

34TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

Business Today

businesstoday.in

February 1, 2026 ₹200

On Stands | Online | On Air

bt

INDIA
TODAY
GROUP

+

RUN-UP
TO DAVOS



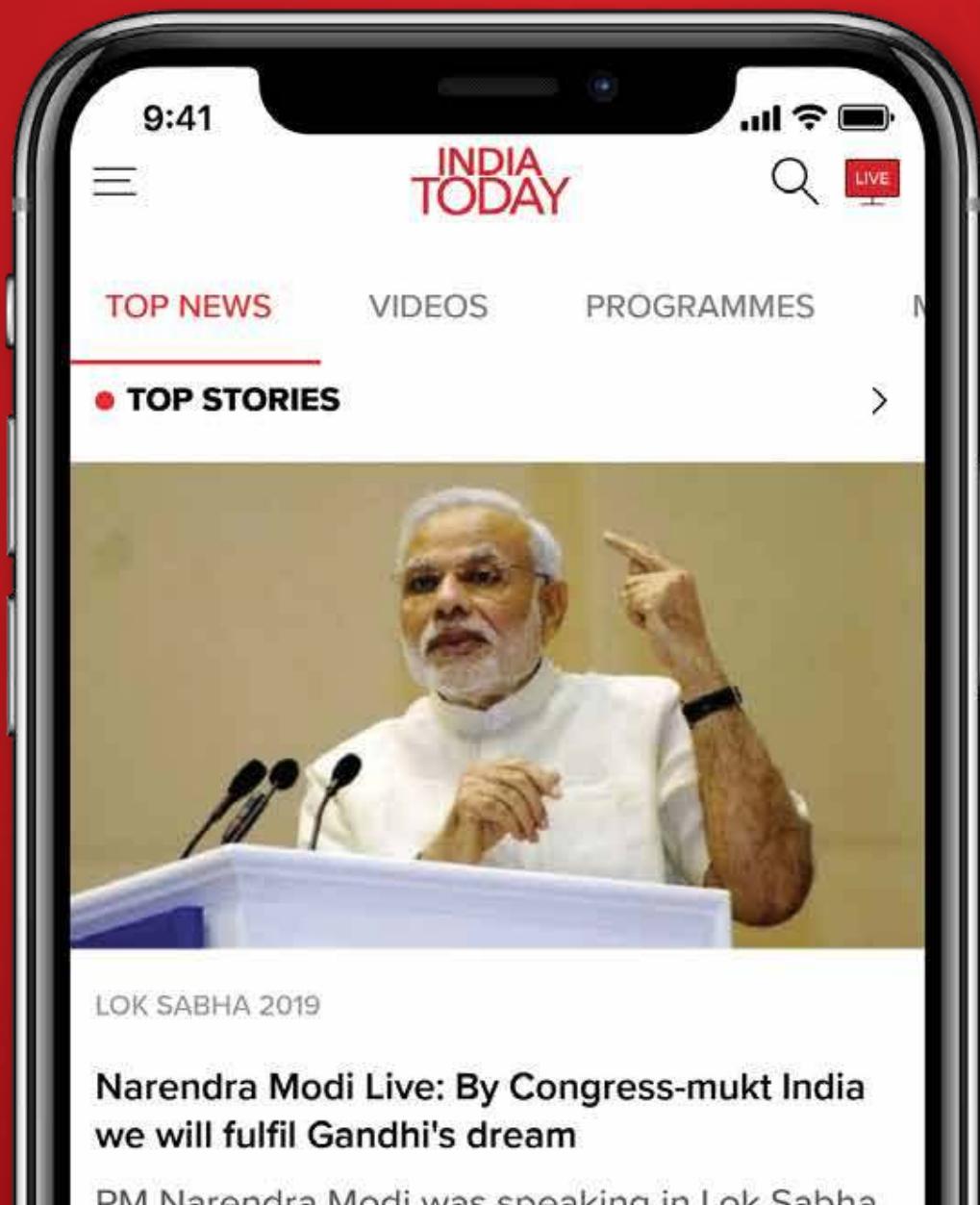
THE NEW CONSUMPTION ENGINE

A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND SURVEY DECODES WHAT GENERATION Z WANTS

INDIA
TODAY

BREAKING NEWS

JUST A TAP AWAY



DOWNLOAD THE APP NOW

AVAILABLE ON





देश का नं. 1 हिंदी न्यूज ऐप

जुड़े रहिए हर खबर से,
कहीं भी, कभी भी

अभी डाउनलोड करें

aajtak.in/app

उपलब्ध है





Icons give you reasons to celebrate them. Time and again.

Thank you, India, for making the E-Class the most desirable luxury car.

Here's celebrating an evolving legacy with a new colour.

Introducing the E-Class LWB, in Verde Silver.

Mercedes-Benz



Scan to know more

Mercedes-Benz India Pvt. Ltd. (CIN: U34102PN1994PTC083160)

Accessories, colors and fitments shown may not be a part of standard specifications. For technical specifications of the model available in India, please refer to the product brochure or contact the nearest Mercedes-Benz Franchise Partner.



**IN LETTER
IN SPIRIT
IN ACTION**

Accelerating Growth
Txation Simplified (GST 2.0)
Modernising Infrastructure
Amplifying Consumption
Nurturing Indigenisation
Innovation & Digitalisation
Renewing Energy
Building Resilience
Harnessing Skills
Assuring Welfare
Reinforcing Security

BHARAT is ready to make the move on the global stage.
We stand ready to bolster this endeavor.



International Supply Chain | CFS-ICD | Ground Express | Consultative Logistics | Industrial & Logistics Parks

34TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

businesstoday.in

Business Today

On Stands | Online | On Air



THE BT-PRICE

GEN Z

CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

Stay Strong and Steady in your investments.

Just like a plank builds **core strength** over time,
consistent investing harnesses the **power of compounding**.



MUTUAL FUNDS *Sahi Hai*

An Investor Education and Awareness Initiative of Bank of India Mutual Fund

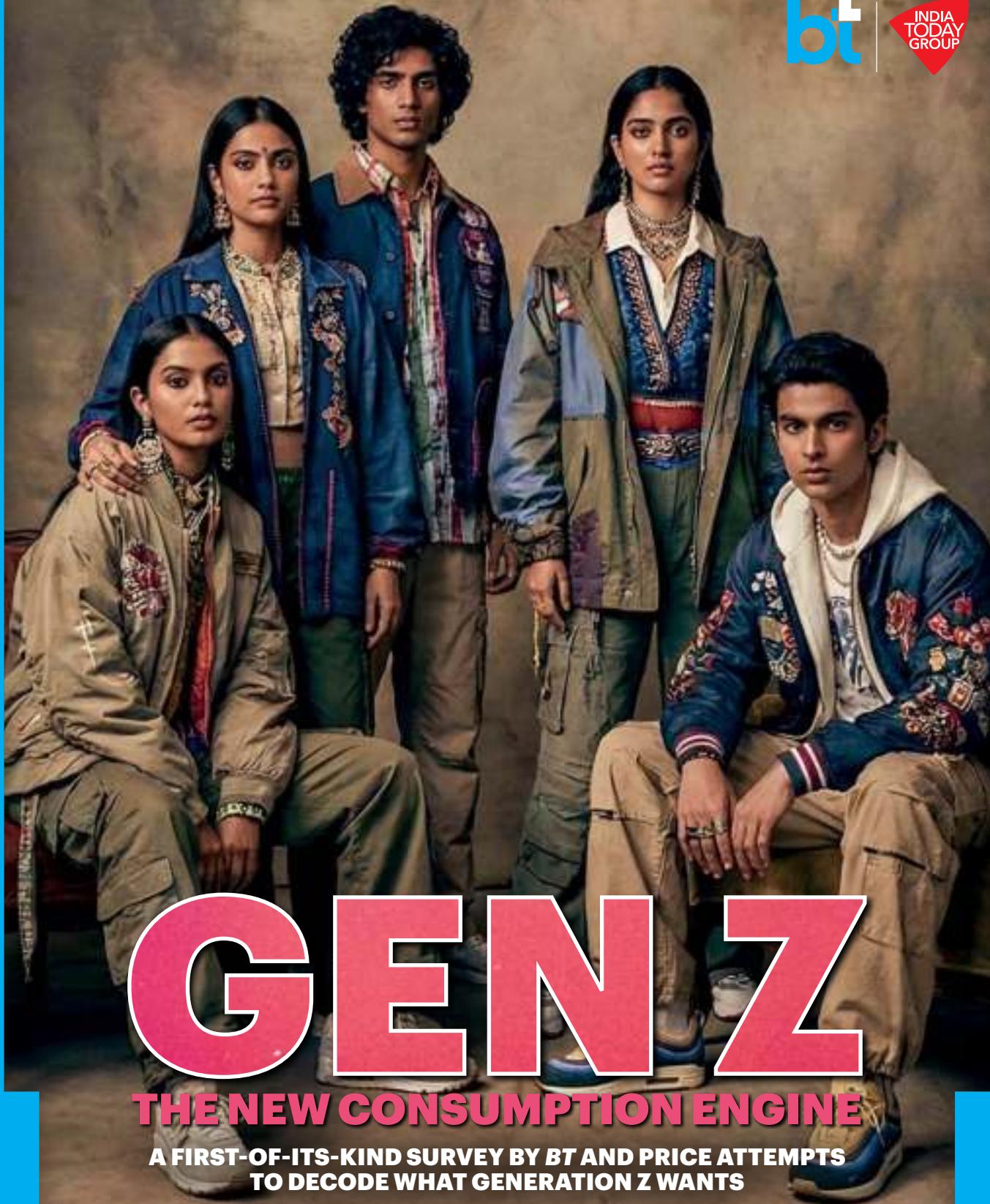
All investors have to go through a one-time KYC (Know Your Customer) process. Investors to invest only with SEBI registered Mutual Funds, as available on SEBI website under "Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure institutions". For redressal of your complaints you may please visit SEBI Scores portal. For further information on KYC visit: www.boimf.in

34TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

businesstoday.in

Business Today

On Stands | Online | On Air



GEN Z

THE NEW CONSUMPTION ENGINE

A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND SURVEY BY BT AND PRICE ATTEMPTS
TO DECODE WHAT GENERATION Z WANTS



EMPOWERING INDIA'S AI-READY DIGITAL FOUNDATION

Innovate on a unified digital foundation that is secure, sustainable, and intelligent, connecting the world's leading businesses and enabling the next wave of AI in India.

One foundation. One view. One AI value chain.

Built on Networks, Data Centers, Cloud, Cyber Security and Managed Services.



Unlock More

India's Top 7 Banks, 4 Insurers, 4 Manufacturers, 3 Hyperscalers, Global Social Media, OTT Leaders and 10000+ Enterprises trust Sify.

34TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL ISSUE

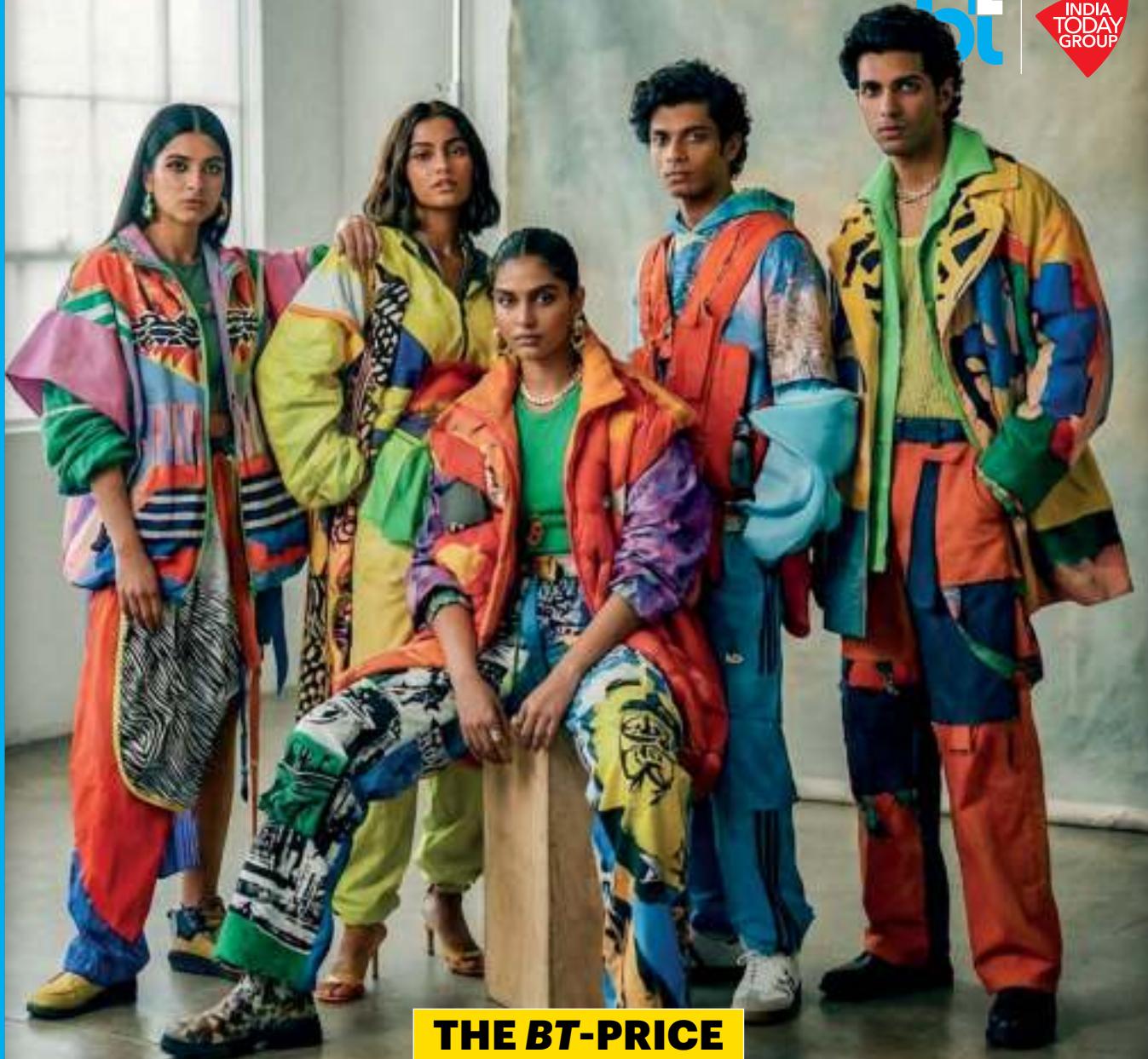
businesstoday.in

Business Today

On Stands | Online | On Air



INDIA
TODAY
GROUP



THE BT-PRICE

GEN Z

CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

VITEEE 2026

B.TECH ADMISSIONS

APPLY NOW



viteee.vit.ac.in



VIT[®]
Vellore Institute of Technology
Autonomous University, established 1984 | VTU Act 2002



VELLORE
INSTITUTE
OF
TECHNOLOGY



Engineering the Momentum of Progress

45 Diverse UG Engineering Programmes

- Aerospace ■ Biotechnology ■ Chemical ■ Civil ■ Health Sciences
- CSE - AI&ML, Cyber Security, Data Science, Gaming Tech., Quantum Computing
- ECE ■ EEE ■ EIE ■ Fashion Tech. ■ Mechanical & many more

Options for Minors /
Specializations / Honours

Opportunities for International Transfer Programme (ITP) &
Semester Abroad Programme (SAP)



National
Institutional
Ranking
Framework
2025*

Ministry of Education, Government of India

14th
BEST
UNIVERSITY
16th
BEST IN
ENGINEERING
14th
BEST IN
RESEARCH
21st
BEST IN
OVERALL
(*Vellore & Chennai)



A++ Grade[®]
IN THE 4TH CYCLE
(*Vellore & Chennai)

HIGHEST CTC

₹ 1Cr.

PACKAGE OFFERED
FOR 2026 BATCH

OVERALL OFFERS*

14,581

*PLACEMENTS & INTERNSHIPS OF 2026
BATCH (FOR ALL THE 4 CAMPUSES)

For more details: +91-44-462 77 555 | www.vit.ac.in



VIT[®]

Vellore Institute of Technology
Autonomous University, established 1984 | VTU Act 2002



VIT[®]

CHENNAI
Vellore Institute of Technology



VIT-AP[®]
UNIVERSITY



VIT[®]
BHOPAL
Autonomous University, established 2007 | VTU Act 2002



vituniversity



VIT.univ



VITUniversityVidZone



vellore_vit



vellore-institute-of-technology

Beyond The Cliches



We did not commission a Gen Z survey to chase a buzzword. We did it because India's youngest adults are too large, and too consequential a cohort, to be understood through cliches. This special edition, to mark the 34th Anniversary of *Business Today*, is centred around consumption patterns of an estimated 420 million Indians in the 15–29 age group, accounting for nearly 29% of our population. If India is home to almost one in five of the world's young people, their choices matter.

Yet the public narrative about Gen Z is perhaps misinformed by the lack of empirical studies. Gen Z is painted as carefree, restless, and always online. They are assumed to be price-led and easily swayed by influencers and discounts. We wanted to test these assumptions.

So, we partnered with People Research on India's Consumer Economy (PRICE) to build a primary, multi-city survey that could decode Gen Z consumers. Fieldwork was carried out in early December 2025, covering 4,311 respondents across four metros and eight Tier II cities. The questions examined consumption behaviours across 34 topics.

What did we discover? The first and most important insight is that Gen Z is not stepping away from consumption. Demand is very much alive—84% of respondents expect their overall spending to rise in the next 12 months. More than half aspire to both home and car ownership. Besides, 57% save more than 20% of their income. This is not the popular image of a spend-now generation.

The second major insight is that product quality is the top purchase driver at 43%, well ahead of price at 20%. Brand reputation follows at 26%, while influencer recommendations are a distant 6%. It is clear that Gen Z responds to performance and proof. That is also why loyalty is conditional. Nearly eight in 10 are willing to switch brands if a better option emerges.

Where is Gen Z spending today? In categories without a long lock-in. Fashion, gadgets and electronics, food, and experiences dominate current outlay. While premium is part of the mix, it is more of sampling. Over seven in 10 acquire premium or luxury brands occasionally or regularly, while “only premium” behaviour remains limited to the top income segment.

The digital aspect too needs a better filter. Instagram leads as the most influential platform at 44%, followed by YouTube at 25%. But influence is different from purchase. Gen Z buys only rarely or sometimes after seeing products on social media. Shopping journeys are fragmented—quick commerce is the default convenience channel for daily needs, while physical retail holds its ground where touch and feel matter, and e-commerce serves planned buys and comparisons.

Credit behaviour is another break from the template. Two-thirds say they rarely or never borrow for discretionary spending. When borrowing does happen, informal sources dominate. This is a cohort that prefers control over leverage, especially for lifestyle spends.

For India Inc, the broader learning for winning over Gen Z is simple: do not just sell them a moment, earn their trust. **BT**

siddharth.zarabi@businesstoday.in
@szarabi

Business Today

<http://www.businesstoday.in>

Chairman & Editor-in-Chief: Aroon Purie
Vice Chairperson & Executive Editor-in-Chief: Kalli Purie
Group Chief Executive Officer: Dinesh Bhatia
Chief Operating Officer: Alok Nair
Group Editor: Siddharth Zarabi
Chief AI Officer, Group Creative Editor: Nilanjan Das
Group Photo Editor: Bandeep Singh
Executive Editor: Krishna Gopalan

Editor (Special Projects): Tina Edwin
Economy Editor: Surabhi
Senior Editor: Neetu Chandra Sharma

Associate Editors: Chetan Bhutani, Karan Dhar
Senior Assistant Editors: Palak Agarwal, Richa Sharma
Special Correspondent: Karishma Asoodani
Principal Correspondents: Aastha Chopra, Aishwarya Patil

RESEARCH
Chief of Research Bureau: Rahul Oberoi
Deputy Research Analyst: Prince Tyagi

COPY DESK
Senior Editor: Mahesh Jagota
Associate Editor: Vikram Gopal
Assistant Editors: Bitasta Basu, Kamalika Ghosh

PHOTOGRAPHY
Senior Photographer: Hardik Chhabra
Photo Coordinator: Vidushi Mehrotra

ART
Art Director: Rahul Sharma
Associate Art Directors: Rajesh Kumar Angira, Raj Verma
Senior Designer: Uma Shankar

EVENTS
Senior Manager: Sourabh Dutta
PRODUCTION
Chief of Production: Harish Aggarwal
Deputy Manager: Narendra Singh
Production Coordinator: Ayekpam David Meitei

LIBRARY
Assistant Librarian: Satbir Singh
Executive Secretary: Jyoti Kochhar

BUSINESS TEAM
Publisher: Siddhartha Chatterjee
General Manager & North Head: Ateez Dhanda
Assistant General Manager (Mumbai): Rohit Subramanian
Assistant General Manager (Chennai): P. Varunam
Assistant General Manager (Govt Sales): Manoj Goherwal

AD OPS
Deputy General Manager: Avinash Karkera
Marketing: Vivek Malhotra, Group Chief Marketing Officer
Newsstand Sales: Deepak Bhatt,
Assistant Vice President – Sales and Distribution;
Rajeev Gandhi, General Manager (North);
Yogesh Godhanal Gautam, Regional Sales Manager (West);
Manawer Hossain, Regional Sales Manager (East)

**Vol. 35, No. 3, for the fortnight January 19, 2026
to February 1, 2026. Released on January 19, 2026.**



• Editorial Office: India Today Mediaplex, FC 8, Sector 16/A, Film City, Noida-201301; Tel: 0120-4807100, Fax: 0120-4807150 • Advertising Office (Gurgaon): A1-A2, Enky Centre, Ground Floor, V.N. Commercial Complex, Udyog Vihar, Phase 5, Gurgaon-122001;

Tel: 0124-4948400; Fax: 0124-4030919; Mumbai: 1201, 12th Floor, Tower 2 A, One World Center (Jupiter Mills), S.B. Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400013; Tel: 022-69193355;

Fax: 022-66063226; Chennai: 5th Floor, Main Building No. 443, Gunja Complex, Anna Salai, Teynampet, Chennai-600018; Tel: 044-28478525; Fax: 044-24361949; Bangalore: 202-204 Richmond Towers, 2nd Floor, 12, Richmond Road, Bangalore-560026; Tel: 080-22212448, 080-30374106; Fax: 080-22218335; Kolkata: 52, J.L. Road, 4th floor, Kolkata-700071;

Tel: 033-2285398, 033-22877226, 033-22819222; Fax: 033-22872754; Hyderabad: 6-3-885/7/B, Raj Bhawan Road, Somajiguda, Hyderabad-500082; Tel: 040-23401657, 040-23400479;

Ahmedabad: 2nd Floor, 2C, Surya Rath Building, Behind White House, Panchwati, Off: C.G. Road, Ahmedabad-380006; Tel: 079-6560393, 079-6560929; Fax: 079-6565293;

Kochi: Karakkatt Road, Kochi-682016; Tel: 0484-2377057, 0484-2377058; Fax: 0484-370962 • Subscriptions: For assistance contact Customer Care India Today Group, C-9, Sector-10, Noida (UP) - 201301.

Email: wecare@intoday.com | Phone / WhatsApp: +91 8597 778 778 (Monday to Friday, 10 am-6 pm)

• Sales: General Manager Sales, Living Media India Ltd, C-9, Sector 10, Noida (UP) - 201301; Tel: 0120-4019500; Fax: 0120-4019664 © 1998 Living Media India Ltd.

All rights reserved throughout the world. Reproduction in any manner is prohibited.

• Printed & published by Manoj Sharma on behalf of Living Media India Limited.

