

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS 2012

January 7-9, 2012

JAI PUR

GLOBAL INDIAN – INCLUSIVE GROWTH

MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2012

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Global Indian – Inclusive Growth

Theme Paper

PREFACE

During 2011, the world witnessed amazing revolutions where ordinary people gathered in hundreds of thousands to reiterate their basic freedoms and human rights. In some countries, these mass protests changed decades-old regimes; in others, they wrought significant changes. For the most part, the gatherings were determined to tread the path of peaceful and non-violent resistance, a path whose efficacy was so well demonstrated during India's freedom struggle. The legacy of Mahatma Gandhi reverberated once more in the world, seventy-three years after his demise.

Mahatma Gandhi's tenets were forged during his long stay in colonial South Africa. It was when he returned to India that the force of his ideas found resonance and succeeded in wresting India's Independence. Marking the return of Mahatma Gandhi to his home country, the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrates for the tenth consecutive year the remarkable contributions of Overseas Indians to the world. The convention is the annual flagship event of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry. With the Government of Rajasthan as partner for the forthcoming convention, it is being held in January 2012 at Jaipur.

Since 2003, the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has emerged as the focal platform of engagement between India and its children overseas. The PBD series of conventions reiterates each year the powerful bonds of 'Indian-ness' that continue to link Pravasis with their emotional homeland, while recognizing the myriad ways that Overseas Indians have integrated with and enriched their countries of citizenship or residence. Each year has succeeded in strengthening the areas of existing engagement as well as developing new ideas for future interaction. Each year, the inherent aspirations of

Overseas Indians to re-connect with their ancestral land are given concrete shape through fresh initiatives.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) is the key facilitator and enabler of the bilateral relationship. Arising from the felt need expressed in the first PBD convention in 2003, the Ministry of Non-Resident Indians' Affairs was set up in May 2004 and renamed as Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in September 2004 to meet the expectations of Pravasis. Its mandate gives expression to the diverse nature of Indian communities worldwide. Headed by a Minister of Cabinet rank, MOIA is positioned as a contemporary, lean and efficient ministry to act as 'friend and guide' to the 27 million Overseas Indians in all parts of the world.

The Ministry has four functional service divisions, namely Diaspora Services, Financial Services, Emigration Services and Management Services. The first three cover different dimensions of the multi-faceted engagement of the Overseas Indian community with India, while the last one provides the internal administrative support. The Diaspora Services division is tasked with all matters pertaining to Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Non-Resident Indians (NRI), including organizing the PBD conventions, mini-PBDs in different parts of the world, and dissemination of information regarding educational institutions.

Financial Services division aims to assist Overseas Indian investors and businesses in participating in the India growth story. The Emigration Services division consolidates all matters relating to employment of Indians in other countries, formulating policies to facilitate and empower workers and professionals traveling abroad. Additionally, the Protectorate General of Emigrants administers the Emigration Act 1983 and overseas the eight field offices of the Protectors of Emigrants in various Indian cities.

Through the nine previous editions of the PBD convention, a multi-modal multi-platform architecture of policies and institutions has been structured to expand the limits of engagement of Pravasis with India. It has been recognized that the Overseas Indian community is in fact not a single entity, but a conglomerate of differentiated identities and experiences, each of which demands different approaches for engagement. Some

of the institutional arrangements initiated by the MOIA include the Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians, Overseas Indian Facilitation Center (OIFC), Global Indian Network of Knowledge (Global-INK), India Development Foundation for Overseas Indians, and PIO university.

Initiatives that have given expression to the needs of the Overseas Indian include the seminal Overseas Citizenship of India card that affords a number of privileges to holders on par with facilities available to Indian citizens, barring a few; the Know India Program, a 3 week tour of India for OI students; the Scholarship Program for Diaspora Children, for financial assistance in Indian higher education institutes; Tracing the Roots; and legal and financial assistance to Indian women deserted by the Overseas Indian spouses. A number of initiatives have been taken for Indian workers overseas such as labour agreements with different countries, emigration helplines, community welfare funds, and others.

The organizational partner for MOIA for the sixth consecutive year is the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), an independent not-for-profit non-governmental organization managed by industry. CII articulates the stance of Indian businesses in a partnership format to catalyse change and build competitiveness of the Indian economy. In existence since 1895, the institution represents the face of a contemporary and progressive national industrial entity, working with Government and with civil society for the development of the nation. Its membership includes over 8100 enterprises from private and public sectors, including small and medium enterprise and multi-national companies. About 90,000 companies are represented in CII through the membership of 400 national and regional associations for different industry sectors.

CII has taken up the agenda of "Business for Livelihood" for the year 2011-12. This converges the fundamental themes of spreading growth to disadvantaged sections of society, building skills for meeting emerging economic compulsions, and fostering a climate of good governance. In line with this, CII is placing increased focus on Affirmative Action, Skills Development and Governance during the year. With 64 offices and 7 Centres of Excellence in India, and 7 overseas offices in Australia, China, France,

Singapore, South Africa, UK, and USA, as well as institutional partnerships with 223 counterpart organisations in 90 countries, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.

The 10th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas carries forward the philosophy of engaging with the Global Indian through diversification of interaction in development issues and economic growth. In keeping with its principle of facilitating grass-roots engagement, the PBD would include Global Indians from different parts of the world, top representatives of state governments of India, and civil society and industry members. Recognising the changing facets of the Overseas Indian community as well as the overarching agenda of equitable development currently in force in India, PBD 2012 is themed 'Global Indian – Inclusive Growth'.

The highlights of the convention are:

- 1500-plus delegates from over 50 countries
- Chief Guest: Her Excellency Ms Kamla Persad Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago
- Focus on Rajasthan
- Distinguished guest speaker for PBD Oration series
- Interaction with Chief Ministers of seven states
- Special seminars on social entrepreneurship in water and solar energy
- Sessions with key ministers on matters of interest to Overseas Indians
- Five concurrent sessions
- Cultural programs

HIGHLIGHTS OF PBD 2011:

- Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, inaugurated the PBD Convention on 8 January in New Delhi.
- Her Excellency Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, President of India, presented the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2011 to 15 distinguished PIOs/NRIs, and delivered the Valedictory Address on 9 January.
- Chief Guest: Sir Anand Satyanand, Governor General of New Zealand.
- 2000+ delegates, including media, from over 50 countries across the globe.
- Special focus: North Eastern States of India.
- Prime Minister unveiled the foundation stone of Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, a research hub on and for Pravasis.
- Prime Minister released the publication 'Homeward Bound – A regulatory and investment handbook for Overseas Indians'. He also announced merger of Overseas Citizen of India and Person of Indian Origin cards into a single facility.
- Pre-convention seminars in health and education; four plenary sessions; and four parallel sessions
- 'Prof. C.K. Prahalad Memorial Lecture' by Prof. Gautam Ahuja, University of Michigan, USA.
- Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) Market Place for focused business networking.
- Cultural Programmes.

