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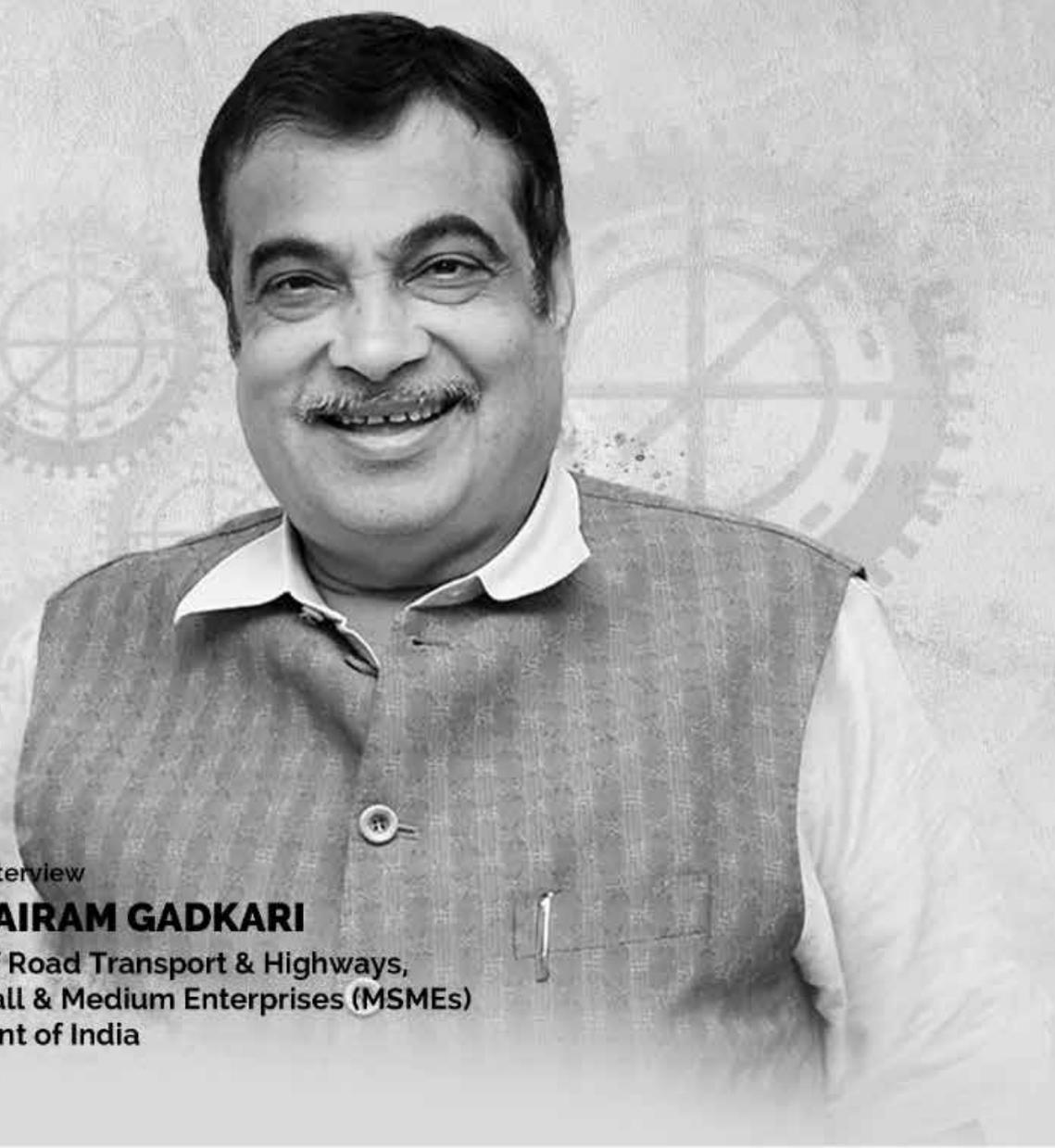
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Innovation for India's **TRANSFORMATION**



Exclusive Interview

NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI

Minister of Road Transport & Highways,
Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)
Government of India



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MESSAGE

The Hon'ble Vice President of India is happy to know that Elets Technomedia Pvt. Ltd. / eGov Magazine is organizing a three day virtual conference, 'Elets India Transformation Summit & Awards', from July 10 – 12, 2020.

The Hon'ble Vice President extends his greetings and congratulations to the organizers and the participants and wishes the event all success.

24/6/2020
(D. Prasanth Kumar Reddy)

New Delhi
24th June, 2020.

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> MAGAZINE

It compiles ICT-related advancements being introduced, exercised by various government organisations via eGovernance module.

> NEWS

Dealing with various key developments and policy-related decisions that define Indian governance style at large, this section throws light on the most important aspects.

> WEBSITE

With a reach of sixty lakhs, the website is pushing the Digital India campaign of the Government of India. It highlights various dimensions of anything and everything related to the changing trends of governance in India .

> EVENT REPORTS

This segment narrates the discussions and deliberations of participants at the occasional conferences held nationally or internationally.

> CASE STUDIES

It deals with in-depth detail of various projects being implemented in any part of the country, worth inspiring others in providing solutions.

> VIDEOS

The youtube channel 'EletsTV' deals with live recorded versions of tech-experts and key decision makers who participate in key debates or discussion of Elets knowledge conferences.

> INTERVIEWS

This section highlights various stakeholders, bureaucrats and policy makers influencing governance in the country.

India Bestrides Towards Transformation

With the launch of development-centric missions including Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), etc. the Government of India has made a mark which testifies its immense efforts to transform India. It is quite evident that in recent years major steps have been taken which provided a thrust to the country's overall functioning and global positioning in various aspects.

Initially, people pointed fingers on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government projecting an image that the government is high on slogans and quite low with implementation. However, PM's speech on the Independence Day of 2019 evidently reflected the changes, work done, and a new and stronger image of India in front of the world.

From coming up with schemes to increase the farmers' income by two folds to building an ecosystem adaptive enough to support businesses, there are many initiatives that have changed India's approach to development. A few more significant steps include-upscaling sustainable farming; supporting local innovations; strengthening local manufacturing; helping startups and MSMEs to flourish; upgrading healthcare infra; active multilateral and plurilateral engagements; expanding foreign relations; Swachh Bharat Mission; Smart Cities Mission; Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana; leading the world in solar power domain; enhancing roadways, railways, airways and overall mobility; and the list goes on and on.

This issue of the eGov magazine is dedicated to the India Transformation Summit 2020 organised by Elets Technomedia. The summit will witness Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Minister for MSMEs as the Chief Guest of the virtual summit. It will see active participation of various policymakers, city leaders, domain experts and other intelligentsia brainstorming on India's growth and development.

This issue further intends to bring in light how the effective measures and impactful strategies by the government have resulted in infrastructure development, enhanced mobility and connectivity, technology-powered processes and systems. How governance has improved with the intrusion of e-governance is another important aspect this issue highlights. Moreover, a wind of transformation is flowing through the nation and India is en-route to becoming an example for all developing nations. The new initiatives have added a whole new chapter to go in the history of India wherein a developing nation is heading towards Self Reliance.

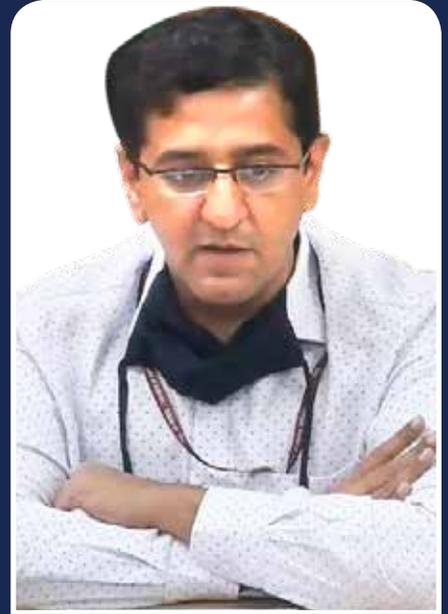


DR RAVI GUPTA

Editor-in-Chief, eGov magazine, and
 Founder Publisher & CEO,
 Elets Technomedia Pvt Ltd



08 INDIA SPEARHEADING



19 Saurabh Gaur, IAS
Joint Secretary, Ministry of
Electronics and Information
Technology (MeitY)



12 Nitin Gadkari

Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)



34 Dr Sumit D Chowdhury
Founder & CEO, Gaia
Smart Cities

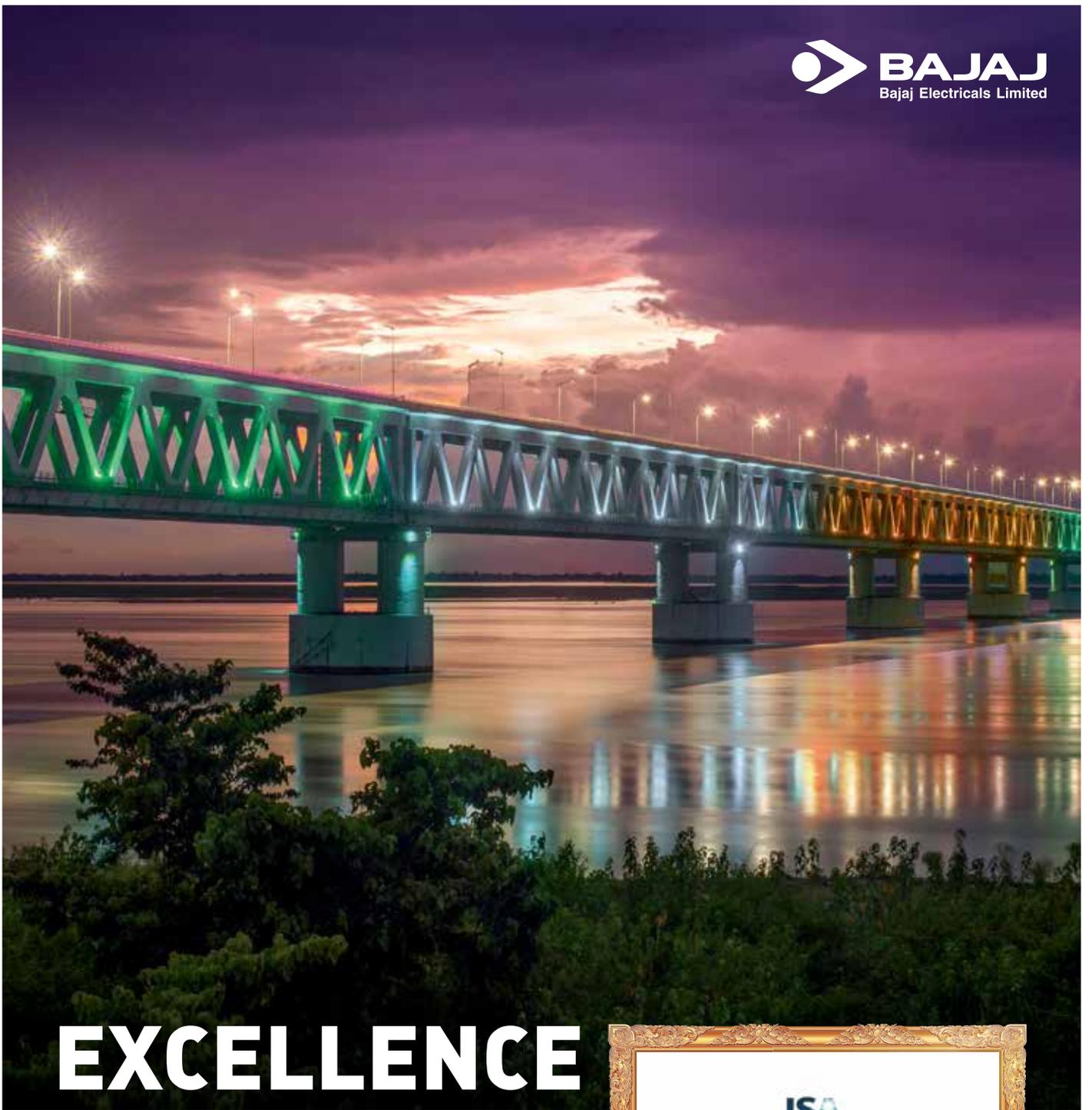


38 Amb. Chung-Kwang Tien
Ambassador, Taipei Economic and
Cultural Centre, India



40 Kumar Bachchan
Co-founder and COO,
Niveshan Technologies
India Private Limited

44 Major Move Aatmanirbhar Bharat



EXCELLENCE IS TRULY REWARDING

Bajaj Electricals has been conferred by the ISA with "The Global SSL Showcase Top 100 Award 2019" for illuminating the Bogibeel Rail-cum-Road Bridge in Dibrugarh, Assam, India.