Printed at Thomson Press India Private Limited, 18-35, Milestone, Delhi-Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007 (Haryana). Published at F-26, First Floor, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001.

Editor: Siddharth Zarabi

• *Business Today* does not take responsibility for returning unsolicited publication material.

All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only.



For reprint rights and syndication enquiries, contact
syndications@intoday.com or call +91-120-4078000
www.syndicationstoday.in

CONTENTS

February 1, 2026 | Volume 35 | Number 3



LEAD ESSAY

24

14 | THE POINT

Import Imbalance

Why the gap between exports and imports is not narrowing fast enough



16 | BT INTERVIEW

"We're at the start of India's coffee story"

Blue Tokai's Shivam Shahi on India's coffee boom

96 | CONSUMER MARKET

Swipe, Select, but Spend Smart

Behind Gen Z's purchase behaviour



116 | HEALTH

Healthy Priorities

Urban India's Gen Zs are treating health as a daily consideration driven by access to information

126 | MANAGING MONEY

Decoding Gen Z's Wallet Share

For Gen Zs, value for money takes precedence over brand loyalty

THE BT-PRICE SURVEY

Survey 34 • Rajesh Shukla 110 • Santosh Desai 217 • Alpana Parida 220

RUN-UP TO DAVOS: Tarun Das 224 • Smriti Irani 228

COVER BY NILANJAN DAS/AI
(FALSE COVER-1) BY HARDIK CHHABRA; (FALSE COVER-2-3) BY NILANJAN DAS/AI

**SOLID BANK KI
SOLID BACKING**



MORE EXCLUSIVE BENEFITS WITH CURATED WEALTH PLANNING

Reach out to **SBI Wealth** for priority banking



T&C Apply

SBI Wealth

#SolidBankKiSolidBacking

Investment and other products | Lifestyle privileges | Digital convenience

To know more, visit: sbi.bank.in



Scan to
know more

✉ Email: wealth@sbi.co.in

Follow us on



PERSONAL CARE

134

India's New Beauty Story

Young consumers are no longer buying beauty to look like someone else. They are buying it to understand themselves

HOSPITALITY, FOOD,
TRAVEL

144

Chasing 'TFW'

India's Gen Z is reshaping how they discover, design, and share their leisure experiences



TECH

152

The Gadget Generation

The Gen Z cohort is now driving almost 50% of India's \$45–50 billion consumer tech market



INVESTING

162

Cautious Money

How young investors are using technology to manage risk. They are not just tech-savvy, but data-rational too



ENTERTAINMENT

168

The Gen Z Show

How do Gen Z members consume content? The BT-PRICE Survey finds it prefers shorter formats that require less attention spans



ASSET OWNERSHIP

178

No Sweet Home Alabama

Gen Z is rethinking home ownership, driven less by aspiration and more by mobility and a deep aversion to being financially locked in for years

192

WORKPLACE TRENDS

Rewiring the Workplace

How Gen Z is questioning workplace practices

202

BEVERAGES

Controlled Cocktails

The nights look the same, but the glass doesn't—Gen Z is curating its buzz rather than chasing it



210

CONTENT CREATORS

The Rise of The Contentpreneurs

How work and income are getting redefined in India's creator economy



232

MANAGEMENT ADVICE

"Gen Z values kind leaders who prioritise training"

Talent and leadership advisor Abhijit Bhaduri on Gen Z's view on career



For the latest updates and analysis, log on to businesstoday.in

FOCUS / An IMPACT feature

From time to time, you will see pages titled "Focus", "An Impact Feature", or "Advertorial" in *Business Today*. These are no different from an advertisement and the magazine's editorial staff is not involved in their creation in any way.

Secure Employee Benefits PEACE OF MIND GUARANTEED



Presenting

LIC's GROUP SCHEMES

Salient
Features:

Scientific funding

Attractive Returns

Benefit of insurance protection

Income Tax Benefits as per Rules

Multiple options for annuity payments

New Group Superannuation Cash
Accumulation Plan - UIN: 512N274V03

New Group Gratuity Cash
Accumulation Plan - UIN: 512N281V04

Group Post Retirement Medical
Benefit Scheme - UIN: 512N352V01

New Group Leave Encashment
Plan - UIN: 512N282V04

For more details, email to groupbusiness@licindia.com or
contact your Agent/nearest LIC P&GS unit /register on <https://lmspgs.licindia.in/ilead>

LIC/P/PGS/2024-25/35/Eng



Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827



Visit: www.licindia.in

Follow us :      LIC India Forever
IRDAI Regn No.: 512

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI or its officials do not involve in any activities of insurance business like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums, refund of amounts. Policyholders or the prospects receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.



LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

| THE POINT |

IMPORT IMBALANCE

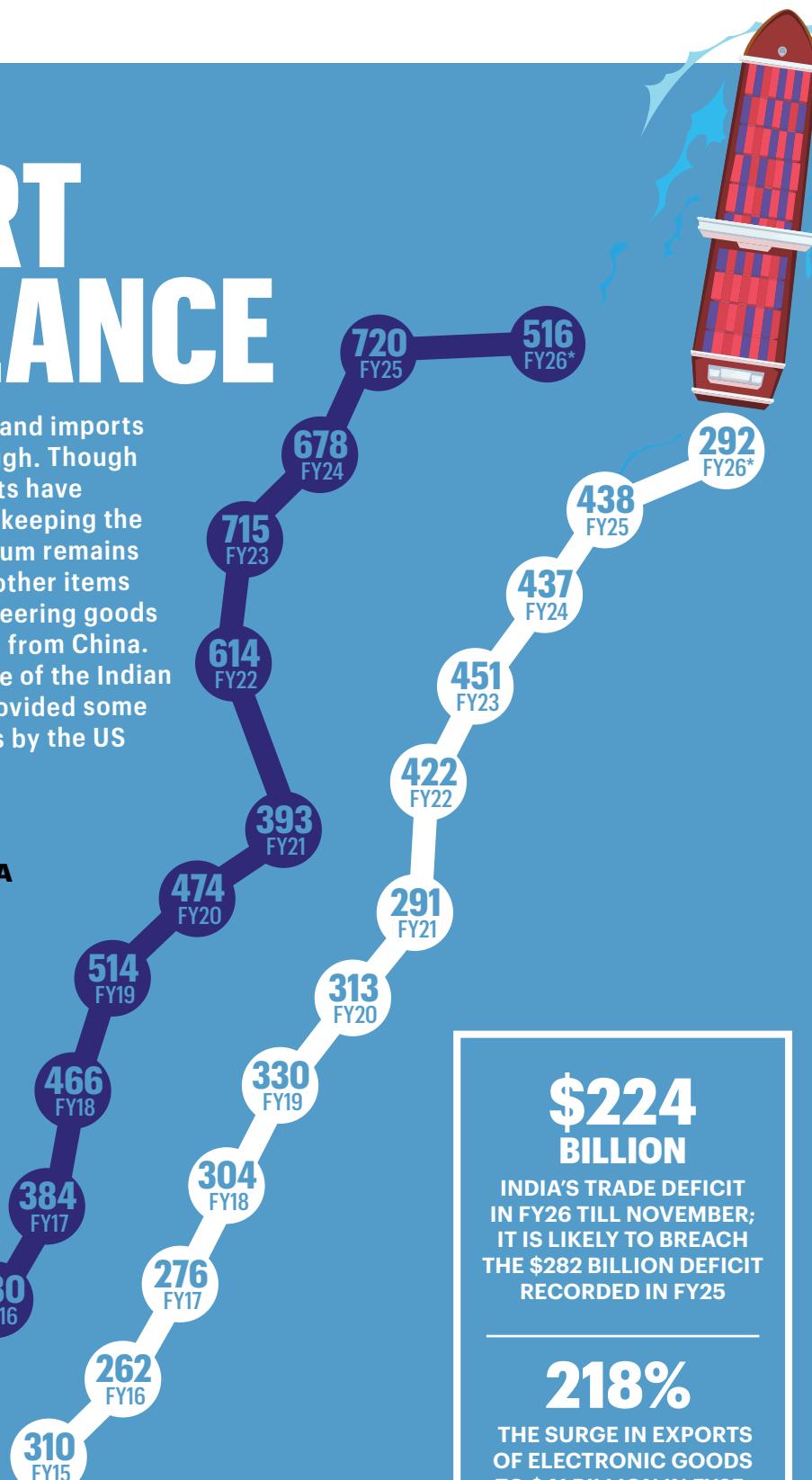
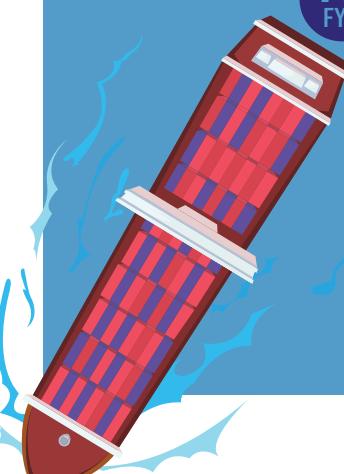
The gap between exports and imports is not narrowing fast enough. Though exports have risen, imports have increased at a faster clip, keeping the trade deficit high. Petroleum remains the largest import, while other items like electronics and engineering goods are still largely shipped in from China. Though the fall in the price of the Indian basket of crude oil has provided some comfort, additional tariffs by the US may hurt

By PRINCE TYAGI

Graphics By RAJ VERMA

RISE AND RISE

EXPORTS HAVE RISEN OVER THE PAST DECADE, BUT IMPORTS HAVE SURGED FASTER, KEEPING INDIA'S TRADE BALANCE IN THE RED



● IMPORTS
● EXPORTS

IN \$ BILLION; *TILL NOVEMBER 2025
SOURCE CMIE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

**\$224
BILLION**

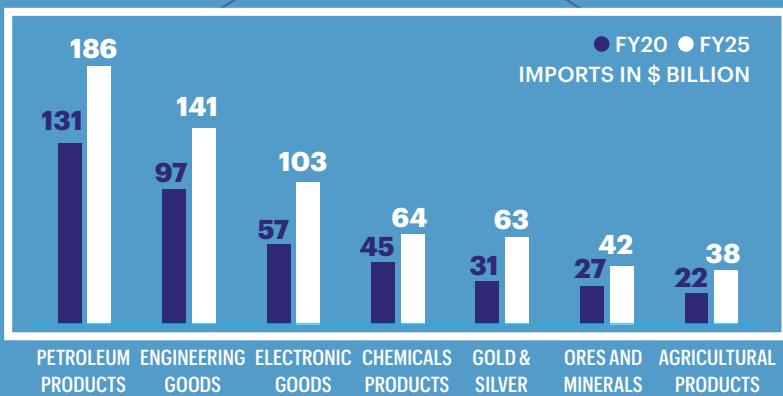
INDIA'S TRADE DEFICIT
IN FY26 TILL NOVEMBER;
IT IS LIKELY TO BREACH
THE \$282 BILLION DEFICIT
RECORDED IN FY25

218%

THE SURGE IN EXPORTS
OF ELECTRONIC GOODS
TO \$41 BILLION IN FY25,
THE HIGHEST AMONG
MAJOR ITEMS, FOLLOWED
BY PETROLEUM PRODUCTS
(53%) AND ENGINEERING
GOODS (48%)

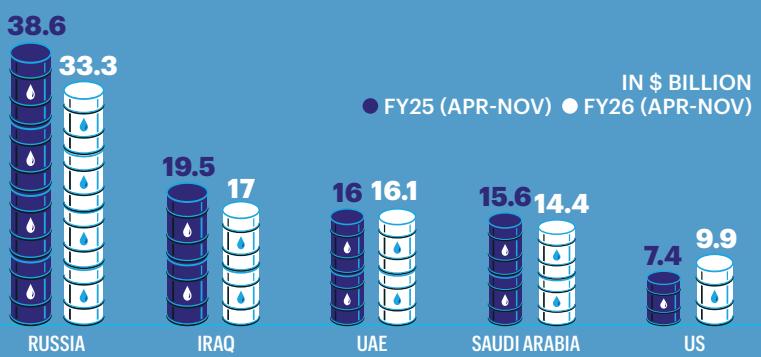
MAJOR IMPORTS

IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, THE IMPORT BILL FOR GOLD AND SILVER HAS SURGED 104%, FOLLOWED BY ELECTRONIC GOODS (80%) AND AGRI PRODUCTS (76%)



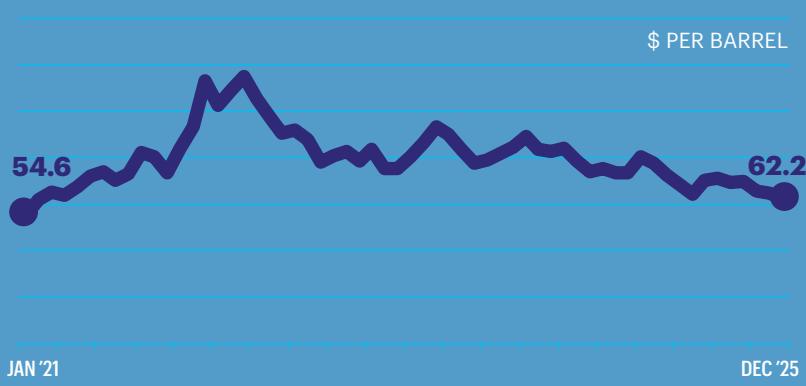
WIDENING SUPPLY

CRUDE OIL IMPORTS FROM RUSSIA, IRAQ AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE DECLINED, WHILE IMPORTS FROM THE US HAVE JUMPED IN FY26 SO FAR (TILL NOVEMBER)



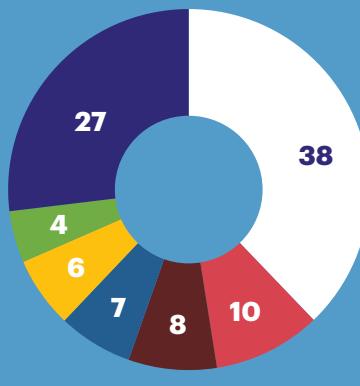
SILVER LINING

THE RECENT FALL IN PRICES OF THE INDIAN BASKET OF CRUDE OIL MAY BRING DOWN THE TRADE DEFICIT



THE DRAGON'S SHARE

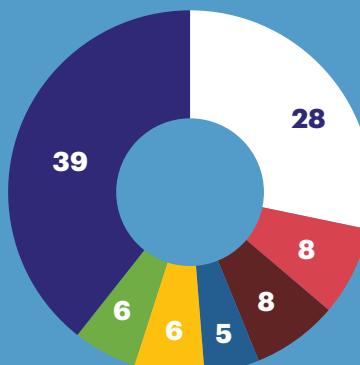
COUNTRY-WISE IMPORTS OF ELECTRONIC GOODS (%)



FY26 DATA TILL NOVEMBER 2025

- CHINA ● HONG KONG
- SINGAPORE ● IRELAND
- USA ● SOUTH KOREA ● OTHERS

IMPORTS OF ENGINEERING GOODS (%)



FY26 DATA TILL NOVEMBER 2025

- CHINA ● JAPAN
- GERMANY ● UAE
- USA ● SOUTH KOREA ● OTHERS

SOURCE CMIE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK



Scan here for the full video
of the interview

| THE BT INTERVIEW |

“We’re just at the start of India’s coffee story”

Shivam Shahi, Co-Founder and COO of Blue Tokai, on India’s coffee boom, building the business, and coffee’s growing pull among young consumers

BY SIDDHARTH ZARABI & AABHA BAKAYA

16 |

C

Coffee is fast becoming India's favourite caffeine fix. Legend traces coffee's arrival in India to a Sufi saint in the 17th century. For years after the first beans were planted in the Baba Budan Giri Hills of Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka, coffee was mostly consumed at home or in some cafés. This began to change in the 1990s with the advent of homegrown chains like Café Coffee Day. Others followed in its footsteps—with the foremost being Blue Tokai Coffee Roasters that spotted the opportunity in 2012. Today, coffee culture has spread across the country, powered by young Indians. What started as a trend is now a full-fledged business story.

Behind this rise is a mix of access and middle-class aspiration, growing

awareness about specialty coffee, more independent cafés as well as multinational chains, and a stronger brew-at-home culture. Social media has helped push coffee into the mainstream, online delivery has made it easier to order in, and wider availability of brewing equipment and quality beans has turned it into a daily ritual. The result is a generation that sees coffee as more than a beverage—shaped by purists chasing that perfect shot of caffeine.

Blue Tokai Co-Founder and COO Shivam Shahi speaks with Business Today Group Editor Siddharth Zarabi and Consulting Editor Aabha Bakaya on specialty coffee, shifting consumer habits, and how the pandemic triggered a surge in consumption. It also zooms in on Gen Z, which is increasingly choosing coffee over tea. Edited excerpts:

SZ: Take us back to the beginning. How did Blue Tokai start?

A: It started 13 years back. The idea was simple. India was growing good, specialty coffee, but most of it was getting exported. Domestic consumption was minimal. We went to the source. We saw ample amounts of good coffee that Indian farmers were growing, but no one was trying to create a brand around that, because everyone felt India was a tea drinking nation.



PHOTOS BY **MANDAR DEODHAR**

"We are focusing on going deeper into a city. Most of our outlets are in Delhi NCR—around 85. There are 48 in Mumbai, 20 in Pune and Kolkata. People were very sceptical about Kolkata, but we have the most successful business model there"

Instead, it was treated as a commodity play. Cafés back then were run as a space where people would meet. We thought there was an opportunity, and maybe over 10-20 years, things would work in our favour because building anything around coffee takes at least two-three decades.

AB: What did starting up look like?

A: We started doing our research, went to farmers. They were hesitant—asking us what we were trying to do. There was no demand in the Indian market and we wanted specialty grade beans. We were the first to start specialty coffee in India. Before us, there was no player focusing on such quality stuff. After a lot of convincing, we managed to get a couple of sacks (of



Scan here for the full video
of the interview

| THE BT INTERVIEW |



beans) from growers as an experiment because they had zero hope that this would pick up in India. We started with a very small, a two-kilogram roaster at home, began selling online, and in very odd community-driven places because there was no demand. You had to educate the consumer. People who were well travelled were the ones who appreciated quality. They became our first set of consumers.

SZ: When did you realise that this could become a scalable business?

A: After about two years, when we were still a home-run business, we realised this opportunity was big. If not us there would be someone else who would pick up the opportunity, as coffee is one of the most consumed beverages globally. We raised funds, although it was a big task—we were initially unsuccessful in convincing potential investors.

AB: Your first café was at an unusual location. Why Champa Gali in Delhi?

A: At the end of 2015, we raised our first small cheque from the Kirloskar Family Office. We then selected

“Even a small shift in habit represents a massive opportunity. There is enough room for multiple players to grow and for this category to create at least one unicorn”

the oddest possible location to start. Champa Gali used to be a chicken farm. The rent was low, there was no one around, and we could control the environment, and do what we wanted. We built up that location, set up our first live roaster, and started online sales to hotels. That is how our cafe journey started.

SZ: How would you describe that stage of India's coffee culture?

A: If the current decade is called the 'third wave of coffee', that was the second wave.

SZ: Where is the growth coming from today?

A: We are focusing on going deeper into a city. Most of



THE NEW ERA OF DIGITAL LUXURY

essence

HOME AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS



reddot winner 2023
design concept



reddot winner 2024
product design



reddot winner 2024
design concept

essence
dawn of digital luxury

The Essence Switch is a bold expression of digital luxury, crafted for villas, bungalows, and curated spaces of the modern era. Its luminous arcs, inspired by nature's contrasts, blend sleek design with intelligent functionality. With built-in smart features and voice-enabled control, it elevates everyday living into a seamless experience. As a complete home automation solution, it gives you the power to manage lights, fans, curtains and more with ease. Essence is not just a switch series; it is where connected living meets timeless elegance.

Modular Switches • Touch Switches • Wi-Fi Switches • Home Automation Solutions • Bluetooth Music System
Video Door Phones • LED Lighting • Wires & Cables • PVC Pipes & Fittings • DBs, MCBs & RCCBs • Fans & Appliances



Scan here for the full video
of the interview

| THE BT INTERVIEW |

our outlets are in Delhi NCR—around 85. There are 48 in Mumbai, and around 20 in Pune and Kolkata. This wave is global, it is a lifestyle, and it is present wherever there are young people and the earning is decent. People were very sceptical about Kolkata, but we have the most successful business model there.

AB: Is coffee finally beating tea, at least among the youth?

A: There is no fight. In my opinion, anything that can be made at home, and that you have grown up with becomes slightly less premium. Fetching a good price for that product outside the home and making it a viable business model will be challenging.

AB: Your cafés turn profitable very quickly. What's the operating logic?

A: You must balance expenses. Do not rely on marketing to develop your business, because the product will always win, no matter what. In a café, 40–45% expenses are rental, marketing, and discounts. You must control that. We do not care about visibility; we care about neighbourhoods. Make your product right and convenient for the consumer. More than 95% of our stores have been profitable in the first month.

20 |

SZ: Did Covid change the consumption behaviour of youth?

A: Coffee consumption in India has surged post Covid, not just in cafés but through deliveries, as people got accustomed to ordering in. Lifestyle habits have changed too; Indians are going out more often, and coffee shops fit seamlessly into this rhythm, whether it is a 7 a.m. run, a mid-morning meetup, or an afternoon break. Today, coffee consumption here is still measured in grams per person, compared to kgs in other countries. Even a small shift in habit represents a massive opportunity. There is enough room for multiple players to grow and for this category to create at least one unicorn.

AB: Are you building towards unicorn status or an IPO?

A: We never reverse engineer. This is a business driven by patience. What we are trying to build is an Indian coffee brand that is going to be famous for good quality across the globe. I do not want to be in a situation where a person who has trusted me loses money. Most of our early-stage investors have reinvested. All the big players have reinvested because we do not overpromise or oversell. People have trusted us with their money and that is going to happen in the public

markets too. The moment we gain the confidence of not disappointing anyone will be the time for an IPO.

AB: Is the market overcrowded or is this just the beginning?

A: India just has 2,300 cafés. In Shanghai or New York, you have more than 10,000 cafes. So, it is a heavily underpenetrated market. You may see this as an overcrowded market, I see this as just the start.

SZ: What about coffee bean prices?

A: The prices of coffee beans have risen 50–60% this year. It is not just Blue Tokai, most players have not been able to pass this increase to consumers. While prices are likely to remain elevated in the near term, we are hopeful that they will stabilise. The specialty market is still young, and both consumers and firms

“After about two years, when we were still a home-run business, we realised this opportunity was big. If not us someone else would pick up the opportunity”

are adapting to these fluctuations. Overall, this price rise reflects global trends in supply, quality, and demand.

AB: What are some operational challenges in running this business?

A: Managing people is our biggest challenge. Our staff comes from varied backgrounds and getting them to adapt to Blue Tokai's standards isn't solved with a 21-day training course—it takes time, experimentation, and even professional guidance. On top of that, we don't outsource anything: breads, fillings, croissants, cookies, everything is made in-house. Building this takes years, which is why patience is key—profitability doesn't happen overnight.

It is not just about selling coffee, it's about creating experiences, educating consumers, and supporting growers along the way. **BT**

@szarabi, @aabhabakaya

V O L V O

Meet the fully electric Volvo EX30.

The big surprise is here.