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Introduction

In an era of vanishing borders, easy travel, and seamless technological connectivity, the distance between Overseas Indians and the land of their roots has collapsed. Today, they are able to connect in real time on multiple technology-enabled platforms to every aspect of their interest, be it family ties through Skype, news as-it-happens through websites, or streaming cultural programs. There are even instances of weddings and other family functions being live-cast to enable participation across continents, grandmothers keeping an eye on their grandchildren through webcams in distant lands, and connections being continuously maintained through Facebook or other social network sites.

Within this scenario, the relevance of the term Overseas Indian has ceded way to the evolution of the Global Indian. The strength of the bonds of people of Indian origin based in other countries with their land of origin has intensified manifold. More important, the aspiration to re-connect – in the case of those who have been away from India for generations – or to remain connected – in the case of lower generation emigrants – has greatly extended. A new format of interaction is needed to align with emerging realities. The tenth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is a chance to acknowledge the evolving aspirations of the Global Indian.

A concurrent transformation is underway in India itself. No longer does the world consider it as a poor underdeveloped nation, beset with challenges of poverty alleviation, income generation and industrialization. Today, India is seen as a global leader, appreciated across the world for the way it has converged strong democratic institutions with rapid development. It is perceived as the next rising power of the world, but in a manner that is non-threatening and inclusive. The ideals of Mahatma Gandhi that underpin the Indian ethos impart it global recognition and respect.

As the world veers toward knowledge-led technology-rich global development, the people of India have emerged as strong participants in the world economy. Following economic liberalization since 1991, the pace of growth in India has considerably stepped up, leading to structural transformation not only of India's economy, but also of

its society, its polity and its knowledge frontiers. Indians today are redefining the way the world looks at itself and the way the world looks at India. India's inclusive growth model - that seeks to promote private entrepreneurship for generating income while making strong efforts to redistribute the fruits of progress towards needy underprivileged sections of society – has elicited wide interest.

As the nation integrates into global leadership platforms and reaches out to the world at large, it has the strength of its communities overseas to draw upon, a community that itself has re-shaped the perception of its ancestral land. Over the years, the people from different parts of India who ventured overseas have been valued members of the society in which they integrated. Whether they began as indentured workers on plantations, professionals and educated emigrants, or intrepid entrepreneurs, Indian communities all over the world elicit high accolades for their diligence, peaceful nature, and contribution to local economies and societies. In particular, the evolution of perception about India as a knowledge-rich land of ancient and modern heritage derives much from the Overseas Indian community.

What emerges from the rapid development of India and the presence of a large Indian community overseas is that the term Global Indian is no longer location-specific. It refers both to the Pravasis based overseas as well as Indians based in India who have a global vision. The distance gaps between Pravasis and Indians are narrowing rapidly not only with the advent of technology but also with the emergence of the new India.

Recognizing that the nature of interaction between India and Overseas Indians is constantly evolving, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has reconfigured to align with emerging trends. It has brought out a Strategic Plan for the next five years to guide its efforts for a meaningful and impactful engagement between these two strong partners on the global stage. The intention is to facilitate and enable participation of the Global Indian in the dynamic Indian growth story.

The Plan is premised on the emergence of expatriate communities from developing countries to advanced economies which now constitute a significant talent pool for growth of their native lands. It acknowledges that the overseas community serves as a

strategic bridge and interface between the country of their origin and the country of their residence. According to it, the success of the bridge is predicated upon the 'ability of the overseas community to develop and project a coherent, intrinsically motivated and progressive identity', as well as the ability of the native country to 'establish conditions and institutions for sustainable, symbiotic and mutually rewarding engagement'.

In alignment with its stated mission for a vibrant institutional framework to support mutually beneficial networks with Overseas Indians that would optimize the development impact for India, as well as enable them to participate in emerging opportunities in India, MOIA's policy imperatives are as below:

- i) To bring a strategic dimension to India's engagement with Overseas Indian community;
- ii) Offer customized solutions to meet the varied expectations of the Overseas Indian community including economic migrants, both workers and professionals;
- iii) Tap the investible Overseas Indian community in terms of knowledge and resources in diversified economic, social and cultural areas.
- iv) Anchor diasporic and skills for overseas employment initiatives in the States

MOIA has identified six fundamental strategic imperatives to give shape to its agenda:

1. Transforming brain-drain to brain-gain: Encourage Indians to partner with the Government and the corporations in its development agenda by offering special status and incentives. This knowledge transfer is being facilitated through the Indian Development Foundation as well as Global-INK. Priority areas are detailed as those that need innovation and technological interventions to improve service delivery such as local governance, post-school education, etc.
2. Facilitating Overseas Indian philanthropy: Facilitate capital flows from Overseas Indians. Several constraints to harnessing the philanthropic propensities of Overseas Indians are observed including the absence of a credible single window, and the requirements of the FCRA. These need to be addressed.

3. Overseas Indians as a Strategic Resource: Advocacy – invite participation and frequent dialogue with professional bodies including Overseas Indians to share perspectives and strategies. Members of the ‘old community’ of those who migrated in the 19th century have now reached heights of political and economic leadership, while new community members are emerging as policy advocates in their countries. Both these communities can be tapped to build a positive image of India in global forums.
4. International migration: positioning India as a preferred source country for economic migration – Partner with states and partners to develop skills which are in short supply internationally and help upskill and reskill with the aim of developing global citizens.
5. Establishing strategic economic depth in new destination countries: Facilitate Overseas Indians and Indian business to invest and share learnings to support the economic growth of developing economies that are of strategic interest.
6. Protection and welfare: Provide institutional support to vulnerable Overseas Indians including women – Review policy and re-engineer processes to be friendly to Overseas Indians and emigrants.

The PBD conventions are an important component of MOIA’s agenda and action plan. PBD 2012 would aim to consolidate and strengthen the various platforms of engagement built by MOIA over the past decade in order to offer value-added initiatives for the strategic plan. Being held in Rajasthan for the first time, the PBD would showcase the great strides made by the state in recent years towards a responsive and caring leader of economic growth in the country. Two pre-convention seminars are being organized in tune with the priorities of the state on social entrepreneurship ventures in the area of water, and investment in R&D for solar energy.

The inaugural session would be addressed by Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, touching upon the role of the Global Indian in India’s inclusive growth process. The current state of the Indian economy following two decades of economic

liberalization would be presented in Plenary 1. Plenary 2 would delve into cultural bonds between Overseas Indian and India while Plenary 3 is envisaged as a business session for participation of Pravasis in India's development and social fields. Chief Ministers of different states would address Plenary 4. Parallel state sessions would be held as well as concurrent sessions on development, knowledge and technology exchange, youth connectivity and gender issues. A special session on Gulf would be part of the proceedings. The PBD Oratory would present the views of an eminent Overseas Indian.

