



PAFI's 9th Annual Forum 22-23 September 2022

India @ 100 – Scale, Speed and Sustainability

[Public Affairs Forum of India \(PAFI\)](#) aims at aligning business, society and government on long term priorities; fostering trust through ethical and respectful interaction across all the stakeholders; collaboratively developing smart and relevant policies, proposals and processes that foster innovation and rely on evidence-based research and promote capacity building to navigate change within the context and complexity of India.

Thus, PAFI serves as a professional resource for public affairs practitioners across sectors and sub-functions.

Its flagship event, [PAFI's Annual Forum](#) is not just a platform for interactive deliberations via **discussions, debates, and dialogues**, but more importantly sets the **direction** for long-term broader policy and economic agenda. emerging from active participation and interaction across a diverse set of stakeholders. These include ministers and officials representing central and state governments, global and multilateral organizations, CEO's, media, think tanks, academia, and legislators.

The **Partner State** for **PAFI's 9th Annual Forum** is **Tamil Nadu**, the second largest state economy accounting for 9.84% of India's GDP. Thanks to the highest number of factories and industrial workers, investment-friendly policies and focus on skilling, a range of sectors such as electronics, IT, textiles, chemicals leather, etc. are thriving in the State. Tamil Nadu is amongst the top 10 automobile hubs globally, and its building a robust EV and battery manufacturing ecosystem in the State.

The Context

In the 75 years since its independence, India has emerged as a vibrant democracy and a thriving economy. Yet, it remains a lower-middle-income developing country with per capita income around USD 2,000. Every sixth person on the planet lives in India but at USD 3 Trillion, its GDP is just 3.25% of the global economy and has a mere 1.5% share in mercantile trade.

There are structural challenges too. Service sector contributes more than 50% of GDP but employs relatively fewer people while agriculture contributes 14% of GDP but employs half

of the people. Manufacturing, lies in between. Clearly, growth has been uneven and its benefits are yet to significantly improve quality of living for majority of the 1.4 billion population. Admittedly, India is punching way below its weight!

India must aspire to become a high-income country by 2047 with a per capita income of at least USD 12,000. With an estimated population of 1.5 billion, it implies that the economy should grow six times from USD 3 Trillion to USD 18 Trillion over the next 25 years. However, this would necessitate a quantum jump in value-added exports of both goods and services via continuous improvement in quality, competitiveness, and efficiency within the new world order with physical, technological and financial integration and inter-dependence.

Clearly, India needs to reach greater heights through smart policies that are evidence-based, process-driven, and people-centric. These should foster innovation and entrepreneurship while celebrating and encouraging investment, both domestic and foreign. Moreover, policy apparatus needs significant enhancement of state capacity, both at the center and in the states.

Realization of this vision needs alignment and collaboration on long-term priorities in an environment of trust across all the stakeholders including business, society and government. This is the underlying philosophy and raison d'être of [PAFI](#) and the **9th Annual Forum** would chart out a roadmap to realize this vision predicated on **Scale, Speed and Sustainability**.

Scale

With growing population, economy, urbanization, digitization, mobility, and aspirations, policies and programs in India must be scalable amidst the inherent diversity and complexity. Only continued growth would provide the requisite resources for greater socio-economic inclusion and equity, while driving up and being driven by, growing demands for various goods and services. To realize the demographic dividend, hundreds of millions of people would shift from farms to factories and services and from villages to towns and cities.

What are the key success factors for policies and programs that are designed for scale, especially for better educational outcomes, healthcare and pleasure of doing business? How can public private partnerships ensure skilling for future through life-long learning and the ability to learn, unlearn and re-learn?

How can India become a major trading nation within the rapidly reorganizing post-Covid global supply chains while diversifying portfolio of products and services as well as sectors and destinations?

Speed

Policy process tends to be rather slow, thanks to iterative steps and institutional checks and balances that are inherent features in a democracy like India. However, the new

paradigm of growth is possible only with speedy development and implementation that would foster pleasure of doing business through digitalization and decisiveness but also by way of initiatives like PM Gati-Shakti and Production-Linked Incentive (PLI). However, much more is needed in this endeavour.

How do we ensure that the policy apparatus is responsive to the speed of execution while allowing for intensive and extensive consultations as well as be amenable to course corrections when needed?

Sustainability

India has been a leading voice and a stellar exemplar in the comity of nations on the issue of environmental sustainability building upon its rich heritage as well as through demonstrated commitment towards keeping up the promises such as the pledge for Net Zero. However, the comprehensive sustainability would imply conservation and responsible leverage of natural resources including but not limited to water, air, forest produce and minerals while also diversifying energy basket and enhanced use of energy-efficient technologies across all aspects of life and business activities.

With the renewed focus on ESG, how should India balance the burgeoning need of more energy and materials with its commitment to sustainability and lifecycle management across the ecosystem through suitable incentives for businesses and awareness amongst people in a circular economy?

Call to Action

Please block your calendar for **22-23 September 2022** for **PAFI's 9th Annual Forum**. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

You may also peruse through the [proceedings](#) and [session recordings](#) of [PAFI's 8th Annual Forum](#), held on **21-22 October 2021**.

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