

## **India Amid Corona Crisis:** A Way Forward





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#### Indian Economy: Pre-crisis

India has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing global economy and is predicted to be among the world's top three economic forces in the next 10-15 years, driven by its robust democracy and alliances. With the exponential growth in income

in recent years, millions of Indians being pulled out of poverty and implementation of an ambitious series of measures taken to boosted economic growth has helped India address inflation and both fiscal and currentaccount deficits. Such effective measures have paved ways for many industries to perform exceptionally in this changing ecosystem. Start-up initiatives and skill development programmes by the government, a boost in FDI laws and investments,



India is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy of the world with GDP of \$ 3.2 billion

growing awareness, more accessible access and changing lifestyles and rising e-commerce market have also added pace to many sectors in terms of

- Employment creation (Industry: Textiles and garments, leather and footwear, gems and jewellery, food processing industries, handlooms and handicrafts)
- Deepen technology capabilities in manufacturing (Industry: Machine tools, IT, hardware and electronics)
- Provide strategic security (Industry: Telecommunications equipment, aerospace, shipping, defence equipment)
- Infrastructure growth (Industry: Heavy electrical equipment, heavy transport, earthmoving and mining equipment)
- Competitive advantage (Industry: Automotive sectors, pharmaceutical and medical equipment)
- Micro, small and medium enterprises sector.



#### GVA growth rate of India (17-18)



Sector wise contribution to GDP of India (18-19)

1. Sector overview, InvestIndia website, accessed on 26 March 2020

2. Union Budget Speech, Ministry of Finance, 1 February 2020

3. Economic Survey 2019-20, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, January 2020



#### A Glance at India Economy

- Foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflows stood at Rs 2,636,362 crore (US\$ 456.,79 billion) between April 2000 to December 2019 and US\$ 27.58 billion for FY20 (till December 2019).
- India's foreign exchange reserves were Rs 33.98 lakh crore (US\$ 476.09 billion) in the week up to February 14, 2020, according to data from the RBI.
- Mutual Funds asset base stood at Rs 27,22,937 crore (US\$ 389.60 billion) at the end of 2020.



The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stood at 137.5 in January 2020, which increased by 2.2% as compared to January 2019. Its cumulative growth during April to January 2019-20 was 0.6%.

India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for Jan 2020 stood at 137.1. The cumulative growth for the period April- Jan 2020 over the corresponding period of the previous year stands at 0.5%.

Sales of passenger

vehicles (cars, SUV and vans) stood at 248,036 units in October 2019, a growth of 11% YoY while two-wheeler sales during the month stood at 1.33 million units.

- India 's current account deficit (CAD) was 0.9% of GDP (US\$ 6.3 billion) in Q2 of 2019-20, as compared to 2.9% of GDP (US\$ 19 billion) in Q2 of 2018-19.
- WPI inflation increased to 3.1% in January 2020 as compared to 2.6% in December 2019.
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) Combined inflation was 4.5% in April-January 2019-20 as compared to 3.6% in April-January 2019.
- Total Merger and Acquisition (M&A) worth US\$ 25.162 billion was recorded in the first ten months of 2019.
- The total value of Private Equity (PE)/Venture Capital (VC) investments grew 44% over the past three years in value terms to reach US\$ 48 billion in 2019.



#### **Economic Impact of COVID-19**

 $1. \qquad http://statisticstimes.com/economy/sectorwise-gdp-growth-of-india.php$ 

2. https://data.gov.in/sectors

3. https://www.news18.com/news/business/coronavirus-lockdown-impact-indian-economy-likely-to-see-only-2-growth-in-2021-2568581.html

February



### **Impact on Different Industries**





- The nationwide lockdown has led to temporary closures of factories and layoffs have already begun among lowwage workers.
- The stagnated supply chain has resulted in reduced demand for the spring-summer season
- The textile and apparel sector production is expected to decline by 10-12% in the Apr-Jun quarter.
- Cotton prices have been reduced by 3% and are expected to be further impacted over the next few months.
- With Chinese lockdown, the imports of MMF (man-made fibre) fibre would be impacted, leading to rising of prices of imported MMF (used for high-value products) is expected to increase by 25-30% over the next two quarters (Apr to Sep 2020).
- Apparel production is expected to contract by 18-20% owing to decline in global demand.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Relaxation in tax compliance by the government may help reduce the impact.
  - Flexible interest rates by the banks should also be considered until the market gets stabilised.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