The Valedictory Session would be addressed by Her Excellency Smt Pratibha Devisingh Patil, President of India, who would also confer the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awards on distinguished Overseas Indians who have made a special contribution to society.

An evolution is underway in the world. The tectonic shifts of the previous few years have accelerated the ascendance of emerging economies. As a large rapidly-developing nation, India occupies a special place in the firmament of nations, a place that is well-recognised in the world. Its engagement with the world is changing in myriad fashions. The Overseas Indian community is a critical element of the rise of India and India is keen to enable their participation in her path to inclusive growth and development. The reinvigorated synergy of India and the Overseas Indian community is an idea whose time has come.

Inaugural Session

Global Indian: Inclusive Growth – Next Generation Partnerships

The global Indian today is the Pravasi living overseas as well as the globally-connected citizen resident in India. Both are equal players in the renewed vitality of India, driving India's interface with the world. As India continues decisively on its path to inclusive growth, how can India strengthen its holistic and multifaceted partnership with Pravasis?

Time was when the economic development model trod a well-worn path – a strong state-centric growth strategy, low-cost labour arbitrage manufacturing, and controlled domestic consumption for export-led growth in a competitive global economy. All this operated within carefully calibrated political environments.

Enter a large, energetic economy and vociferous democracy that oversets convention – India. Following five years of close to 9% annual GDP growth, briefly interrupted due to global slowdown, India returned emphatically to its inherent momentum, achieving 8.5% growth in the last financial year 2010-11. It is now viewed as a stable growth pole for a global economy still fragile.

Driven by domestic consumption, an innovative entrepreneurial class, and global integration, India's new development experience is being termed the Inclusive Growth model. The chief characteristic of this model is creating an enabling climate for doing business that fosters rapid expansion of the economic pie, accompanied by targeted Government schemes channeling income to those who need it most. A self-sustaining growth impulse is thus initiated that leads to a virtuous spiral of prosperity and development.

India's growth model is emerging as a paradigm for developing nations, setting new trends for global businesses and opening new opportunities for global growth. Several features of this growth model are unique.

Democracy: Addressing the Asia Society in Mumbai in October 2010, Lawrence Summers spoke of an enduring 'Mumbai Consensus' "based on the idea of a democratic developmental state, driven not by a mercantilist emphasis on exports, but a

people-centered emphasis on growing levels of consumptions and a widening middle class.”

A multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-linguistic country, India enshrined universal civil rights and secular democracy in its 1950 Constitution and has faithfully upheld its tenets and institutions through the decades. Rule of law, free press, articulate civil society, private property rights, and accountable executive ensure that pluralism finds expression. While this may seem to slow down economic growth, ultimately such political freedoms expand space for economic freedoms and are sustainable over the long term.

Private enterprise: India adopted the mixed economy framework at Independence in 1947, building a strong industrial base from scratch through iconic state giants. However, since industrial liberalization from 1991, Government has stepped back from running businesses and views its role as that of facilitator, regulator and enabler.

Encouraged by continuing reforms, private entrepreneurship has taken over the reins of growth. Its contribution to employment, incomes, savings and investment, and the community is significant and growing rapidly. Large Indian corporates are the engine of growth for new economic sectors such as IT, telecommunications, and manufacturing, many corporates emerging as multinationals. As vital partners in the Inclusive Growth aspiration, they are reaching down to rural hinterlands and new consumer markets. At the other end, a huge, thriving and vibrant base of small entrepreneurs is driving growth at the bottom of the pyramid.

Inclusive policies: “India is succeeding in fostering greater domestic demand in part by directing economic policies and incentives toward the bottom of the income pyramid,” said US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner in an article in November 2010¹. Partnering an articulate and committed civil society, the Indian Government has increased focus on equitable growth, through the rural employment guarantee program,

¹ Read more: <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2010/November/2010112111803su0.0572474.html&distid=ucs#ixzz1A30zL5KG>

rural infrastructure and other flagship schemes. Budgetary allocation for social services has gone up by more than 2.6 times between 2004-05 and 2009-10. This includes expenditure on education and health - which doubled in the period - as well as on social security and welfare, nutrition, welfare of backward classes, etc.

These initiatives have considerably added to grassroots empowerment and placed discretionary incomes in the hands of the most deprived citizens with unexpected results. Simultaneously, Indian corporates too are innovating for products suited to low-income groups and penetrating traditional village markets. The current consumption boom derives from resurgent rural economy, growing middle classes and young consumers.

Globalization: Lawrence Summers elaborated on the Mumbai Consensus, “A consensus based globally not on the idea that competitiveness was in service of a nation trying to win a zero sum game, but rather on the idea that through international integration, nations could diversify, pursue their strengths, and realize together the benefits of larger global markets.”

India’s integration with the global economy is a central facet of its economic growth model. One of the few emerging economies with a current account deficit, it is relying on the world to fuel its consumption and infrastructure investment. Its global openness indicator as measured by current inward and outward flows has crossed 60% of GDP. With robust services export earnings to finance its increasing appetite for imports, India has welcomed international partnership in its domestic markets.

What does the rise of a peaceful, consensual and inclusive India imply for global economies? As India surmounts myriad challenges, its huge and differentiated consumer base and infrastructure growth offer unprecedented opportunities across sectors. India’s growth with an inclusive global agenda expands economic space for the rest of the world.

At the same time, a global India offers the opportunity to the rest of the world to also join in the task of inclusive growth. Sustained strong measures are needed to ensure that

growth reaches out to developing and poor countries. It is necessary that they maintain rapid growth momentum that will enable their people to contain poverty and attain development. In this task, the efforts of Global Indians, wherever residing, can contribute substantially. It is for India to reach out to its global denizens so as to embrace them within its inclusive growth agenda.

New formats of partnership of India, Global Indians and developing nations are needed to make India's growth process globally inclusive. Overseas Indians with their unique understanding of diverse cultures can partner to reinforce economic, social and cultural linkages with India to spread growth in their countries of residence.

Plenary 1

Inclusive Growth: Two Decades of Economic Liberalisation

Since the economic reforms process was initiated in 1991, India has progressed rapidly on growth and human development. The resurgence of a vibrant and dynamic economy that is a global engine of growth throws open many opportunities for Pravasīs to participate in and benefit from its prosperity. Just as automotives, pharma, and telecom became growth hotspots, infrastructure and other sectors are now growing exponentially. What are the emerging sectors of investment potential? How can Pravasīs synergize their competencies with India's growth for optimal mutual gains?

On July 24th 1991, the Government of India presented the Statement of Industrial Policy that signaled the start of a new era of growth and development and was to transform the economic environment of the country. So sweeping were the changes that they have been likened to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Resulting in massive economic and social transformation in India, the two decades of economic reform since then have set the nation on a stable and sustainable path to inclusive development.

