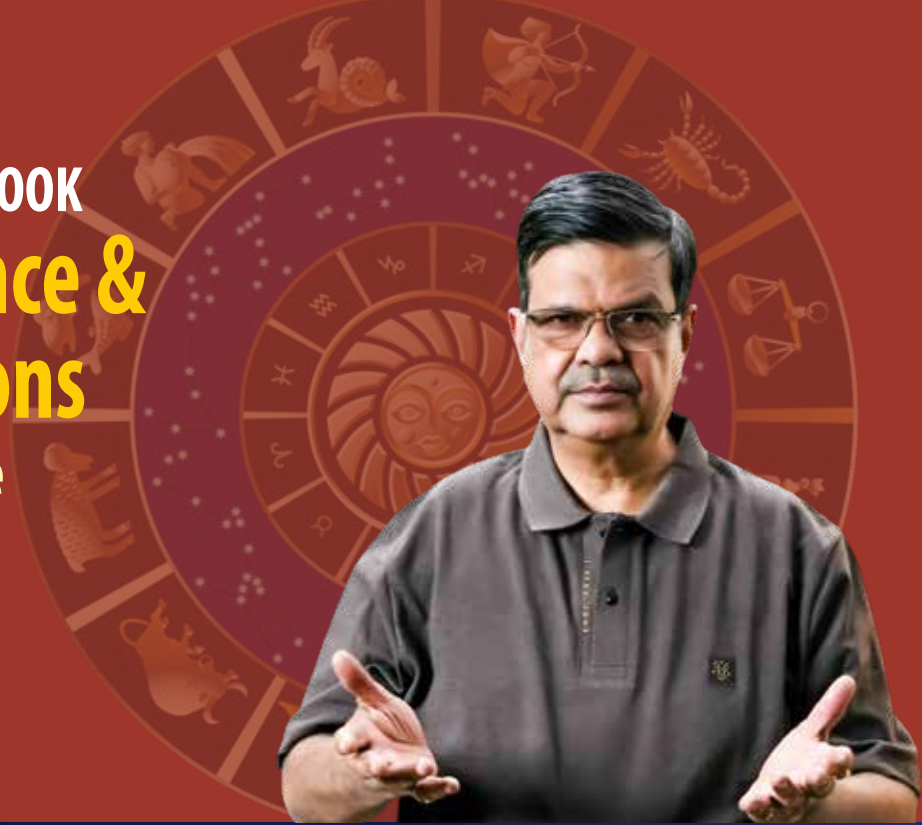
MONTHLY MOON SIGN OUTLOOK

Decisions, Influence & Changing Equations

A Zodiac-Based Perspective

**DR. SHANKER
ADAWAL**

Astrologer, Author
& Researcher



This forecast is based on your Moon Sign (Janma Rashi), offering practical insight into behavioural patterns, decision-making, professional equations and public interaction.

Readers are advised to refer to their Moon Sign for better personal relevance.



The Month at a Glance

September carries an interesting mix of action and restraint. The month opens with the Moon entering Mesha on September 1, bringing a more direct and action-oriented mood. But Krishna Paksha is still running, so everything that looks urgent may not actually require an immediate response. Better results can come from watching the situation first and choosing the right moment to act.

As the Moon moves through Vrishabha, Mithuna, Karka and Simha during the opening days, priorities keep changing. Practical matters come first, followed by communication, emotional equations and then questions of visibility or authority. This can be an active period for meetings, discussions and public interaction, but positions may still be evolving behind the scenes.

Around September 10–11, the Amavasya phase brings a noticeable pause. Pending matters may need another review. Conversations can become less direct and people may hold their cards closer. This is better used for assessment, correction and internal planning rather than pushing for instant agreement. Sometimes not reacting is also a decision.

After this, the atmosphere gradually changes. Shukla Paksha begins, and the Moon's movement through Kanya and Tula supports a more organised and balanced approach. Ganesh Chaturthi around September 14 also falls in this rebuilding phase. Discussions that were stuck can reopen. Professional equations may improve and coordination becomes easier where both sides are willing to listen.