INDIA GROWING

PROJECTED TO ACCELERATE FURTHER, SAYS WORLD BANK

INDIA SPEARHEADING

The second term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government is ongoing and the past six years have been significantly evident of India's leap towards upgrading the existing systems. From foreign relations, physical infrastructure, Smart City Mission to Swachh Bharat Mission, AMRUT, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, various schemes for the power sector, Startup India and more such initiatives, a wave of growth and development has been tiding on the nation, writes **Adarsh Som** of **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

UPSCALING E-GOVERNANCE



E-Governance is a significant aspect of a country's development. Why is it significant? Because there is a need for the government to serve the citizens online and not in line. However, looking at the progression of e-governance in India, there ample benefits of the technology that has come in light. Today, people have access to government services with just a click of the mouse or even on smartphones. Ranging from applying for driving license, pan card, election card, electricity connection, passport, to telemedicine, online bill payments, online FIRs, and the list goes on. This is how e-governance has transformed the existing pen-paper based system to a faster responding, better equipped, more accurate, widely available and accessible digital system.

In recent times, the country has added 19,513 GPs to the broadband infrastructure. Moreover, 1492 GPs were provided with broadband connectivity through satellite media. Further, over 200 percent rise in data usage through BharatNet. Since June 2019, more than 41,000 Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) have been added in the overall communication system in the country.



TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

With the rise in e-governance, digital platforms coming up to ease everyday operations. Especially in times like COVID crisis

wherein work from home has become the new norm, India has strengthened its approach to digital development. On this path of digital development, India and Finland have signed a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) for digital cooperation between the two countries.

Amidst the journey of transforming India through digitisation, 4058 railway stations have been installed with free WiFi in the past one year. Printed card tickets have been replaced by e-tickets and AI-based PNR confirmation predictor integrated with the IRCTC website helps the passengers to know waiting period. Moreover, Indian Railways also launched a passenger grievance portal - RailMadad.

The government launched e-pass systems across the nation which issued passes to people who were working for essential services to operate and travel during the lockdown period. India is rapidly growing and developing its digital infra easing down everyday functioning of the government as well as benefitting citizens with better service delivery accessible through their smartphones. As per the state by the government, India soars high in digital payments and UPI transactions. Further,

Empowering MSMEs

The government has readily come forward to handhold



MSMEs for their survival and growth. On their outstanding balance, MSMEs are being provided two percent interest subvention maximum up to Rs 1 crore. Furthermore, Rs 640.8. Crore has been released and claims of as many as 9.96lakh beneficiaries have been settled in the previous fiscal year. The government in strengthening its efforts to support MSMEs launched Credit Guarantee Trust Fund for MSMEs under which a unit can avail credit up to Rs 2 cr and 85 percent is guaranteed by the government. In the past fiscal year, the government has sanctioned credit guarantee of worth Rs 45,852 crore.

considering the IT industry, a growth of 7.7 percent observed in revenue year on year. By 8.1 percent exports in the industry have risen and 10.5 percent jobs have been created which accounts to 2,50,000 jobs.

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS & STARTUP INDIA



The Government of India has been proactive in strengthening the businesses in the country. With the launch of Ease of Doing business, India has ramped up its infra and services for the startups and well-established businesses in the country. According to the World Bank Report 2020, India was ranked 64th amongst 190 countries for ease of doing business. The rank is a leap of 14 places from the previous year's rankings wherein India was placed at 77. This shows enhancement in readiness for supporting businesses in the nation.

Considering significant measures taken to support startups in India, the government has recognized over 31,500 startups under the Startup India initiative. Further, a National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) has been constituted to advise the government for building a strong startup ecosystem. Moreover, for extending financial support, Credit Guarantee Scheme and Startup India Seed Fund scheme. Also, in order to facilitate the growth of startups, many reforms in regulations have been done.

One among the major moves made by the government is the amendment in Section 54GB of Income Tax Act for exempting taxes for the startup owners. Another one is the amendment in Section 79 of the Income Tax Act which allows the startups to carry forward their eligible losses. Further, moves include an amendment in Section 80-IAC of Income Tax Act for extending turnover criteria for eligible startup to Rs 100 crore. Till February 2020, 266 startups were granted the exemption under Section 80-IAC of Income Tax Act.

ENHANCING MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE



The Indian government has been actively pushing for electric mobility in India and has taken effective measures to empower e-mobility. GST rates on electric vehicles (EVs) reduced to five percent from 12 percent. Moreover, in an effort to make the EV infra affordable, the government slashed GST rates on EV chargers from 18 percent to five percent. In addition, the GST has been exempted for the hiring of electric buses by local authorities in order to promote the use of EV for public transportation. Moreover, an additional income tax deduction of Rs 1.5 lakh on the interest paid on loans to purchase electric vehicles. This amounts to a benefit of as much as Rs 2.5 lakh over the loan period to the taxpayers.

Moreover, one of the big moves was FAME India scheme under which 2.85 lakh buyers of electric vehicles have been provided by subsidies of Rs 360 crore. Another exemplary step was the



launch of National Common Mobility Card. India developed its first automated fare collection system wherein the mobility card will seamlessly work across Metro, City Bus, Railways, Parking, Toll, etc.

In its efforts to ramp up the infrastructure in the nation, the government launched various schemes like Affordable Housing for All, Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, Swachh Bharat Mission, etc. As on June 2020, 14.07 lakh housing units have been constructed within the past one year at a cost of Rs 28,931 crore. Moreover, the government released a sum of Rs 48.54 crore to National Housing Bank on July 31, 2019, for its disbursal to 12,000 beneficiaries under Rural Housing Interest Subsidy Scheme.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) projects for a total of 29,154 km road length and 363 LSBs have been sanctioned to States under different verticals. As much as 7505 km of road length has been completed using Green Technology. Besides this, the task force working on the infrastructure has submitted National Infrastructure Pipeline Report. And, it has been projected that a total amount of Rs 111 lakh crore will be invested in the infrastructure from 2020-25.

UPGRADING HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE

The ongoing Coronavirus outbreak has posed a major challenge in front of the government. And, the Centre has ramped up the country's healthcare infrastructure rapidly to deal with the crisis.

Following the COVID onset, the government started providing technical guidance for quarantine, surveillance,

Holistic Healthcare

The Centre came up with Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWC) to extend primary healthcare closer to people and provide active screenings for hypertension, diabetes, breast cancer, cervical cancer, etc.

Moreover, the launch of healthcare programmes like Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN), Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), Social Awareness and Actions to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully (SAANS), Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI), Joint Effort for Elimination of TB (JEET), etc. display India's stride towards becoming a developed and healthy nation.

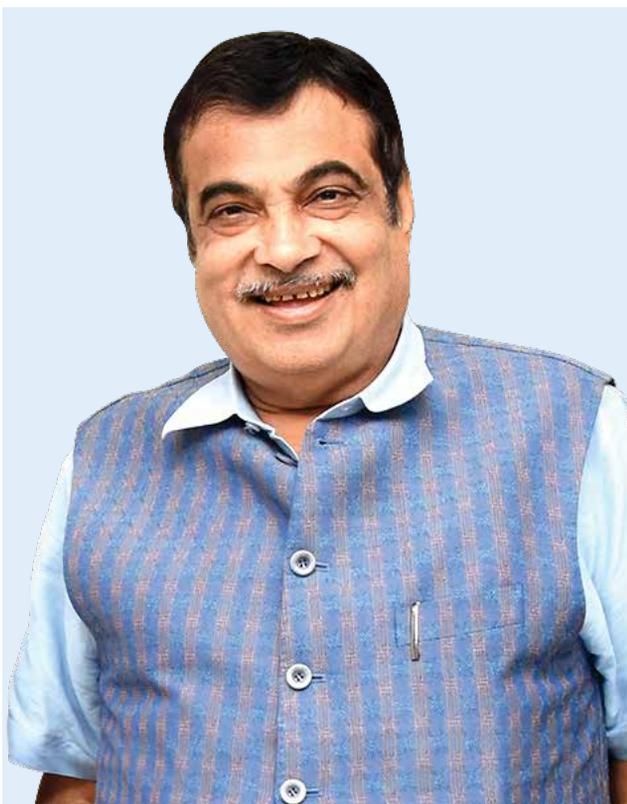
containment, testing and treatment, preventive measures, and so on. As on July 3, the total number of tests done in a day was 2,42,383 tests. Further, healthcare infra has been pumped up across the country. As of May 29, there were 1054 dedicated COVID hospitals with 1.81 lakh beds, 2681 COVID health care centres with 1.50 lakh beds, 7292 COVID care centres having a capacity of 6.62 lakh beds. Moreover, the Centre announced an insurance cover of Rs 50 lakh per person for health professionals under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY).

The government also leveraged IT to curb the menace of the pandemic. Hence, the Centre came up with Aarogya Setu App and e-Sanjeevani portal for teleconsultation services. Moreover, 1075 helpline number was activated. [mca.gov.in](https://www.mca.gov.in)



MSMEs & Transport Striding Towards Growth

Due to lockdowns imposed to prevent transmission of the Coronavirus, small businesses suffered huge losses and the transport sector has come to a halt. However, with relaxations from the Ministry of Home Affairs industries have started rev their engines again. To know about how the MSMEs and the transport sector is moving ahead towards growth and development, **Arpit Gupta** and **Adarsh Som** interacted with **Nitin Gadkari**, Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in an exclusive interview for the eGov Magazine.



NITIN GADKARI

Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

How has Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan's stimulus fund supported the roads and highways sector and MSMEs in regaining normalcy?

Under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan's stimulus fund, RBI has supported all infrastructure projects by giving moratorium against all loan payments due in COVID period. Besides RBI's support, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has extended the following support:

- All road agencies will now be providing up to six months extension to contractors without any costs which will be covering construction work as well as goods and services contracts.
- Partial release of bank guarantees to the extent of partially completed contracts.
- Compensation of toll loss for the period for which the toll collection was suspended.
- It has been observed that the toll collection has significantly decreased which has led to cash flow issues in many projects. National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has rolled out a policy for extending cash support in the form of COVID loan at a lower interest rate to help concessionaires.
- One-time dispensation for toll revision of concessions signed before 2008 to be undertaken on the basis of WPI prevailing in December rather than March. As WPI for March was very low because of prevailing conditions in the country.

As per the relief measures provided by MoRTH under Atma Nirbhar Bharat, all-out efforts were made to extend all possible help to Contractors, Concessionaires and developers of Road

Sr. No.	Type Of Cases	Samadhaan Data As On 14.05.2020		Samadhaan Data As On 07.07.2020	
		No. of Cases	Amount involved Rs, in crore.	No. of Cases	Amount involved Rs, in crore.
01	Total no. of cases against the				
	i. Central government departments	940	309.73	1054	341.89
	ii. CPSEs	2619	1539.41	3026	2283.44
	iii. State Govt.	3335	1872.4	4020	2378.43
	iv. Central Ministries.	555	270.3	643	313.98
	Total.	7449	3991.84	8743	5317.74
02	Total no. of mutually settled cases against the central government departments /CPSEs /State Govt/Central Ministries.	870		1000	
03	Total no. of disposed cases by MSEFC against the central government departments /CPSEs/State Govt/Central Ministries.	456		535	
04	Total no. of rejected cases by MSEFC against the central government departments /CPSEs /State Govt/Central Ministries.	940		1047	
05	Total no. of pending cases against the	No. of Cases	Amount involved Rs, in crore.	No. of Cases	Amount involved Rs, in crore.
	I. Central government departments	605	241.56	681	262.92
	ii. CPSEs	1775	1286.52	2079	1855.17
	iii. State Govt.	2480	1634.23	3008	2123.72
	iv. Central Ministries.	323	190.61	393	138.49
	Total	5183	3352.92	6161	4380.3

Note:The increase in the new cases filed on SAMADHAAN portal has been raised after Atma Nirbhar Bharat declaration.