SURPRISINGLY BIG ON

POWER

Up to 480 Km* range
200 kW / 272 hp

STORAGE

318L boot space
(expandable up to 904L)
7L Front compartment space

SAFETY

Safe Space Technology
Dooring alert

SOUND

Harman Kardon premium
sound 9 speakers -
1040 W output

TECH

"Google built-in
Keyless access

SUSTAINABILITY

Smart use of renewable
materials Lower carbon
footprint



TO KNOW MORE

Scan the QR code
or visit volvocars.in

VOLVO CAR INDIA | TOLL FREE NO.: 1800 102 389

Specifications, features and colours shown here may not be part of standard equipment. Accessories and features may change from model to model. The model, equipment, and possible vehicle configurations illustrated in this advertisement may not be offered in India. Volvo Auto India reserves the right to make changes without prior notice, in design, colours, materials, components, equipment, specifications, features, functions, make and models etc. *Figure according to WLTP laboratory testing. In real world the range you experience can differ from above stated figure. "Google, Google Play and Google Maps are trademarks of Google LLC. Google is a trademark of Google LLC. Google Assistant is not available in certain languages and countries. Sequences shortened and simulated. Google features are only for 5 years. After 5 years, new terms and conditions apply. The commercial is shot outside India with a left-hand drive Volvo EX30. For features and specifications please refer to <https://www.volvocars.com/in/cars/ex30-electric/>. Image is for representation only.

Award-Winning Vision, Admired Leadership: Venu Vinod at the Helm of CYBERCITY



In conversation with Business Today, **Mr. Vinod, Managing Director of CYBERCITY Builders & Developers**, looks back at 20 years of CYBERCITY's evolution—from a bold entrepreneurial vision to a respected name in India's real estate landscape. He shares insights on leadership, sustainability, and the future of luxury living.

Born and raised in Hyderabad, Mr. Vinod's entrepreneurial journey began long before CYBERCITY came into existence. A graduate in commerce, he embarked on his business career in 1982, gaining hands-on experience across diverse industries including real estate, engineering products, chemicals, and construction equipment. Over three decades in the field shaped his strategic mindset and prepared him for the complex challenges of urban real estate development. Today, he is recognised as one of Hyderabad's respected business leaders, known for his commitment to quality, innovation, and long-term value creation.

By the time **CYBERCITY Builders & Developers** was incorporated in 2005, Mr. Vinod had already established a strong reputation for business integrity and operational excellence. Stepping into his role as Managing Director from the company's early days, he brought with him a blend of deep industry knowledge and a bold vision—to create living spaces and work environments that resonate with the aspirations of modern Indian buyers.

What was your thought process when you envisioned CYBERCITY Developers and embarked on your real estate journey?

We started CYBERCITY Builders & Developers at a time when the IT revolution was redefining our economy, aspirations, and lifestyles. Real estate was no exception to this transformation. Our primary objective was to create



Venu Vinod
Managing Director (MD)
Cybercity Builders & Developers Pvt. Ltd.

"Our existing customers are our biggest brand ambassadors"

world-class living spaces for the modern Indian household, especially professionals working in the technology sector.

From the very beginning, our core ethos revolved around constant innovation, technological and design leadership, superior construction quality, and a strong commitment to sustainable building practices. These values continue to guide us even today, as we diversify into new real estate verticals.

In 2025, CYBERCITY Developers completed 20 years since incorporation. How would you describe your journey over the last two decades?

Rainbow Vistas was our first major venture, launched in 2008. The project was mostly sold out within 90 days, and there has been no looking back since. Over the past two decades, we have welcomed more than 7,500 customers into the CYBERCITY family. We have delivered over 9 million sq. ft. of built-up space, with an additional 10 million sq. ft. currently under construction at various stages.

From 2025 onwards, our focus has increasingly shifted towards the luxury segment. With several premium projects in the pipeline, we aim to establish **CYBERCITY Developers** as a leading name in luxury real estate in the years ahead.

CYBERCITY Marina Skies was one of the winning projects at the first-ever CREDAI National Realty Conclave & Awards. Could you tell us more about this achievement?

CYBERCITY Builders & Developers is a lifetime member of the CREDAI Hyderabad chapter, and our association with CREDAI spans nearly two decades. CREDAI is the most influential and representative body of the real estate industry, advocating for stakeholders at both the state and national levels.

Having one of our flagship projects recognized at All-India level at the National Realty Conclave & Awards is a proud and defining moment for us. This recognition is a testament to our continued efforts to deliver cutting-edge technology, world-class amenities, and sustainable living spaces for our

customers.

Congratulations on the award win. Could you share more about Marina Skies and what made it deserving of this prestigious recognition?

Some of the key factors that contributed to Marina Skies winning the award include:

1. Prime location at the heart of HITEC City, offering excellent connectivity to both new and old Hyderabad.

2. Unmatched views, with the project overlooking two natural lakes—each apartment enjoys either a lake view or a central green vista.

3. Sustainability focus, as Marina Skies is an IGBC Gold-rated green building and a benchmark for environmentally responsible living.

4. Architectural excellence, with the project designed by renowned architect **Hafeez Contractor**. Despite being positioned in the mid-segment category, his design philosophy elevated Marina Skies into a luxury offering—combining world-class living spaces, expansive open areas, comprehensive amenities, and sustainable design.



Coming of AGE

The new generation of youth coming into the workforce, with their own aspirations and belief systems, brings new opportunities and challenges. Is India Inc ready to navigate this frontier? The BT-PRICE survey sheds light

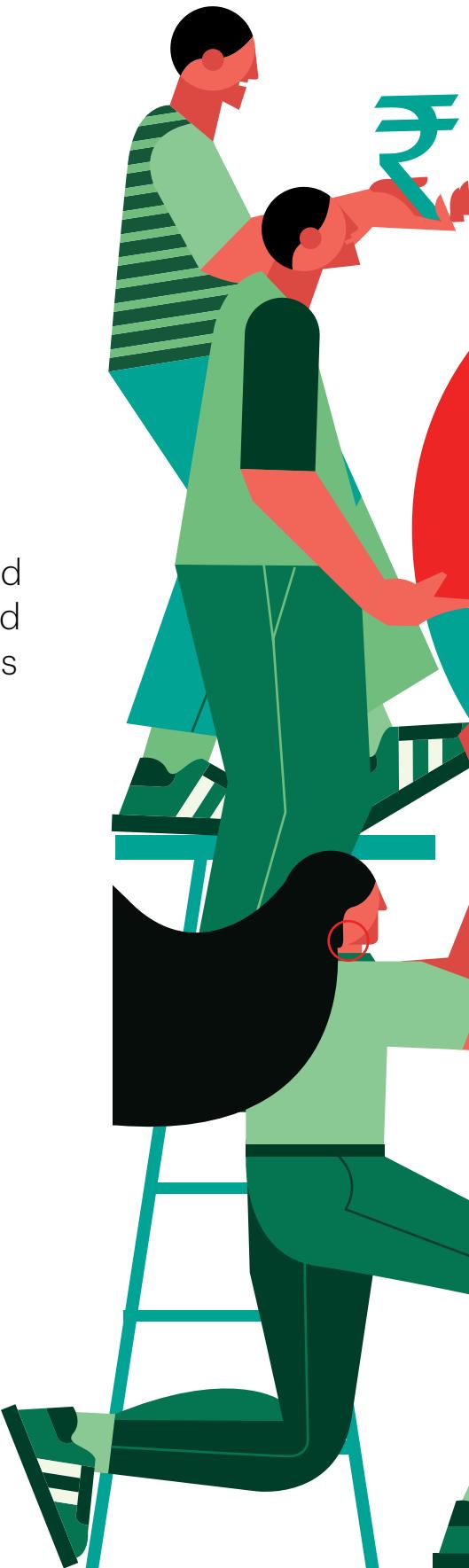
BY SURABHI

THE LAST TWO YEARS—2024 and, more notably, 2025—saw a wave of protests by a new generation of students and young professionals looking for political change, better economic conditions and more climate awareness across countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia and the Maldives.

But beyond these uprisings, Gen Z, the term used to describe those born in late 1990s to the early part of the 2010s and currently aged around 13-29 years, are not only questioning but also bringing forth changes in societal norms and economic behaviour. It's not just a generation gap!

Gen Z are digital natives. They are tech savvy, have grown up with Internet in their homes, iPads as their support system, social media as a constant companion and take digital payments, online and quick commerce for granted. They tend to be night owls, the real gigsters, at home with artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, and with a lingo—cap, salty, suss and tea—that make others scratch their heads.

They also have newer challenges—rising unemployment, an uncertain economic environment, the rise of AI that has put a question mark on the future of work, climate change that is turning more real by the day, and skyrocketing real estate prices that mean a dream home could remain just a dream. Still, they are the rising consumer force who, over the





DRIP (SWAG)

Gen Z refers to those born in late 1990s to the early part of 2010 and currently aged 13-29 years

As per PRICE estimates, 420 million young people who fall in the age group of 15-29 constitute 29% of the population

They will soon be the largest part of the workforce and present a new market opportunity

Digital natives, price conscious and aspirational, they face an uncertain economic environment, unemployment and environmental concerns

Firms are waking up to the wave and realising they need to review strategies to gain the attention and loyalty these consumers

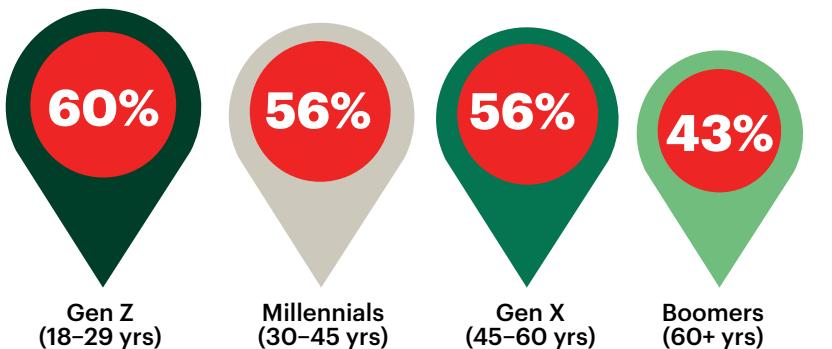
BT commissioned a survey by PRICE of 18-29-year-olds to map Gen Z's economic thinking and consumption patterns

BUYING ON THE NET

Gen Z Is More Engaged with E-Commerce and Paid Delivery Services

Do you subscribe to any paid delivery service (e.g. Flipkart Plus, Amazon Prime, Zomato Gold, Swiggy One, etc.)?

Respondents who said Yes (%)



SAMPLE 8,200 (18-70 YEARS) ACROSS 25 MAJOR CITIES
SOURCE PRICE'S ICE 360 SURVEY (2024)

next decade, are poised to become the largest chunk of the labour force and the focus of most companies.

For a country like India that is still young, Gen Z will soon be the economic force to reckon with. A recent report by not-for-profit think

tank People Research on India's Consumer Economy (PRICE) estimates that as of 2025, nearly one in five young individuals globally lives in India. "This is a formidable 420-million strong force, constituting approximately 29% of the na-

tion's total population, and made up of individuals aged between 15 and 29 as defined by India's National Youth Policy (2014)," it said.

Labour sociologist Ellina Samantroy, Fellow at the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, says India's expanding Gen Z or youth workforce offers a significant opportunity for the country to reap the demographic dividend. As per the recent Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023-24, around 46.5% of the labour force is in the 15-29 age group. "There has been an increase in labour force participation in this age group from 42% during 2021-22. One can see the economic growth potential of this cohort," she says.

However, with transitions and emerging opportunities in the world of work, it is important to harness the potential of this population cohort with adequate access to education and skilling, she says. Devangshu Dutta, founder and chief executive of Third Eyesight, a boutique management consulting firm focused on the retail and consumer products ecosystem, says Indian Gen Z consumers are not a uniform cohort.

"A critical issue in India is the coexistence of aspiration and constraint, and India's Gen Z are shaped by a mix of high digital exposure and wide economic disparity. While they are ambitious and globally aware, their purchasing power varies sharply across segments and locations," he says.

Further, urban, higher-income Gen Z display global consumption behaviours such as brand experimentation, social commerce and premium aspiration, whereas a large proportion of Gen Z in Tier II, Tier III and rural India is highly value-driven and necessity-led, while drawing their inspiration from global and national sources. He also points out that unlike Millennials, Indian Gen Z are also entering the



FRANKLIN
TEMPLETON

WHEN
EQUITY MARKETS
CORRECT,

DON'T STOP
YOUR SIPs.

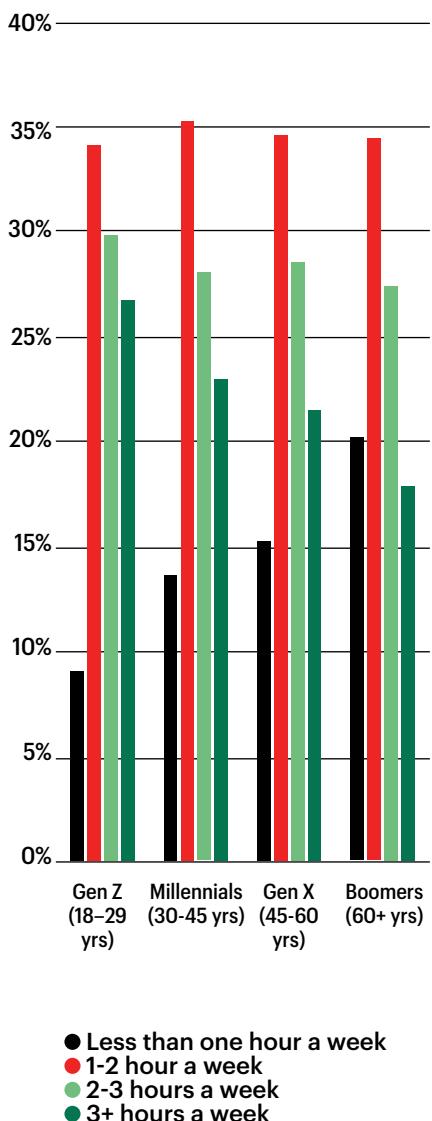
#BeNonStop

An investor education and awareness initiative by Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund.

1. One-time KYC (Know Your Customer): One-time KYC registration is mandatory to invest in mutual funds. You can complete the same by submitting the requisite documents at any of our branches or collection centres. You may also avail our Online KYC Registration facility while opening an online account with us. For more details please visit our website www.franklintempletonindia.com. 2. Investors must deal/ invest only with SEBI registered Mutual Funds. Details available on the SEBI website www.sebi.gov.in. 3. Investors can reach us on our toll-free helpline 1800 425 4255 OR write to us at grievancedressal@franklintempleton.com. For escalation, write to us at headofcustomerservice@franklintempleton.com; president@franklintempleton.com or lodge your grievance with SEBI through their SCORES (SEBI Complaint Redress System) Portal at <https://scores.sebi.gov.in> or you may file any complaint on the Smart ODR on <https://smartodr.in/login>.

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

On an average, how much time do you spend browsing e-commerce platforms in a week?



SAMPLE 8,200 (18-70 YEARS) ACROSS 25 MAJOR CITIES

SOURCE PRICE'S ICE 360 SURVEY (2024)

workforce in a more uncertain economic environment, making price sensitivity, smaller pack sizes and flexible payment options important. "Employment patterns such as informal jobs, gig work and delayed income stability are influenc-

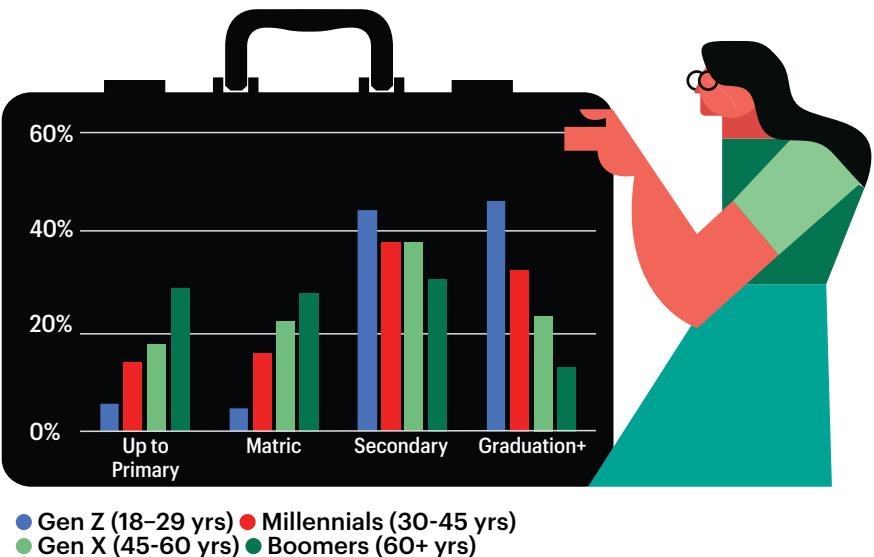
ing consumption cycles and brand loyalty," he says. There is a strong preference for digital discovery, vernacular content and peer-led recommendations, with trust built through community and relevance rather than legacy brand status.

Rising aspirations of Indian households and changes in consumption pattern with a marked move from essentials to more premium products have been well documented, most recently in Household Consumption Expendi-

HOW GEN Z STANDS OUT

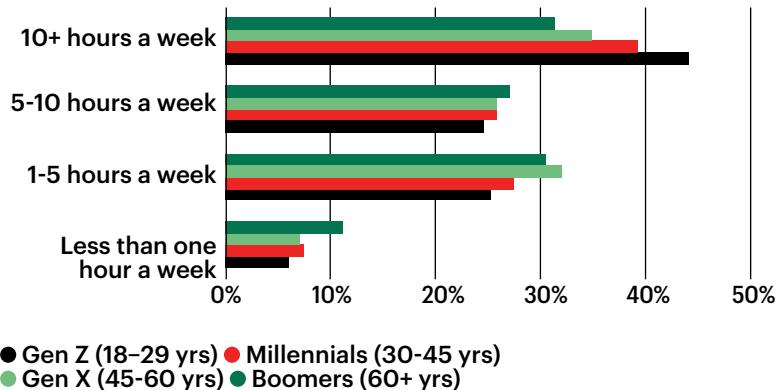
The Most Educated

What is the highest level of education you have attained?



Top in Net Browsing

On average, how much time do you spend browsing the Internet?



LL

A leap that begins with engineering and lands in history.

77

Leaping to the Moon with Chandrayaan-3 was no ordinary feat. It demanded cutting-edge engineering and flawless execution.

From system integration of the launch vehicle, to launch tracking with the C&S Band Radar, to deep-space communication using the 32M DSN Antenna – every step was engineered with precision. These systems were manufactured and tested to perfection by L&T and delivered ahead of schedule – enabling the Vikram Lander's historic, pinpoint touchdown.

It takes a leap of innovation to push the limits and create history.

JUST LEAP



SCAN TO SEE OUR LEAP

At the heart of
ISRO's Chandrayaan-3,
technology powered by L&T



ture Surveys. But more granular, individual-level data from PRICE shows marked changes in education levels and behaviour of Gen Z and other cohorts such as Millennials (those aged between 30 and 45), Gen X (aged 45-60) and Baby Boomers (60+). A 2024 PRICE ICE 360 Survey of 8,200 respondents (18-70 years) in 25 major cities showed that Gen Z is the most educated cohort, spends the most time browsing the Internet and is more engaged with e-commerce and paid digital services.

Multinational and domestic companies are also now waking up to the Gen Z wave and are realising that they need to review strategies to gain the attention and loyalty of Gen Z as consumers and workers.

"Fashion, beauty and personal care, food and beverages, and mobile and consumer electronics are at the forefront of change in India," says Dutta. Responding to Gen Z requirements, companies are designing products at accessible price points, expanding entry-level ranges and leveraging sachetisation and subscription models. Brands are investing more in regional languages, local influencers and platforms such as short-video and social commerce channels that resonate with young Indian consumers, he says.

But this process is still at a nascent stage, and many companies and analysts are still trying to assess this generation.

For the 34th Anniversary Issue, we at *Business Today* decided to decode what Gen Z is truly about, what influences them the most, what they aspire to purchase, what they can afford and what this means for India Inc. Over the course of the last few months, our newsroom saw animated discussions as senior editors sat down with younger colleagues to discuss lifestyle choices, brand loyalties and career ambitions, as we drafted an issue brief and a potential survey.



***"India's expanding
Gen Z or youth
workforce offers
a significant
opportunity for the
country to reap
the demographic
dividend"***

ELLINA SAMANTROY
CO-ORDINATOR,
CENTRE FOR GENDER AND
LABOUR, VV GIRI NATIONAL
LABOUR INSTITUTE



***"Brands are
investing more in
regional languages,
local influencers
and platforms
that resonate with
young"***

DEVANGSHU DUTTA
FOUNDER AND CEO,
THIRD EYESIGHT

We then got in touch with PRICE, which worked with us on our survey objectives and tweaked the questionnaire. The result—a first-of-its-kind exercise where PRICE surveyed 4,311 Gen Z respondents, who are now entering the workforce with an income of their own, residing in metros and Tier II cities. The survey covered gender, education, employment status, personal income and household income classes. The main focus was urban, educated Gen-Z who has the income to be a strong consumer.

The research examined consumption behaviour across discretionary and essential categories, savings and credit attitudes, digital influence, brand loyalty, aspirations, and future spending intent.

And the results are indeed, surprising! The survey reveals that traditional consumption models that were built around age-based life stages, linear career progression and early credit adoption no longer hold for Gen Z. "This cohort's behaviour reflects early exposure to economic shocks, greater career volatility and a redefinition of success away from speed toward resilience," it underlines.

For businesses, misreading delayed demand as permanent weakness risks underinvestment just as Gen Z approaches its next consumption inflection, it warns. For financial services, premature credit push without trust-building will underperform. For consumer brands, price-led acquisition without quality consistency will fail to convert into lifetime value.

Delve into this issue where *BT* brings to you the in-depth findings of the survey and explains what this means for companies as they vie for a share of this growing consumer segment. Gen Z is not just about rizz and drip, it is giving the main character energy as they come of age.

@surabhi_prasad

How We Did It

The methodology for the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey

THE GEN Z CONSUMPTION Behaviour Survey was co-designed by *Business Today* and People Research on India's Consumer Economy (PRICE) to generate statistically robust and policy relevant insights into the economic thinking, life-style preferences, and consumption patterns of young adults aged 18–29 years in urban India.

The study carried out by PRICE covers 12 major urban centres, comprising four metropolitan cities (Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai) and eight Tier II cities (Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Pune, Indore, Kochi, and Surat). These cities represent India's most influential urban consumption markets, where Gen-Z participation in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and digital consumption is highly concentrated.

The final achieved sample consists of 4,311 individual respondents, exceeding the originally proposed sample size and thereby strengthening the statistical reliability of the findings. The expanded sample reduces the overall margin of error to approximately 1.5–2% at a 95% confidence level, allowing for confident national-level inferences as well as robust subgroup comparisons across gender, age cohorts, city tiers, education levels, employment categories, and income classes.

It was conducted during a

two-week period from December 1–15, 2025 with a 34-point questionnaire.

Sampling was executed using a stratified random sampling framework. Respondents were stratified by city, gender, age group and household income, majority consisting of middle class and rich, to ensure proportional representation across metropolitan and Tier II urban contexts. Within cities, interviews were spread across mul-

occupational profiles, and socio-economic backgrounds in urban India.

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

The final sample of 4,311 Gen-Z respondents reflects a balanced and diverse urban youth population.

- City Type:** 51% of respondents are from metropolitan cities, while 49% are from Tier-II cities, enabling strong comparative analysis across urban tiers.

- Gender:** The sample is well balanced, with 2,238 males (52%) and 2,073 females (48%).

- Age Composition:** 12% are aged 18–21 years, 33% fall in the 22–25 years group, and 55%, are aged 26–29 years, reflecting Gen-Z's growing presence in the workforce.

- Education:** The respondent base is highly educated: 79% are graduates or post-graduates, underscoring the urban, aspirational character of the cohort.

- Employment Status:** 52% are privately salaried, 12% are government salaried, 33% are self-employed or entrepreneurs.