The Backdrop: The world stood at a precarious juncture at the start of the decade of the 1990s. Unprecedented political developments such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, unification of Germany, and protests in China had shaken the world and set the scene for huge changes in economic order. War in the Middle East and high oil prices placed further pressures on the global economy.

Besieged by global developments, the Indian economy too faced challenges in the several years preceding 1991, leading to a near crisis situation at the turn of the decade. Public debt, fiscal deficit and current account deficit were at danger levels. Foreign exchange reserves had slumped to levels barely enough to cover two weeks of imports. The nation was at risk of defaulting on its external loan obligations.

It was in this backdrop that the Government undertook the reforms process that has continued uninterrupted for twenty years.

The Advent of Reforms: The changes that began in 1991 encompassed the entire range of economic activity in India. Industrial activity, which until then had required a

license from the Government, was freed from permits and industrial sectors reserved for investment by the state were opened up to private investment. Entrepreneurs were at liberty to enter any sector, barring a few sensitive sectors, with any amount of investment.

Tax reforms drastically lowered taxation levels, simplified procedures and moved towards uniformity. Licenses for imports were removed and customs duties were slashed, opening the country to foreign goods. External sector reforms promoted the globalization of the Indian economy. Simultaneously, the financial sector too was liberalized, with a series of steps taken to enlarge access to funds for the private sector. Foreign direct investment was encouraged and a number of multinational companies entered the Indian markets. New sectoral policies enabled specific industries to surge ahead, setting a new pace for growth.

Over the two decades since 1991, the country has remained steadfast on its reform agenda, drawing the interest of successive governments. The facilitative economic policies have been welcomed at the level of the state governments which have also been proactive in opening up their economies to attract investments.

The Achievements: Economic liberalization crafted an entirely new paradigm of growth and development. This is most evident in the elevation of the growth trajectory which crossed from a 5-6% level to 8-9% level during the twenty years. Poverty ratios too have improved substantially, recording fall in absolute numbers of people below the poverty line. Human development indicators such as life expectancy, literacy, infant mortality ratio, maternal mortality ratio and others too have improved.

In economic terms, the major achievement has been dramatic increase in savings and investment ratios, the drivers of GDP growth. The private sector has greatly expanded its footprint in areas such as investment, tax contribution, manufacturing output and exports. Liberalisation of the financial sector has facilitated access to funds for large private sector projects.

A modern Indian economy has been crafted over the last two decades since reforms. Today, India is respected for its knowledge economy as reflected in its iconic IT industry as well as in innovations, management styles and sunrise sectors. It is carving a place for itself in new talent-rich manufacturing industries such as automotives, aerospace, and life sciences. The globalization of the economy and integration with global flows of goods, services, people and technology has turned the economy into a favorite destination for global political and corporate leaders.

Much of this transformation emanated from the movement of Global Indians to all parts of the world. The re-connection of Overseas Indians with India accelerated in the past two decades as the engagement of those who left as students, professionals and entrepreneurs reached a critical mass. Researchers, knowledge workers, businessmen and skilled labourers built a new paradigm for India's globalisation process, tracking back and forth in chains of connectivity.

Significantly, the reform process has today led to the rise of a new India on the global platform. As a nation, India has proved the strong and positive relationship of democracy and development. Its growth path carries high credibility as it is accompanied by protection of basic human liberties and rights as enshrined in India's Constitution. The country stands as a paradigm for emerging economies across the world.

As India attains top three ranking among global economies over the next two decades, it will be the Global Indian who will be her interface with the world. Already, the presence of the Global Indian outweighs India's economic position in the world. This is evident by the value of remittances that come back to India each year, the highest for any country. It is also evident in the fact that Indian food is served in foreign university canteens, Indian movies are blockbusters overseas, Indian dances and music reverberate in many countries, and Indian-inspired fashions are increasingly visible in top hotspots. The progression of this trend, strengthened by the Global Indian, can make India not only an economic leader, but also a cultural, spiritual, and innovation leader.

The Challenges: The task of development and reforms is by no means complete. Poverty alleviation remains a central objective of the inclusive growth policies, accompanied by targeted measures to raise levels of human security through education and health. Efforts for employment generation, income growth and public services need to be expanded.

A number of economy sectors are yet to be addressed in the liberalization process. Agricultural productivity must rise if India is to continue to remain self sufficient in food. Infrastructure stock has to be built through innovative new means. Taxation, labour and financial sector reforms are to be completed. Procedural delays and governance are central challenges. The economy has some way to go in integration with the global economy.

The next few decades will remain busy as India fulfills its promise of becoming a top three global economy. Global Indians can partner in each of these challenges, with their innovative ideas, investments, and action leadership.

Some potential sectors for global economic interaction:

I. Engineering

The engineering sector is the largest segment of the Indian industrial sector and accounts for 12% of India's GDP². India's engineering exports during the period 2003-08 witnessed a CAGR of 31%. Exports are expected to reach \$76 billion in the present fiscal year (2011-12), witnessing a surge of 27% as compared to the last financial year. The Government's export strategy targets engineering exports worth US\$ 125 billion by 2014.

Engineering exports are particularly strong in automotives and transport equipment, where exports surged by 88% in 2010-11 over the previous year. India is in the process of carving out an enviable space for its automobiles and components, led by low-cost high-technology manufacturing expertise.

² IBEF

II. Pharmaceuticals

According to the Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council (Pharmexcil), pharmaceutical exports have grown by 15 per cent to touch \$10.3 billion in 2010-11.³ India ranks 13 in world pharmaceutical exports and Indian exports represent 1.59% of global pharma exports.⁴

United States, Russia, United Kingdom, South Africa and Nigeria are the sector's largest export destinations. India is also the largest exporter of pharmaceuticals to Sri Lanka, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Nepal and Ethiopia, among others.

As more drugs come off patent in the coming few years, Indian generics capacities are set to grow.

III. Chemicals

The Indian chemical industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. The industry ranks 12th in world in terms of volume of production of chemicals⁵ and contributes to around 16 percent of the total manufacturing exports from India.⁶ USA, Germany, China and Korea are India's largest export destinations. The major segments of the industry include organic and inorganic chemicals, agro-chemicals, tanning and dyeing extracts, essentials oils and perfumes. Exports of agro-chemicals while comparatively lower in value, have seen a tremendous growth of more than 1000% since 2006.

The Department of Commerce in its export strategy set an export target of US\$ 19 billion by 2013-14. The Government in its strategy aims to achieve its target through empowerment of SMEs.

IV. Gems and Jewellery

³ Financial Times, May 19,2011: Drug industry: Nation aims for role as global pharmacy

⁴ ITC Trade Map

⁵ Achema World News

⁶ World Development Indicators 2011

The Gems and Jewellery sector has been India's largest foreign exchange earner after petroleum products over the past few years. It contributes around 17% of India's total merchandise exports. India ranks 8th in the world in terms of value of export.