Sectors by way of Time Extensions (3-6 months), relaxation in Contract provisions for ensuring cash flow, direct payment to subcontractors and release of retention money to augment cash flow, waiver of penalty in case of delay in submission of Performance Security (for new Contracts), and compensation of toll loss.

Availability, as well as the cost of credit, has been one of the perennial problems of this sector. MSME Sector survives on a very thin margin. The recently announced measures (i) Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), (ii) Distressed Asset Fund - Subordinated Debt for Stressed MSMEs (iii) Fund of Funds will help this sector in its pursuit towards mobilisation of funds both as Debt as well as Equity.

Definition: This Ministry, vide notification no. S.O.2119 (E) dated June 26, 2020, has notified composite criteria of classification of MSMEs based on investment in plant & Machinery/equipment and turnover of MSMEs. The new classification has come into effect from July 1, 2020.

Any person who intends to establish a micro, small or medium enterprise may file Udyam Registration online in the Udyam Registration portal, based on self-declaration with no requirement to upload documents, papers, certificates or proof. On registration, an enterprise (referred to as "Udyam" in the Udyam Registration portal) will be assigned a permanent

Smart highways use technologies like Highway Traffic Management System (HTMS) that includes Variable Message Signs (VMS) CCTV, Video Incident Detection System (VIDS), Warning Devices, Over Speed Checking System, Weigh-in-Motion, Pavement Management Systems, etc. to ensure that the highway provides world-class safety and comfort to the users.

identification number to be known as "Udyam Registration Number". An e-certificate, namely, "Udyam Registration Certificate" shall be issued on completion of the registration process. The total new registration is 33051 as on date.

With the change in criteria of classification of MSMEs, Enterprises with an investment of up to Rs 50 crore and turnover of up to Rs 250 crore will now be termed as medium enterprises, investment of up to Rs 10 crore and turnover of up to Rs 50 crore will be termed as small enterprises and investment up to Rs 1 crore and turnover up to Rs 5 crore as micro-enterprises.

Under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan's stimulus fund for government procurement, tenders up to Rs 200 crore will not be regarded as global tender. Earlier, a majority of MSMEs were unable to match the requirements due to the tender being global. With this change in classification criteria, MSMEs could now be able to participate in Government/ Highways related Tenders, which will help the MSMEs to grow their business and help MSME sector to come to normalcy faster.

Change in classification criteria will help firms increase their capacity without losing the benefits of being a small unit.

Delayed payment: On delayed payment, the matter has already been pursued with DPE and other Departments at Secretary level through D.O. Letter dated 18.05.2020. The Samadhaan data as below shows that the cases of delayed payments against central government departments /CPSEs / State Govt/Central Ministries have been mutually Settled/ disposed of in a speedy manner.

The resolving of delayed payments problems will increase the liquidity of MSMEs and increase their operational efficiency.

Procurement & Marketing Support:

Atma Nirbhar Abhiyan is a self-Reliant Indian Movement. It includes Package to cater to various sections including cottage industry, MSMEs, labourers, middle class, and industries, among others. It includes the following interventions for MSMEs related to Marketing Support. In the wake of the widespread COVID pandemic, accessibility of conventional modes of the market to the MSMEs have been greatly impacted and hence, the providing e-marketing platforms are the plausible solution.

- As regards, Procurement & Marketing Support to MSME is concerned, efforts are being made to create e-market linkage for MSMEs that could act as a Stopgap arrangement to the Conventional trade fairs and Exhibitions. Various trade bodies and Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) are being consulted to onboard them for holding Virtual trade



fairs and Exhibitions so that trade for MSMEs could be facilitated.

- The process of establishing a connection with e-commerce companies has been initiated to discuss ways and means to provide concessional membership to the MSMEs. Meeting with e-Commerce companies to deliberate the way forward has started.
- Organising India Global Joint Venture Shows not only to facilitate trade between Indian MSMEs but also facilitating Joint Ventures in areas of technology transfer, investment in equity, investment in startup companies through venture capital and angel funding, tie-ups with OEMs, tie-ups in areas of Skill development, tie-ups on Brand usage and network of businesses across the globe, and sharing of best business practices and management knowledge and information. A Webinar for consultation with the trade bodies will be held shortly to proceed further in the matter.

As it is known that there are business opportunities coming up as many companies are shifting their manufacturing from China, how do the MSMEs in India prepare to grab the opportunity?

For sustainable and robust growth of MSME Sector, M/o MSME has several schemes which would help Indian MSME to grab the opportunity. These schemes include the following:

Credit and Financial Assistance to MSMEs

- Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)
- Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme for Technology Upgradation (CLCSS)
- Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE)
- 2 percent Interest Subvention Scheme

Skill Development and Training to MSMEs

- Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP)

Infrastructure Support to MSMEs

- Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)
- MSE Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP)

Technology Upgradation and Competitiveness Scheme for MSMEs

- Design Clinic Scheme
- Lean Manufacturing Competitiveness Scheme (LMCS)
- Digital MSME Scheme
- Financial Support to MSMEs in ZED Certification
- Scheme Support for Entrepreneurial and Managerial Development of MSMEs through Incubators
- Building Awareness on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)
- Tool Rooms & MSME Technology Centres

Procurement and Marketing Support to MSMEs

- Procurement and Marketing Support (PMS)
- Scheme Procurement from Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs)
- For helping MSMEs, we have Development Institute: 32, Branch-26 and 18 Technology Centres covering all States/UTs. Recently the Government has taken a series of measures to contain the adverse impact of COVID19 on the MSME Sector. These include Rs 20,000 crores Subordinate Debt for Stressed MSMEs, Rs 50,000 cr. Equity infusion for MSMEs through Fund of Funds, MSME receivables from Gov and CPSEs to be released in 45 days, Definition of MSMEs revised, etc.

Is the road ministry planning to install a system which can automatically track the movement of ambulances and fire engines and can send alerts through traffic signals to people on roads to make the passage traffic-free or something similar?

The Ministry has been working on such a system. There are a few pointers to reflect the efforts from the ministry to adopt a smart approach using tracking systems to clear traffic for emergency situations.

- The Ministry has mandated the Vehicle Tracking System and specifications for such a system are already in place. It provides for vehicle tracking and emergency buttons.
- The system for Tracking for Public Service Vehicles (Commercial ones mainly) as a VTS device has been fitted in all new vehicles since 1st Jan 2019.
- For the old vehicles, we have given the powers to the State Government to specify the implementation date.
- The VTS based system has the functionality to track the ambulances, fire service vehicles.
- Further, the Government of India is financing a project for

implementing the Back end Control IT system in States under Nirbhaya Project which will help in monitoring vehicles fitted with VTS.

What are the major challenges that authorities face when it comes to EV infra establishment?

Major challenges in the creation of charging infrastructure are as under:-

- High Cost
- Limited Domestic Manufacturing (Charging Guns are being imported and assembled in India)
- Low Volume is resulting in a lesser number of players from participating

As smart roads are a new concept, please throw some light on what smart roads actually are and their significance?

Smart Highways are highways which blend new technologies in improving and strengthening highways and making them smart.

Technology: Smart highways use technologies like Highway Traffic Management System (HTMS) that includes Variable Message Signs (VMS) CCTV, Video Incident Detection System (VIDS), Warning Devices, Over Speed Checking System, Weigh-in-Motion, Pavement Management Systems, etc. to ensure that the highway provides world-class safety and comfort to the users.

Going Green: Environment friendly, as they use solar power for lighting on the entire stretch and plantation of trees along the stretch of the road is mandatory. In the case of space constraints, there could be vertical gardens with drip irrigation facilities.

Better ecosystem: These highways will have no red lights, no parking problems, sound and air pollution free environments along with our other features. These highways will provide speed and have local markets, restaurants, shopping complexes where the local residents get employment.

Smart tolling: Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) is part of the broad initiative in smart highways which is aimed at avoiding congestion at toll plazas and making payment of toll easy and quick. Further, Eastern Peripheral Expressway uses a closed tolling system in which the collections are made only on the distance travelled and not on the entire length.

Prototype: Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) country's first smart highway has been operational since May 2018. The highway is equipped with smart and intelligent highway traffic management system (HTMS) and video incident detection system (VIDS) and is set a benchmark in highway construction by being environment-friendly with world-class safety features

and smart/interactive infrastructure. The street lights are powered by 8 solar power plants having a capacity of 4000-kilowatt (4 MW). 2.5 lakh trees have been planted along the highway.

In dense cities like Delhi, there are a lot of parking issues that people face every day. Can multi-level car parks and underground parking for every residential colony be a potent solution for the woe?

In dense cities like Delhi, Multi-level Parking System is an efficient system and shall provide relief to the present woeful parking scenario, since they come with a number of advantages; the most vital advantage is the provision of a good number of parking slots within minimal space. The key advantages of Automated Multilevel Car Parking are as under:

For helping MSMEs, recently the Government has taken a series of measures to contain the adverse impact of COVID19 on the MSME Sector. These include Rs 20,000 crores Subordinate Debt for Stressed MSMEs, Rs 50,000 cr. Equity infusion for MSMEs through Fund of Funds, MSME receivables from Gov and CPSEs to be released in 45 days, Definition of MSMEs revised, etc.

Optimal utilization of space, lower maintenance and operational cost. Safeguard against on-road damages and theft. Environment-friendly nature (leads to more green spaces for plantation, etc). Comfortable for the drivers, saving time and fuel (since one does not have to drive around for locating parking space). Minimum Manual Intervention. Can be above ground or underground or combination of both. The concept of Automated Multilevel Car Parking System shall substantially contribute to the Smart City development programme as well.

Recently, on World Bicycle Day, many environmentalists and even the government leaders

advocated cycling. Sir, are the streets of Delhi or Mumbai or any other metro city properly equipped with cycling infra and safe for cyclists?

The Government is taking steps to ensure that safety features are built-in at the stage of design, manufacture, usage, operation and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized vehicles in line with international standards and practices in order to minimize adverse safety and environmental effects of vehicle operation on road users (including pedestrians and bicyclists) and infrastructure.

In India, how are we working on hydrogen-based fuel? What steps are being taken to shift the major chunk of fuel consumption on biodiesel or other biofuels?

This Ministry is in the process of notifying standards for the safety evaluation of Compressed Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicle and creating a road map for the development and further adoption of the Technology of Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicle.

Further, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has notified following mass emission standards-

- E-10 is notified vide GSR 412(E) dated 19.05.2015 for blending 10 percent Ethanol blending with gasoline. The materials of gasoline vehicles are currently compatible with E-10 fuel.
- E-85 has been notified vide G.S.R. 682(E) dated 12.07.2016 for 4 Wheeled vehicles, 2W, 3W.
- E-85 enables newly manufactured gasoline vehicles to mix gasoline and ethanol (85 percent by volume). Under the same notification, E-100 and ED-95 [95 percent ethanol and 5 percent additives (co-solvent and corrosion inhibitors and ignition improvers)] have been notified.'
- Mass emission standards for M-15 or M-100 and MD 95 have been notified vide G.S.R. 490(E) dated 24.05.2018 for M and N category vehicles and also 2W and 3W. M-15 implies that newly manufactured gasoline vehicles mix gasoline and methanol (15 percent by volume). MD-95 [95 percent methanol and 5 percent additives (co-solvent and corrosion inhibitors and ignition improvers)] fuel.
- The Ministry has notified the mass emission standards for new vehicles fitted with compression ignition engines compatible to run on a mixture of bio-diesel up to 100 percent, vide GSR 412(E) dated 11.04.2016.
- The emission standards for Bharat Stage VI (BS-VI) notified vide G.S.R 889(E) dated 16.09.2016 refers to vehicles fuelled with a blend of biodiesel (7 percent) and diesel. \
- Mass emission standards for Bio CNG (G.S.R. 498 (E), dated 16/06/2015)
- Mass Emission Standards for LNG. (G.S.R. 643 (E), dated 27/06/2017)
- Mass emission standards for M85 and Di-Methyl Ether (DME or D100) Vehicles

Production of Biofuel from coir pith

The demand for fossil fuels, a nonrenewable resource, is increasing day by day. Energy security of the world is vulnerable unless alternative fuels such as biofuels are developed to supplement fossil fuels. Biofuels are environmentally friendly so that fewer efforts are only needed to control the pollution caused by these. The Government of India has initiated a National Policy on Biofuels which aims at blending 20 percent of biofuels such as bioethanol and biodiesel with fossil fuels.