- Income Profile:** Nearly 55% report annual personal incomes between ₹3 lakh and ₹10 lakh, while 18% earn above ₹10 lakh, highlighting significant purchasing power within the cohort.

- Household Income Class:** Two-thirds (66%) belong to middle-income households, and 28% to high-income households, situating the sample firmly within India's urban consuming class. **BT**

The survey was conducted from December 1–15

iple urban wards and youth-dense locations to minimise clustering and selection bias. All respondents were interviewed as individuals rather than households, aligning with the study's focus on personal consumption behaviour and financial decision-making.

Data were collected using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) by trained field team of Research Investigators, Supervisors and Zonal Coordinators, supported by GPS tagging, real-time data monitoring, and multi-stage back-checks to ensure accuracy and data integrity. The final dataset provides a high-quality empirical foundation for analysing Gen-Z consumption behaviour across income strata,

Dr. Payal Kanodia: Redefining Indian Philanthropy Through Purpose, Scale and Sustainability



"The year 2025 has taught me that sustainable impact is built at the intersection of empathy and execution. Ideas matter, but what truly transforms is disciplined follow-through. Don't wait for the perfect moment, start with the resources you have, build momentum through consistent action, and bring others along. Success is not a solo sprint; it's a relay of trust, resilience and shared vision. In a world full of noise, let your impact be the quiet signal that resonates far beyond you" opines Dr Payal Kanodia, who exemplifies leadership at the intersection of corporate excellence and transformative philanthropy.

In a country where philanthropy has long been guided by compassion, Dr. Payal Kanodia represents a new generation of Indian leaders who are reshaping it with strategy, scale, and systems thinking. As Chairperson and Trustee of the M3M Foundation, she has emerged as one of India's most respected voices in social impact—someone who believes that charity must evolve into institution-building, and goodwill into measurable transformation. With a background that spans medicine, family business management, entrepreneurship at Harvard Business School, and international studies

in diplomacy, Dr. Kanodia brings to philanthropy a rare blend of empathy and execution. It is this duality—heart and discipline—that has defined her work across education, healthcare, women's empowerment, sports, and environmental sustainability.

Since its inception in 2019, the M3M Foundation under her leadership has impacted over 4.8 million lives across 22 states, three union territories, 851 villages and 85 districts—a scale that places it among India's most credible social institutions. Yet, for Dr. Kanodia, numbers are only the beginning. The real measure of success, she often says, lies in whether dignity becomes durable and opportunity becomes systemic.

Dr. Kanodia's growing presence on international platforms reflects the evolution of Indian philanthropy itself. No longer confined to local action, today's Indian social leadership is increasingly global in its outlook—connecting grassroots realities with global conversations on equity, sustainability and inclusive growth. At forums such as the Vatican Summit on Faith and Philanthropy and global leadership platforms in Europe, she has consistently articulated a simple but powerful belief: that emerging economies like India are no longer just recipients of global solutions—they are now architects of them.

Her participation at Davos this year comes at a defining moment—not just for her personally, but for the Indian development narrative. As the world debates climate responsibility, inclusive growth and ethical capitalism, Dr. Kanodia brings to the table a model that integrates all three.

Under Dr. Kanodia's stewardship, sustainability at M3M Foundation is not treated as an isolated vertical—it is embedded across programmes.

From large-scale tree plantation drives such as Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, which has seen over 200,000 saplings planted, to rural waste-management initiatives like Katran, which turns discarded fabric into livelihood opportunities for women artisans, the Foundation's approach reflects what she calls "environmental

responsibility with economic dignity". In rural clusters across Haryana, Odisha and Rajasthan, M3M Foundation's sustainability framework links climate action with community resilience—combining water conservation, green skilling, and circular-economy models that ensure environmental protection also generates income.

At Davos, Dr. Kanodia is expected to highlight how Indian CSR can move beyond compliance to become a global template for climate-conscious development—where sustainability is not a checkbox, but a value system that influences how organisations build, employ, and invest.

One of the defining pillars of Dr. Kanodia's philanthropy has been women's empowerment—not merely as beneficiaries, but as economic stakeholders.

Through programmes that focus on entrepreneurship, digital literacy, skilling and workforce participation, the Foundation has enabled thousands of women to move from informal labour to formal opportunity. Her former leadership at FICCI YFLO Delhi further amplified this mission, reaching over a million women through initiatives that promoted leadership, innovation and financial independence. At Davos, this narrative of women as catalysts of sustainable growth resonates deeply with global priorities. Dr. Kanodia's work demonstrates that when women participate economically, resilience multiplies—not just for families, but for entire ecosystems.

What sets Dr. Kanodia apart in India's philanthropic landscape is her insistence on continuity. "My goal" she has often said, "is not to create moments of charity, but institutions of care". This philosophy has guided the Foundation's long-term investments in education through Saakshar, in healthcare access, and in sports development through Lakshya, which supports over 100 athletes across India. Her belief is simple yet radical: development must outlive intention. And that is why, whether it is rural entrepreneurship through the Triveni Awards, climate-

linked livelihoods, or women-led micro-enterprises, each initiative is designed to sustain itself beyond its founders.

Recognised with honours such as the Karmaveer Global Fellowship, CSR Person of the Year, the Mahatma Award, and titles like Leader of Hope and Custodian of Humanity, Dr. Payal Kanodia today stands at the intersection of business excellence and transformative philanthropy. Yet, she wears these accolades lightly. For her, leadership is not about visibility—it is about velocity: how quickly impact travels from intent to implementation. As India enters its '*Amrit Kaal*' and the world looks to emerging economies for solutions to climate, inequality and inclusive growth, voices like hers matter more than ever. At Davos, Dr. Kanodia will not just represent an organisation or a foundation—she will represent a philosophy of modern Indian philanthropy: confident, compassionate, globally relevant, and uncompromisingly rooted in action. In redefining what it means to give in the 21st century, Dr. Payal Kanodia is not merely contributing to India's social story—she is helping shape its future narrative: one where progress is not a privilege, but a promise kept through purpose, partnership, and sustainability.

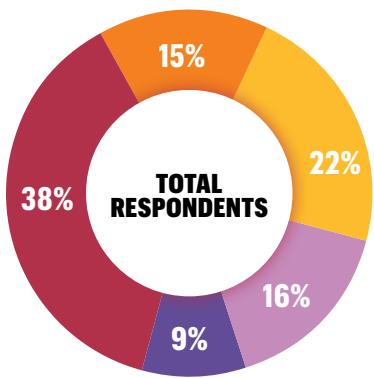
"Philanthropy today must operate at the scale of the challenges it seeks to solve. In 2026, our focus at M3M Foundation is on building replicable systems—where education feeds employability, women's economic participation strengthens resilience, and sustainability is embedded into growth. Development can no longer be episodic; it must be institutional"

- Dr Payal Kanodia.

WHICH CATEGORIES DO YOU SPEND THE MOST ON?

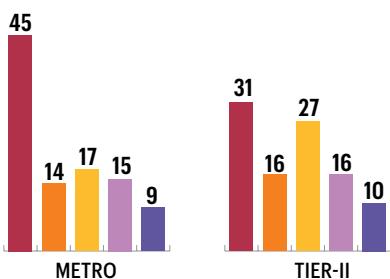
■ FASHION ■ FOOD & DINING ■ GADGETS/ELECTRONICS ■ PERSONAL CARE & WELLNESS ■ TRAVEL & EXPERIENCES

WALLET SHARE: GEN Z'S TOP 5 SHOPPING PREFERENCES



34 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER-II



All figures in %



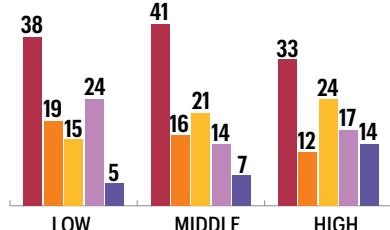
50%

Gen Z with education below primary level are spending more on fashion compared with graduates (38% and post graduates (36%)

12%

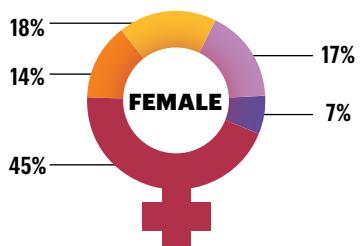
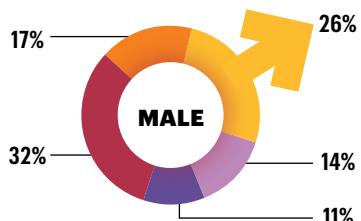
Of self-employed spend on travel and experience, which is the least preferred category. Salaried-govt employees and private spend 11% and 7%, respectively.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Fashion | 39% | 41% | 37% | 34% | 41% | 42% |
| Food & dining | 19% | 18% | 17% | 14% | 11% | 9% |
| Gadgets/electronics | 21% | 20% | 22% | 28% | 20% | 11% |
| Personal care & wellness | 14% | 16% | 16% | 15% | 12% | 23% |
| Travel & experiences | 6% | 6% | 8% | 9% | 16% | 16% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

INDIA HAS ARRIVED.
AND SO HAS ITS BIG ELECTRIC SUV.

XEV 9S



PRICE STARTS AT
BOOKINGS OPEN NOW | ₹19.95 Lakh*

Panoramic Skyroof™ & Triple Screens
standard across all variants

INDIA'S 1ST ELECTRIC 7-SEATER SUV

Big on Space

Biggest-in-class Cabin Space • 527 L Trunk^ & 150 L Frunk

Big on Tech

Level 2+ ADAS with 5 Radars, 1 Vision • VisionX AR HUD
• Auto Park Assist • 540 degree Camera

Big on Driving Thrill

0-100 km/h in 7 seconds • Shortest 10 m Turning Radius

Big on Entertainment

Coast-to-Coast Triple 31.24 cm HD Screens
• 16-speaker Harman Kardon Audio with Dolby Atmos

Big on 2nd Row Luxury

Sliding & Ventilated Seats • Powered Boss Mode

Big on Savings

Save up to ₹10-15 Lakh in 5 years*
• Up to 40% Depreciation Benefit for Business Owners

500 km Real World Range** • Lifetime Battery Warranty^^

^With 3rd row folded *Ex-showroom starting price for Pack One Above Variant. **As per tests conducted internally with moderate ambient temperature, City Drive with Low HVAC, Dry road and Optimal Drive Mode. ^^For First Registered Owner. Applicable for Private Registration only. In case of ownership change, warranty on HV Battery shall be 10 years or 200000 km – whichever is earlier. *Indicative savings versus ICE SUVs assuming running of 1500-3000 km per month and includes running cost, maintenance cost & depreciation benefit. Please connect with your nearest dealership for details and financial advisor for depreciation benefit.

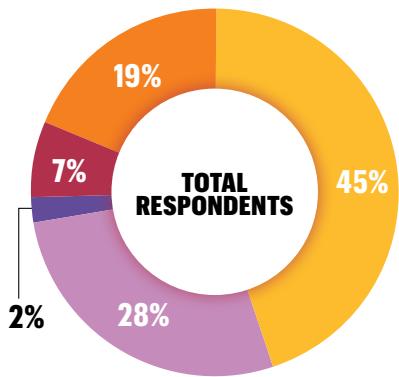
SCAN TO
LOCATE
A DEALERSHIP
NEAR YOU



HOW OFTEN DO YOU DINE OUT OR ORDER FOOD ONLINE?

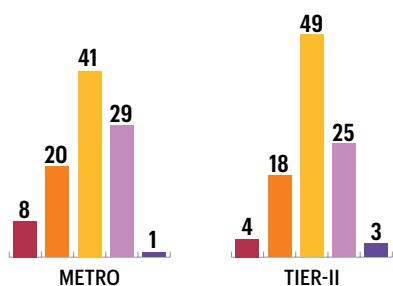
■ EVERYDAY ■ 3-5 TIMES A WEEK ■ 1-2 TIMES A WEEK ■ RARELY ■ NEVER

NEARLY 45% OF GEN Z PREFERS TO DINE OUT OR ORDER FOOD ONLINE AT LEAST ONCE IN A WEEK



36 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER-II



All figures in %



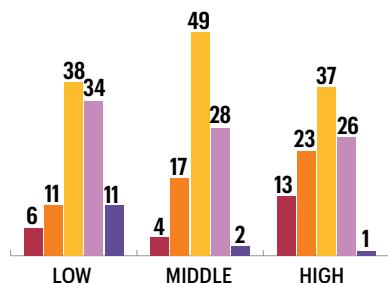
49%

Graduate Gen Zs dine out or order food online 1-2 times a week compared with 40% post graduates

48%

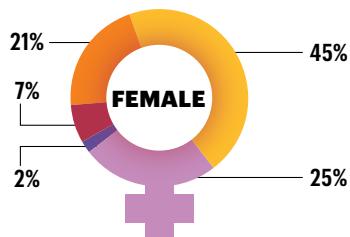
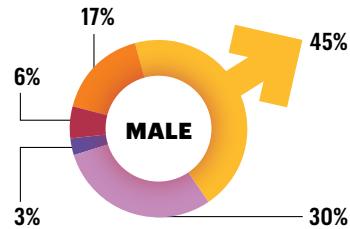
Of private sector employee dine out or order food online 1-2 times a week compared with 41% government employees and 42% self-employed

HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹ 2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Everyday | 3% | 4% | 5% | 8% | 9% | 16% |
| 3-5 times a week | 15% | 19% | 19% | 19% | 20% | 19% |
| 1-2 times a week | 44% | 50% | 53% | 41% | 38% | 24% |
| Rarely | 31% | 25% | 22% | 29% | 31% | 39% |
| Never | 6% | 2% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Featherlite®

Smart office solutions



Helix Chair with Switch Workstation

Now available on 

080 4719 1010 | sales@featherlitefurniture.com

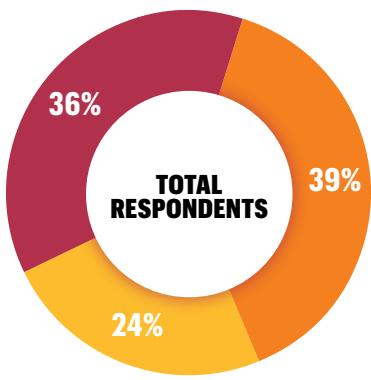
Present in **66 locations** across India, also in **Nepal, Sri Lanka, Philippines and U.A.E.**
For more details visit our website  www.featherlitefurniture.com



DO YOU ACTIVELY CHECK NUTRITION OR INGREDIENT LABELS BEFORE BUYING PACKAGED FOOD OR BEVERAGES?

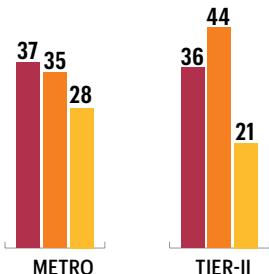
■ YES, ALWAYS ■ SOMETIMES ■ RARELY / NEVER

MORE THAN ONE-THIRD GEN Z ALWAYS CHECKS NUTRITION OR INGREDIENT LABELS BEFORE BUYING



38 |

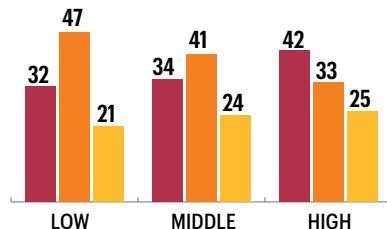
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

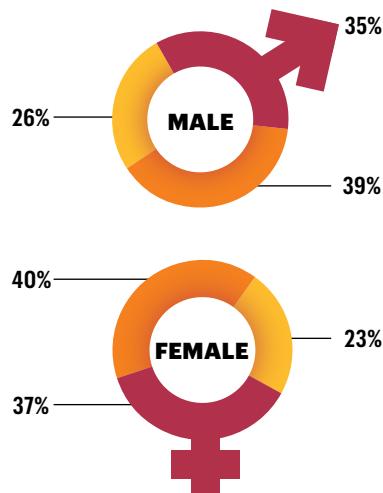


HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Yes, always | 31% | 39% | 40% | 37% | 35% | 25% |
| Sometimes | 52% | 42% | 43% | 37% | 28% | 33% |
| Rarely / Never | 17% | 19% | 18% | 27% | 37% | 42% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

ITC Group

A Future-ready Enterprise
Serving India
across
Agriculture | Manufacturing | Services



FMCG



AGRI BUSINESS



PAPERBOARDS
& PACKAGING



HOTELS



INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

TRANSFORMING LIVES & LANDSCAPES

ITC and its value chains support 9 million sustainable livelihoods

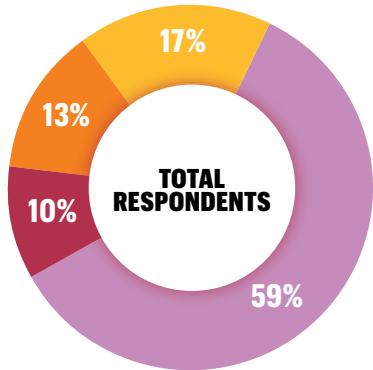


ITC is the only enterprise in the world to be
Water, Carbon and Solid Waste Recycling Positive for 2 decades

DO YOU CONSUME CIGARETTES OR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?

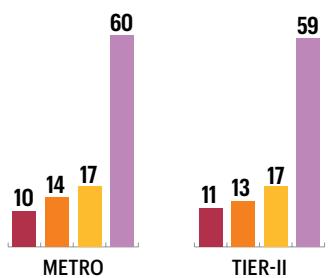
■ ALCOHOL ONLY ■ CIGARETTES ONLY ■ BOTH ■ NEITHER

A MAJORITY OF GEN Z AVOIDS ALCOHOL AND CIGARETTES



40 |

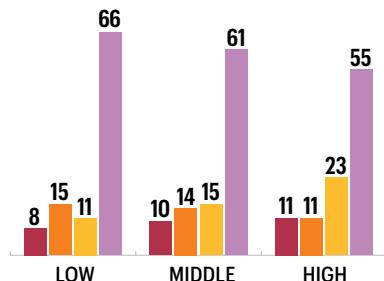
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in %

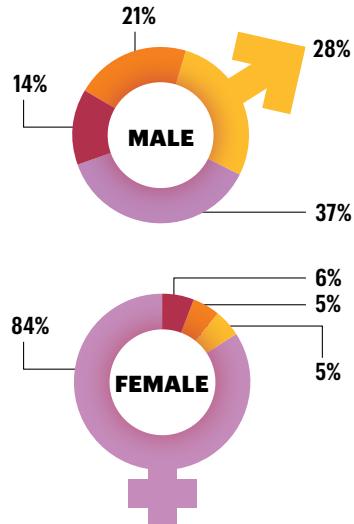
20%

Post-graduates report highest dual consumption (alcohol and cigarettes)

61%

Private salaried respondents consume neither alcohol nor cigarettes, the highest among occupations

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Alcohol only | 8% | 7% | 11% | 11% | 10% |
| Cigarettes only | 17% | 15% | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| Both | 13% | 15% | 18% | 17% | 18% |
| Neither | 62% | 62% | 57% | 58% | 59% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The all-new Hyundai VENUE. Tech up. Go beyond.



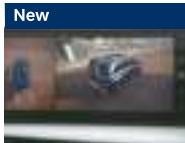
Price starts at
₹ 7 99 900[~]
Now in showrooms.



Dual 62.5 cm (12.3" + 12.3") curved panoramic display with Connected Car Navigation Cockpit (ccNC)[^] and Controller - OTA



New
Dark chrome radiator grille
Quad beam LED headlamps



New
Surround view monitor (SVM)



New
Dual tone (Dark navy & dove grey)
interior theme with terrazzo-textured crashpad finish



New
Spacious cabin – More head room,
shoulder room and knee room



New
Front row ventilated seats



New
6 AT in 1.5 l Diesel New

Engine options
Kappa 1.2 l MPI Petrol
Kappa 1.0 l Turbo GDI Petrol
U2 1.5 l CRDi Diesel

Transmission options
MT | AT | DCT

Super strong body structure
33 Standard safety features
More than 65 advanced safety features

HYUNDAI

To enquire give a
missed call at
9555295868

my
Hyundai
app

Hyundai
ClickToBuy

3 Year
Unlimited[†]
Kilometer Warranty

7 Years
Extended
Warranty^{**}

5 Years
Shield of Trust
Running Repair Package^{***}

5 Years
Shield of Trust Super
Maintenance Package^{***}

10 Years
Road Side
Assistance (RSA)^{**}

Shield of Trust Bodycare
Body Maintenance Package^{**}

Bluelink
3 Years free Bluelink subscription

Accelerated by[†]
 NVIDIA
*324 cm (12.7') touch navigation system is accelerated by NVIDIA

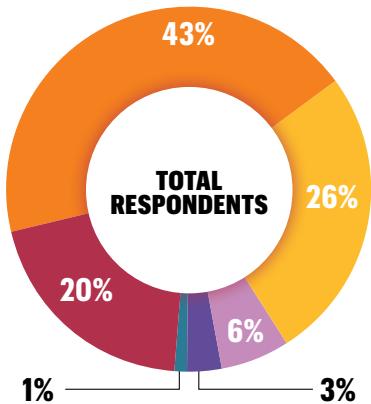
*Terms & Conditions apply. ~Ex-showroom price mentioned is for HX 2 MT (Kappa 1.2 l MPI Petrol) variant. Creative shown is for representation purpose only. Features & specifications shown may vary or not be a part of standard fitment & are subject to change without prior notice. Hyundai Motor India Limited reserves the right to change specifications, colour, equipment and schemes at any time without prior notice. Images shown are for creative representation. The black shade on glasses is due to lighting effect. Size, colour may vary due to lighting and positioning effects. Bluelink functionality is dependent on adequate power supply and uninterrupted network connectivity. The Bluelink system is designed in such a way that it makes vehicle theft difficult if its circuit and battery connection is uninterrupted. Hyundai SmartSense, the Advanced Driver Assistance System is not a substitute for safe and attentive driving. Its effectiveness depends on various factors. Availability of Hyundai SmartSense Features may differ by variants. **Up to 7 years extended warranty is applicable for all variants. It is applicable for upto 7 years or 140,000 kms whichever is earlier. *For detailed terms & conditions of warranty refer owner's manual. ***For detailed terms & conditions of extended warranty & Shield of Trust/Super/Bodycare kindly visit Hyundai India website, <https://www.Hyundai.co.in/>. Extended warranty, RSA and Shield of Trust Packages are on payable basis. For more details, consult the nearest Hyundai authorized dealer. Hyundai urges you to follow traffic rules-these are meant to keep you safe on roads.

INNOCEAN-056/25

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE YOUR PURCHASE DECISIONS THE MOST?