As per the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council's annual export performance figures, during 2010-11, exports rose to US\$ 43 billion. Cut and polished diamonds accounted for two-thirds of the total jewellery exports, with gold jewellery comprising almost one-third while colored gemstones and others accounted for 5%.

V. Textiles

India's textiles and clothing industry is one of the mainstays of the national economy. According to the Annual Report (2010-11) of the Ministry of Textiles, the Textile industry contributes about 14% to industrial production and 4% to GDP. The industry accounts for nearly 12% of the country's total exports basket and provides direct employment to more than 35 million people.⁷

The exports basket consists of a wide range of items comprising readymade garments, cotton textiles, handloom textiles, man-made fibre textiles, wool and woolen goods, silk, jute and handicrafts including carpets. USA and the EU account for about two-third of India's textiles exports.

VI. Leather and Leather Products

The leather industry occupies an important position in the Indian economy and contributes substantially to the export basket. The export of leather and leather products increased manifold over the past decades and touched US\$ 3.84 billion in 2010-11. India ranks 12th in the world in export of 'raw hides, skins and leather' (HS Code 41) and 4th in export of 'articles of leather' (HS Code 42).⁸

⁷ Ministry of Textiles Annual Report, 2010-11

⁸ ITC Trade map Data

The Government targets leather exports of US\$ 9 billion for the year 2013-14. The Union Budget 2011-2012 announced the setting up of Mega Leather Clusters in about seven states.

VII. Infrastructure

India's infrastructure financing requirements and the new manufacturing policy being finalised will open up US\$ 1 trillion opportunities for global investors over the next five years. The government has taken several policy decisions in making the Indian infrastructure sector an attractive investment destination for both domestic and foreign players. Steps taken by the government include opening up the sector to private players, liberalising foreign investment norms and setting up financing institutions for viability gap funding. The spending on projects like National Highway Development Project (NHDP), National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP), rural roads, aviation sector, and power have greatly increased in the last few years. The private sector has taken the lead in areas such as telecom and power, and is actively participating in transport sectors as well. The Indian government will award a record 7,300 km of road building contracts in 2011 worth about US\$ 12 billion. The capacity of Indian ports during 2010-11 crossed 1 billion tonnes per annum. Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow into ports has been registered at US\$ 1.64 billion from April 2000 to April 2011.

The infrastructure sector potential extends beyond construction to consultancy, financing, maintenance and repair, related services, etc.

INCLUSIVE INDIA: CONSOLIDATION PHASE

Fastest growing free market democracy

- Remains major global growth engine
- Markets are free, government is regulator and facilitator
- Dominated by private sector, entrepreneurial energy
- Democracy with rule of law, freedom of expression, human rights; more sustainable

Responsible global player

- Responsible role model for development and democracy
- Responsible management of diversity
- Responsible nuclear player
- Responsible exchange rate policy

Market for the world

- Domestic consumption – 57% of GDP [China 37%]
- Rising per capita incomes
- Youth and middle-class consumers
- Dynamic rural economy of 720-790 million
- Infrastructure mission of \$1 trillion for 2012-2017

Rewarding investment destination

- \$1 trillion infrastructure investments planned
- Services and manufacturing attracting high investments
- Emerging knowledge economy

Reform agenda on elevated trajectory

- Inclusive growth agenda, especially rural
- Direct and indirect taxes to be restructured
- Disinvestment of \$10 billion planned this year
- Manufacturing investment zones proposed
- Big changes in higher education expected

Demographic dividend

- 500 million people to be skilled by 2022
- 20 million additional workforce each year
- Literacy levels going up

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS SINCE MAY 2009

Economy and Industry:

- Reforms are high on the policy agenda. Petrol prices were deregulated; subsidies are being examined; off-budget items were placed back on the budget for greater transparency; the process of disinvestment was reinvigorated; financial inclusion has been accorded mission status, etc.
- Changes to the direct tax structure added more disposable income in the hands of consumers.
- Careful attention was given to reducing fiscal deficit in the last government budget and a clear roadmap laid out.
- GST is to be implemented by April 1, 2012. The Direct Tax Code has made good progress and will greatly simplify and streamline tax structures.
- A National Manufacturing Policy has been finalized and National Manufacturing Investment Zones are proposed. Areas such as labour flexibility and labour security, world-class infrastructure, rapid administrative procedures, sustainable urbanization, renewable energy, etc are to be addressed in this.
- Corporate disputes concerning mergers and acquisitions and amalgamations will be decided by the proposed fast-track adjudication body, National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)
- Discussions are also underway on foreign investment in retail.

Infrastructure:

- In order to catalyse the needed investment of \$1 trillion in infrastructure to 2017, the Planning Commission has been designated as nodal agency and is driving agendas and policies. More research is being done to identify and address roadblocks.
- A Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure was set up to monitor projects on quarterly basis.
- A separate capital formation index for infrastructure was put in place. Infra investment as a proportion of GDP has doubled in the last decade.
- The government has set up a committee under HDFC Chairman Deepak Parekh to review a proposal for a Rs 50,000-crore (~\$11 billion) infrastructure debt fund.
- PPP is being promoted aggressively. Changes in RFQs, RFPs and MCAs are being considered by NHAI. Regulatory Reform Bill is under consideration. The India Infrastructure Finance Corporation Limited is bridging viability gaps in finance.
- Specific targets have been set for power, roads, ports, airports, railways for 2010-11. Monitoring, a major issue with cost and time overruns, has been tightened by Planning Commission.

Plenary 2

Shared Connectivities: Symbiotic Linkages

Pravasis share robust bonds with their ancestral land in terms of culture, language, customs, and other 'soft' spheres. Several initiatives by India have helped strengthen these bonds, including the Know India Program, Trace Your Roots Program and educational scholarships. What are the gaps faced by Pravasis in the services available to them, and what further areas can India work on? What can overseas Indian communities do to reinforce cultural connectivities?

Following the previous Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, a landmark memorial was inaugurated at Kolkata, marking the starting point of the journeys of hundreds of thousands of girmityas overseas. The stories of these outbound indentured workers are amazing as they endured torturous travel, harsh living conditions, and unknown cultures to forge a new life for themselves in strange lands. The memorial commemorates the heroic sagas of these men and women who left the shores of their motherland in 1834-1920 and whose descendants today are scattered in millions all over the world.

Executive Vice President of GOPIO, Mr Ashook Ramsaran of Guyana, took the initiative for the memorial and drafted the inscription: "*[In] recognition and remembrance of their journeys as Indian indentured laborers to faraway lands seeking better livelihoods for themselves and their descendants; for their pioneering spirit, determination, resilience, endurance and perseverance amidst the extremely harsh and demeaning conditions they encountered; for their preservation of sense of origin, traditions, culture and religion, and their promotion of the Indian culture; for their achievements and successes despite insurmountable odds*".