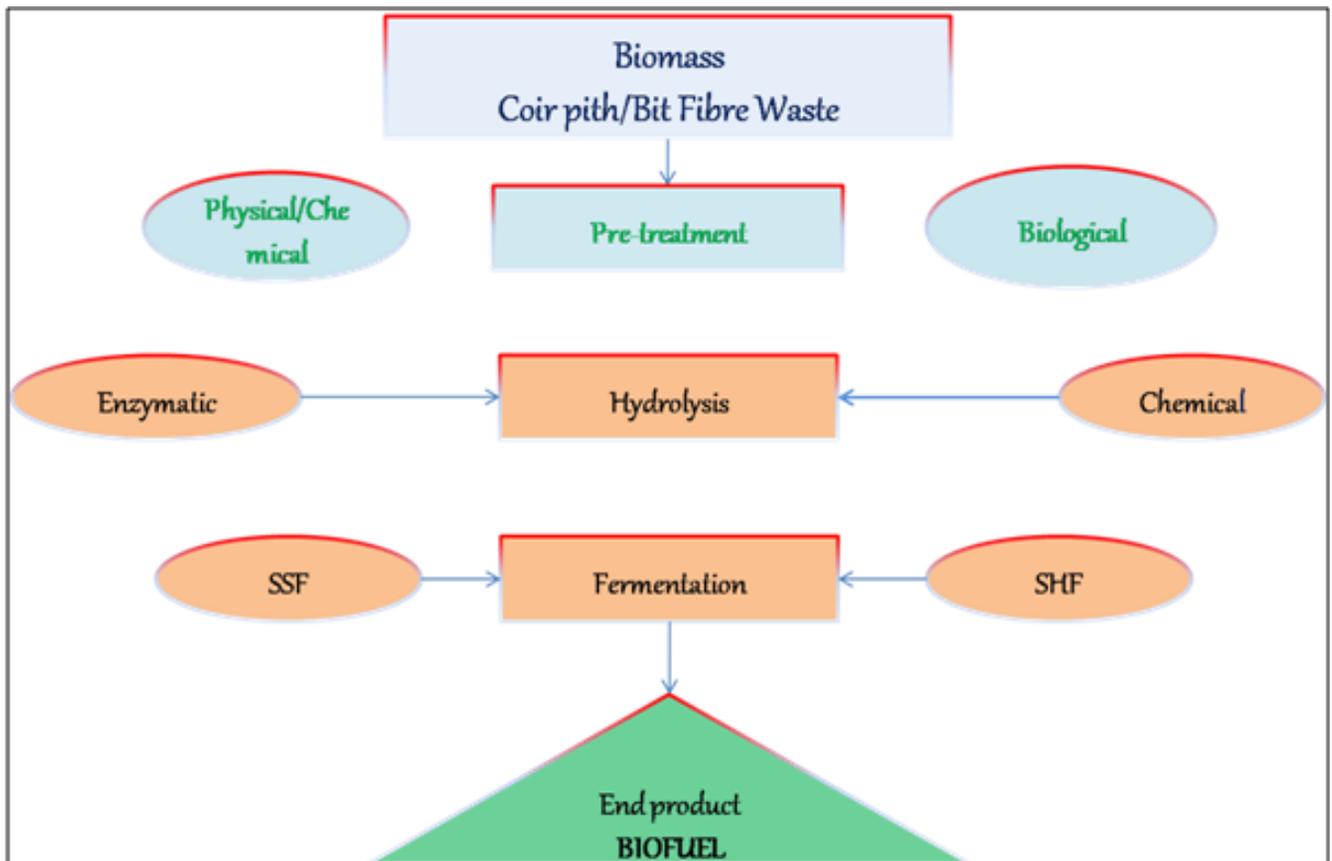
Biodiesel is a form of diesel fuel derived from plants or animals and consisting of long-chain fatty acid esters. It is typically made by chemically reacting lipids such as animal fat (tallow), soybean oil, or some other vegetable oil with alcohol, producing a methyl, ethyl or propyl ester. Fast Pyrolysis is an effective method for the production of bio-oil under varying temperatures in the absence of oxygen. This Bio-oil could be treated as in the same way as that of conventional fuels but is less polluting.

Processes need to be developed for effective removal of lignin with minimum loss of cellulose for the effective production of bio-ethanol. The production of bioethanol involves three major steps such as Pre-treatment for the removal of lignin, Hydrolysis for the depolymerisation of cellulose and

Fermentation which converts the available sugars into ethanol. These various steps need to be compared and optimised so that the method becomes effective for the production of Biofuel.

Coir pith is a by-product from the coir industry, which is a lignocellulosic material with high lignin percentage (38.5 percent) and cellulose content of 26.4 percent. Methods such as pyrolysis and fermentation are widely used for the production of biofuels from lignocellulosic materials. Coir pith which could be one of the best substrates for biofuel production needs to be utilized in an effective way so that optimised processes or conditions would give a higher yield from a minimum substrate.

CCRI has already initiated work on the extraction of biofuels from Coir Pith. A method of fast pyrolysis process has been utilised, where coir pith is subjected to a temperature of 350 to 400oC and the vapours generated are condensed to obtain the Bio-Oil. This crude bio-oil needs to be upgraded by the process of deoxygenation to obtain a better quality Biofuel. The sample of Biofuel extracted from coir pith has been tested for burning property and showed high calorific value. The work is being continued and further characterisation needs to be performed for confirmation of results. egov.gov





India Boosting IT & Electronics Sector

The Coronavirus pandemic has turned out to be an eyeopener for the government, projecting the importance of technology. The government of India has also been proactive at their end. It launched various schemes and programmes to boost the country's IT and Electronics Sector. Highlighting the facts, **Saurabh Gaur**, IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), interacted in an exclusive interview with **Arpit Gupta** of **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



SAURABH GAUR, IAS

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)

What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the Indian IT and Electronics sector? What mitigation measures are being undertaken?

We know that domestic electronics manufacturing in the country has increased substantially over the last few years. However, domestic value addition continues to be low in the range of 10-20 percent only, which is due to the lack of electronic components manufacturing ecosystem.

While we are steadily moving from Semi Knocked Down (SKD) to Completely Knocked Down (CKD) level of manufacturing, the pandemic of COVID-19 has halted the

The schemes together will enable large scale electronics manufacturing, a domestic supply chain ecosystem of components and state-of-the-art infrastructure and common facilities for large anchor units and their supply chain partners. It will contribute significantly to achieving a US\$ 1 trillion digital economy and a US\$ 5 trillion GDP by 2025.

process to a large extent as the supply chain is controlled by few economies of the world.

MSMEs are the most affected and bearing the brunt of the disruption in supplies caused due to the COVID-19 since they have limited resources and generally do not have many suppliers or alternative sources.

There are some short-term measures taken by the Government to respond to the immediate challenge. This includes promoting flexible working arrangements, helping in inter-state movement of the essential electronic goods, helping industry in their Business continuity plan and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the opening of their factory/plant.



You will be happy to know that, apart from the short-term measures taken by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the Government has come up with the trilogy of schemes including Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECs), and modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) scheme to give momentum to electronic manufacturing in the country.

MeitY has launched three schemes including PLI, SPECs, and Cluster Schemes (EMC 2.0). Can you please elaborate on the benefits of these schemes? How will it help India to ascend in electronics manufacturing?

I would like to say that the Government of India attaches high priority to electronics hardware manufacturing and it is one of the important pillars of both "Make in India" and "Digital India" programmes. The National Policy on Electronics 2019 (NPE 2019) envisions positioning India as a global hub for Electronics by creating an enabling environment for the industry to compete globally.

The current geopolitical situation and the huge domestic market is offering a great opportunity for India to establish itself as a global manufacturing hub for electronics - both for catering to the domestic demand as well as for exports.

The three new schemes including PLI, SPECs and EMC 2.0 highly resonate and in line with the NPE 2019. The schemes together will enable large scale electronics manufacturing, a domestic supply chain ecosystem of components and state-of-the-art infrastructure and common facilities for large anchor units and their supply chain partners. It will contribute significantly to achieving a US\$ 1 trillion digital economy and a US\$ 5 trillion GDP by 2025.

It is expected to achieve an incremental production of 8 lakh crore and an incremental export of 2 lakh crore over the next five years. The combined impact of the proposed schemes in terms of employment generation will be around 10,00,000 direct jobs.

Technologies like Blockchain, AI, Machine Learning, Internet of Things (IoT), Drone Technology, etc. are playing a major role in multiple arenas. Where do you see a role for these emerging technologies in future governance?

According to the UN e-Government Survey 2018, India is ranked at 96 on e-Government Development Index (EGDI) published by United Nations for the year 2018 (India's rank is improving from 107 in 2016 and 118 in 2014).

Our Smart Cities Network; Industry 4.0; Public Digital Platforms for Health, Education, Agriculture, etc. have to use Emerging Technologies and IoT Sensors and devices and therefore India has to build core strength in design and manufacturing of such devices. These are covered under both the PLI and SPECS Schemes. Further, there is a great opportunity to leverage our startups, software design and hardware manufacturing that will make India a global leader in these technologies.

Emerging technologies like AI, Blockchain, IoT and Cloud Initiatives have a very important role in future governance. According to a report by NITI Aayog, Discussion Paper on National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, AI/ML has the potential to transform India's nucleus - healthcare, agriculture, education, smart cities and infrastructure, and smart mobility and transportation.

The production of mobile phones in India grew from \$2.9 billion to \$24.3 billion between 2014 to 2019. Similarly, consumer electronics production grew from \$8.5 billion to \$11.2 billion. What are the next milestones and how would it contribute to bringing back the Indian economy on track?

It is a now known fact that India has emerged as the second-largest manufacturer of mobile phones in the world. The production of mobile phones has gone up from about six crore mobile phones in 2014-15 to approximately 33 crore mobile phones in 2019-20. Most of the major brands have either already set up their own manufacturing facilities or have sub-contracted manufacturing to Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) companies operating from India. Over 260 units are manufacturing cellular mobile phones and parts/ components thereof in the country, up from only two units in 2014.

With the PLI scheme for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, India will soon secure its place in the field of electronics manufacturing. The mobile phone market is dominated by five to six companies globally which account for about 80 percent of the world's market share. These companies are able to exploit large economies of scale to compete in global markets. It is imperative that these companies expand their operations in India and make it a major destination for manufacturing of mobile phones.

Similarly, other Ministries/ Department are also working on the Production Linked Incentive Schemes to promote the manufacturing of the products/goods handled by them.

Government has taken several initiatives for promotion of electronics manufacturing in the country, as a result of which the domestic production of electronic goods has increased substantially from Rs 1,90,366 crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 4,58,006 crore in 2018-19, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of about 25 percent.

India's electronics manufacturing has grown to Rs 4,58,000 crore today from Rs 1,90,366 crore in 2014. India's global manufacturing share has risen to 3 percent in 2018 from 1.3 percent in 2012. Exports have also spiked between 2018 and 2019. How do you see the growth in the coming years?

In recent years, Government has taken several initiatives for promotion of electronics manufacturing in the country, as a result of which the domestic production of electronic goods has increased substantially from Rs 1,90,366 crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 4,58,006 crore in 2018-19, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of about 25 percent. As per the reports from Industry Associations, the production may reach Rs 5,46,550 crore in 2019-20.



The growth in coming years will be driven by three Schemes- PLI, SPECS and EMC 2.0. These schemes will contribute to the vision of National Policy on Electronics 2019 (NPE 2019) notified on February 25, 2019, to position India as a global hub for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) by encouraging and driving capabilities in the country for developing core components, including chipsets, and creating an enabling environment for the industry to compete globally.

The schemes will lead to incremental production of Rs 8.0 lakh crore and lead to incremental export of Rs 2 lakh crore.

As of now, we understand the schemes are applicable to smartphone components and semiconductors- given that India is aspiring to attract disruptions in global value chains, would the scope of the current schemes/new schemes be announced to attract other hardware electronic suppliers?

It is very true that components form the backbone of all segments of electronics such as Medical Electronics, Strategic and Defence Electronics, Telecom Equipment, Industrial Electronics, Consumer Electronics, etc. Achieving a greater degree of self-reliance in components manufacturing will reduce dependence on other nations and improve the balance of trade. Components manufacturing is being aggressively pushed under both PLI and SPECS schemes.