- Tax relief to end customers should be considered to boost consumer spending power.
- Credit ratings based loan facilitation for MSME players need to be reviewed in order to make the sector competitive/lucrative.
- Provide an adhoc reimbursement/concession of 5-10% against the recently approved Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export
   Product (RoDTEP) scheme to compensate for the hitherto unreimbursed levies and taxes to the exporters.

#### **IMPACTS**

- As per IATO estimates, a loss of INR 85 billion may be incurred by hotel, aviation and travel sector due to travel restrictions on foreign tourists and large-scale cancellations.
- Loss of both white collar and bluecollar jobs. (Potential loss of 38 million jobs [70%] in Indian Tourism and Hospitality Industry)
- Decline in demand for turbine fuel



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**Apparel & Textile** 

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

Discontinuation of fuel infrastructure and into plane charges and reduction in VAT on ATF to maximum of 4% across all states for 6 months. • Moratorium for next 12 months on interests, principals and on all loans across the industry.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Removal of AAI and private airport operators space rentals, royalty, landing, parking for a period for six months.

Increased credit allowance to airline by AAI, oil companies.

#### IMPACTS

- Domestic demand has increased as people stay indoors. Closure of industrial and commercial activities has led to significant loss of demand. Overall, demand has been suppressed by 20-30% during lock down period.
- Solar projects, largely dependent on imported modules from China and Malaysia likely to be impacted due to raw material shortfall, production delay and supply chain disruption
  - 1. Annual report, 2018-19, Ministry of Textiles, accessed on 24 March 2020
- 2. Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2000-December 2019, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Power

- B. COVID-19 puts break on India's raw material import, Fibre2Fashion, 25 February 2020
- 4. Coronavirus puts up to 50 million Travel and Tourism jobs at risk says WTTC, Press Release, 13 March 2020
- 5. Aviation sector overview, InvestIndia website and International Air Transport Association (IATA) website, accessed on 5 April 2020
- 6. Tourism and Hospitality sector overview, InvestIndia website, accessed on 25 March 2020
- 7. Ministry of Power, Government of India, accessed on 26 March 2020
- 8. Union Budget Speech, Ministry of Finance, 1 February 2020

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

• Contingency measures and advance training to manpower, management of demand volatility and large-scale power outages among other occurrences.

• Campaigns for revenue collection through digital means.

• Late fee waiver, support to consumers unable to pay bills and increase awareness targeting utility employees and customers



- Low availability of contract labour for operations and support functions have impacted production.
- Disruption in supply of raw material and critical automobile components from China impacted Indian automotive part imports (Indian automotive parts from China accounts to 25%)
- Production shutdown due to low demand
- Decrease in sales due to liquidity shortfall in NBFCs and banking sector.

#### Auto and Auto Components

Healthcare

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

GST tax rate cuts and income tax deductions on auto loans to increase the demand in short term

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Reduction of interest rates for delayed tax payments and retail customers

• Allowing OEMS and other automotive parts producers to operate on previously permitted approvals and licenses in long term.

#### **IMPACTS**

- Due to market uncertainty and supply tightness in China, raw materials, APIs and intermediates for pharma, medical equipment and health sector will be negatively affected.
- Prices of various dugs and self-hygiene products such as sanitisers, masks, gloves, disinfectants will see a surge until production increases to compensate for the rise in demand
- "Due to market uncertainty and supply tightness in China, raw materials, APIs and intermediates for pharma, medical equipment and health sector will be negatively affected."
- Elective surgeries put on hold. But patients needing non-COVID-19 critical care suffering in absence of means to affordable healthcare or due to closing down of hospitals or due to restrictions in travel.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Reduce import/export duties on pharma and biomedical items
  - Launch of emergency viral and infectious disease packages in the public health insurance schemes such as Ayushman Bharat
    - •Interest free deferred payment option for private healthcare providers for three months