The middle of September carries a stronger practical note. Kanya Sankranti on September 17 brings attention towards systems, details, work and accountability. This is a useful period for correcting weak areas, reviewing commitments and putting plans into a workable structure. Small details should not be ignored—they may decide the larger outcome.

As the Moon moves through Vrishchika and Dhanu, the tone changes again. First comes intensity and deeper assessment; then a wider outlook. Strong opinions are possible, but so are new ideas. This phase can favour strategic conversations, negotiations and decisions that need both conviction and perspective.

The third week becomes more structured with Makara and then more network-oriented with Kumbha. Responsibility, alliances, professional contacts and group equations come into focus. Some people may find support from an unexpected quarter. Others may realise that an old

equation needs to be handled differently.

Towards September 26, Bhadrapada Purnima brings matters closer to culmination. But immediately afterwards, Pitru Paksha begins, giving the closing days a more reflective character. Older responsibilities, past decisions or unfinished personal matters may return to attention.

September therefore is not about remaining aggressive throughout. Influence comes from knowing when to speak, when to negotiate, when to wait—and when the moment has finally arrived to move.

Zodiac Insights (Moon Sign Based)

ARIES (MESHA): September brings energy and confidence. Take initiative and restart pending discussions, but avoid quick reactions early on. After mid-month, professional coordination improves and visibility rises. Use confidence wisely and avoid unnecessary contests.

TAURUS (VRISHABHA): Stability matters more than speed. Handle financial and professional decisions patiently. Early September favours quietly strengthening your position. Review plans around Amavasya. The second half supports negotiations and reliable partnerships.

GEMINI (MITHUNA): Communication is your biggest asset. Meetings, networking and fresh conversations can open opportunities. Avoid unclear promises. After mid-month, stalled discussions may progress. An old proposal could return, offering a fresh perspective.

CANCER (KARKA): Separate emotions from judgement, especially in professional matters. Family responsibilities may influence decisions. Avoid pressured reactions around Amavasya. The second half supports cooperation and resolving misunderstandings. Quiet confidence works best.

LEO (SIMHA): Leadership and visibility remain important. Interact confidently, but avoid commitments made only for appearances. Reassess priorities around the second week. From mid-month, clarity improves. Consistency will create greater authority than loudness.

VIRGO (KANYA): September favours organisation, analysis and practical decisions. Kanya Sankranti on September 17 strengthens this practical tone. Review commitments and correct systems. Avoid overthinking. The second half can bring recognition for disciplined work.

LIBRA (TULA): Relationships and professional equations improve after mid-month. Negotiation and cooperation become easier. Partnerships can help, but keep your own position clear. Diplomacy supported by practical thinking will serve you well.

SCORPIO (VRISHCHIKA): Mid-month brings greater intensity and awareness of hidden dynamics. Avoid suspicion and immediate reactions. The later period supports strategy, negotiation and control. Sometimes keeping your next move private can be useful.

SAGITTARIUS (DHANU): The second half brings wider contacts, new ideas and useful opportunities. Learning and institutional connections may prove valuable. A delayed matter can move forward. Stay optimistic, but separate possibility from certainty.

CAPRICORN (MAKARA): Responsibility and execution become important during the third week. Discipline and long-term thinking support professional decisions. Authority may increase with accountability. Avoid accepting every responsibility. The closing days favour completing important work.

AQUARIUS (KUMBHA): Networks and professional connections gain importance. New contacts may prove useful, while unconventional ideas receive attention. Check practical details before joining arrangements. Keep roles clear and protect time for personal priorities.

PISCES (MEENA): Observe before taking firm positions. Emotional clarity improves as September progresses. Around September 26, near Purnima, an important issue may become clearer or reach completion. Avoid confrontation and rely on patience, judgement and timing.

Leadership is not always about moving first. Some phases favour action, some negotiation and some simply watching the situation develop. September reminds us that good decisions are rarely about speed alone. When timing, judgement and communication come together, influence becomes quieter—but often much stronger.