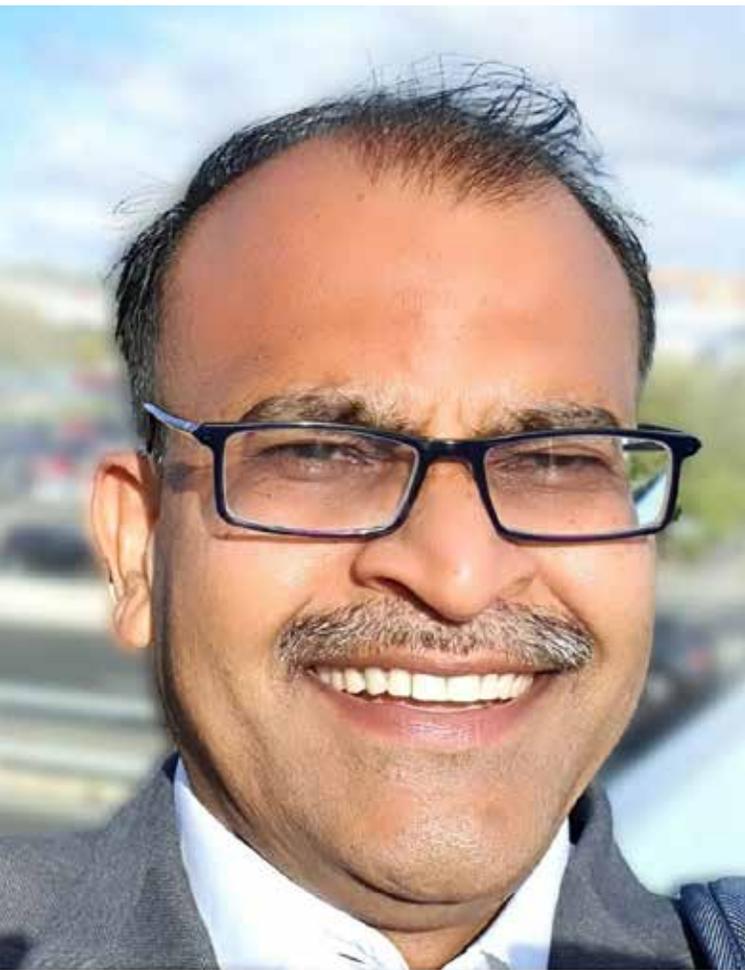
While PLI covers the specified electronics components which are basic building blocks of electronics, SPECS covers downstream value chain of electronic products only viz., Components, Semiconductors (Discrete as well as Integrated Circuits), Displays and specialized sub-assemblies/ parts, including capital goods for electronics manufacturing, all of which involve high value-added manufacturing (an average value addition of over 30%; going as high as 50% in several cases).

The new Schemes aspire to disrupt the global value chains and bring them to India. Once the anchor units / EMS units start shifting their base to India, it will nudge them to start manufacturing other electronics hardware, if the proper ecosystem and incentive are provided.

How will these three Schemes help in increase in increasing value addition and ultimately help India to be part of the Global Value Chains?

The new Schemes are focusing on the manufacturing of mobile handsets as well as components. Electronic components are the basic building blocks for the electronics industry and entail maximum value addition. Hence, these Schemes will promote companies to set up the whole value chain here in India and reduce import and will provide an overall conducive ecosystem of electronics manufacturing in India. Achieving high production of components will increase value addition to an average of 35% in the next 5 years from the current 20% - 25%, which is the objective envisaged under SPECS Scheme. 

TAMIL NADU SETS BENCHMARK OF E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA



Santosh K Misra

Commissioner of e-Governance
and CEO, Tamil Nadu e-Governance
Agency (TNeGA)

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the State governments across India have geared up their systems for remote functioning using advanced technologies. This has also strengthened the e-governance framework of the country. Highlighting the commendable initiatives taken by Tamil Nadu in this regard, **Santosh K Misra**, Commissioner of e-Governance and CEO, Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA), Department of Information Technology, Government of Tamil Nadu interacted in an exclusive interview with **Arpit Gupta** of **Elets News Network (ENN)**.

What are the major e-governance measures launched by TNeGA in times of COVID-19? How are you utilising technology to ensure last-mile delivery of essential services?

Various e-governance initiatives are launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu with the help of TNeGA to manage COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the major initiatives include:

TN e-Pass

The State developed a unified portal called 'TN ePASS' to facilitate the movement of individuals and industries within the state and beyond while adhering to the lockdown norms laid down by the Government. It was a large initiative in terms of volumes and efforts by TNeGA. It was launched on May 2, 2020. The software is customizable and fully modular. That means you can keep adding relaxation of a particular district or place or industry. This system was put in place in a very short time and was stable within a day. So far about 22 lakh passes have been processed on our portal <https://tnepass.tnega.org>.

IVRS Solution for COVID-19

Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is a tool for people to self-assess vulnerability to COVID-19 and for the department to identify the people needing help. This system was designed to reach out to the population which does not use smartphones and help them in understanding the symptoms of coronavirus. This system does not require an internet connection or a smartphone and was made available in the regional language Tamil. The way it works is that anyone can give a missed call to 9499912345. The system would then call them back and ask them to respond to simple questions. Their responses are analysed and risk categorisation of the caller is done. The district administration would step in for providing appropriate assistance. As on May 19, 2020, Aarogya Setu IVRS has received around 1.75 lakh calls.

TNGIS Portal for COVID-19

TNIGS is a one-stop portal for all location-based information on COVID-19 positive cases and contacts, geographical concentration and spread of the disease over a period of time.

Data Analysis and Visualizations

Another important measure by the State is collection, processing and analytics of data from field workers and health care systems and processes.

COVID-19 Quarantine Monitor Application

The mobile application is developed to monitor people who

have been put under quarantine by the Department of Public Health (DPH) or Law Enforcement authorities.

Citizen Engagement

Disseminating through short films & posters health and hygiene precautions to be followed by people to avoid coronavirus. Gathering positive news stories from districts and sharing in social media.



Technologies like Blockchain, AI, Machine Learning, Internet of Things (IoT), Drone Technology etc. are playing a major role in multiple arenas. What are the e-governance services developed and being delivered by deploying these technologies to combat the pandemic?

TNeGA has provided applications development, data management, GIS and data analytics services to Department of Public Health (DPH) and other stakeholders like Tamil Nadu Police by providing visibility into the prevalence of COVID-19 in order to make effective resource allocation decisions. Also, various touchless applications and services are provided by TNeGA with its partners, like AI-Based Facial Recognition System for Attendance, Drone technology for maintaining Sanitation, Chatbot for Information dissemination.

What is the role of data in e-governance? How are you managing such a huge data in this time of Corona crisis?

Data is the key to all the e-Governance initiatives. Analytics helps to leverage this vast information about projects and activities to effectively utilise resources for efficiency in public service delivery, transparency in governance and improving day-to-day operations.

For example, daily spread data serves as the basis for policymakers to take key decisions. For Example, the decision on how transport should be allowed could be based on data of disease spread.

In the post COVID era, which are the core areas/sectors in which maximum technology would be taking place?

COVID-19 will have a far-reaching effect on most sectors. It is easy to note that COVID-19 has made the concept of 'work from home' mainstream and acceptable to all sectors beyond the IT/ITES sector. Now, all entities, ranging from the Government to large and small enterprises are adopting it. This has huge implications on opportunities for engaging a more diverse workforce, enhance the participation of women in the workforce and enable businesses to tap the hinterlands and not just focus on cities or major urban centres for their operations.

Specifically, two sectors that could see radical change post-COVID-19 are health care and education. People are now comfortable to consult with doctors over a video conference, teachers & students are learning to use the online platforms effectively. While it is nobody's case that online would become the primary norms for teaching or healthcare, it is certain that major new avenues are now wide open.

Do you agree that the adoption of technology would increase in the near future by State governments?

Yes. This pandemic actually has introduced new opportunities for wider adoption of technology. There has always been a natural resistance whenever changes are introduced and technology is no exception. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has broken barriers at multiple levels. Many have realized the benefits of technology, its penetration in all sections of the society and the ease which it provides for all stakeholders. Internet, mobility and social media have created a 'networked society'. It has significantly influenced our response to COVID-19. It is therefore imperative for Governments to change the way they operate and interact with people.

Use of video conferencing technology and acceptance of work-from-home is a part of this evolving scenario. For instance, our entire GIS team was stranded at different places and yet they were able to deliver on their tasks in time, every



day. They collaborated using online tools and delivered on the tasks assigned to them. A large part of our workforce was using a work-from-home option for the entire period of lockdown and we did not notice much of a difference. Thus, we probably now have a lot of new converts advocating technology within the Government. Going forward, we should see major adoption of technology at a large-scale level in Governments.

How e-governance services are being delivered through Common Service Centres?

The CSCs were mostly shut for the entire lockdown period except for the taluk headquartered ones. We had to open these to handle e-pass requests from people who were not able to access the online e-pass system. However, most of our regular e-governance services are available online. In the last few days, the numbers are going up for online applications. People are using e-governance services.

Now following the new relaxations, as many as 25 districts in Tamil Nadu have been allowed to function normally (for the most part). The district collectors are slowly opening the CSCs to resume operations.

How is Tamil Nadu utilising the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Covid-19 management?

TNeGA is actively engaged with both start-ups and large enterprises to help manage COVID-19. It was heartening to see companies big and small, professionals and academics proactively reaching out to the Government and offer their help. Several companies, professionals and technology enthusiasts volunteered their time to help manage the pandemic. It has truly been a collaborative effort of Government and civil society in Tamil Nadu. [tn.gov](https://www.tn.gov.in)

Osmanabad Restraining COVID Crisis

With the onset of COVID-19 outbreak across the country claiming thousands of lives, the district authorities have buckled up their preparations to fight the pandemic and save lives. Enhancing functions, upscaling healthcare facilities, active monitoring and surveillance, increasing testing, and strict implementation of physical distancing are some of the measures adopted by various districts. To know more about measures taken by Osmanabad authorities, **Harshal Desai** of **Elets News Network (ENN)** interviewed **Deepa Mudhol-Munde**, Collector and District Magistrate, Osmanabad, Maharashtra.



DEEPA MUDHOL-MUNDE
Collector and District Magistrate,
Osmanabad, Maharashtra

With below 40 active cases of COVID-19, Osmanabad has been able to contain the virus to a great extent. Please elaborate on what are the initiatives you have undertaken in the district.

Osmanabad district belongs to the Marathwada region of Maharashtra. Up to date, we had 179 COVID cases, out of 179 cases, 136 had completely recovered and discharged. At present, only 36 cases are active and under supervised treatment. The main strategies that we adopted to tackle the COVID pandemic in our districts focussed a lot on the identification of migratory population, strict implementation in containment zones, special care of co-morbid patients and use of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) in spreading awareness.

Will you please elaborate on these initiatives in brief?

Identification of migratory population and their enumeration in the village level or ward level register, regular health checkups of all migratory population (suspect) for corona and their isolation in the farmhouse, schools, or in the identified institutional quarantine places at least for fourteen days helped us in mitigation of corona spread.

If we talk about data till June 22, 1,19,018 migratory population has been identified, screened for COVID, and isolated for fourteen days. Out of a total of 179 COVID positive patients, 175 which is 97.76 percent, were from the migratory population. I must tell you that the isolation



strategy of the high-risk migratory population made us successful in controlling the community spread to a great extent.

Further, we followed a strict implementation of Containment Zone SOPs. A total of 62 such zones were marked in Osmanabad. Out of the 62 zones, at present 26 are active. A total of 231 teams of health workers deployed in these zones for a survey for 14 days and 54,063 persons from the containment zones were enquired for COVID symptoms and screened for any signs of COVID by tracking their level of contact with COVID positive index case. Surprisingly, we had only 60 index cases and the remaining 119 were identified by expert teams of zones by tracking the close contacts of the index case. So, thus no spread of Corona observed beyond the containment zone and not even from the index case also.

How have you been able to take care of patients who are at higher risk?