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

- Increase funding towards research in communicable diseases, virology, vaccines and technology related to health equipment
- Increase awareness about infection and sanitation in rural areas by mobilising Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)
- Support domestic manufacturing companies producing essential drugs and testing kits by providing subsidies (land/equipment)

#### IMPACTS

- Due to shortage of money in policyholders' hands, renewals may get delayed.
- Growth in SME group health segment is likely to be stopped in short term in the current economic scenario.
- Fresh savings business and P&C business issuance is expected to be muted.
- Elective surgeries are getting pushed out and there will be lesser claims in the shorter run, but near term should see an increase in the claims and hence loss ratios.

1. Automobile and auto components sector overview, InvestIndia website, accessed on 25 March 2020

- 2. Export-Import (EXIM) databank, Ministry of Commerce, accessed on 25 March 2020
- 3. Economic Survey 2019-20, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, January 2020
- 4. National Health Profile Report, 2019, accessed on 5 April 2020
- 5. Healthcare Industry in India, India Brand Equity Foundation, accessed on 5 April 2020
- 6. PM Modi Allocates Rs 15,000 Cr For Healthcare Infra to Combat Covid-19 Outbreak, ABP News, 24 March 2020, accessed on 5 April 2020
- 7. Calculations based on data available on websites of Life Insurance Council and General Insurance Council, accessed on 1 April 2020
- Financial Services (Insurance)

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

 Accelerated payment of premiums for government policies would be extremely beneficial for the cash flows of insurance companies.

• In the lockdown phase, the regulator can provide a provision for automatic renewal with a grace of certain duration for premium payment to ensure policies stay in force.

• The post lockdown situation would be challenging economically, and the industry would look at introducing products calibrated to the same. An accelerated approval process, specifically for retail products shall be beneficial.



- Lockdown would decrease the available skilled manpower by ~10-15%. This coupled with sluggish human resource demand is likely to increase unemployment rate in the country.
- Post-COVID-19, many job roles are likely to change; skill institutions will need to be prepared for this impact
- The challenge in a country like India is the additional economic burden facing the parents in the absence of school provided midday meals.
- Public schools and low-fee private schools especially are likely face a larger impact on teaching and learning, owing to heavy reliance on brick and mortar means of delivering lessons.

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#### Education

Transport &

Logistics

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Oil & Gas

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Online entrepreneurial courses/modules at minimal cost
  - Creating awareness about COVID-19, by mobilising healthcare personnel, anganwadi workers, people trained in community programmes
    - Framework for effective collaboration with Industry associations, Skill Councils, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and EdTech companies to devise effective ways of online skills training across sectors

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

- Incentivise health related courses offer free to qualified youth
- For apprenticeship trainings, theoretical learning component to be taken up online modules to be delivered by the training providers

#### IMPACTS

- Asset utilisation across the transport and logistics sector anticipated to reduce in the short term.
- Artificial demand reduction due to lockdown restrictions
- Low cargo volume impacts
- Working cap and debt service challenges
- Reduced demand for logistics due to reduced production across sectors will put downward pressure on prices across various transportation and logistics subsectors.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Relaxation in timelines and documentation for compliance. Tax benefits in the short term
  - •Working capital/loan repayment support in the short-term from the banking sector

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Digitisation of compliance related processes.

• Fair and transparent pricing of all relevant transport and logistic services through price caps etc.

#### IMPACTS

- Crude prices have seen a significant drop due to price war and supply issues.
- Lesser revenues and extended credit to customers//suppliers likely to lead to potential cashflow impact
- Demand slowdown from customer side owing to limited travel and reduced consumption leading to lower refinery throughout gross refining margin spreads and higher inventory build-up
- Exports of diesel, petrol to neighbouring countries reduced due to lockdown and reduced demand

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

Oil and gas companies may potentially need short-term borrowings to resolve cash flow and working capital issues which banks should provide as oil and gas are tagged as essential services

> • Government may want to reduce excise and state VAT as crude prices have dropped to ensure end-use price lowers as well at retail outlet

