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Circulation

Veena Srivastava

Coordination

Dinesh Bhandari

Anjana Rajwar

Design & Art

Visualeyes Communications Pvt. Ltd vipul2001@gmail.com

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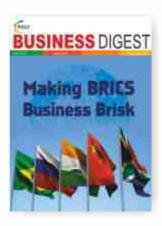
New Delhi - 110001

Phone: 23738760-70(11 Lines) Fax: 23320714, 23721504 E-Mail: ficci@ficci.com Website: www.ficci.in

FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. Established in 1927, it is India's oldest and largest apex business organization. FICCI is in the forefront in articulating the views and concerns of industry. It services its members from the Indian private and public corporate sectors and multinational companies, drawing its strength from diverse regional chambers of commerce and industry across states, reaching out to over 2,50,0000 companies.

Special Features

- 06 BRICS Business Council submits action agenda to BRICS Heads of State
- 12 Broadband connectivity for one lakh panchayats by March 2017
- 20 IPO approvals being speeded up to meet global standards



- 04 From the Secretary General's Desk...
- 18 Need to find sustainable ways to address India-China trade imbalance
- 28 Educate in India!
- 33 New Landscape of Education in India
- Skilling for the Future
- 37 Need for focus on quality & investments for better patient care
- 39 16 States score over 80% on 'Ease of Doing Business' ranking
- 41 Huge opportunities for Japanese investments in India's tourism sector
- 43 French Minister woos Indian industry with investment prospects
- 44 Call for innovative solutions for Disaster Risk Reduction
- 45 Customs conference on facilitating cross border trade in South Asia
- 46 Call for synergized mega-initiative in product life cycle management
- 47 Industry urged to forge tie-ups for design & construction of underwater vehicles
- 48 Border guards critical in combating cross-border illegal trading
- 50 FICCI & Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tajikistan sign MoU
- 51 Time to accelerate pace of India-Taiwan trade & investment
- 52 In the States
- **60** Key Macroeconomic Indicators

We would like feedback/comment from readers to enable us to improve our offering. Write to us at: sukumar.sah@ficci.com or sushmita.yadav@ficci.com



From the Secretary General's Desk...

he BRICS Business Council met last month on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Goa, chaired by Mr. Onkar S Kanwar, Chairman of the Indian BRICS Business Council and Chairman, Apollo Tyres Ltd. Key suggestions were received from the seven Working Groups of the Council, namely, agribusiness, energy and green economy, financial services, infrastructure, manufacturing, skills development and deregulation. These were presented to the BRICS heads of States in a bid to strengthen economic and financial cooperation amongst member nations. We carry these recommendations in this issue.

The 13th edition of FICCI's annual Capital Markets Conference 'CAPAM 2016' on the theme 'A Vibrant Capital Market - An Enabler for Investment' was held in Mumbai on October 4, 2016. U.K. Sinha, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), who inaugurated the conference announced that the IPO approval time had been reduced from 12 days to 6 and may even be brought down to 4 days to meet global best standards. See a report in the pages that follow.

The 'Digital India' programme of the government is indeed a catalyst to better governance and conduct of business. It envisages rolling out various initiatives aimed at digital empowerment, improving digital infrastructure and offering on-demand governance and services. From building broadband highways, easing mobile connectivity and promoting e-governance, the main aim is to bridge the connectivity gap between the rural and urban areas.

These objectives are bearing fruit. Through the Bharat Net initiative, the government proposes to provide broadband connectivity to 1 lakh gram panchayats by March 2017 in the first phase and another 1.5 gram panchayats by March 2018. This was announced by Manoj Sinha, Union Minister for Communications, while inaugurating 'India Telecom 2016', organised by FICCI and the Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, in New Delhi on November 1, 2016. We bring you a report on the event.

C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, has recommended that there is a need to focus on quality, investment to build systems for better patient care and continue to remain globally competitive in the area of medical value travel. In his inaugural address at the second edition of the 'Advantage Health Care India (AHCI) 2016' last month, Mishra said this was an opportune moment in the Indian healthcare sector story as it talks about medical value travel, a validation of the fact that India has moved ahead. AHCI is an initiative of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India in association with FICCI and Service Export Promotion Council (SEPC).

We hope you will find the contents of the issue interesting.

A. Didar Singh