We focussed a lot on the co-morbid patients who suffered from other diseases. As we know, co-morbidity is a hazard for the COVID patients. We all know that the mortality rate among co-morbid patients is high as compared with normal patients. In Osmanabad, special efforts have been made to improve the immunity of 1100 tuberculosis patients by providing them multivitamin tablets, protein powder along

with a hygiene kit of sanitizer and masks. In the same way leprosy, patients also supported with food kits, HIV/AIDS patients by providing them doorstep medicine supply along with food kits. No patient from this group was found positive. Thus the protection of co-morbid by training, counselling, and support helped us to keep them safe.

You mentioned about IEC use? Will you elaborate on this as well?

Yes. We made the most of IEC – that is Information, Education and Communication to spread awareness. Continuous IEC through various YouTube channels, social media handles, appeals from Akashwani by district level officers and experts, local bodies as well as special well-organized Janta Curfews by the people under the guidance of District Administration helped us to percolate the severity of coronavirus infection and message to take care for its prevention. Also, through flyers, District collector's letter to citizens, a series of Akashwani talks of district collectors for awareness and precaution to be taken during this pandemic and to increase the morals of citizens

How many containment zones are there currently please also brief us on the isolation facilities as well?

At present, there are a total of 26 active containment zones.

Up to date, 36 containment zones were closed after 28 days of completion of the last positive case detection in those areas.

For the feasibility, better compliance, comfort, and accessibility of people, we identified our schools for quarantine/ isolation at the village level. At the village/ward level nearly 750-800 schools from public/private were identified. At Block level 123 isolation/quarantine places like boarding's, ITI colleges, and hostels were identified. As a plan for COVID positive patients' treatment and isolation.

14 COVID Care Centers (CCC) having a bed capacity of 1400, 12 Dedicated COVID Health Centers (DCHC) of having the bed capacity of 540, and Dedicated COVID Hospitals (DCH) having a bed capacity of 500 are identified and converted to fight against COVID.

We focussed a lot on the co-morbid patients who suffered from other diseases. In Osmanabad, special efforts have been made to improve the immunity of 1100 tuberculosis patients by providing them multivitamin tablets, protein powder along with a hygiene kit of sanitizer and masks.

How have you been able to keep the morale of Corona warriors high? What were the challenges you faced?

In any disaster, the dedicated teams' involvement plays a key role in the mitigation of its immediate impact and further hazards. Corona pandemic is also the fearful one for the frontline workers initially. As its epidemiology was not known, prevention and mitigation guidelines were not there. So daily one to one communication through video conference with all field level doctors, front line workers like nurses, paramedical staff, police, teachers, along with HODs

involved in the process, this made us have clear dialogues with them, to identify their fear points and accordingly actions were taken like more training, IEC material provision, support of PPE, sessions of meditations, etc. Simultaneously, continuous support by providing logistics like sanitizers, PPE kits helped us to bring moral into practice also. Various WhatsApp groups were formed so that all staff and officers get timely support and help.

Is the corona testing facility operational in the district? Share some statistics.

At present, there is no facility of corona testing at the district level. As per government's orders, the Osmanabad district is linked with the lab of Latur Government Medical College. To date, 2,586 swabs have been tested.

This is also a glad point to share that through the people's participation and contribution, we are setting a testing lab at the sub-campus of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar University of nearly Rs 1 crore. This lab is in the final stage and will start testing in the next 15-20 days. To set-up this lab CSR funds from industries and banks like Balaji Amines, Osmanabad Janata Sahakari Bank, Natural Sugars and allied industries, Gokul Sugars, Avenue Supermarts limited, various Co-operative federations from Osmanabad, etc. is utilized.

The entire country has faced the issues of migrant labourers. How serious was this issue in your district and how did you handle it?

As compared to all other districts we are having fewer migrant labourers who want to go to their districts/states. A total of nearly 3,267 migrant labourers were sent to their respective districts/states by bus/train with coordination of divisional office and State government.

For the migration of labourers, a separate dedicated wing was established at block levels and also at the district level to collect necessary information and coordination with other districts and states. This helped for the quick transfer of these labourers. Also, we had nearly 36 labour camps wherein nearly 1250 labourers were kept and given food during initial lockdown stages. Also, we had Yoga, Pranayam, and Health sessions for these labourers at the relief camps.

How has the district administration been able to make the most of IT and eGovernance during the Covid-19 crisis?

During the initial stages of lockdown, most of the meetings for planning were conducted through the Video Conference of NIC for field-level machinery. For the intra-district



movement, we started the E-pass system at every block level and centrally at the district office. For inter-district movement the state government came up with a Central pass system for that dedicated team of 10 people under Tahsildar was made to approve the pass after verification. Also, to supervise high-risk patients and people coming in contact with positive patients, the police department used a sim-based geofencing facility. Most of the communication and filing work was done on e-mail. The procurement of emergency equipment was done through e-tendering.

Osmanabad had a large number of immigration during Pandemic from Pune, Mumbai and other metropolitan cities. To tackle the problem of unemployment and scarcity of labourers at industries, we circulated Google Form to collect

the information of skill and unskilled labourers and which was given to respective authorities to fill the gap from both sides. During the Lockdown period to resolve the citizens' complaints one dedicated WhatsApp complaint team was formed which redressed complaints with the help of respective authorities. For the distribution of foodgrains, the supply department developed NPH (Non-Priority Holder) app, which enabled them central monitoring on every PDS shop and also covered citizens not having ration cards in this system.

A number of NGOs have come forward to help the government in fighting COVID-19 in various ways. Did you have any such organization working in the district? Please elaborate.

During this pandemic, many NGOs were active and still working on different fronts. In Osmanabad also nearly 50-60 different NGOs are actively working for food distribution, awareness, survey, spraying of disinfectant, distribution of masks and sanitizer, etc. For example, Annapurna NGO is working for distribution of ready food packets to beggars, daily wage workers, patients, relatives from civil hospital areas etc. Daily they had distributed nearly 1000 food packets in Osmanabad city. Likewise, many NGOs were involved during this pandemic. Rupamata NGO was working in the food distribution for nearly 150 stranded for more than 15 days. Same work was carried out by Anjuman Health Care NGO in Osmanabad Municipal Council area.

To strengthen the helping hands, the administration of industries like Balaji Amines, Britania, Osmanabad Janata Sahakari bank and Tuljabhavani Mandir trust came forward as their social responsibility. Also, some Corporators from Tuljapur, Paranda were proactive in the distribution of food, masks, sanitizer, immunity kits, etc. [e.gov](#)

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COVID CRISIS & CHANGING SCENARIOS

As the country is going through a dire crisis due to the Coronavirus outbreak, NGOs and many philanthropists have come forward to help government authorities and aid people in these times. Throwing light on the situation, contribution by NGOs, and changing economy, **Dr Megha Bhargava**, IRS, Deputy Commissioner, Income tax, Mumbai, Ministry of Finance, Government of India interacted in an exclusive interview with **Nisha Samant** and **Adarsh Som** of **Elets News Network (ENN)**.



DR MEGHA BHARGAVA

IRS, Deputy Commissioner, Income tax,
Mumbai, Ministry of Finance,
Government of India

Recently, crowdfunding platforms have come in light, especially in the crisis. How such models are effective? Can these be a new shift in Indian philanthropy?

Crowdfunding in India is at its nascent stage at present. The popularity of the crowdfunding platforms is a positive phenomenon and an indicator of the changing landscape of philanthropy in India. It is in tune with the increasing internet penetration and the ease of making online payments. With the increasing popularity of social media platforms, it becomes very easy to share a story and raise funds for a cause. It is also a transparent way of generating funds with the donor details being published on the fundraiser. There is also a transparent utilization of funds with the donors being updated regularly about the cause for which they have donated. In line with the developing technologies, the crowdfunding platforms are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning to create fundraising stories after gathering the basic data. AI is also being used to detect any fraudulent transactions. It sensitizes and motivates the growing Indian middle class and gives them an opportunity to engage in social change and cultivate the virtue of 'giving'. At Samarpan, we did our COVID relief campaigns on three crowdfunding platforms viz. Ketto, Milaap and Efforts for Good and were able to connect with around 1350 supporters.

Efforts by your NGO, Samarpan is worth lauding. How has Samarpan managed to feed masses and distribute masks, sanitisers, essential groceries and more?

COVID-19 has been the most challenging for the daily wage earners and the migrant

labourers. It has not only deprived them of their basic survival but also posed a severe challenge to the long term impacts on health and education of their families. Before the declaration of the lockdown, Team Samarpan sprang into action and started distributing hand sanitizers and face masks to prevent the spread of infection. Soon after the lockdown, different teams were organized to address several areas of the relief initiative such as Food kit and Sanitary kit Procurement from vendors, Distribution in coordination with local authorities after proper identification of beneficiaries, Publicity and Social Media Management, Finance & Accounts, Technical Assistance etc.

With the support of IRS officers across India, 'Samarpan' in collaboration with the Municipal Authorities and Local Police has reached out to such daily wage earners with dry ration kits, sanitary kits and cooked meals in Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi, Jodhpur, Anand, Latur, Ujjain. We also collaborated with several other organizations on the ground to help us in the distribution activities.

Till date, Samarpan has distributed around 28,700 dry ration kits, 5,60,000 cooked meals and 35,700 milk packets. Apart from this, around 1,57,000 face masks, 48,000 hand sanitizer and 57,000 soaps have been provided to the daily wagers, essential service providers like Police, Local administration staff, security guards, sanitation workers etc. Samarpan has also started the distribution of 22000 sanitary pads to the underprivileged women in Mumbai for whom the lockdown has proved to be major hurdle inaccessibility to safe menstrual hygiene. We have given sanitation kits to around 16000 migrant workers in 10 Shramik Trains leaving from Mumbai ensuring them a safe journey back home.

Considering the past five years, CSR fundings have fallen. What measures could be taken to stabilize the situation, especially for NGOs which are being funded by these?

When the entire world is reeling under the pressure of a pandemic induced economic crisis, there will also be a question of dwindling funding of the NGOs; a large number of which are funded by the CSR funding from the corporate. As per the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, CSR spending in India has decreased from Rs 14,547 cr in FY 2015-16 to Rs 14,333 in FY 2016-17 and Rs 13,708 cr in FY 2017-18. In the coming times, it is very likely that the CSR and other funding will dry up further, thus jeopardizing the subsistence of the NGOs. The funds which were pumped into the NGOs in the form of an emergency relief measure have been used to sustain the activities till Lockdown 4.0. This will pose a challenge to the NGOs and calls for a need for immediate rethinking in terms of their operations and prioritizing the areas and nature of their



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functioning. During the last 50 days, we have seen that there are numerous organizations working in different areas in silos. Each organization works in a particular area and has all the necessary details of the demographics, requirements in terms of ration, sanitation needs, social-economic indicators etc. But these organizations being small are resource crunched in terms of manpower, finances or technology. These may just fall short of reaching that ‘critical mass’ to bring about a sustainable impact. On the other hand, there are bigger organizations which are funded by the Government or the corporates but which may or may not be having detailed information on the ground. The need is to link such ground-level smaller organizations with the bigger and funded organizations so that the funds are channelized to the right

beneficiaries. The need is to have an interconnected Civil Society where data, expertise and resources can be pooled and be made accessible. This will amplify the individual efforts, build up the resilience of the communities to face a crisis and translate into more concrete and sustainable outcomes.

As the Government has allowed the opening of shops in malls, markets, and other economic activities, by when do you think the economy will see normalcy in trends?

It is premature to say that things will return to normal after the lockdown is over. The economy will take a while to return to normalcy. This crisis will create economic hardships. Both supply and demand-side seem to be affected. Lockdown has put great stress on the supply chains of essential commodities, and therefore, we have seen increased production and supply of essential items only. As we enter into the Unlock phase, and the factories and manufacturing units start their production, all units will have to follow physical distancing norms leading to scaling down of the products which will result in constrained supply chains.

The informal sector of India, the backbone of its economy and employing around 90% of our labour force, is the hardest hit in view of economic activities coming to a total standstill. The share of households that experienced a fall in income shot up to nearly 46 percent during the lockdown. There have been job losses and also people staying at home, and hence there has been a fall in consumption demand for many services and products except the essential ones. Since this is a global phenomenon, export demand will also be hampered. UNCTAD has suggested that India's trade impact due to the COVID-19 outbreak could be around USD 348 million.