The Government's Know India Program and Tracing Your Roots scheme help Pravasis to discover India and find out about their forebears who left the country generations previously. The 14th, 15th and 16th editions of the Know India program were held during 2010-11 in partnership with states for 100 Overseas Indians from different countries. The Overseas Citizenship of India card is applicable to those who have at least one great-grandparent from India.

Recognising the need of the Overseas Indian community to learn about their ancestors as well as to consolidate information and preserve documents, MOIA has taken the initiative of building the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra. This will serve as a focal point for networks with and among Overseas Indians. It will be developed as a hub of activities for sustainable, symbiotic and mutually rewarding economic, social and cultural engagement of India and Pravasis.

The center will include facilities and resources such as library, research center, meeting rooms, cultural center, art auditorium, museum, etc. It would also offer dedicated services for businesses for networking and other facilities. The Kendra is expected to emerge as a point of first contact for Overseas Indians visiting India. The Prime Minister unveiled the foundation stone of the building on 8th January, 2011 during the inauguration of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, 2011 in New Delhi.

The Kendra is another milestone in the efforts of the Government to strengthen the links of Pravasis with India. As part of the aspiration to facilitate participation of Overseas Indians in India's robust growth story, it is important to meet the needs of the community as also to build networks for social, educational and cultural interaction.

Apart from the Government, the efforts of the private sector to connect culturally with the overseas community have also surpassed expectations. The annual film awards ceremony, IIFA, held in 2011 in Toronto, reiterated the shared bonds and common interests of Pravasis with India. Events in India find resonance among Indian communities overseas who are not only fully abreast with happenings but also have strong opinions about them, just like their brothers and sisters in India. TV channels, internet and social networking sites, online newspapers, etc contribute to greater understanding about developments in India.

The challenge is to leverage these platforms to promote India's traditions among new generations of Overseas Indians. Vibrant interactive hubs to serve as nodal points for learning, social networking, and connecting with India are the need of the hour.

Towards this end, MOIA with the partnership of CII has undertaken mini-PBDs in different parts of the world. In 2011, Pravasi gatherings with MOIA were held in Trinidad

and Tobago and in Toronto. These were addressed by Minister, MOIA, Shri Vayalar Ravi as well as other key ministers, reiterating the commitment of India to open new chapters in their links with Overseas Indians.

The diverse nature of Indian communities leads to the formation of different social groupings particularly in places where there are large Indian communities. GOPIO and other similar organizations help bring these communities under a single umbrella. Such overarching organizations must be strengthened so that they are able to collectively pursue the interests of the community as a whole. Since these efforts are entirely voluntary, this becomes a challenging task.

GOPIO has helped bring some of the concerns and issues faced by Overseas Indians to the Indian government. Recently, GOPIO interacted with Ministry of External Affairs to ease administrative procedures of Indians who became citizens of other countries. GOPIO is also facilitating business linkages through its Business Council. These efforts need to be intensified so that a strong representative and networking voice for the Pravasi community is available. Such an organization would serve in working with the Indian government as well as local governments.

A large component of the Overseas Indian community comprises of workers who are on stays of differing periods overseas. The MOIA has made emigrant workers a special priority area through a range of initiatives designed to facilitate overseas travel for work as well as to ease their conditions in the place of work.

A number of bilateral labour agreements have been signed with Gulf countries and Malaysia. Social security agreements have been concluded with several European nations and Korea while others are being negotiated. These agreements are for the purpose of abolishing contributions to local social security arrangements for short-duration stays of professionals and workers. Human Resource Mobility Partnership Agreements are also in the process of negotiation with various countries which would open up new employment opportunities for Indians. The first Indian Workers' Resource Center was inaugurated by Her Excellency the President of India at Dubai to offer legal assistance and aid to workers in distress.

At home, greater transparency for emigration has been made possible through dedicated websites. Migration issues are discussed with external agencies to promote research and suggest measures for curbing illegal migration. An Employers' Conference was held in February 2011 at Hyderabad, and was attended by 49 foreign employers from Gulf and South East Asian countries to raise issues of mutual concern.

It is when workers are faced with unprecedented danger that the Government of India truly demonstrates its solidarity. When conditions in Libya became untenable following unrest and eruption of violence in February 2011, thousands of Indian workers were affected. The Government stepped in to evacuate Indian nationals on emergency basis, providing planes and ships to transport them back to India. At the airport in Delhi, MOIA made arrangements to receive them, look after them, and then ensure that they made it back safely to their homes.

Plenary 3

Business Session: Partnering for Prosperity

Education, healthcare, rural development, gender issues.....these have been some of areas in which Pravasis have wholeheartedly partnered in India. The country's inclusive growth drive and targeted programs such as universal education and National Rural Health Mission offer platforms for integrating Pravasis into the endeavour. How can Pravasis work with government institutions for meeting common development objectives?

Since the PBD conventions began in 2003, many cataclysmic changes in the global and the Indian economy have been witnessed. During this period, Overseas Indians have continued to distinguish themselves on the global arena and indeed have evolved a new visibility and increased presence in the international community.

The world is now emerging from unprecedented global economic turmoil. In this context, it is all the more important to intensify global engagement. Indian-origin people, scattered in all countries, play a significant role in connecting the world with India. Indeed, as India grows, the overseas Indian community must benefit strongly from its potential just as children benefit from the prosperity of their ancestors. The various routes of engagement include trade in goods and services, direct investments, technology exchange, investment in social sectors such as education and health, and finally knowledge sectors.

The Indian government has set in place a conducive and facilitative environment to foster and promote entrepreneurship and investment. These policy measures are directed towards two major objectives. The first is to grow the economic pie in an optimal manner and emphatically boost GDP growth to its natural path of over ten percent. The second is to take targeted steps in order to ensure equitable and inclusive distribution of the fruits of growth.

Several measures have been taken for the twin objectives.

For economic participation, a new set of tax measures is being proposed. The Value Added Tax is to be replaced by a universal Goods and Services Tax that will greatly add

to streamlining the present indirect tax structure and make Indian manufacturing more competitive. GST is to be implemented by April 1, 2012. The Direct Tax Code has made good progress and will greatly simplify tax structures, adding to efficiency and transparency.

Corporate disputes concerning mergers and acquisitions and amalgamations will be decided by the proposed fast-track adjudication body, National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). The Limited Liability Partnership Act has bridged the gap in corporate structures and encourages small investors to flourish. Discussions are also underway on foreign investment in multi-brand retail formats. All these can be brought to the attention of global investors by Overseas Indian business groups.

The inclusive growth agenda has involved a number of steps for social welfare, directing incomes and key social services at poor, rural, and marginalized sections of society.

A major new development has been the Right to Education Act. This entails mandatory provision of school facilities to ensure free and compulsory education for children from the ages of 6 to 14 years. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or Universal Education Mission, is the nodal program for implementation through state governments in a fund-sharing mode. Considerable progress has been made in building new schools, upgrading facilities, hiring new teachers, and providing mid-day meals. However, much still needs to be done, especially in quality of curriculum and teaching methods. Rural schools in particular still lack essential tools and facilities such as libraries, computers, etc.