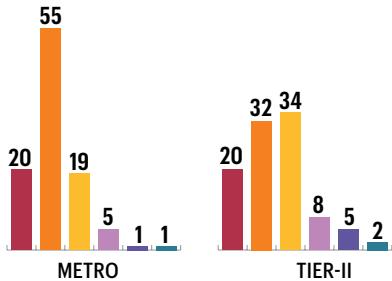
■ PRICE/VALUE FOR MONEY ■ PRODUCT QUALITY ■ BRAND REPUTATION ■ INFLUENCER RECOMMENDATIONS
 ■ SUSTAINABILITY & ETHICS ■ CONVENIENCE (DELIVERY/AVAILABILITY)

PRODUCT QUALITY AND BRAND REPUTATION MATTER FOR GEN Z



42 |

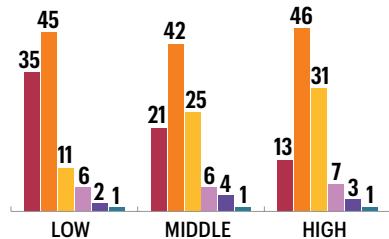
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



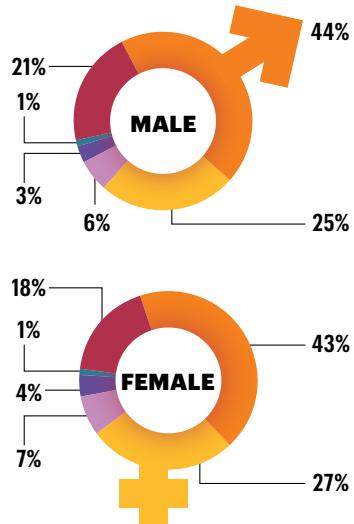
All figures in %



HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Price/value for money | 31% | 22% | 23% | 16% | 13% | 10% |
| Product quality | 38% | 41% | 38% | 45% | 50% | 63% |
| Brand reputation | 22% | 27% | 26% | 28% | 26% | 21% |
| Influencer recommendations | 5% | 6% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 3% |
| Sustainability & ethics | 1% | 3% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 2% |
| Convenience (delivery/availability) | 3% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



FOLLOW US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Protect your digital wealth
with these **ARMOURS**.



**Have strong
passwords.**



**Use secure
networks while
trading online.**



**Monitor
your accounts
regularly.**



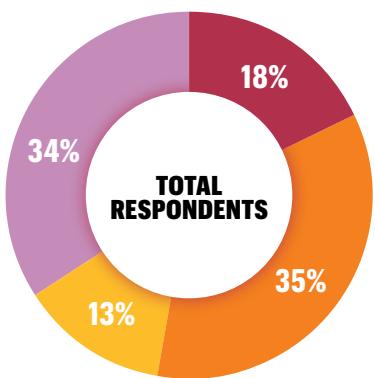
**Only invest
through SEBI
registered
intermediaries.**



WHICH TYPE OF BRANDS DO YOU PRIMARILY PREFER?

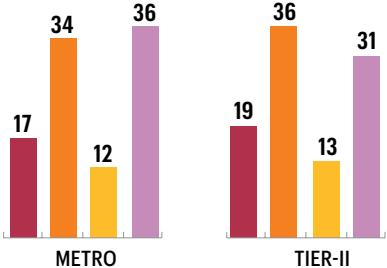
■ BOUTIQUE INDIAN/HOMEGROWN BRANDS ■ MASS-MARKET INDIAN BRANDS ■ INTERNATIONAL BRANDS
 ■ A MIX OF INDIAN AND INTERNATIONAL BRANDS

GEN Z PREFERS MASS-MARKET INDIAN BRANDS THE MOST



44 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



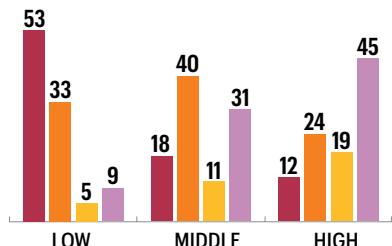
44%

Post-graduates prefer a mix of Indian and international brands—the highest across education levels

40%

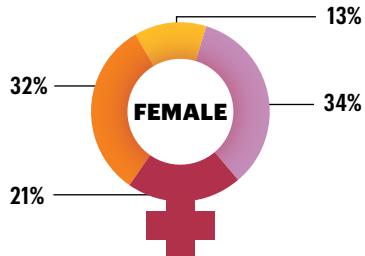
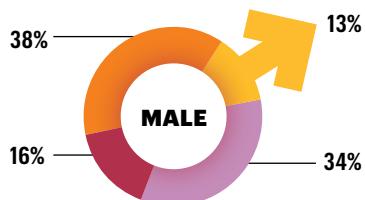
Entrepreneurs show the strongest preference for a mix of Indian and international brands

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Boutique Indian/homegrown brands | 37% | 25% | 18% | 14% | 12% | 3% |
| Mass-market Indian brands | 40% | 40% | 40% | 32% | 27% | 23% |
| International brands | 7% | 10% | 11% | 14% | 22% | 15% |
| A mix of Indian and international brands | 16% | 25% | 30% | 40% | 40% | 58% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The Woman Behind the Wires: Tejasri Puthumbaka's Rise from Engineer to CEO



■ Tejasri Puthumbaka

Chief Executive Officer
Genret Energy Solutions

Tejasri's high voltage world of power infrastructure, Tejasri Puthumbaka stands as proof that determination and vision can reshape industries. From an entry-level engineer to Chief Executive Officer of Genret Energy Solutions, her journey reflects purpose, perseverance, and performance.

From Rural Roots to Rising Leader

Born and raised in Khammam, Telangana, in a family with an agricultural background, Tejasri's path to leadership was anything but conventional. She laid her foundation with a B.Tech & M.Tech in Electrical Engineering, building strong technical depth in power systems and communication networks. To bridge engineering with enterprise, she completed a Professional Certificate in Advanced Business Management from

IIM Kozhikode and is currently pursuing a Global MBA from the University of Western Australia. This rare mix of technical and managerial expertise has been central to her success story.

Engineering Her Way Up

Tejasri's professional journey began in 2016 as a Project Coordinator, where she managed planning and execution activities for transmission and substation projects. Her clarity, discipline, and hands-on approach set her apart early. By 2019, she had become Technical Director, overseeing engineering designs, technical coordination, and project execution. Between 2022 and early 2025, she rose to Executive Director, managing operational performance and driving standardization across large-scale power projects. Each role expanded her influence, preparing her for the ultimate leadership transition.

Leading Growth at Genret Energy Solutions

In March 2025, Tejasri took charge as Chief Executive Officer at Genret Energy Solutions, an EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) player in power transmission and infrastructure. Under her leadership, the company achieved 100x year-on-year revenue growth and expanded to a talented team of over 100 professionals across engineering, planning, and execution. She introduced systems for digital project monitoring, vendor optimization, and internal capacity building transforming Genret into a trusted name in India's power sector. "Efficiency and empowerment are the real conductors of growth," she says, reflecting her belief that leadership begins with trust and precision.

Expanding Horizons with SarTez Infratech

Beyond Genret, Tejasri is also the Founder and Director of SarTez Infratech Pvt. Ltd., a venture focused on innovative EPC and renewable integration projects. Through SarTez, she continues to advance sustainable development, create job opportunities, and promote technical excellence in smaller towns across India. Her entrepreneurial efforts are redefining how infrastructure businesses can scale responsibly while empowering local talent.

Inspiring the Next Generation

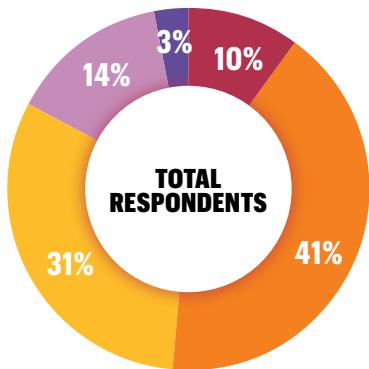
As one of the few women CEOs in the power transmission ecosystem, Tejasri has become an inspiration for emerging professionals, especially young women engineers. She actively supports STEM education in rural Telangana and mentors students to pursue long-term roles in engineering and leadership.

From the project site to the boardroom, her journey reflects what's possible when expertise meets determination. Tejasri's story isn't just about building power lines, it's about powering change, proving that leadership is earned through knowledge, integrity, and vision.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CONSUMPTION OF LUXURY OR PREMIUM BRANDS?

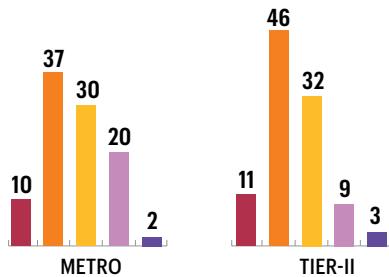
■ DO NOT PURCHASE LUXURY/PREMIUM BRANDS ■ OCCASIONALLY PURCHASE LUXURY/PREMIUM BRANDS
 ■ REGULARLY PURCHASE LUXURY/PREMIUM BRANDS
 ■ ONLY PURCHASE LUXURY/PREMIUM BRANDS ■ NOT SURE / PREFER NOT TO SAY

ONE-TENTH OF GEN Z DOES NOT PURCHASE LUXURY BRANDS



46 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



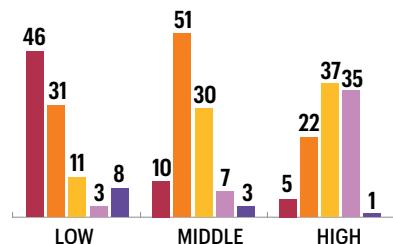
26%

Over one-quarter of post-graduates say they only purchase luxury or premium brands

25%

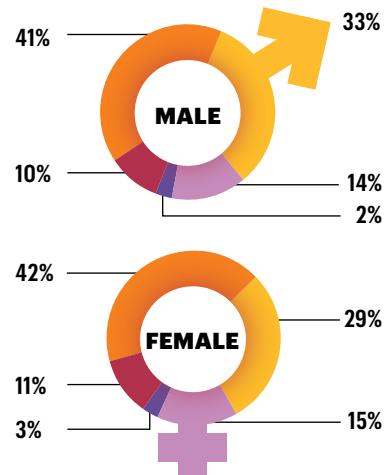
One in four government salaried respondents say they only purchase luxury or premium brands

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|---|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| I do not purchase luxury/premium brands | 28% | 12% | 11% | 7% | 6% | 1% |
| I occasionally purchase luxury/premium brands | 42% | 53% | 55% | 35% | 21% | 5% |
| I regularly purchase luxury/premium brands | 16% | 23% | 25% | 42% | 42% | 33% |
| I only purchase luxury/premium brands | 5% | 7% | 6% | 14% | 31% | 61% |
| Not sure / Prefer not to say | 8% | 5% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Language

Footwear & Accessories



CRAFTED SUSTAINABLY WITH
LWG - CERTIFIED LEATHER

For days that move from meetings to moments after hours, **Santino Loafer** delivers understated elegance, a smooth finish, and the kind of comfort men rely on.

www.languageshoes.com | www.languageshoes.ae | [@language.shoes](https://language.shoes) | language_ae

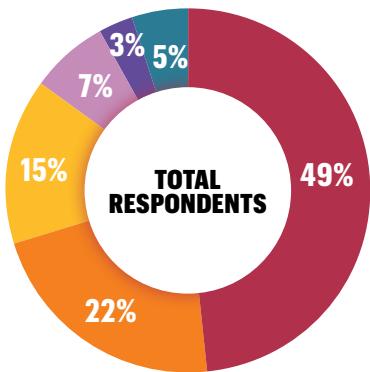


SCAN HERE FOR
STORE LOCATION

WHAT MAKES YOU LOYAL TO A BRAND?

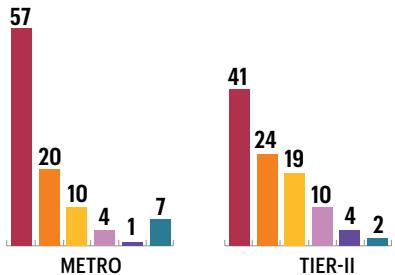
■ PRODUCT QUALITY ■ VALUE FOR MONEY ■ CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
 ■ INNOVATION ■ SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ■ PERSONALISATION

FOR GEN Z, QUALITY COMES FIRST—EVERYTHING ELSE FOLLOWS



48 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



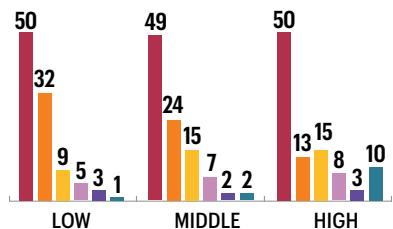
52%

Product quality is the single biggest driver of brand loyalty among post-graduates

51%

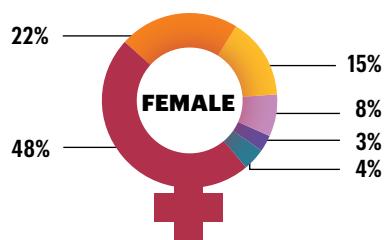
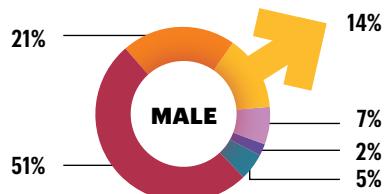
Product quality is the top driver of brand loyalty among private salaried respondents

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



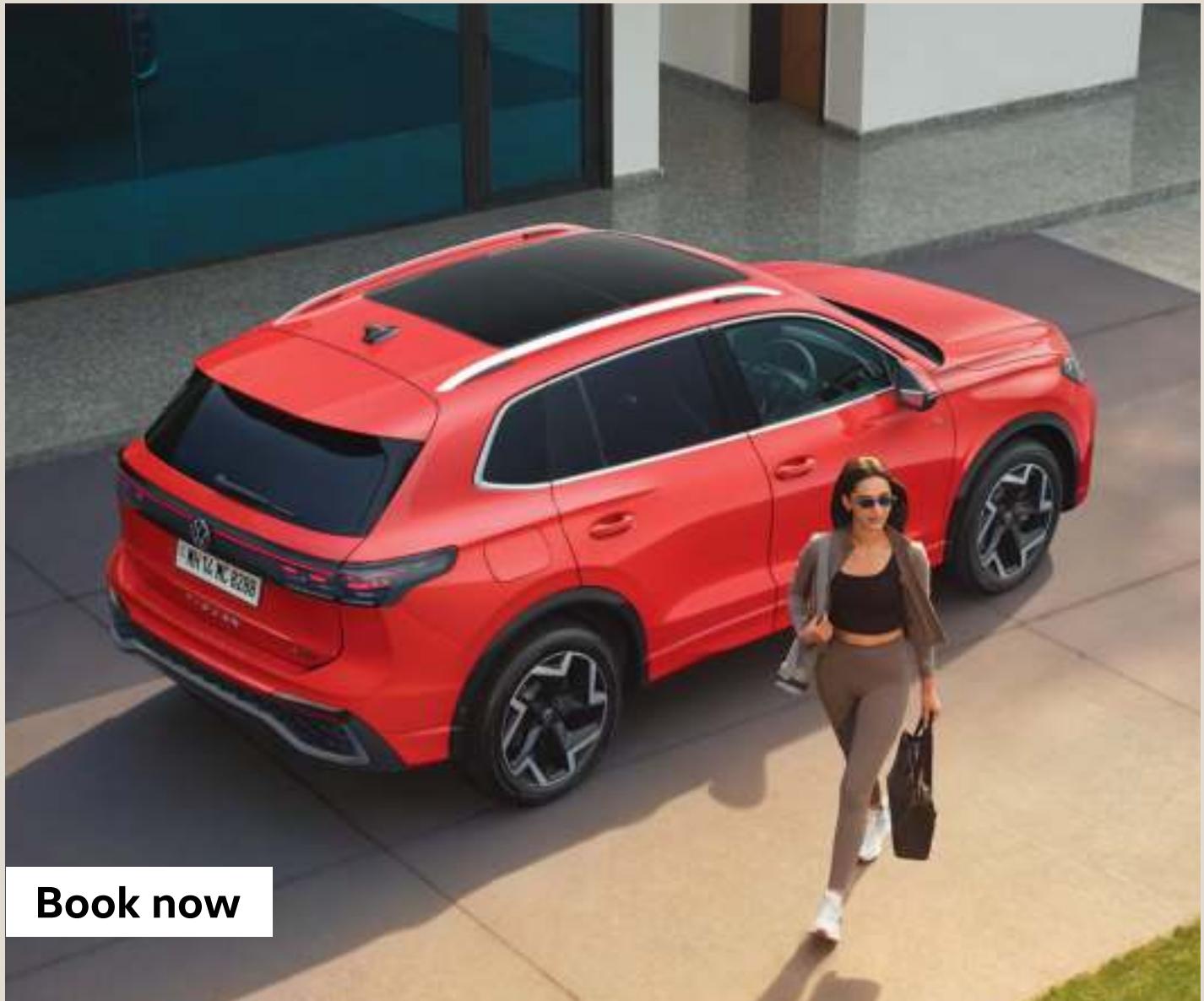
All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Product quality | 40% | 46% | 49% | 53% | 53% | 53% |
| Value for money | 35% | 31% | 24% | 17% | 12% | 6% |
| Customer experience | 16% | 11% | 15% | 17% | 16% | 11% |
| Innovation | 5% | 8% | 8% | 7% | 7% | 6% |
| Social responsibility | 4% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Personalisation | 1% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 9% | 21% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Book now

The Tiguan R-Line

Beyond betteR

2.0l TSI with 4MOTION | 26.04 cm Digital Cockpit Pro | 9 Airbags as standard
DCC Pro with Driving Mode selection | Infotainment System with 38.1 cm display
Level 2 ADAS with 21 features | Head-up display | IDA Voice Assistant

volkswagen.co.in

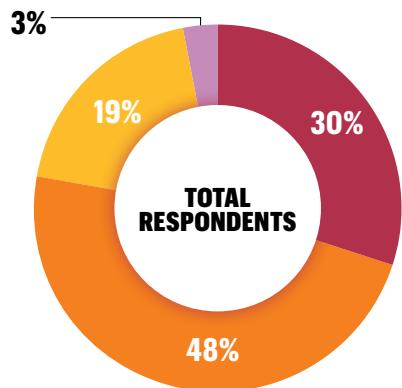
*T&C apply. Imagery shown for representation purpose only.



HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO SWITCH BRANDS IF A BETTER ALTERNATIVE APPEARS?

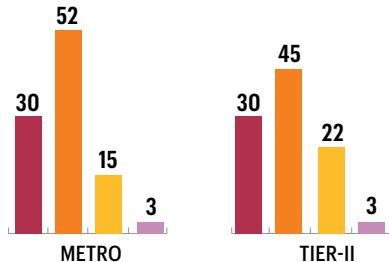
■ VERY LIKELY ■ SOMEWHAT LIKELY ■ NOT VERY LIKELY ■ NOT AT ALL

ONE BETTER OPTION, AND GEN Z MOVES ON



50 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



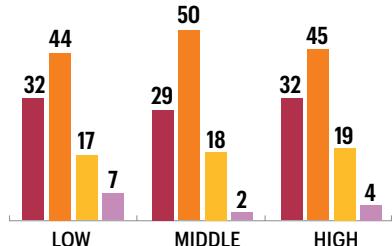
49%

Nearly half of graduates and post-graduates are somewhat likely to switch brands if a better option appears

50%

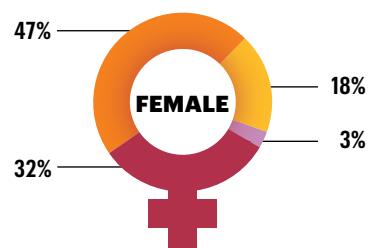
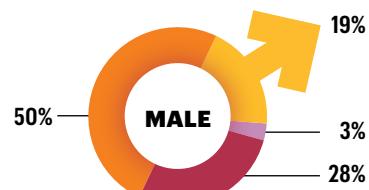
Half of private salaried respondents are open to switching brands when a better alternative appears

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in %

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Very likely | 26% | 36% | 33% | 25% | 32% | 19% |
| Somewhat likely | 52% | 46% | 46% | 51% | 43% | 61% |
| Not very likely | 19% | 15% | 18% | 21% | 21% | 17% |
| Not at all | 2% | 3% | 2% | 4% | 4% | 3% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

SCIENCE OF PREPAREDNESS KEY TO REPUTATION RESILIENCE

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." - Warren Buffet



ASHWANI SINGLA,
Founding Managing Partner, Astrum

In today's hyper-connected, always-on business landscape, where every action, or lack thereof, can trigger instant scrutiny from multiple stakeholders, small issues can quickly snowball into a crisis.

No longer limited to geopolitical events, cyberattacks, natural disasters, economic downturns, or regulatory or policy changes or even potential or actual loss of life or serious injury; today, even a careless conversation or a personal choice of a member of the C-suite can hurt a business's credibility. In today's world, crisis is no longer 'if' but 'when'.

The increasingly powerful digital media, steadily scaling self-publishing on social platforms, self-appointed influencers, not to mention closer stakeholder scrutiny, have fundamentally altered the reputation risk landscape, with issues once manageable internally, now spiralling into cross-border crises within minutes. Today, misinformation spreads faster than facts, while expectations around ethics, governance, transparency, and accountability continue to rise.

The foundation of effective crisis preparedness lies in scientifically anticipating potential 'vulnerabilities'; their occurrence

probability and the possible impact on corporate stakeholders and the public. While the immediate impact may affect business performance, the long-term often manifests in loss of goodwill, trust and diminished value, eventually leading to reduced share of preference.

Preparedness Begins Before the Crisis Arises

"Risk comes from not knowing what you're doing." – Warren Buffett

Effective crisis management is about being prepared. It requires focused investment and deep expertise to develop, test, and enhance crisis plans well before they are needed. The early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic offered a clear and valuable lesson in the essence of preparedness. When the first warnings emerged, lack of action by various global economies led to the issue turning into a massive crisis, with limited options and resources bringing the majority of the world to a standstill.

In most cases, a **corporate crisis is simply an unaddressed issue that has been allowed to fester.** Being crisis-ready, therefore, requires early identification and continuous monitoring of issues that could pose a threat, be it poor safety norms at the shop floor, repeated disruption of servers of a bank or even leadership getting embroiled in any form of controversial situation.

Building a resilient reputation is not a reactive communications exercise, rather a strategic imperative driven by the Board/C-suite and ingrained into the organisation's overall risk management approach.

Key Steps to Build a Resilient Corporate Reputation

For any organization, of any nature or size, the first step is to **ensure a proper and empowered crisis management structure.** This means ensuring that teams, processes, escalation matrix, with defined TATs are 'in-place'. To put 'in-use' frameworks in place, it is critical that the management games out and stress tests the scenarios to ensure their effectiveness in real situations. In my three decades of experience, companies often fail in this step and struggle to come to

grips with the crisis, when it strikes.

Astrum's crisis specialists help companies put 'in-place' and 'in-use' scientifically tested crisis monitoring and response frameworks that comply with regulations and maintain stakeholder confidence.

Further, in a crisis, 'who' the company talks to and 'how often' matters as much as 'what' it communicates. It is vital to identify and prioritize the key stakeholder engagement as per their interest in the company — employees, customers, investors, regulators, and the wider public — and to ensure they receive precise, timely, and consistent communication. Lucid, fact-based and honest messaging prevents spread of misinformation, reduces speculation, and fosters trust in the management. Acknowledging the problem, even when all the facts may not be available or should not to be disclosed publicly, reflects accountability and helps mitigate reputational damage.

Well before any crisis or an issue, those organisations that have consistently communicated their purpose, demonstrated value-based conduct and fair business practices over time are better positioned to retain stakeholder confidence not only during business as usual but also when things go wrong.

Turning Crisis into Resilience

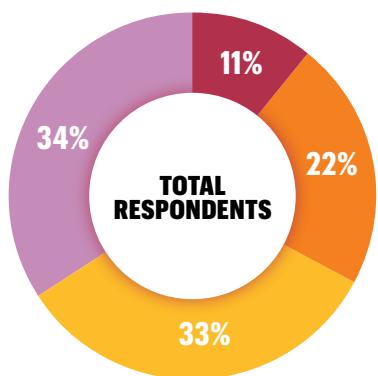
Preparedness does not end with response. Post-crisis assessment is equally essential to understand what worked, what did not, and how systems, processes, and behaviours can be improved and reinforced. Instilling these learnings into future planning can help transform crisis management from a defensive capability into a bedrock of long-term resilience.

In a world where it takes just a few minutes for a company's reputation to get damaged and rebuilding it all over again may take years, preparedness is the single most important element of resilience. Facing crises is inevitable; to do so with farsightedness, leadership, and discipline, companies can do the right thing, the right way, when it matters most.