The need of the hour is to open the country for business in a carefully calibrated manner, focusing on reviving sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and services while ensuring basic health hygiene. Sectors like tourism, aviation, hospitality and construction will also need immediate attention. To pump up the consumption and demand, there is a need to put cash in the hands of people. It is essential to provide income support to those who have lost jobs and also provide working capital support to those businesses who have lost income due to no demand. Measures like credit guarantee for the MSMEs, interest subventions, tax relief measures, moratoriums on repayments etc have been declared by the Govt. PM's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat will go a long way in reviving the economy and bringing back the economy on track.

How citizens can contribute to the mitigation of this crisis?

It is clearly established that lockdown reduced the infection rate in India and that has been because of the active understanding of the citizens of the country to follow the lockdown guidelines diligently. As the nation enters into Unlock phase, it is important that citizens follow the physical distancing norms and take due precautions as it's the only way to contain the spread of infection. We have to work with the same discipline and resilience as we have during the lockdown. It is important that we take due care in order to minimize the strain on already stretched healthcare resources at this critical hour. As citizens, we also have a role in quelling any kind of misinformation on social media which may cause the spread of false information and cause panic. We have to learn to stay with the virus for some time until there is a vaccine for the same. Till then, we have to exercise maximum self-discipline in terms of our interactions and communications with others in person or on social media platforms. [mca.gov](https://www.mca.gov.in)





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Gaia Empowering Urban Governance through Advanced Technology

As the Coronavirus outbreak has made the Government impose a nationwide lockdown, smart city initiatives, IT and e-Governance infra were some of the few that enabled the Government to fight the pandemic and carry on effective governance in times of COVID. To know more on tech as driving the new scenario of remote working and smart governance, **Arpit Gupta** and **Adarsh Som** of **Elets News Network (ENN)** interviewed **Dr Sumit D Chowdhury**, Founder & CEO, Gaia Smart Cities.



Dr Sumit D Chowdhury
Founder & CEO, Gaia Smart Cities

What role is Gaia playing in enhancing India's e-Governance?

Gaia is a tech firm specializing in IoT, Digital, & AI-based SaaS platform for e-Governance Monitoring. As a team of tech experts, we bring in the expertise and skills to help city, state, and national level governments in two ways.

Firstly, we are deploying our core technology platforms to implement solutions that enable governments and enterprises to monitor, manage, and optimize the distributed last mile sites, assets, people, and processes. We have a specific focus in building and operating two-sided models that enable monitoring between Government to Government entities and Government to Business entities. These solutions provide tech-enabled governance, assurance of service levels, and contractual monitoring of multiple third-party service providers onto a common platform. Data-driven operations and governance is a new concept, which connects the last mile to the Boardroom on a unified platform to give a comprehensive near realtime view of the entire operation.

Our customers in this space have included Swachh Bharat Urban, Various City and State Urban Development Authorities, Indian Railways, Airports Authority of India, and multiple smart cities. As an example, for Swachh Bharat Urban, where we developed and managed their entire Mission Management cloud platform to connect 4041 towns and their nearly 1 lakh officials onto a common system for performance monitoring, communications, and rapid visualization.

Secondly, our team of Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Operational Technologies (OT), and Advanced New Tech (AI, ML, IoT, SaaS, Visualization, GIS) are designing city or campus level technology roadmap, technology blueprints, detailed tech design including Detailed Project Reports, Inception Reports, Business Process Reengineering, Tender and Bid Specifications, and Procurement Management. Our team serves as program management experts to help cities or enterprises manage bid processes, select and onboard vendors and system integrators, and program manages implementation for effective outcomes.

While we have worked with 14 cities during the Smart Cities Challenge phase and 3 cities during the Project Management & Implementation phase, one of our key clients has been Agra Smart City, which recently was ranked as the Number 1 city by Smart Cities Mission, MoHUA in terms of performance, implementation status, and outcomes.

Gaia contributed to Agra by repurposing our SaaS solutions for COVID-19 usage. Agra is using Gaia solutions for Citizen Health Risk Assessment, Online Platform to connect last-mile suppliers of essentials, and Citizen Emergency Request App, powered by an AI-based allocation engine to ensure incoming requests are serviced by a team from Agra Civil Defense.

In which cities Gaia is working on smart metering solutions? How has the lockdown affected the work and by when do you expect normalcy to return?

Gaia has deployed multiple solutions in the smart monitoring space. Gaia's SmartFeedback IoT and Cloud SaaS solution have been deployed by 110 cities and Urban Local Bodies in nine states for governance monitoring of sanitation in public and community toilets. All the Top Winning cities and states of Swachh Survekshan 2018, 2019, and 2020 have used our solution and it won the Quality Council of India Gold Award 2019 for impact. Till date, this solution has had 75 million citizen touchpoints over three years.

Gaia's SmartFeedback solution has also been deployed in 32 airports for the Airports Authority of India for monitoring last-mile traveller experience at multiple service touchpoints.

Gaia's Digital and Cloud SaaS solution is deployed for governance monitoring of Indian Railways on-board housekeeping services and platform monitoring is being used in 13 zones nationally to serve nearly five million passengers on a daily basis. This has special relevance in post corona scenario for ongoing sanitation and hygiene management on

trains and stations. In the post-corona scenario, health and hygiene will be important indicators for cities and governments, and the need for governance monitoring and service and health safety assurance will be more critical than ever.

Remote monitoring and management of distributed sites will become even more critical in the post corona phase when requirements for effective and safe operations will be stringent, and there may be a shortage of last-mile staff for manual interventions. So, digital and sensor-enabled solutions will be needed.

Is Gaia working on mapping technologies and tracking/ tracing measures to aid the civic authorities and governments in disease outbreaks like COVID-19?

Gaia SaaS solution is being used to enable city and district government to provide hyper-local delivery of last-mile

"Gaia's Digital and Cloud SaaS solution is deployed for governance monitoring of Indian Railways on-board housekeeping services and platform monitoring is being used in 13 zones nationally to serve nearly five million passengers on a daily basis."

essential, emergency, and health-related services. Gaia's Sarvam Setu app and platform is a two-sided solution. The citizen-facing app enables citizens to raise requests for assistance in multiple categories. It pairs with the Volunteer or Staff app, which allows cities and their partner organizations to orchestrate real-time, AI-based allocation of requests to deliver the last mile request of food, essentials, medicine, emergency call, or containment violation reporting. This solution has already been deployed to serve the 4.4 million citizens of Agra district. The city tied up with 800 retailers of essentials in 101 wards for doorstep delivery of essential groceries and milk, and with Agra Civil Defense and its team

of 600 volunteers to respond to citizen emergency requests. The solution enables cities to get micro-location based information on health risks and citizen requests and needs.

One of the significant services you offer is City Sensor Network and IoT Platform. How has been Indian smart cities developing in this regard? Please mention a few IoT projects Gaia is doing with Indian Smart Cities.

Gaia City Sensor Network and IoT Platform allow multiple solutions, and their associated sensors, to run on a common communication and data management platform, thereby creating ease of usage, data latency and validity, data interoperability and data intermediation for the city at an aggregated level. This platform has been deployed in Kakinada Smart City to cover 440 million square feet of the urban area to connect solutions such as Air Quality Monitoring, Smart Parking, and Waste Management.

Gaia is one of the only companies in India that can deploy, optimize, and manage private LPWAN networks for cities or campuses or large footprint sites. We have the full stack capability for this, and can connect to Gaia's solutions or multiple third-party devices and applications.

Considering the fact that Smart cities are from smart people, do you think the government authorities and even the private players must focus on conditioning citizens? What measures Gaia is taking for the cause?

Smart Cities Mission has always focused on citizen centricity. Even from the start, citizen interaction, engagement, and idea collection was built into the process to get citizen feedback into defining the vision and plan for each city. As cities implement solutions and solutions are live, the engagement of the entire ecosystem of service providers, staff, and citizens must be conditioned. Training, Capacity Building, and Change Management are essential to ensure that all staff, from officials to the last mile workforce, know how to use and operate the new systems and processes, and can use data-driven tools to manage and improve service delivery and citizen satisfaction. At the same time, citizen awareness and engagement is needed to ensure that citizens understand the services being put into place to ensure cooperation and adoption, as needed. Citizens need to be comfortable with the interfaces and usage of solutions. Especially considerations of vandalism or theft of hardware, data protection and privacy, surveillance for safety, and citizen activism are critical where citizens need to feel a part of the process. Gaia ensures that change management and citizen engagement is built into all solutions so that cities can

“Gaia City Sensor Network and IoT Platform allow multiple solutions, and their associated sensors, to run on a common communication and data management platform, thereby creating ease of usage, data latency and validity, data interoperability and data intermediation for the city at an aggregated level. This platform has been deployed in Kakinada Smart City to cover 440 million square feet of the urban area to connect solutions such as Air Quality Monitoring, Smart Parking, and Waste Management.”

transform the ecosystem and not just technology and processes, but also people and mindsets.

Smart Cities are connecting more and more services and people on integrated technology networks, does this make the entire city functioning and people's data vulnerable to hackers? What contingency plan cities have to tackle this?

Smart City solutions come in two categories. Solutions pertaining to delivery of essential services which has data about the city, but no information about the citizen. Solutions pertaining to last-mile citizen services and online transactions related to them have citizen data. Cities are ensuring complete protection through appropriate infrastructure and firewalls and protective software at edge nodes and at cloud levels. Vulnerability testing is critical for hardware, networks, applications, and cloud infrastructure, and cities are extremely cognizant of the requirements and ensuring the same. 



Event Calendar

July-August-Sept 2020

DATE

EVENT NAME

15 July 2020

National Skill Summit Gujarat

24 July 2020

Future Cities Virtual Conclave

27 July 2020

Junior College Studies Conclave

26 August 2020

3rd Elets National Housing Summit

28 August 2020

Elets National Water Summit

11 September 2020

3rd Elets Agriculture Innovation Summit

25 September 2020

4th Elets National Energy Summit



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TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AMIDST COVID - 19 AND THE TAIWAN-INDIA COLLABORATION

As economies across the world grapple with the aftermath of COVID19 outbreak, Taiwan's response to the pandemic has been outstanding. Though the country is bracing for a temporary slump in its economy, the Taiwan Government is working out effective strategies to revive its economy. In their bid to tap opportunities under Taiwan's 'New Southbound Policy' and India's 'Make in India' policy, Taiwanese companies have been building up a supply chain for electronics in central and southern India in major products such as mobile phones, netcom equipment, computers, etc. Taiwan looks forward to sharing its experiences, best practices and forge mutually beneficial collaborations with India post COVID-19 writes Ambassador **Chung-Kwang Tien**, Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre, India.



Amb. CHUNG-KWANG TIEN

Ambassador, Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre, India

TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Looking at the economic trends of Taiwan, the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 1.54 percent in the first quarter of 2020. This, when compared to the previous forecast shows a fall of 0.26 percent. The economic impact of the pandemic has dealt a serious blow to domestic consumption, while manufacturers have benefited from order transfers and the expansion of domestic production capacity.

Despite the challenges from the impact of COVID-19 outbreak, the Government of Taiwan is seeking opportunities to strengthen a friendly environment for investment. And, in order to attract investment in the country, the Government has taken three initiatives to attract investments in the 5+2 Industrial Innovation Plan, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and 5G action plan. Such initiatives are important to make Taiwan an advanced manufacturing and R&D hub in Asia.

The three initiatives which the Taiwan government has implemented are- An action plan for welcoming overseas Taiwanese businesses to return to invest in Taiwan; Program to help domestic corporations with no history of business activity in China; and Plan to accelerate investment by SMEs.

The 5+2 Industrial Innovation Plan includes five pillar industries: Intelligent Machinery, IOT (Asia Silicon Valley), Green Energy, Biomedicine, National Defence and Aerospace, plus two innovations: New Agriculture and Circular Economy.

SLUMPING EXPORTS

As the COVID outbreak has impacted supply chains globally, the total exports in March 2020, faced a decline of 0.6 percent year-on-year. However, not all is gloomy as the production of the parts of electronic products grew by 18.1 percent in the same month. Moreover, as 'work from home' has become the new normal these days, 5G technologies have benefited the Taiwanese businesses. Hence, though at a reduced pace, businesses are bucking up.