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• There will be a downturn on capex investment with lower demand for short-medium term. Accordingly, there will be a need for sectoral incentives for new project

<sup>1.</sup> Education Sector Overview, Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), accessed on 25 March 2020

<sup>2.</sup> Union Budget Speech, Ministry of Finance, 1 February 2020

<sup>3.</sup> Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2000-December 2019, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

<sup>4.</sup> BP Statistical Review of World Energy, 2019, accessed on 26 March 2020

<sup>5.</sup> Export-Import (EXIM) databank, Ministry of Commerce, accessed on 25 March 2020



- The domestic supplies and those from imports both will suffer leading to a significant impact on availability and cost.
- Even after easing the lockdown restrictions, MSMEs will face cascading impacts on working capital needs, along with global slowdown in demands
- Contractual, wage labour will get impacted more leading to layoffs, unrest, lowering of purchasing power
- As per AIMO's study, about a quarter of over 75 million MSMEs in India will face closure if lockdown extends over 4 weeks
- The impact will be high considering the fact that these MSMEs provide employment to more than 114 million people and contribute around 30-35% to the GDP5.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- All GST and other tax refunds should be credited to the businesses immediately to tide over the lack of fund availability with the enterprises.
  - MSMEs to be supported for the production of pandemic related items to serve the surge in demand and supporting them with logistics, finances etc.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

- No fines/penalties should be levied owing to delays in filing of statutory returns or those arising out of statutory physical audits for an extended three months period.
- Increasing the Open Cash Credit (OCC) account limits for MSMEs would have a positive impact on the liquidity available with the MSMEs.
- Framework for adoption of Industry 4.0 by MSMEs aimed at decentralised and lean manufacturing could help deal with crisis situations in the future.

#### **IMPACTS**

- Rabi season harvest for wheat, rice and pulses may get impacted due limited availability of labour force.
- Import dependent Argo chemicals, and fertiliser sector may see some volatility in the long term. Supply of Agricommodities are expected to be normal in short term but.
- long-term impact will be known only after three to four months, once first Kharif sowing reports are out.
- Supply chain seems to be the major challenge as several states are evolving their strategies for food supply chain.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- States and Centre should classify essential food items with zero hurdle supply chain mechanism for food retail and food industries to help consumers, food industry and farmers.
- Fake propaganda regarding food items like poultry to be countered
- "E-commerce based apps should be encouraged to help rapid deployment of delivery personnel to avoid panic buying and restrict movement in the streets"

 "Ensuring optimal farm gate prices for domestic and export commodities and easy availability of Agri labour will ensure farmer's interest in Kharif season and therefore the food production will not be impacted."

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• National e-commerce policy during pandemic situation and safety net policy for healthcare personnel will need to be implemented.

• Agriculture and allied export policy during this period need to be recalibrated.

- Crude prices have seen a significant drop due to price war and supply issues.
- Lesser revenues and extended credit to customers//suppliers likely to lead to potential cashflow impact
- Demand slowdown from customer side owing to limited travel and reduced consumption leading to lower refinery throughout gross refining margin spreads and higher inventory build-up
- Exports of diesel, petrol to neighbouring countries reduced due to lockdown and reduced demand

- 4. Food Processing Industry in India, InvestIndia website, accessed on 26 March 2020
- 5. Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2000-December 2019, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Agriculture

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6. Euromonitor International, accessed on 26 March 2020



<sup>1.</sup> Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, accessed on 25 March 2020

<sup>2.</sup> Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, accessed on 25 March 2020

<sup>3.</sup> Union Budget Speech, Ministry of Finance, 1 February 2020



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#### IMPACTS

- Overall halt in manufacturing sector activity including cement, steel and other building materials.
- Delayed construction owing to disruption in the supply chain network
- Both direct and indirect jobs likely to be affected in the real estate sector
- There is a high possibility of postponement of REIT launches (earlier scheduled for listing in 2020), which would mean further liquidity pressure on real estate developers
- Fresh equity investments into the country's real estate sector could slow down, with almost all subsectors going through turmoil.
- Industrial (logistics and warehousing) sector is also expected to get impacted in the short run.
- Demand for segments such as data canters is expected to increase in order to maintain safe and secure digital

infrastructure as more customers move their daily operations online and employees' transition to remote work environments.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

• "GST tax holiday for 6-12 months for the tourism/hospitality sector."