DO YOU BORROW MONEY FOR DISCRETIONARY/LIFESTYLE SPENDING?

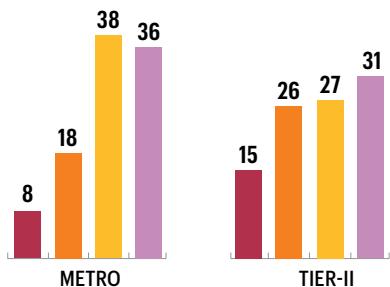
■ FREQUENTLY ■ SOMETIMES ■ RARELY ■ NEVER

GEN Z THINKS TWICE BEFORE BORROWING



52 |

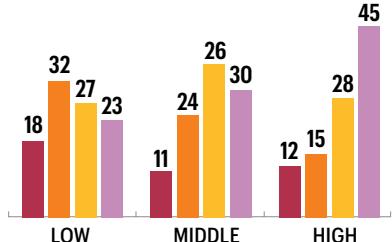
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in %



HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in %

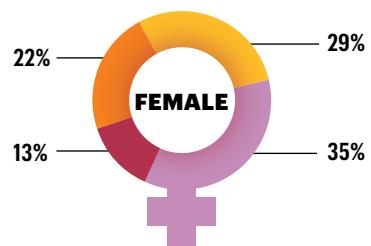
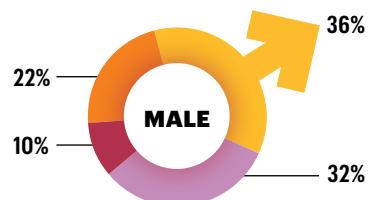
38%

Post-graduates say they never borrow money for discretionary or lifestyle spending

39%

Nearly four in ten entrepreneurs say they never borrow for discretionary or lifestyle spending

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Frequently | 15% | 10% | 10% | 12% | 10% | 9% |
| Sometimes | 41% | 30% | 24% | 16% | 14% | 12% |
| Rarely | 24% | 29% | 34% | 34% | 40% | 34% |
| Never | 20% | 31% | 32% | 38% | 37% | 45% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

TVS *Racing*

TVS 

— INTRODUCING —
INDIA'S 1ST 150 cc HYPER SPORT SCOOTER
TVS NTORQ 150

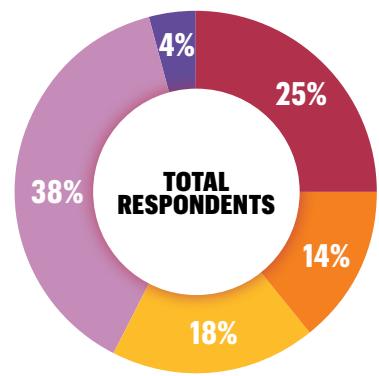


SCAN TO KNOW MORE

WHAT MODE OF BORROWING DO YOU PREFER?

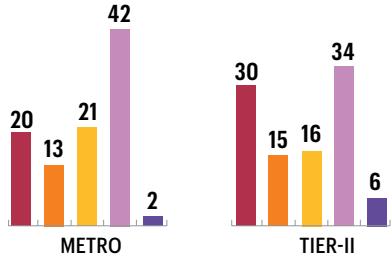
■ CREDIT CARD ■ PERSONAL LOAN / BNPL ■ MONEY FROM PARENTS ■ MONEY FROM FRIENDS/FAMILY ■ OTHERS

WHEN GEN Z NEEDS MONEY, FAMILY COMES FIRST



54 |

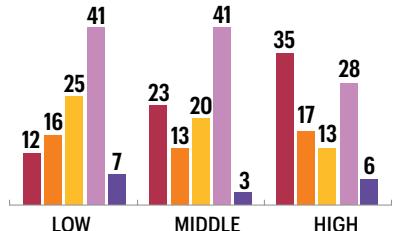
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

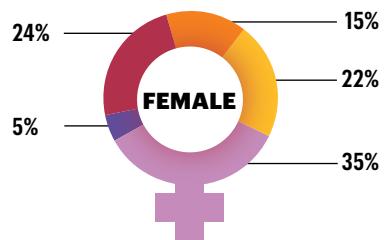
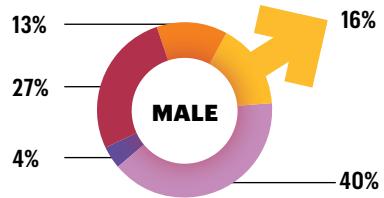


HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Credit card | 15% | 21% | 30% | 26% | 26% | 34% |
| Personal loan / BNPL | 19% | 13% | 13% | 13% | 10% | 36% |
| Money from parents | 25% | 24% | 20% | 15% | 9% | 1% |
| Money from friends/family | 39% | 38% | 32% | 41% | 53% | 26% |
| Others | 2% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 2% | 3% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

 70953 33335
aparnaconstructions.com



BENCHMARK

after

BENCHMARK

after

BENCHMARK...

In India's fastest growing city[#] Hyderabad, one name has consistently redefined how the city lives.



APARNA - Setting benchmarks in gated communities, since 1996.

Eco-conscious Approach

Delivered AP / Telangana's 1st IGBC Platinum Rated Green Residential Project

Focus on Backward Integration

Set new benchmarks in **quality, precision and consistency** with backward integration of building materials.

Expert Property Management Services

Backed by 2200+ skilled personnel, Aparna Property Management Services (APMS) delivers maintenance and safety facilities to Aparna's Gated Communities.

Building Iconic Destinations

Nallagandla and Gundlapochampally (Komppally) were two little-known localities popularized by Aparna's strategic residential developments, with approx. 12000+ families residing in Aparna homes in these destinations today.

Hyderabad's New Benchmark

2024 marked the launch of the 123-Acre Township, **Aparna Deccan Town** - a landmark moment for real estate in the city.

APARNA Gated Communities

Great Quality. Great Value.

HYDERABAD | VIJAYAWADA | BENGALURU

*Source: [1] article 'Hyderabad crowned India's fastest growing city' dated 20th Nov, 2024.
**T&C Apply. Images used are for illustrative purpose only.



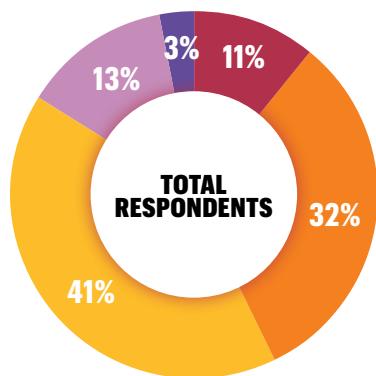
Scan to explore
the world of
APARNA
Homes:



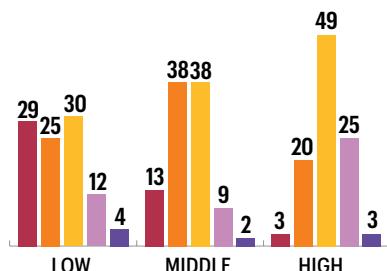
WHAT PROPORTION OF YOUR INCOME DO YOU USUALLY SAVE?

■ DON'T SAVE ■ UP TO 20% ■ 20-40% ■ 40-60% ■ SAVE MOST OR ALL

GEN Z SAVES BEFORE IT SPENDS



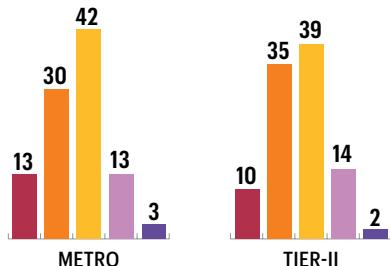
HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

56 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

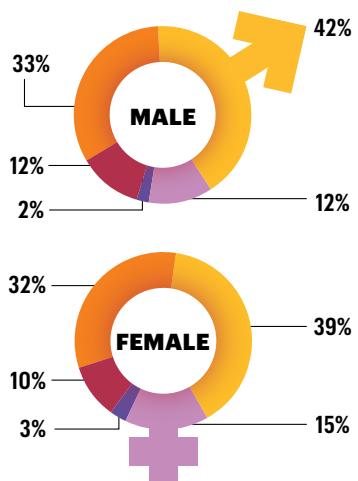
52%

Over half of post-graduates save 20-40% of their income

67%

Two-thirds of government salaried respondents save 20-60% of their income

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

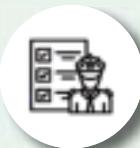
| | Below ₹ 2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| I don't save | 23% | 16% | 11% | 8% | 3% | 1% |
| Up to 20% | 35% | 45% | 42% | 24% | 22% | 4% |
| 20-40% | 31% | 30% | 33% | 51% | 55% | 52% |
| 40-60% | 8% | 7% | 10% | 15% | 17% | 40% |
| I save most or all | 3% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Our Services for Translating Vision to Reality



**GENERAL & BONDED
WAREHOUSING**



**CUSTOM
CLEARANCE**



**FREIGHT
FORWARDING**



**TRANSPORTATION
TO NEPAL
AND BANGLADESH**



**DOOR DELIVERY
ACROSS AMERICA**



**LARGEST FLEET OF
AIR SUSPENSION VEHICLES
FOR FRAGILE CARGO**

Head Office:

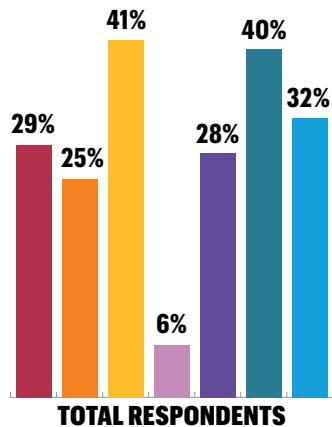
D-201/202, Lotus Corporate Park, Goregaon - East, Mumbai - 400 063,
Maharashtra, India. +91 22 4041 9090 +91 22 6288 9090

Ms. Vaishali: +91 98202 80945

WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED METHOD OF SAVING OR INVESTING? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

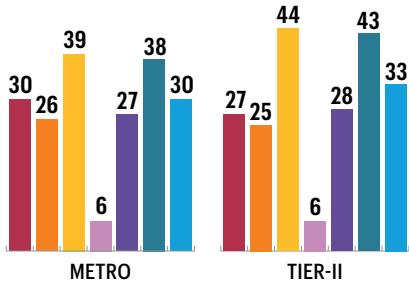
■ SIPS / MUTUAL FUNDS ■ STOCKS / IPOS ■ GOLD ■ CRYPTOCURRENCY
 ■ REAL ESTATE ■ FIXED DEPOSITS / PPF ■ OTHERS

GOLD, FIXED DEPOSITS, MF LEAD GEN Z INVESTMENT CHOICES



58 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



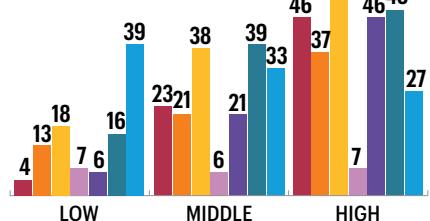
51%

Post graduates prefer gold and fixed deposits, making them the most trusted saving instruments among India's most educated investors

47%

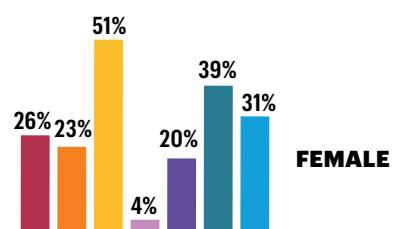
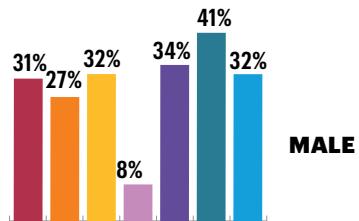
Gold is the top preferred investment among both government salaried employees and entrepreneurs.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



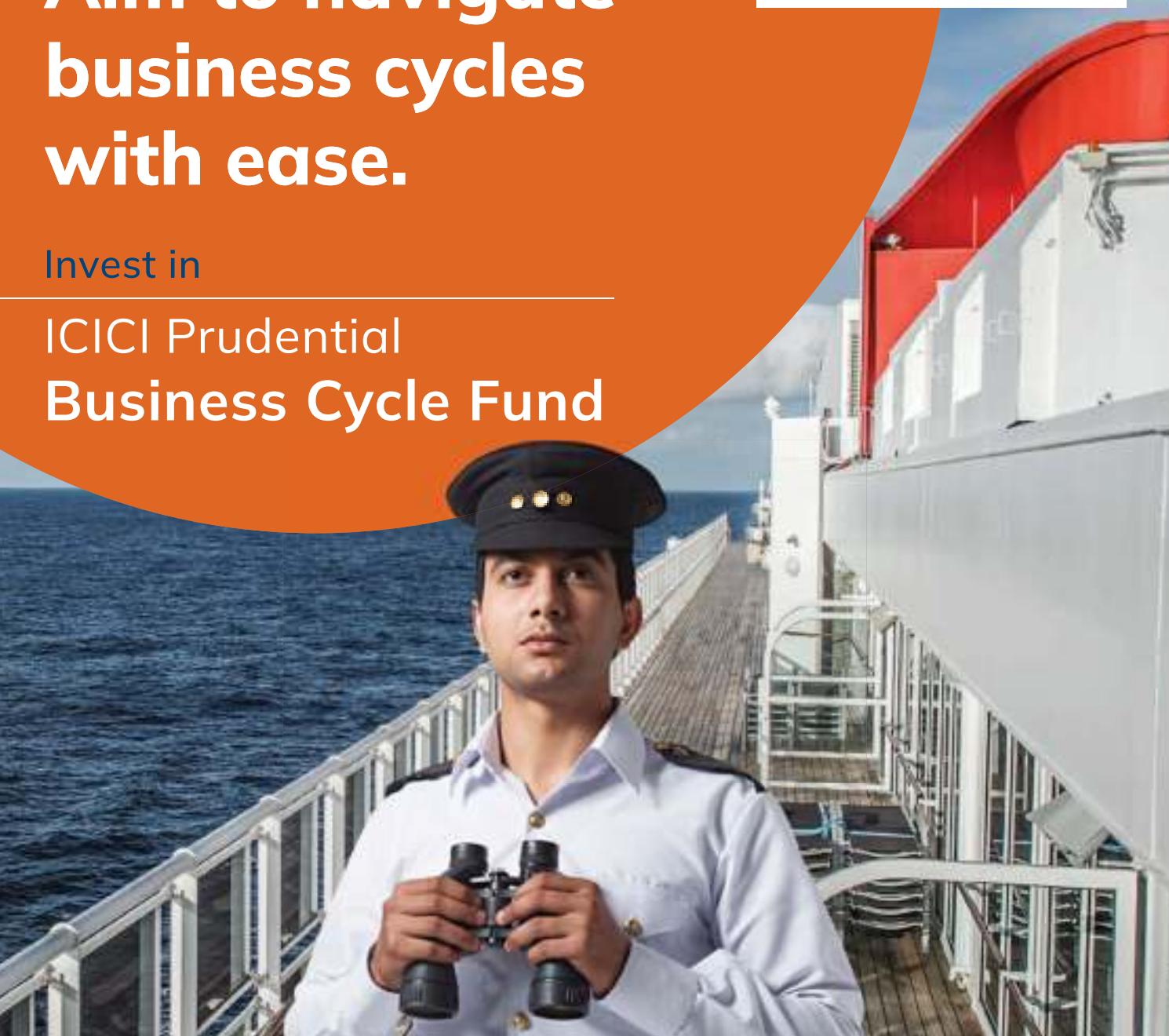
LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| SIPs / Mutual funds | 14% | 21% | 25% | 34% | 34% | 58% |
| Stocks / IPOs | 13% | 20% | 22% | 29% | 35% | 37% |
| Gold | 28% | 34% | 35% | 45% | 60% | 63% |
| Cryptocurrency | 8% | 7% | 6% | 6% | 5% | 5% |
| Real estate | 12% | 12% | 18% | 33% | 52% | 68% |
| Fixed deposits / PPF | 18% | 29% | 39% | 45% | 59% | 54% |
| Others | 31% | 40% | 42% | 25% | 19% | 16% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Aim to navigate business cycles with ease.

Invest in

ICICI Prudential Business Cycle Fund

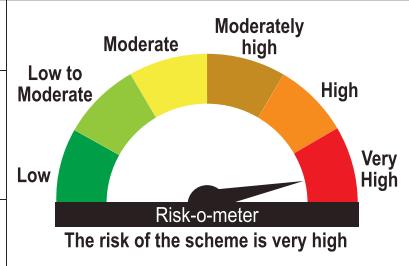


Download our App **i-Invest** | Visit: www.iciciprumpf.com | Contact your Mutual Fund Distributor

ICICI Prudential Business Cycle Fund (An open ended equity scheme following business cycles based investing theme) is suitable for investors who are seeking*:

- Long term wealth creation
- An equity scheme that invests in Indian markets with focus on riding business cycles through dynamic allocation between various sectors and stocks at different stages of business cycles.

*Investors should consult their financial advisers if in doubt about whether the product is suitable for them.



The Risk-o-meter(s) specified above will be evaluated and updated on a monthly basis.

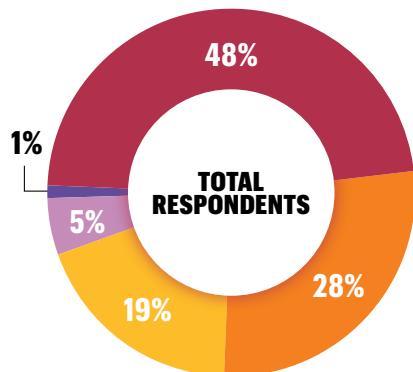
Please refer www.icicipruamc.com/news-and-updates/all-news for more details on scheme riskometers.

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN MANAGING YOUR PERSONAL FINANCES?

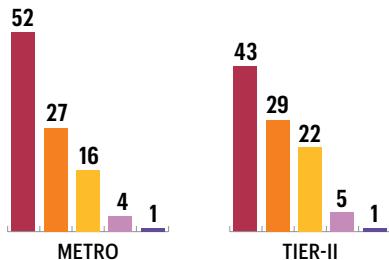
■ VERY CONFIDENT ■ SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT ■ NEUTRAL ■ NOT VERY CONFIDENT ■ NOT CONFIDENT AT ALL

GEN Z IS LARGELY CONFIDENT ABOUT MONEY MANAGEMENT



60 |

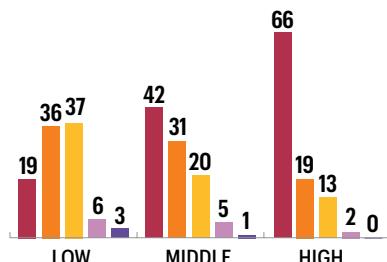
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

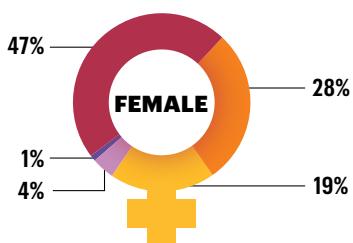
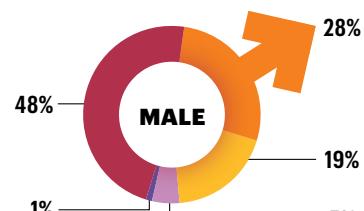


HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All Figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹ 2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Very confident | 36% | 35% | 41% | 50% | 71% | 79% |
| Somewhat confident | 29% | 30% | 31% | 32% | 18% | 11% |
| Neutral | 24% | 28% | 21% | 14% | 9% | 9% |
| Not very confident | 9% | 6% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 0% |
| Not confident at all | 2% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Poltrona Frau and Ceccotti Collezioni co-sign the **DUO Collection**, expressing their synergy in a shared design vision. Inspired by the Italian-style Dolce Vita, the products of the collection include luxury upholstered furniture with rounded shapes and exquisite wooden furniture for the living room. Designed by **Roberto Lazzeroni**, the objects, with their retro flair, speak of the past and the present, of memory and of innovation.



Made in Italy

Mumbai - Ground Floor, Wakefield House, Dougall Road Ballard Estate, Mumbai - 400 001 - Tel.: +91 22 22614848

Surat - No.6-7, Union Heights, Next to Lalbhai Cricket Stadium, Surat Dumas Road - Tel.: +91 261 2977444

New Delhi - 99 Empire Plaza, Mehrauli-Gurgaon Rd, Sultanpur, Tel.: +91 11 26809772

Bangalore - Ground Floor, # 87, Infantry Road, Near Canara Bank, Centrum, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560001
Tel.: 080 25585577 / 87622 12340

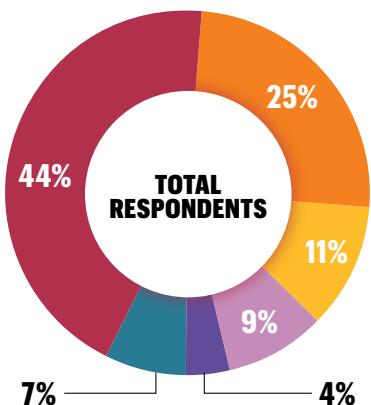
Hyderabad - Plot No 839 / Al, Road No 44, Jubilee Hills, Telangana, Hyderabad – 500033 T. +91 90329 89555



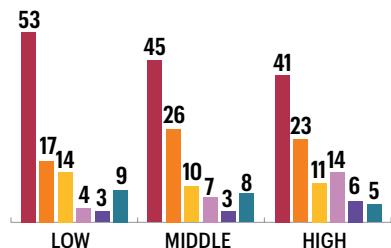
WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS INFLUENCE YOUR PURCHASES THE MOST?

■ INSTAGRAM ■ YOUTUBE ■ SNAPCHAT ■ X (TWITTER) ■ LINKEDIN ■ NONE

INSTAGRAM DOMINATES GEN Z'S DIGITAL ATTENTION



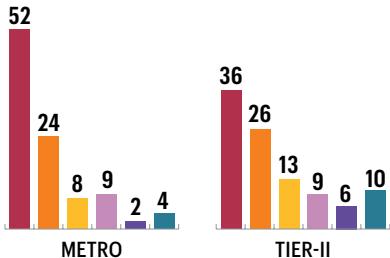
HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All Figures in (%)

62 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

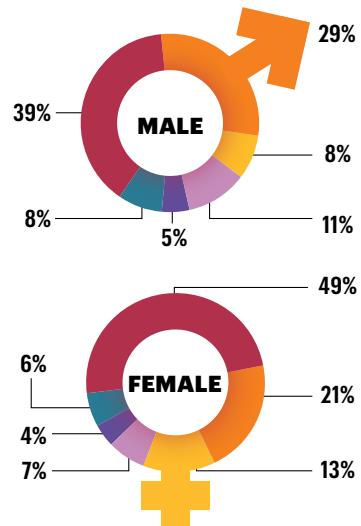
46%

Instagram is the most influential purchase platform for graduates

47%

Private salaried respondents say Instagram most influences their purchase decisions

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Instagram | 43% | 43% | 47% | 41% | 45% | 42% |
| YouTube | 34% | 32% | 24% | 22% | 24% | 13% |
| Snapchat | 11% | 13% | 10% | 10% | 8% | 11% |
| X (Twitter) | 7% | 4% | 5% | 14% | 12% | 19% |
| LinkedIn | 2% | 2% | 4% | 5% | 6% | 9% |
| None | 4% | 5% | 9% | 8% | 6% | 5% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Introducing



DEPOSIT SCHEME

Senior
Citizens
Earn **7.50%***
P.A

General Citizens Earn - 7.10%* P.A

Tenure: 456 Days

*T&C Apply

Visit Your **Nearest TMB Branch** or Book via
Mobile/Internet Banking to Invest Today.