Beyond the DESTINATION

How Indian Couples Are Redefining the Luxury Honeymoon

Prashant Daroch, Founder of AtravelQ, decodes the shifting preferences of Indian honeymooners—from classic beach escapes to experiential, personalised journeys across the globe.

● **What are the top honeymoon destinations Indian couples are choosing currently, and what is driving these preferences?**

Prashant Daroch: Indian couples have become more adventurous when it comes to honeymoon destinations, moving beyond the traditional beach honeymoon. Switzerland, Maldives, Bali, Mauritius, Thailand and Japan remain favourites, while New Zealand and Norway have also emerged as destinations of choice for couples seeking more offbeat experiences. The key shift is that couples are moving beyond simply selecting a destination to choosing the right experiences within it.

● **Which emerging or lesser-known destinations would you recommend to couples seeking alternatives to popular choices such as the Maldives, Bali and Europe?**

Prashant Daroch: Some destinations I would recommend to couples looking beyond the more conventional choices include Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, New Zealand, Norway and Japan. Vietnam is ideal for couples seeking a combination of luxury, cuisine and culture, while Sri Lanka works well for those who want to combine beaches with wildlife. New Zealand and Norway offer spectacular scenery, scenic drives, luxury and privacy, making them particularly appealing for couples seeking distinctive experiences.

● **How have honeymooners' expectations evolved, particularly in terms of luxury, privacy and experiences?**

Prashant Daroch: There has been a significant change in the definition of luxury. Today, couples are not necessarily focused on booking the most expensive hotel. Instead, they value privacy,

customisation, seamless service and meaningful experiences. They want their itinerary to reflect their personalities, whether that means staying in a private villa or scenic lodge, enjoying a personalised dinner or embarking on private excursions. Couples are also increasingly opting for a slower pace rather than trying to cover several destinations in a single trip.

● **What are the most sought-after honeymoon experiences today, from private dining and wellness to adventure and cultural immersion?**

Prashant Daroch: Private and intimate experiences are particularly sought after. Private dining, sunset sailing, spa and wellness retreats, stays at exclusive lodges and special excursions are increasingly becoming integral to premium honeymoons. At the same time, couples want experiences that help them connect with the destination—whether through local cuisine, cultural encounters, nature-based experiences or a touch of adventure.

● **Are you seeing a growing trend towards personalised and multi-destination honeymoons? Which combinations are proving popular?**

Prashant Daroch: Yes. Personalisation is becoming a key differentiator when couples plan their honeymoons. The trend is towards combining different types of travel experiences within the same trip—for example, Switzerland with Italy, France with Switzerland, or Thailand with Singapore. Longer journeys that combine city experiences with wilderness, or luxury resorts with experiential stays, are also

Indian honeymoons are evolving beyond traditional favorites like Switzerland and the Maldives toward emerging destinations like Norway, Vietnam, and New Zealand. Couples now prioritize self-expression and personal passions, shifting focus from typical sightseeing to curated, intimate experiences such as private villa retreats, wellness escapes, outdoor adventure, and deep cultural immersion.

gaining popularity.

The focus is on creating a well-balanced itinerary with the right pace, rather than trying to fit too much into the journey.

● **Which destinations do you expect to emerge as the next big honeymoon hotspots, and why?**

Prashant Daroch: Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Vietnam and Seychelles are destinations that I expect to continue gaining prominence among honeymooners, as they offer what today's premium traveller is increasingly seeking—unique surroundings, high-quality service, privacy and distinctive experiences. Japan offers a compelling blend of culture, cuisine, luxury hospitality and seasonal experiences, while New Zealand and Norway are particularly suited to couples looking for nature-based luxury and deeper immersion.

From our perspective at AtravelQ, the future of honeymoon tourism is not about identifying a single “best” destination. It is about selecting a destination that genuinely aligns with a couple's interests, preferences and personality—and then curating experiences that make the journey uniquely theirs.

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