There are also huge opportunities in post-school education, including higher education and skill development. The government has undertaken a mission to skill 500 million youth by 2022. A three-tier infrastructure has been set up, monitored at the apex level by the Prime Minister. The National Skill Development Corporation has been established in a public private partnership mode to catalyse projects through rapid and efficient deployment of funds specially set up for the purpose. Several projects have already been initiated.

The government has also vastly increased university education including centers of excellence. New Central universities are proposed in all states with many already commencing operations. Besides this, private universities are also being set up. With these initiatives, that India will not only be able to effectively tap its own human resources, but also emerge as a center for higher education, leveraging its high reputation as a knowledge leader.

Social Sector Policy Developments

- In line with inclusive growth aspirations, major emphasis has been laid on the social sector.
- Right to Education was made a Fundamental Right and is being implemented from April 1, 2010, bringing free and compulsory universal education to children.
- Higher education is a high priority agenda. Four bills were introduced in Parliament, paving the way for operation of foreign varsities in India, checking malpractices, settling disputes and establishing accreditation and regulatory bodies.
- New Central universities have been established in 12 states, with 2 new IITs and IIMs and more such institutes on the anvil.
- For skill development, the National Skill Development Corporation, a public private partnership venture, is now operational with investments from the National Skill Development Fund. The target is to skill 500 million people by 2022.
- The Unique Identification Authority of India was set up on June 25, 2010, with private sector collaboration, and the first cards were rolled out by September 2010.
- Budgetary allocation for 2010-11 on social sector has been increased to about 37 per cent of the total Plan outlay. Flagship schemes such as the rural employment guarantee program (MNREGA) and rural infrastructure program (Bharat Nirman) have been escalated.
- A National Social Security Fund for unorganized sector workers offers protection and welfare to this category of workers for the first time.
- The National Rural Health Mission has made considerable progress. Infant Mortality Ratio has come down by 4 points to 53 in 2008. Immunization and natal delivery rates have improved. Four of five villages have Village Health and Sanitation Committees

Many overseas Indians have returned to India to set up and mentor quality educational institutions such as the Indian School of Business. Government is also setting up an NRI university and a South Asia university. The Overseas Indian family with its strong talents, excellent capacity for adapting to circumstances, and ability to operate within different cultures and environments should make a concerted effort to connect with

India's growth for its greater prosperity in the future. A pool of Overseas Indians in each state, contributing knowledge, funds and facilities, would greatly assist in this endeavour.

A number of excellent suggestions have emanated from Overseas Indians who have involved themselves in socio-economic development in India. The OIFC platform can be extended to partnerships with Indian communities worldwide for greater outreach and awareness dissemination. An Overseas Indian fund targeted at the infrastructure industry has been suggested.

The India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians, a not-for-profit trust, enjoys FCRA exemption and is being registered as a charity in USA to facilitate contributions from overseas. IDF would serve as a facilitator to connect philanthropic activities to grass-roots projects. An institutional mechanism to connect small and medium philanthropists to projects is recommended. It has been suggested that district level platforms be instituted to coordinate such funds.

Plenary 4

Global Indian: Local Solutions – Chief Ministers' Session

India's growth and development story has decisively shifted to the states and many states have evolved innovative models for their progress. Leaders of different states come together to highlight their policies for investment and development and to discuss the institutional support offered by them for Pravasis.

A key pillar of the PBD series has been to widen interaction of Overseas Indians at the grassroots. This has been facilitated through direct dialogue with state governments at the PBD platform, and state governments in turn are partners with MOIA in the engagement with the Pravasi community. Several states have instituted boards or panels to build greater linkages with Overseas Indians and facilitate their participation with the economic and social development of their state. These platforms act as single windows to help PIO/NRIs in areas including investment, knowledge, and contribution to inclusive growth on the one hand, and meeting their expectations on the other.

A recent positive development at the federal level in India has been the rapid progress of states that have been experiencing slow growth as compared to the average in India. In fact, some of these states were collectively given the acronym of BIMARU to designate their low incomes and rates of growth. However, the aspiration of state governments to attract investments and encourage private sector entrepreneurship has resulted in rapid growth in these states. Led by strong policy action, states such as Odisha, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have raised their rates of growth and embarked on a new road to development.

Among the larger states, per capita income in 2009-10 was lowest in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh at Rs 11,799 and Rs. 16,411 respectively; in Maharashtra and Haryana, the comparative figures were Rs 57,458 and Rs. 55,214 respectively, while Goan denizens laid claim to Rs 98,807 annual incomes and residents of Chandigarh earned an average of Rs 91,598.

However, the growth rate of per capita net state domestic product in Bihar crossed 11% in 2006-07 to 2009-10, topping that of Maharashtra at almost 9%.

According to the World Bank report 'Doing Business in India 2009', the reforms of 1991 led to moving 300 million people out of extreme poverty. It reiterates that national, state and local governments need to create an encouraging and supporting regulatory environment. In India, local practices vary from state to state, offering differing investment climates. This has resulted in divergent rates of growth and poverty alleviation across states.

Of 17 cities studied by the report in different states, the World Bank found that business environment was the most conducive in Ludhiana in Punjab, followed by Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh and Bhubaneswar in Orissa. The last three ranks were occupied by Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Kochi in Kerala, and Kolkata in West Bengal (now Paschim Banga). The report states that reforms at state and municipal levels have accelerated. For example, the average time to start a company in ten cities covered in 2007 and 2009 dropped to 35, the same as in Thailand, while the time to obtain a building permit dropped by an average of 25 days.

Administrative, legal and technological reforms were also introduced in the ten states studied. E-governance has become more wide-spread, being used for stamp duty payment, value-added tax registration, construction permits, etc. However, there are large variations among practices in states since national regulations are interpreted and implemented differently. The report reiterates that Indian cities and states must step up their pace of reform in order to compete with other global cities in the race for investment.

Most states in India have investment boards that facilitate investments and deal with administrative procedures and clearances. States have also brought out dedicated industrial policies to target certain sectors in accordance with their comparative advantages. Incentives are offered to investors for these sectors.

The session would offer an opportunity to engage with Chief Ministers of different states and share their perspectives on partnerships between state governments and Pravasis on economic and social development.

Concurrent Sessions

Seminar on Diaspora and Development: Return Migration

Development partnerships in education and healthcare can be scaled up from individual efforts to community endeavours, involving both Pravasis and panchayats. Pravasis aspire to transfer of funds and expertise for visible difference to places of their origin. Best practices will be shared at this session which would also examine partnership models.