• Relaxations on penalties due to delayed repayment for developers as well as end customers for upcoming few months.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Extend registration timelines granted to promoters by a year

- Lending rate for realty projects to be fixed at a lower repo rate
- NPA classification to be extended beyond 90 days for stressed project

#### **IMPACTS**

- Raw material supplies could be a challenge due to disrupted supply chains. A fall in imports could severely impact select categories in retail Imports and durables.
- Production for specific categories especially non-essentials would be a major challenge, with demand unlikely to pick up immediately.
- Stronger demand for delivery through ecommerce; consumers to buy essentials and postpone purchase of non-essentials.
- Sentiment will be to conserve cash due to uncertainty of duration of COVID-19 exigency.

#### Consumer & Retail

Infrastructure

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

Digital payment should be prioritised in order to enable easy and 'COVID-19 risk-free transactions.

- Banks/NBFCs could extend credit limits for small retailers.
  Payment deferment or interest waivers or special rebates to ensure that micro/small retailers have cash flows to pay workers and suppliers
  - Provide relief on cash flow for retail players by way of GST waivers or tax incentives.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Personal income tax slab reduction, re-evaluation of dividend distribution & capital gains taxes.

• Easing manufacturing rules for essential commodities – faster clearance, cut duties/allow imports of critical to retail markets and create incentives for retail products manufacturing.

#### IMPACTS

- COVID-19 is also likely to impact the much awaited 5G auctions as operators are focusing on servicing current demand surge and quality of service.
- Demand for handsets and new subscriptions is likely to be impacted in the short term.
- The increased broadband usage at home has resulted in pressure on the network and demand in excess of 10%.
- 1. Indian real estate and construction: Consolidating for growth, KPMG, NAREDCO, APREA publication, September 2018
- 2. Indian real estate attracts \$5 billion PE in 2019, commercial projects lead: Report, The Economic Times, 8 January 2020
  - 3. Retail Sector Overview, FICCI, accessed on 25 March 2020
- 4. Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2000-December 2019, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- 5. Telecom sector overview, InvestIndia website, accessed on 26 March 2020
- 6. Highlights of Telecom Subscription Data as on 31st December, 2019, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Gol, accessed on 26 March 2020

**Telecommunication** 

7. Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2000-December 2019, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Relaxation of regulatory compliances and Quality of Service (QOS) norms similar to those relating to work from home guidelines to be initiated.
  - Provision for additional spectrum both access and backhaul microwave on a temporary basis.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

 Use telecom as an enabler to implement transformational technologies like, tele-medicine, teleconferencing & expand use of collaborative tools for ease in work from home.



**Financial Services** 

(Banks & NBFCs)

Chemicals and

Petrochemical

**Metals & Mining** 

#### **IMPACTS**

Banks profitability will be under pressure due to

- reduced offtake of loans under recessionary market conditions and cautious customer outlook
- increased delinquencies post the moratorium period, due to the lockdown
- depressed NIMs in a low interest rate regime
- fall in transaction banking income due to lower cross border trade
- drops in fee income on distribution of wealth products, due to volatility in the capital market.
- There is a potential risk of defaults and insolvencies unless the regulatory framework is tweaked urgently to address the unprecedent challenge that corporate sector, and retail sector is witnessing at present.
- "Auto and auto-ancillary, aviation, travel and hospitality, retail and consumer durables, real estate and construction are likely to general stressed assets in absence of significant Government stimuli to these sectors.

SHORT-TERM REMEDY

Regulatory support on asset classification and provisioning norms with forbearance period of up to nine months, for stressed sectors and end-user segments, post end of the moratorium, to defaulting borrowers.

• COVID-19 related credit guarantee schemes to be extended to banks supporting securitisation deals with NBFCs.

• Relaxation on implementation of PCA norms for a one-year period may be assessed for Banks, depending on how the portfolio stress unravels across the industry.