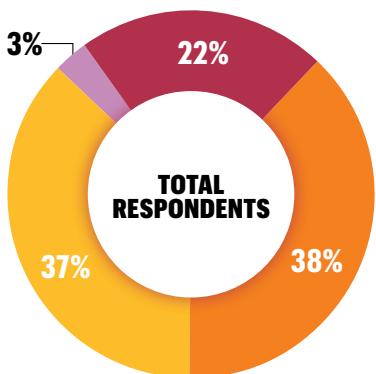


www.tmb.bank.in | Toll-free: 180 0425 0426

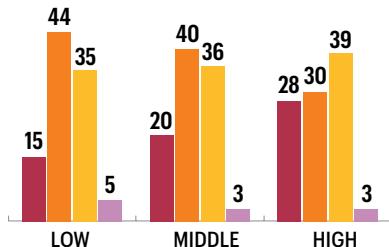
HOW OFTEN DO YOU PURCHASE SOMETHING AFTER SEEING IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

■ FREQUENTLY ■ SOMETIMES ■ RARELY ■ NEVER

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCES GEN Z PURCHASES



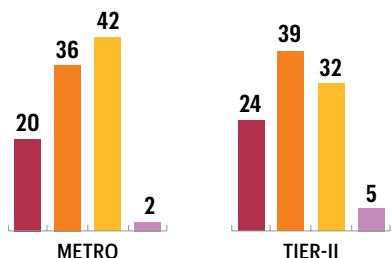
HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All Figures in (%)

64 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

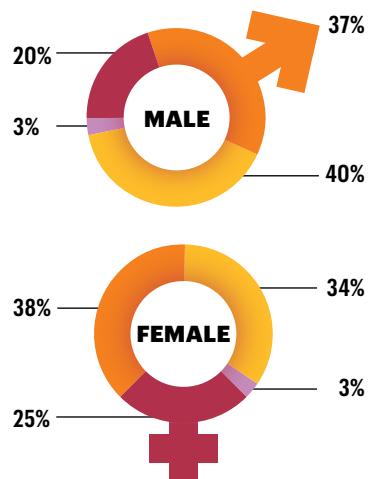
48%

Nearly half of post-graduates rarely make purchases triggered by social media.

34%

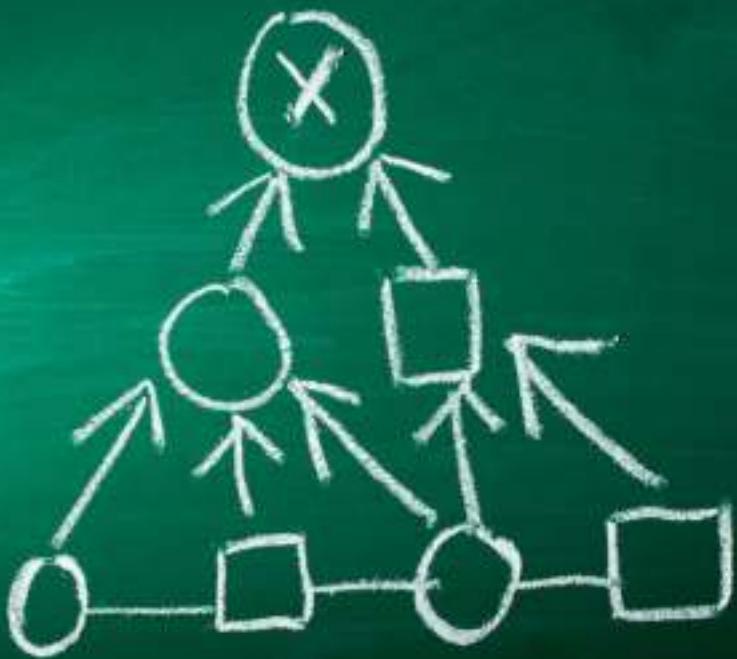
Government salaried respondents are the most likely to frequently purchase products after seeing them on social media.

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Frequently | 19% | 22% | 24% | 23% | 21% | 17% |
| Sometimes | 51% | 45% | 44% | 33% | 22% | 20% |
| Rarely | 26% | 29% | 29% | 41% | 52% | 62% |
| Never | 5% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 5% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Your 2026 Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard

It's a new year. It provides both opportunities and challenges for your business. Is your strategy or business ready to leverage this opportunity?

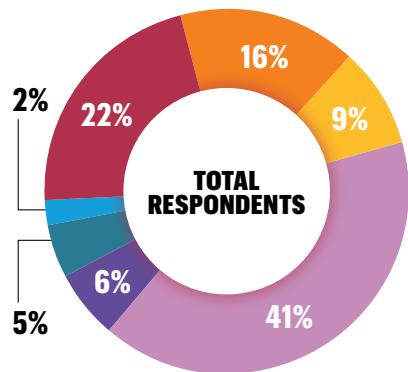
The Balanced Scorecard is the world's leading strategy deployment and enterprise performance management system. It helps firms develop and execute breakthrough strategy. Cedar's heritage includes being part of the firm co-founded by the creators of the Balanced Scorecard. With over 400 Scorecards implemented by us, see how we can help you transform your business, measurably & rapidly.

We make Strategy & Innovation work!

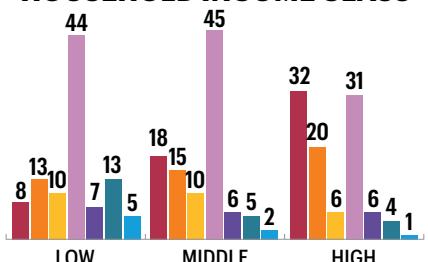
WHAT DO YOU PRIMARILY USE THE INTERNET FOR?

■ BROWSING & SEARCH ■ NEWS & INFORMATION ■ EDUCATION ■ SOCIAL MEDIA
 ■ ONLINE SHOPPING ■ ENTERTAINMENT / ADULT CONTENT ■ GAMING

SOCIAL MEDIA LEAD GEN Z INTERNET USAGE



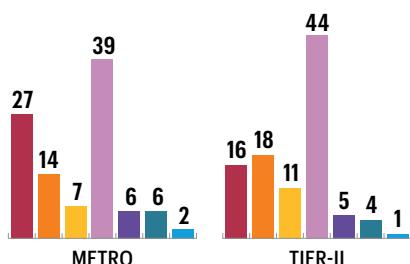
HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All Figures in (%)

66 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

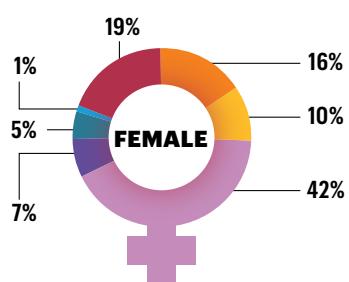
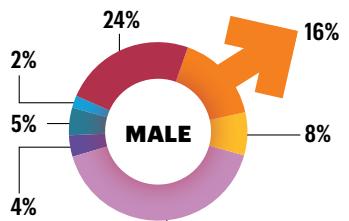
17%

Post-graduates use the internet more for news and information than other groups

44%

Private salaried respondents primarily use the internet for social media

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES

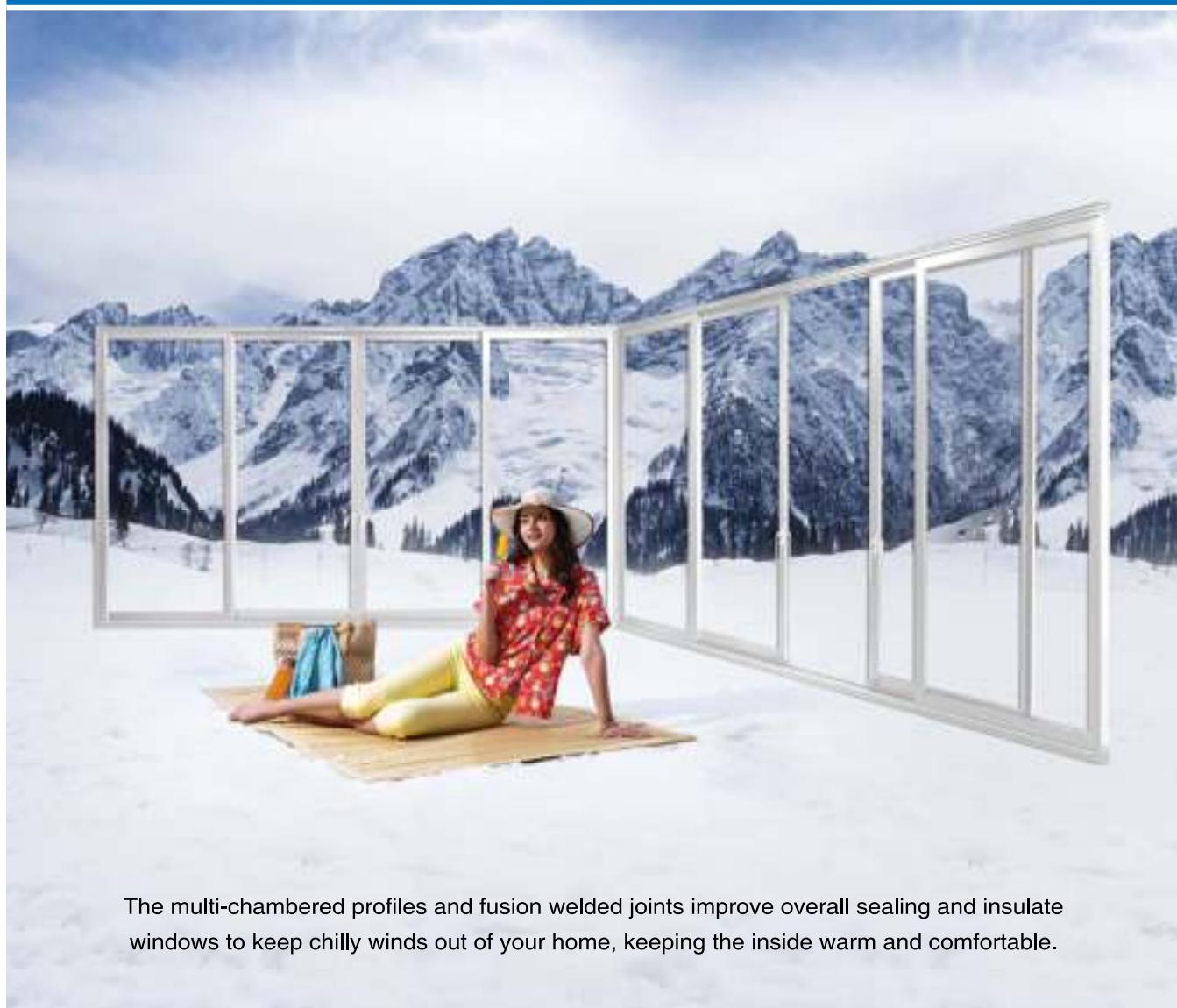


LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Browsing & search | 11% | 15% | 16% | 22% | 36% | 52% |
| News & information | 17% | 17% | 13% | 19% | 15% | 17% |
| Education | 10% | 13% | 9% | 7% | 6% | 0% |
| Social media | 49% | 42% | 47% | 39% | 39% | 20% |
| Online shopping | 6% | 6% | 7% | 5% | 2% | 5% |
| Entertainment / adult content | 5% | 4% | 6% | 7% | 2% | 3% |
| Gaming | 2% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Keep the Outside Outside Forever



The multi-chambered profiles and fusion welded joints improve overall sealing and insulate windows to keep chilly winds out of your home, keeping the inside warm and comfortable.

RANGE OF SOLUTIONS ▶ uPVC | Aluminium | Doors | Façades

Science@work



Prevents
Dust Buildup



Noise
Insulation



Keeps out
Rain*



Thermal
Insulation

Fenesta
Better by Design

India's No.1 Windows & Doors Brand

*T&C Apply.

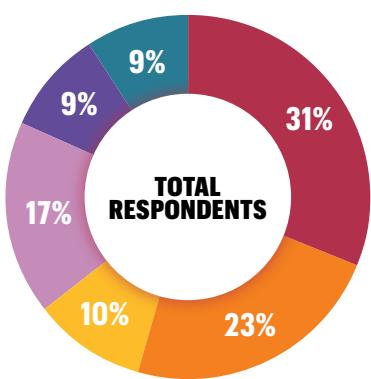
Servicing 900+ Cities in India & Internationally

Call: 1800 102 9880 (Toll Free) | WhatsApp: 74286 91568 | Email: response@fenesta.com | Visit: www.fenesta.com

WHICH MOBILE PHONE BRAND DO YOU CURRENTLY USE?

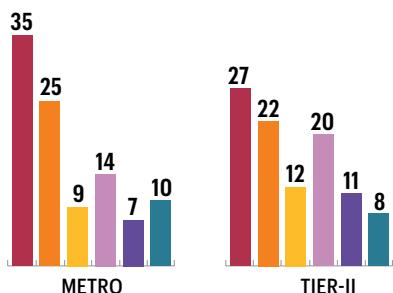
■ IPHONE ■ SAMSUNG ■ XIAOMI ■ VIVO ■ OPPO ■ OTHERS

IPHONE LEADS GEN Z SMARTPHONE CHOICES



68 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



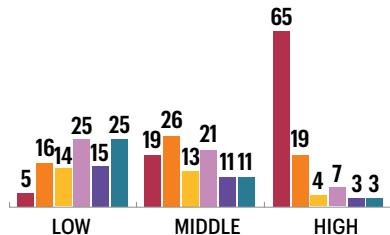
47%

Nearly half of post-graduates use an iPhone—the highest across education levels

28%

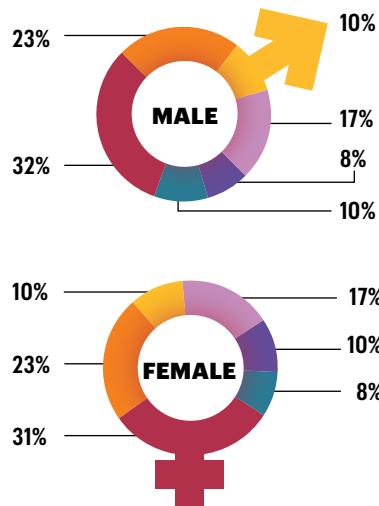
Samsung is the most used brand among private salaried respondents

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All Figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



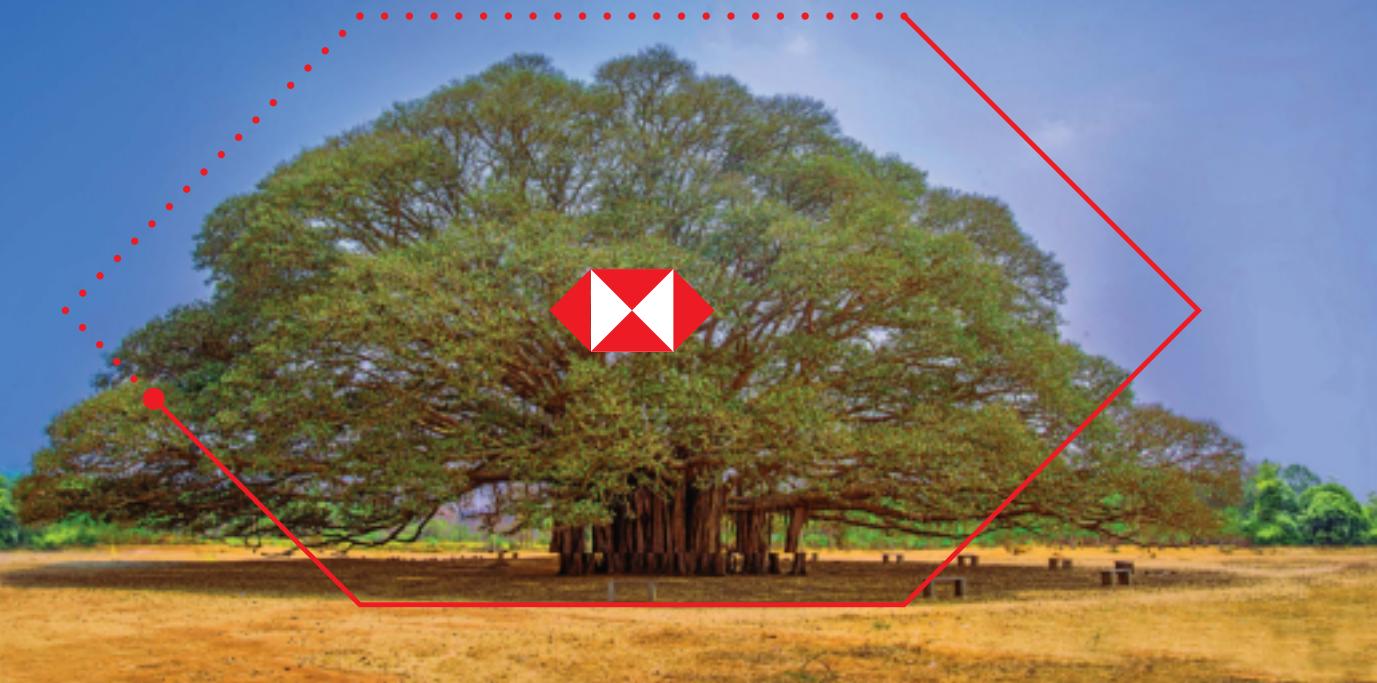
LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| iPhone | 10% | 13% | 20% | 41% | 54% | 79% |
| Samsung | 19% | 27% | 24% | 22% | 29% | 11% |
| Xiaomi | 17% | 14% | 10% | 11% | 4% | 2% |
| Vivo | 28% | 19% | 22% | 13% | 9% | 3% |
| Oppo | 15% | 12% | 11% | 7% | 4% | 3% |
| Others | 10% | 14% | 12% | 6% | 1% | 1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



HSBC Mutual Fund

Deeply rooted.
Committed to your future.



HSBC Mutual Fund is part of the HSBC Group which has a legacy over 160 years and is trusted by millions of customers worldwide.

Local expertise and strong on-ground presence combined with sharp insights on Indian markets, help us deliver focused investment solutions across asset classes for your portfolio.

Our expert team builds on deep research and proprietary processes to take responsible investment decisions sustained over multiple economic and market cycles.

We remain dedicated to your wealth creation journey and helping you build a long-standing legacy.



~₹1.36
lakh crore
AUM*



~1.08
crore
folios#



63
locations
pan India



45
mutual fund
schemes

Data as on 31 December 2025. *Assets Under Management, ~Approximate numbers, Source: AMFI. #Source: CAMS.
For disclosure of quarterly AUM/AAUM and AUM by geography, please visit our website assetmanagement.hsbc.co.in

www.assetmanagement.hsbc.co.in



Scan to invest

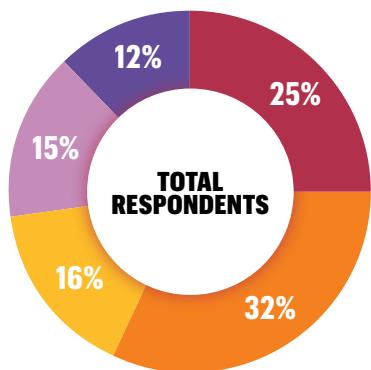


Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully. CL3578

HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND ON YOUR CURRENT MOBILE PHONE?

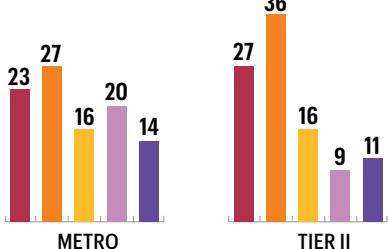
■ UP TO ₹25,000 ■ ₹25,000–50,000 ■ ₹50,000–75,000 ■ ₹75,000–1,00,000 ■ ABOVE ₹1,00,000

GEN Z DOESN'T GO CHEAP ON PHONES



70 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



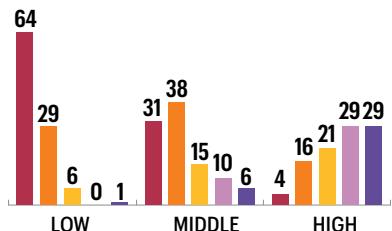
22%

Over one-fifth of post-graduates spent above ₹1,00,000 on their current mobile phone.

38%

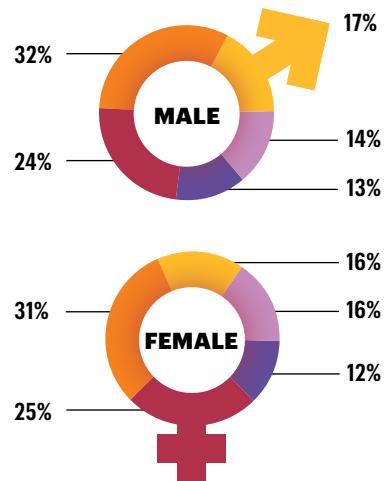
Nearly four in ten government salaried respondents spent ₹75,000 or more on their phones

HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Up to ₹25,000 | 60% | 48% | 29% | 8% | 4% | 5% |
| ₹25,000–50,000 | 24% | 33% | 41% | 34% | 20% | 6% |
| ₹50,000–75,000 | 11% | 11% | 16% | 23% | 18% | 9% |
| ₹75,000–1,00,000 | 4% | 7% | 9% | 18% | 33% | 39% |
| Above ₹1,00,000 | 1% | 2% | 5% | 18% | 26% | 41% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Nippon **India** Mutual Fund

Wealth sets you free



What's
stronger than
individuals?
Processes.

**Individuals may change,
processes stay consistent.**

Tried and tested processes are fundamental to an organisation's success as they clearly define how things are done. That's why it is imperative to choose an investment manager backed by strong processes, not just by competent individuals.

Strong processes and risk management help you achieve your goals steadily and sustainably.

An investor education and awareness initiative of Nippon India Mutual Fund

#EdgeOfKnowledge

Contact your Mutual Fund Distributor or Investment Advisor | Give us a missed call on 8000112244 | Visit mf.nipponindiaim.com/EdgeOfKnowledge

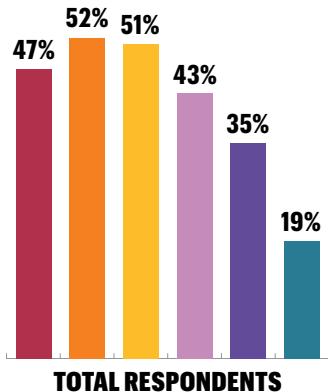
Helpful information for investors: All Mutual Fund investors have to go through a one-time KYC (know your Customer) process. Investors should deal only with registered mutual funds, to be verified on SEBI website under 'Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure Institutions'. For redressal of your complaints, you may please visit <https://scores.sebi.gov.in>. For more info on KYC, change in various details & redressal of complaints, visit mf.nipponindiaim.com/investoreducation/what-to-know-when-investing This is an investor education and awareness initiative by Nippon India Mutual Fund.

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

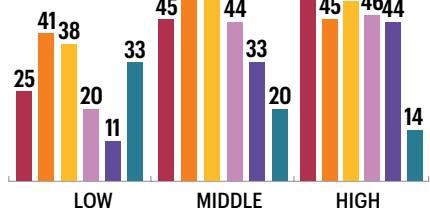
WHICH ENTERTAINMENT FORMATS DO YOU SPEND ON THE MOST?