INCREASE IN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

Although exports have seen a decline, the industrial production index increased 10.4 percent year-on-year in March. The rise is majorly due to the expansion of domestic production capacity and demand for 5G applications. By sector, the index for the electronics component industry raised 26.04 percent year-on-year in the same month, while computers and optoelectronics makers increased 22.16 percent.

NEGATIVE INFLATION

Looking at the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in April 2020, a 0.97 percent drop is observed when compared with April 2019, largely reflecting a dive in crude prices. While the core CPI has increased 0.05 percent remaining in positive territory. The fuel, lubricants prices slumped 35.50 percent, and prices of vegetables, eggs, communication fees, as well as entertainment expenses also dropped 13.63 percent, 7.32 percent, 5.80 percent, and 3.72 percent, respectively.

BUSINESS INDICATORS - THE MONITORING INDICATOR FLASHES YELLOW-BLUE SIGNAL

In March 2020, the overall monitoring indicator changed from 'green' to the "yellow-blue" last month, as the total score decreased four points to 20. The trend-adjusted leading index decreased for six consecutive months and the coincident index decreased for two consecutive months. Moreover, manufacturing PMI dropped into a

contraction zone. The manufacturing sector reversed its recent trend of growth in the past seven months as the seasonally adjusted Taiwan manufacturing PMI fell 5.5 percentage points to 47.6 at present and recorded its biggest month-to-month decrease since July 2012.

TAIWAN PROMOTES 'NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY' AND INDIA IS ONE OF THE KEY PARTNERS

In an effort to strengthen its trade, economic and cultural ties with ASEAN member countries, South Asian Countries including India and also with Australia and New Zealand, Taiwan has been promoting the 'New Southbound Policy' since 2016. The Policy promotion plan consists of four main components: promoting economic collaboration, conducting talent exchange, sharing resources, and forging regional links.

There are five flagship projects which are covered under the policy initially - Innovative Industries, Medical Cooperation and Industrial Supply Chains, Policy Forums and Youth Exchange Platforms, Regional Agriculture, and Talent Cultivation. Also, there are three potential fields for collaboration - e-commerce, infrastructure and tourism.

FIELDS OF TAIWAN-INDIA COLLABORATION

In their bid to tap opportunities under Taiwan's 'New Southbound Policy' and India's 'Make in India' policy, Taiwanese companies have been building up a supply chain for electronics in central and southern India and the major products include mobile phones, netcom equipment, computers, etc.

As India has been working extensively on sustainable development, Taiwanese industries continue to exchange knowledge with their Indian counterparts during various forums to seek effective and feasible collaborations. The exchange of view majorly encompasses fields such as electronic manufacturing, smart cities, green technology, water resource management, smart vehicles and components, and more.

Moreover, as Taiwan's response against COVID has been well appreciated, it looks forward to sharing best practices, experiences and PPE industries with India post COVID-19. 

COVID-19, A true test of Indian Leadership

COVID-19 or Coronavirus just landed and caught everyone globally, including India, unaware and by surprise. Truly, no one knew what it was! Even now, people are struggling to decode and trying to find exit options. COVID-19 continues to be a mystery, writes **Kumar Bachchan**, Co-founder and COO, Niveshan Technologies India Private Limited.

In the context of business, it may be interesting to understand “what did COVID-19 mean to different Sectors, Industries, and Companies”. Niveshan Technologies, an ICT (Information Technology, Communication, and Telecom) company, would like to share our experience and journey broadly under four perspectives:

- How did we take COVID-19 on face value, as it landed at our doorstep as a Nation & Company!
- What all we did, in our wisdom, right to go through the motions of COVID-19
- What all we did not do convincingly, by design
- Our learning from the pandemic, possibly once in a lifetime for some

We are a young company, in the third year of our operations. We believe, one of our biggest advantages & strengths under such a situation was “we didn’t have much legacy or baggage”. Our being Mindful, Focused, Absolute commitment to our Customers-Partners-People, and attitude to ‘Take Responsibility’ was good enough to see through COVID-19. We do understand, it is not yet over; but we as well don’t know ‘when and how’, we will overcome this phenomenon. The only certainty in visibility is ‘uncertainty’. So, what is the resolution! “live through the motions”.

Early 2020, COVID-19 started appearing in discussions, conversation & interactions little lightly and possibly NOT many people were aware of “what is coming”! We, at Niveshan as an organisation and people, were somewhat cautious. We adopted precautionary measures within our offices and in our internal & external engagements. We had no hesitation in acknowledging implicitly & explicitly that we ‘care’, especially during unaware & unknown scenarios.



KUMAR BACHCHAN

Co-founder and COO

Niveshan Technologies India Private Limited

Reasonably early, we started taking stock of our business in terms of projects under execution, new business in the pipeline for closure, our backward & forward partner’s ability & readiness to support the business, fund flows, new initiatives, our people’s whereabouts, and other fundamentals of our business.

I must acknowledge, our entire leadership team was together. We were possibly more & better together during COVID-19 than when we were in our offices. Clearly, the productivity of our people was far better than BAU (Business As Usual) for two primary reasons - firstly, all the time & energy spent on commuting & travel for various business meetings had gone, as even other side didn't want to meet or meet at a minimum and secondly, all counter-productivity in internal & socializing meetings had gone.

We decided one thing as a prerequisite right in the beginning that we will not touch the people's fundamentals like compensation, working from home, real minimal movement of people unless warranted, and mobilise all possible resources on best effort basis. We continued our hiring and onboarding people across levels, across disciplines. This superbly worked as a major confidence-building measure for our teams that 'All is Well'. No insecurities related to the job.

Human Capital building was one of our major focuses. We invested in all-round training & workshops for our people. We conceived new workshops and invested a lot internally like a program. Investment in people is coupled with strengthening the processes to enable them like a well-oiled well-greased engine.

We remained focused on the execution of our business. Most of our customer projects are mission-critical, the dependency on the availability of ICT infrastructure in running their business is high, ... Despite being in times of uncertainties & prevailing scenarios, we remained with our customers.

In one case, our team came up with an innovative solution for very peculiar collaboration requirements of one of our Public Sector customers. The entire solution was delivered & rolled out Pan-India in less than 100 locations within 7-10 days.

Portability and Agility in one of our projects were seen recently in one of our City's Command and Control Center (CCC). The CCC was reconfigured and deployed seamlessly for COVID-19 monitoring operation within the same day. This speaks of government leadership and project execution excellence.

Our leaders were on the top of affairs, such that available resources were deployed in the most optimal manner. Credit to our teams across levels & across discipline, who delivered their best with full commitment. It is important to make one point here, no one (not even a single employee) was expected to perform his/her duty (esp onsite) under any constraints. We struck a good balance between business: work: people. Our teams found means & ways to achieve optimally and innovatively.

We had an amazing experience in working upon and closing a mega-deal totally digitally and working from home. The customer is one of the giants in Asia, a partner is another Industry leader from another country, and yet another mega entity from India. All done during the peak of COVID-19 without any major challenge, esp, in-person meeting or logistics.

I can say quite comfortably, all this helped us serve our customers by beating their expectations; though we will fail in our responsibility & accountability if we do not extend our sincere thanks to our customers for extending all their possible & required support. A Big Salute to our Customers for staying engaged throughout the project lifecycle, including sign-off and honouring commercial commitments.

In today's business, no success comes without partners as an integral part of the overall execution. Our partners were standing next to us, all the time, in delivering our commitments. We were equally professional in our reciprocation to our partners.

On our learning, look at the big picture and see beyond. Everything is temporary, even COVID-19 like situation would be temporary; though stretch is still unknown. Do not, I repeat do not mess with business fundamentals; stick to your core values, keep the flock together, manage uncertainties by keeping them at distance. This is across all facets of business 360° with respect to all stakeholders.

One more learning, stay together at home and ensure your people stay together at their home. This is one reason, we continue to operate almost full strength 'Work from Home' till now, July'2020.

Niveshan is an end-to-end core ICT services provider that specializes in IT Application, Infrastructure services and ICT Solutions.

As a part of IT Application & Infrastructure services we have different Service Portfolios, namely Software & IT application Support Services, Network, Security, Storage and Back-up, Mainframe and Database, End User Computing and Datacenter services, and technology strategic outsourcing.

Niveshan is in the third year in operations, Profitable, and Revenue in Three digits with absolute Focus on Growth with a Difference is all about 'NextGen Niveshan'.

Niveshan Executive Leadership team is backed by investors in varied sectors and fields; to name a few Real Estate, Solar Power, and Warehouses & Logistics. Such vast and rich expertise & experience is guiding force in our conceptualization through successful execution journey. [egov.gov](https://www.egov.gov)



The City of Westminster in London gets its first 'Electric Avenue' to charge electric vehicles on the street. The Westminster City Council in collaboration with Siemens and Ubricity installed EV charging points in the existing streetlamp columns, using the already available infrastructure. The move is a display of smart and modern solution to a modern problem.

The companies used the existing infrastructure to install the EV charging points which saved a lot on efforts, time and money. A SmartCable attached to the lamps connects with the car's charging point.

THE ELECTRIC AVENUE, W9





Westminster's EV Charging infra

- As of yet, there are over 1,300 streetlamp charging points installed across the city and 24 of these are on the 'Electric Avenue, W9' which is the first residential avenue in the UK to have fully converted its streetlamps into EV charging stations.
- The 24 charging points provide a total output of 132 KW of charging capacity using the local electricity.
- The charging points are powered by 100% renewable energy.
- EVs reduce emissions by 75% per mile when compared to the regular fossil-fuel-powered cars.

#AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a new mission to make India Aatmanirbhar - Self-Reliant. Under the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', the Government of India announced a Rs 20 lakh crore economic package to aid the country out of the Coronavirus crisis by making it Self-Reliant.

The Stimulus Package launched is focused on kickstarting the Economy, improving Infrastructure, enhancing Systems, managing Demography and catering to the Demands.

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AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan Package & its distribution

Part - 1		Part - 2		Part - 3		Earlier Fundings	
Measures	Stimulus package (in crores)	Measures	Stimulus package (in Crore)	Measures	Stimulus package (in Crore)	Measures	Stimulus package (in Crore)
For MSMEs and small businesses	3,72,800	For food grains and credit facility for street vendors	8,500	For Operation Greens, Agricultural Infrastructure and Promotion of Herbal Cultivation	1,04,500	Tax Concessions, Health Sector	22,800
Liquidity Schemes and Reduction in EPF rates	1,71,750	For MUDRA shishu loans and Housing for Middle Income Group	71,500	For Food Microenterprises and Matsya Sampada Yojana	30,000	PMGKP	1,70,000
Reduction in TDS/ TCS rates	50,000	For working capital through NABARD and Credit through Kisan Credit Card	2,30,000	For Animal Husbandry and Bee Keeping	15,500	RBI measures	8,01,603
Total	5,94,550	Total	3,10,000	Total	1,50,000	Total	9,94,403

PM Modi while announcing the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' asked people support local brands by using locally manufactured products. He urged the citizens of India to be Vocal for the Local



NATIONAL WATER INNOVATION SUMMIT 2020

VIRTUAL | 28 August 2020



Keynote Speaker & Programme Mentor

U P SINGH, IAS

Secretary
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources,
River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation
Government of India

Water Management is the need of the hour for a developing country like India. It needs a focussed approach to address the challenges posed by scarcity of water, be it in urban or in rural areas. At the same time, technology & innovations can be leveraged more effectively to transform the water management ecosystem of the country.

Realizing this, Elets Technomedia- India's premier media & knowledge consultancy organization, in association with **Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India** is organizing **National Water Innovation Summit 2020** on 28 August 2020

• KEY THEMES •

- Demand Side Water Management in agriculture, industries & municipal bodies
- Rejuvenation of Water Bodies
- Water Budgeting at Community Level
- Waste Water Treatment
- Water Security Plans
- Atal Bhujal Yojana
- Water Conservation
- River Rejuvenation
- Inter Linking of Rivers
- Rain Water Harvesting
- Research & Development
- Dam Improvement
- Innovation & Technology
- Smart Water Meters
- Global Best Practices
- 24x7 Water Supply

• PARTICIPATION FROM •

- Key Policymakers from Government of India
- State Government Officers
- Water Boards
- Research Institutes
- Policy Think Tanks
- Embassies
- International Agencies
- Development Institutes
- PSUs
- Industry Leaders

FOR PROGRAM RELATED QUERIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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