Return migration has become commonplace in India as thousands of students, workers and professionals come back to their homeland after years spent abroad. What was once termed 'brain drain' has transformed into a 'brain gain' with the reverse migration of knowledge-enriched people. Some 60,000 professionals alone are estimated to have returned to India in 2010, lured by India's growth and opportunities. Indeed, Indian companies as well as multinational companies operating in India prefer to hire people who have lived and worked abroad since they are comfortable in different environments and cognizant with global practices. They truly embody the characteristics of the Global Indian.

The reverse migrants bring many changes with them that impact their local communities. New gated housing complexes have been built especially for these people. International schools are proliferating in many cities, allowing children to continue in the educational system that they have been accustomed to. Shops and supermarkets offer imported food products to cater to demand from these migrants. All these developments enrich the local environment.

The reasons for returning are varied, ranging from family obligations to better job opportunities and higher salaries to better living conditions. A key characteristic of returnees has been their desire to give back and to serve the nation. Thus the Returned NRIs Association, formed in 1992, has engaged in diverse community and social activities. Similar associations and groups in different cities help the continuous flow of returning migrants to adjust to their new lives in India. They also converge group efforts to help society around them.

In India itself, a concerted effort has been undertaken over the recent past to strengthen local governments, including panchayats in rural areas and municipalities in urban areas. Devolution of financial and decision-making powers to local self-governments has enabled them to be directly involved in a range of development projects such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), village roads, health centers, child and women's welfare, water management etc. What these local institutions lack is capacity to handle such projects effectively. Managing funds, accounting and auditing, and planning and execution of projects is a difficult task for them.

Although there are programs for capacity building, these are not sufficiently widespread. A convergence of knowledge, training and tools would greatly assist in the devolution aspiration.

Roundtable on Knowledge and Technology Exchange

Many multinational companies have set up base in India for R&D, product development and engineering solutions. Similarly, Pravasis have turned entrepreneurs in the technology space, especially Information Technology. This session will explore how Pravasis can leverage Indian talent for joint participation in innovation and research.

Over half of Silicon Valley's start-ups were founded by immigrants, a significant proportion of them of Indian origin. Indian-origin professionals make their presence felt in international metropolises such as Singapore, New York, and Hong Kong by the sheer numbers of those employed by banks, multinational companies, and Indian companies. Doctors of Indian origin are a substantial component of medical staff in UK, USA, and Gulf. Research institutions including in pure sciences too have high numbers of Indian-origin staffers.

Many of these Overseas Indians have been keen to share their expertise and knowledge with India. Although distance may be a limiting factor, the Government has established the Global India Network for Knowledge (Global-INK) a website designed to facilitate interaction and take up joint projects.

The portal provides a framework of moderated online communities to harness knowledge catering to different focus areas. Collaboration tools such as blogs, social networking, forums, and document management and sharing will enable the diverse stakeholders to connect and share knowledge and access knowledge solutions across the globe. It will also be an ideating platform incubating valuable storehouse of knowledge.

The development of Global INK has been facilitated by the MOIA in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry in a public-private partnership. Global INK remains at 'arm's length from the government' and is managed by a professional team under the leadership of an independent moderator. It has the autonomy to catalyse knowledge exchange and to develop a wide network of Overseas Indians, scientists, technologists and achievers from across the world.

Town Hall on Youth Connectivity

Engagement of the next generation of Pravasis with India has gathered pace as the vibrancy of their ancestral land and its global profile increasingly attracts youth. Young Pravasis are returning to enrich their cultural experience, learn languages, and work in India. Ideas for creating platforms of engagement in different spheres will be evolved in this session.

Today's Overseas Indian youth are better able to connect with India due to advances in technology. Films and music from India are easily available to them over the internet. Chat sites and social networking enable them to remain in touch with friends and family in India. The Global Indian is most likely to be a young person of Indian origin whose parents or grandparents made the transition overseas.

The challenge is to connect higher generation Overseas Indian youth whose ancestors left India several generations previously. Their links with India being more tenuous, greater effort is needed to meet their expectations even while the aspiration to benefit from India's growth exists.

Youth in India are a rising global force as India's working age population expands. At the last PBD, the activities of the Global Young Indian Professionals and Students were mentioned. The organization has over 1500 members and helps connect young

professionals to Indian administration. Fellowships and technology networks can help catalyse such initiatives.

Youth can best deal with solutions on their own; hence this session is envisaged as an interactive platform where suggestions and action agendas emanate from the audience.

Conclave on Gender

Gender issues relate to women's empowerment efforts in India such as education of the girl child, domestic abuse, and financial empowerment, among others. Gender issues in the Pravasi community have also received attention from the Indian government. Joint interventions and solutions for both sides will be considered in this session, with special mention of the role of political and professional women.

The position of women among Pravasis has varied. Women who left India as indentured labour worked hard in the fields as well as in their homes. They were instrumental in maintaining cultures and languages. Others who followed as wives of men settled overseas often remained out of the workforce. In current times, women have emerged strongly as professionals or as businesswomen and have even engaged actively in politics in their countries. Many of them have been successful in elections, attaining high positions in local and national governments. Her Excellency Ms Kamla Persad Bissessar is Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. In Canada, Dr Ruby Dhalla is a Member of Parliament, while in US Ms Nikki Haley is Governor of South Carolina.

As wives and mothers, Overseas Indian women have played a strong role in connectivity with India. As professionals too their role can be enlarged in order to enable them to be part of India's growth story. At the same time, women can offer their services in development of India in fields such as legal affairs, business and entrepreneurship, maternal and child care, vocational training for women, microfinance, and others.

Indian women have made great strides at the political level as well. The empowerment of over one million women as elected heads of local self-governments or panchayats has helped bring transparency and greater community participation in development efforts. Emboldened by the positive outcomes, many states in India have raised the

reservation of seats for women in panchayats from one-third to half, giving more women the opportunity to participate in local development.

A partnership of professional and political Overseas Indian women with panchayats in India could be a win-win process. For this, it may be useful to initiate a separate platform that would enable Indian women overseas to directly link with their counterparts in India.

Session on Gulf

The Gulf session of the PBD has emerged as a focal point for the PBD series. This is due to a strong bilateral engagement relating to India's need for oil resources from Gulf as well as Gulf's requirement for Indian workers. The Gulf countries are India's largest trading partners and an important source of investments. Political engagement between the two sides is strong and frequent.

The Indian government has instituted a number of steps for welfare of workers in the Gulf deriving from felt needs as expressed during the dedicated PBD sessions. Some of these include labour agreements, welfare officers, establishment of a welfare fund, distress helplines, etc. Government has also taken measures to facilitate emigration and curb illegal migration.

Gulf NRIs have raised certain issues related to investment avenues, taxes, returnees, etc. Cultural centers also need to be upgraded, according to them. One of the key concerns has been insufficient staff in Indian missions overseas which makes it difficult to address the increasing welfare and consular issues in the Gulf. Greater interaction on the PBD platform has helped alleviate some of the concerns while further suggestions would be elicited from Gulf participants.