 Incentivising merchants, retailers and consumers through lower taxation, special incentive schemes to shift to digital payment transactions.

- Extended moratorium of six months post return to normalcy, to provide sufficient headroom for the borrowers to honour their loan obligations.
- Wage support and tax holidays/deferments for impacted sectors.

SHORT-TERM REMEDY

• Guaranteeing MSME borrower's credit obligations.

benefits need be considered.

#### **IMPACTS**

- Raw material prices for petrochemicals are falling primarily driven by crude prices. Additional supply resulting from a price war between Russia and Saudi price and weakened global demand due to COVID-19 are driving prices down.
- Supply tightness of raw material for other chemicals due to production cuts in China could drive raw material prices higher in shortmedium term.
- Imports are expected to fall as major import sources - Middle East and China are highly impacted by COVID-19.

#### **IMPACTS**

- Other than coal, India is insulated from global supply chain disruption.
   Domestic freight disruption unlikely to extend beyond the mandatory lockdown period by governments.
- Consumers of steel- construction, auto, etc. - highly impacted; Consumers of base metals - conductors, construction etc - medium - impacted.
- Consumer industries slowly coming to a halt; globally, industry and financial markets reconciled to a deep recession.

#### 1. Monthly Bulletin, RBI, 11 March 2020, accessed on 01 April 2020

- 2. Bank credit growth at 7.6% as on 03 January 2020, Business Standard, 16 January 2020, accessed on 01 April 2020
- 3. Commercial banks at a glance: Reserve Bank of India, accessed on 01 April 2020
- 4. Financial Stability Report, Reserve Bank of India, December 2019, accessed on 01 April 2020
- 5. Annual Report 2018-19, Ministry of Mines, accessed on 26 March 2020

6. Export-Import (EXIM) databank, Ministry of Commerce, accessed on 25 March 20205. Quarterly factsheet on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), April 2.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

In order to help increase operating rates of

to provide working capital loans on flexible and favourable terms to help them keep afloat.

Banking assistance would be needed

petrochemical units, additional fiscal/non-fiscal

• Review of import tariffs on essential feedstock for chemical companies to ensure adequate and competitive supply.

 Review of FTAs and anti-dumping duties to protect downstream manufacturers from dumping and inferior quality imports.

#### SHORT-TERM REMEDY

- Temporarily waive bidding amount payable on own mines until sector recovers.
- Provide relaxation in statutory and employee related payments & provide a moratorium for loan repayment.
- Reduce cost of trade-finance, provide wage subsidies for labour intensive projects.

#### LONG-TERM REMEDY

• Rationalise taxation of freight, increase quantum of accelerated depreciation for revival of capex cycle.

Provide special package to finance working capital loan for re-starting plants.





**Aparajita Prasad** is an IIM Ahmedabad alumna. She is a renowned Corporate Leader and Subject Matter Expert with over 15 years of experience in Business Research and Strategic Consulting across Europe and India. She has worked across many companies including Accenture, TCS, Evalueserve, Heidrick and Struggles etc. She later joined few Start-ups and contributed to their success. She has led huge teams and headed business units. Her experience spans across Strategy, Business Research, Analytics, and Consulting.

Currently, she is Founder and Director of MetaConnect Consulting and also Vice President at StartUp Buddy Services. She is an investor and mentor to start-ups and on advisory board of many incubators and accelerators. She also takes many

leadership training sessions. She Heads the Women Entrepreneurs Network (WEN) in India and is on Board of Directors for IIMSociety.org. She is a well-known speaker and panellist at major events.

She has been chosen as the State Director, Uttar Pradesh for ICTMAE and CIMSME.

Aparajita holds a formidable reputation of adjusting in any environment and bringing out the best in the team. Her value addition has been recognized by her employers and teammates much sooner than most leaders. She aspires to help anyone and everyone who crosses her path.

Aparajita holds a Masters in Biotechnology and MBA from IIM, Ahmedabad. She is also a Certified NLP and Life Coach. Recently she was awarded as "Prima Donna Women of Substance 2020" for her contributions.

For more details, reach out to Aparajita Prasad.