■ OTT PLATFORMS / STREAMING TV ■ CINEMAS ■ YOUTUBE CREATORS ■ STAND-UP COMEDY
 ■ CONCERTS & LIVE EVENTS ■ OTHERS

GEN Z PAYS FOR BOTH SCREEN AND STAGE



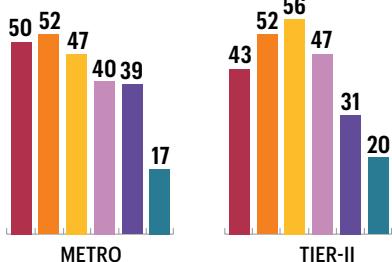
HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All Figures in (%)

72 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

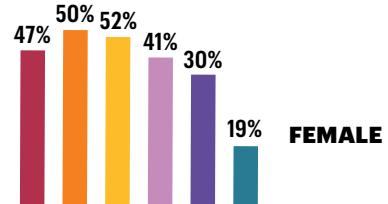
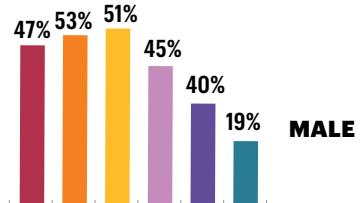
55%

YouTube creators attract the highest spend from those with higher secondary education

55%

Private salaried respondents spend the most on cinemas, the highest across occupations

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| OTT platforms / Streaming TV | 35% | 46% | 46% | 50% | 46% | 51% |
| Cinemas | 50% | 58% | 61% | 50% | 41% | 18% |
| YouTube creators | 38% | 56% | 52% | 52% | 54% | 45% |
| Stand-up comedy | 28% | 34% | 37% | 48% | 62% | 55% |
| Concerts & live events | 19% | 26% | 34% | 34% | 47% | 63% |
| Others | 24% | 26% | 22% | 14% | 9% | 14% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

KONE: Innovating to Move People Safely, Smartly & Sustainably

Mr. Amit Gossain, Managing Director, KONE Elevator India, shares how safety and sustainability remain uncompromising priorities for the company while designing and manufacturing smart elevators and escalators driven by predictive technology. With a strong customer-centric approach, KONE, moving more than two billion people every day globally, is helping transform India's urban lifestyle into a safer, digitalized, and more connected experience.



Amit Gossain

Managing Director, India and South Asia, KONE

Looking ahead, how is KONE prioritizing its strategy to revolutionize India's vertical mobility?

KONE India's brand proposition is strongly defined by its cutting-edge predictive technologies that are shaping the vertical transportation category. Alongside innovation, the company remains committed to raising industry benchmarks by integrating sustainable manufacturing practices and design excellence.

Every solution is thoughtfully customized to deliver energy efficiency, intelligence, and aesthetic appeal. By maximizing performance features, KONE aims to meet evolving customer expectations, ensuring ease of movement across building types, whether low-rise, mid-rise, or high-rise, and across industries. Going the extra mile to ensure passenger safety remains a key differentiator for KONE.

What are the salient sustainable features of KONE elevators?

KONE is a Global leader in the elevator and escalator industry. Its modern elevator solutions can reduce energy consumption by up to 70% through innovations such as regenerative drives, LED lighting, and standby modes. These energy-efficient features help lower running costs, reduce CO₂ emissions, and support customers in meeting sustainability targets, complemented by carbon-

optimized maintenance solutions.

In India, KONE complies with stringent international certifications, including ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management System), ISO 14001:2015 (Environmental Management System), and OHSAS 18001:2007 (Occupational Health & Safety Management System). These certifications reflect KONE's commitment to ensuring that people's journeys are safe, convenient, reliable, and environmentally responsible.

How do you envision elevator technology shaping the future of people's mobility?

Elevator technology has entered an era of smart, connected systems enabled by predictive maintenance, touchless controls, and personalized services. KONE is at the forefront with its DX Class and SMART elevators, which offer space-saving designs, built-in connectivity, and future-ready digital upgrades.

Predictive elevator and escalator maintenance solutions help maximize availability through AI-driven data analytics, significantly reducing unexpected breakdowns. Key parameters such as speed, temperature, vibration, and energy consumption are monitored in real time to enhance safety and enable more efficient, carbon-optimized operations.

By combining manufacturing excellence with advanced technology and design innovation, KONE continues to elevate the overall customer experience, across ride quality, service responsiveness, and safety.

What makes KONE's elevator and escalator maintenance unique?

KONE's elevator maintenance solutions are enabled by 24x7 connectivity and intelligent data analytics, allowing potential issues to be identified early and addressed proactively. Continuous performance monitoring helps enhance safety, optimize efficiency, and support carbon-efficient operations across building lifecycles.

For escalators, KONE applies advanced condition monitoring and data-driven maintenance to improve availability and reliability. By analyzing operational patterns and performance trends,

potential abnormalities can be detected early, enabling timely interventions and reducing unplanned downtime.

In the event of a fault or stoppage, automated alerts enable faster diagnosis and response, helping minimize disruption for building users. Supported by trained and dedicated service technicians, KONE's predictive and tailored maintenance approach improves equipment reliability, reduces unexpected breakdowns, and keeps customers informed throughout the service process.

By combining connected elevator technology with intelligent escalator monitoring and strong service expertise, KONE continues to set benchmarks for quality, service excellence, and dependable maintenance support.

What is the extent of KONE India's market penetration?

KONE India continues to expand its footprint with an ambitious growth strategy- Rise. The company operates regional offices in five major cities, supported by over 55 branches across India and Nepal, and serves neighboring markets including Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

Its world-class manufacturing facility in Sripurumbudur, Tamil Nadu, is among the largest and most advanced of its kind in South and South-East Asia. Through IoT-enabled passenger lift solutions and smart people-flow technologies, KONE India is helping redefine vertical mobility, creating safer and more seamlessly connected building experiences across the country.

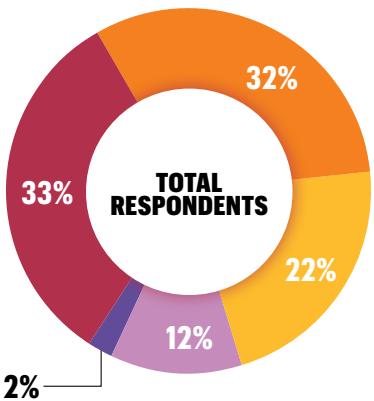
KONE makes every journey safe and smooth through:

- Elevators designed with proven safety and quality standards
- Built-in smart elevator connectivity
- Sustainable performance with lower energy consumption
- Global expertise with strong local delivery and service support

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PREFERRED BEVERAGE?

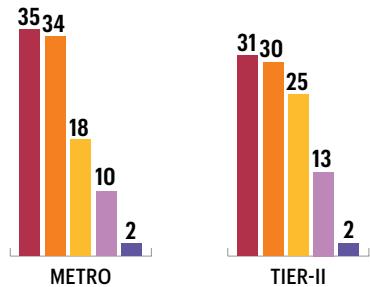
■ TEA ■ COFFEE ■ FRUIT JUICE ■ ENERGY DRINKS ■ OTHERS

TEA AND COFFEE DOMINATE GEN Z BEVERAGE CHOICES



74 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



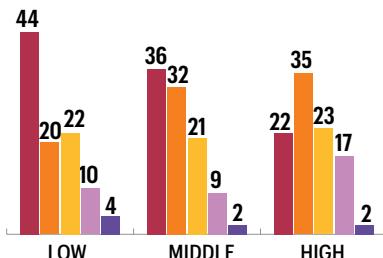
44%

Tea is the most preferred beverage among those with below primary education

35%

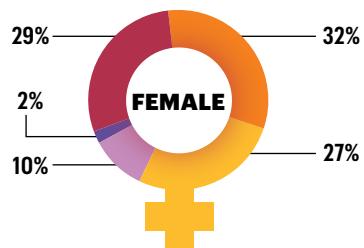
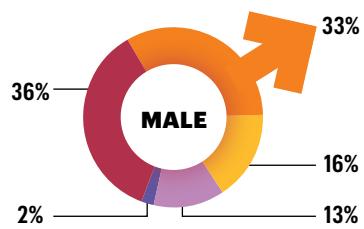
Coffee leads beverage preferences among government salaried respondents

HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Tea | 40% | 35% | 32% | 30% | 39% | 19% |
| Coffee | 26% | 30% | 33% | 34% | 28% | 47% |
| Fruit juice | 21% | 22% | 23% | 23% | 19% | 14% |
| Energy drinks | 11% | 12% | 10% | 11% | 12% | 18% |
| Others | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 3% | 2% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Shaping Inspirational Offices for an Aspirational Gen Z



■ Neetish Sarda
Founder and Managing Director, Smartworks

India's workforce is getting younger, more vocal, and far less tolerant of workplaces that feel dated or transactional.

For Neetish Sarda, Founder and Managing Director of Smartworks, this shift was visible long before Gen Z became a boardroom talking point.

"Gen Z isn't entering the workforce quietly," Sarda says. "They arrive with expectations, flexibility, speed, and environments that don't feel inherited from another era."

Sarda, who launched Smartworks in his twenties has since built it into India's largest managed campus platform, believed early on that the next generation would judge offices the same way they judge products, on ease of use, experience, and relevance. That conviction shaped how he thought about offices. Sarda approached workplaces as operating infrastructure, spaces that should evolve as quickly as businesses and people do.

"At one point, permanence was mistaken for stability," he says. "But businesses don't operate in fixed cycles anymore. Offices have to adapt just as fast as teams, markets, and technology do."

This thinking closely mirrors how Gen Z approaches work. Access matters more than ownership. Experience outweighs hierarchy. Choice is valued over rigidity. The result is a workplace philosophy built around energy and engagement.

Smartworks' fully managed spaces incorporate social and recreational elements such as cricket pitches, basketball courts, amphitheatres, gyms, cafés, smart convenience stores, sleeping pods, and informal collaboration zones. These amenities reflect a belief that productivity is sustained when people are mentally refreshed, socially connected, and physically comfortable.

"Offices shouldn't drain people by mid-day," Sarda notes. "If employees are spending most of their waking hours at work, the environment has to recharge them, not exhaust them."

Another dimension of Sarda's thinking has been proximity to talent. As workforces spread across cities and neighbourhoods, he anticipated the rise of hub-and-spoke models that allow enterprises to be closer to where people live, without fragmenting operations.

"Talent doesn't want to travel hours for access anymore," he says. "Enterprises have to go where talent is and make it easy for people to engage with work."

That belief has shaped Smartworks' expansion across both Tier-1 and Tier-2 markets. Today, it operates across 13 cities including Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, Delhi-NCR, Kochi and Coimbatore. The objective, Sarda says, is not just scale, but consistency, enabling enterprises to deploy teams across locations while maintaining a standardised workplace experience.

Technology forms the final layer of this vision. Digital-native employees expect seamless, app-led experiences everywhere. Sarda pushed for offices that function the same way, from access and service requests to analytics and engagement, allowing the workplace to fade into the background and let work take centre stage.

"For younger employees, the best technology is invisible," he explains. "If the office works intuitively,

people focus on their work, not on navigating systems."

Under Sarda's leadership, Smartworks has positioned itself as a platform that designs, builds and manages offices, delivering custom layouts tailored to enterprise needs, with workspaces that reflect each organisation's brand, culture and way of working. The company has a total area under management of approximately 14 million sq. ft. across 61 centres in India and Singapore, and was listed on India's stock exchanges in July 2025.

"As India's workforce becomes younger and more global, the competitiveness of our economy will increasingly depend on how quickly enterprises can deploy talent," he says, adding, "Flexible, managed infrastructure is becoming as critical to growth as digital or physical connectivity."

Sarda's vision reflects a broader shift underway in India Inc, a move away from offices as static spaces toward environments that actively shape how the next generation builds, collaborates, and grows.

Smartworks today serves over 760 clients. Its diverse clientele includes organisations such as Google, Xoriant, Discovery, Bridgestone, EY, Groww and others that operate at scale and expect consistency across cities.

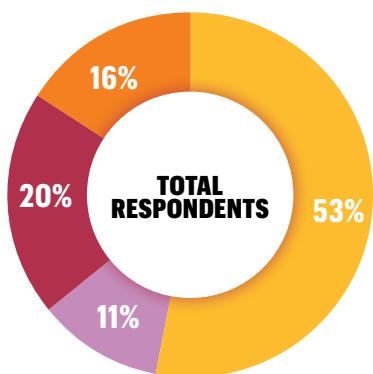


Smartworks is India's largest Managed Campus Platform. It provides fully managed offices for enterprises and GCCs across India and Singapore in 60 days, enabling fast city entry and multi-city scale without the complexity of traditional leasing or fit-outs.

WHICH BIG-TICKET ASSET DO YOU ASPIRE TO BUY FIRST?

■ CAR ■ HOUSE ■ BOTH ■ NEITHER

JUST OVER 50% GEN Z ASPIRES TO OWN BOTH A HOME AND A CAR



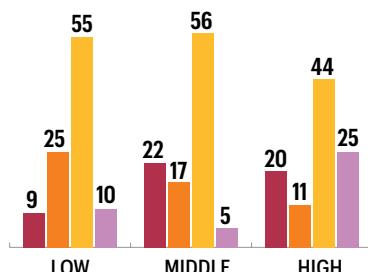
58%

Graduates aspire to buy both a car and a house as their first big-ticket purchases

55%

Private salaried respondents aspire to buy both a car and a house first

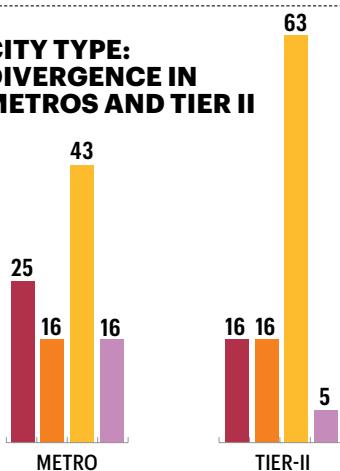
HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

76 |

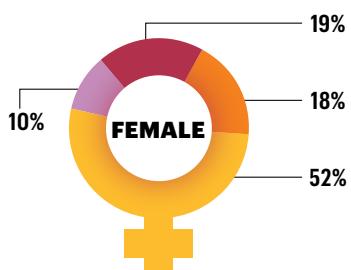
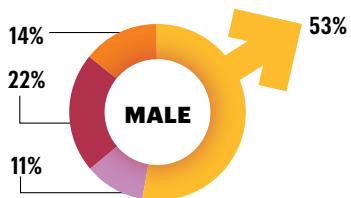
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Car | 15% | 15% | 20% | 27% | 23% | 17% |
| House | 22% | 17% | 17% | 16% | 11% | 8% |
| Both | 55% | 64% | 58% | 47% | 48% | 29% |
| Neither | 8% | 4% | 5% | 10% | 18% | 46% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

India's Clean Tech Vanguard: Drumil Joshi on AI Powering the Global Energy Transition

In a business landscape where energy security and sustainability have become strategic priorities, one Indian technologist stands at the forefront of innovation. Drumil Joshi is a globally respected *expert in artificial intelligence applied to renewable energy operations. His work combines technical rigor, real-world deployment, and measurable economic value.* With a portfolio of renewable assets under his supervision valued at \$450 million, his insights are reshaping how clean power is *forecasted and delivered. This profile highlights why his contributions have attracted international recognition and why his story matters to India's economic future.*



Drumil Joshi

Expert in Artificial Intelligence

Drumil Joshi in an interview with Salil Parekh

How did your journey with AI and renewable energy begin?

"Growing up in Mumbai and Gujarat, I saw firsthand how volatile power supply affects daily life. When I pursued data science, I realized that advanced analytics could make renewable energy not only abundant but reliable. Traditional forecasting and maintenance are reactive. My goal was to make them predictive and strategic."

Joshi's approach uniquely integrates machine learning, meteorology, and operational engineering to solve complex energy challenges. His models achieve prediction errors as low as 1 to 2 percent, a benchmark that industry analysts describe as setting new standards for accuracy in renewable forecasting.

Your innovations have been featured internationally. What sets them apart?

"It is not just about algorithms. It is about impact. For example, our predictive maintenance tools and outage-scheduling systems reduce avoidable energy losses and extend asset life. We created an ensemble intelligence platform that prioritizes issues before they escalate and integrates smoothly into real-time operations."

His work has been spotlighted in global media and technical communities, demonstrating the economic and operational benefits of AI integration in energy systems. His forecasting work has drawn academic citations and extensive reads on research platforms, reflecting widespread professional engagement.

What does your role at Southern Power involve?

"At Southern Power, I monitor analytics for 34 utility-scale solar plants, 15 wind farms, and 2 flagship battery systems.

These assets operate across diverse climates and market conditions. My team and I apply real-time diagnostics to improve performance and reduce downtime."

Industry peers note that Joshi's platform recovers significant energy otherwise lost to inefficient scheduling or unplanned outages, contributing measurable financial value to operators.

How do you see the future of AI in energy markets evolving?

"AI must be practical, transparent, and scalable. Future systems will not only forecast but autonomously guide decisions that balance generation, storage, and distribution. India's ambitious renewable targets require such intelligent systems to ensure that every watt counts."

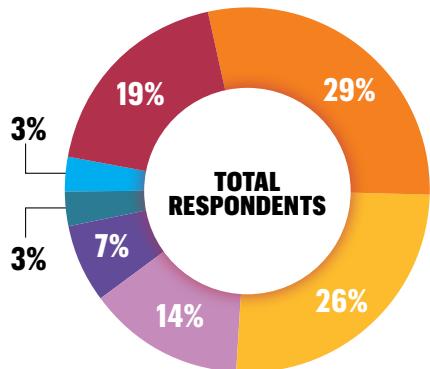
As India scales its clean energy capacities and explores next-generation markets like green hydrogen and distributed grids, leaders like Drumil Joshi exemplify how Indian innovators are shaping global sustainability outcomes with technology and strategy.



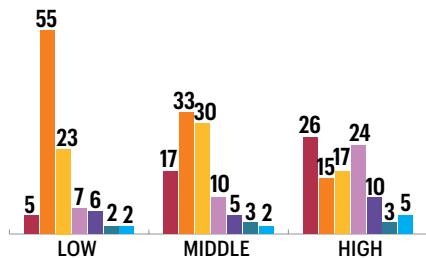
WHICH LIFESTYLE ASPIRATIONS MATTER MOST TO YOU?

■ INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL ■ OWNING A HOME ■ CAREER GROWTH ■ ENTREPRENEURSHIP ■ FITNESS & WELLNESS
 ■ PREMIUM FASHION ■ OWNING LUXURY GADGETS

GEN Z PRIORITISES CAREERS AND HOMES

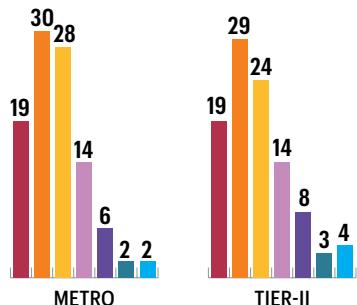


HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



78 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

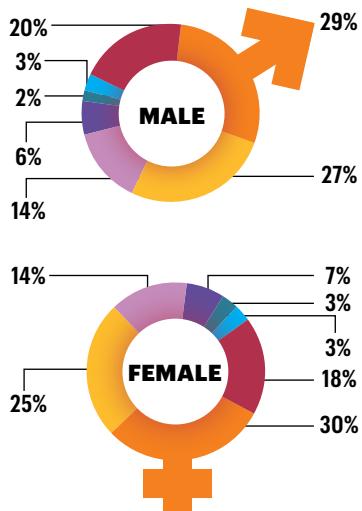
23%

Career growth emerges as the top aspiration among post-graduates of Gen Z

27%

Entrepreneurs prioritise entrepreneurship as their top lifestyle aspiration—far higher than salaried groups

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| International travel | 8% | 8% | 16% | 25% | 33% | 19% |
| Owning a home | 39% | 33% | 31% | 30% | 23% | 8% |
| Career growth | 33% | 35% | 31% | 22% | 13% | 6% |
| Entrepreneurship | 10% | 12% | 11% | 12% | 12% | 51% |
| Fitness & wellness | 6% | 7% | 6% | 6% | 10% | 9% |
| Premium fashion | 2% | 5% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 1% |
| Owning luxury gadgets | 1% | 1% | 2% | 3% | 6% | 6% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



*Seamless Banking for
a BRIGHTER Tomorrow*



Union Bank
of India

Good people to bank with



Banking that is
Always On For You

(Toll Free No.) 1800 2333 / 1800 222 244 / 1800 425 1515
www.unionbankofindia.bank.in | Follow us on:

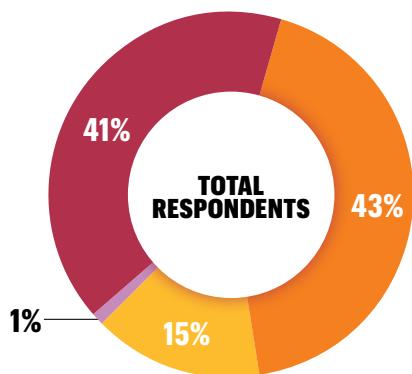


Scan here

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR OVERALL SPENDING?

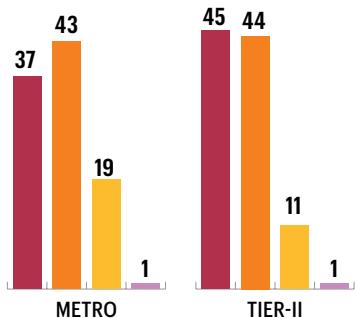
■ INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY ■ INCREASE MODERATELY ■ STAY THE SAME ■ REDUCE

GEN Z SIGNALS HIGHER SPENDING AHEAD



80 |

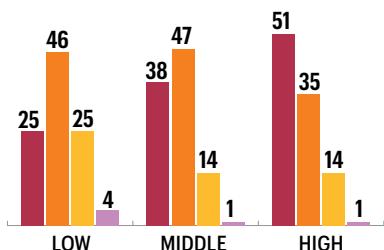
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

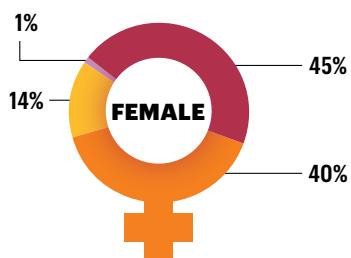
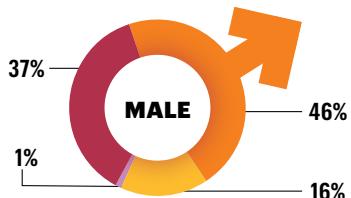


HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Increase significantly | 37% | 38% | 39% | 40% | 45% | 60% |
| Increase moderately | 44% | 45% | 48% | 45% | 35% | 29% |
| Stay the same | 18% | 17% | 12% | 14% | 19% | 11% |
| Reduce | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

AKSHA KAMBOJ OF ASPECT GLOBAL VENTURES ON VISION, PURPOSE AND POWER: CELEBRATING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AT BUSINESS TODAY'S MOST POWERFUL WOMEN AWARDS

What does being powerful mean to you beyond the title?

Power, to me, is the quiet ability to influence outcomes without raising your voice. Titles evolve with time, but consistency, integrity, and the courage to stand by your values define real power.

What is the boldest decision you made this year that changed everything?

I chose to trust my instincts over external noise. In sectors where large conglomerates operate, following your inner compass can be the boldest move. At Aspect Global Ventures, I believe every vertical deserves equal passion and clear direction, whether it is Bullion, Sports, Hospitality, or Real Estate. Taking on the responsibility of owning the Tiigers of Kolkata with a people-first vision was also a defining decision that shaped our growth meaningfully.

What is the one leadership rule you always break and why?

I do not believe leaders need to remain distant. I stay accessible and involved. When teams see leadership that is present and invested, it builds confidence and energises the organisation.

If you could give your younger self one line of advice, what would it be?

Do not rush. Everything meant for you will arrive at the right time.

What is a barrier you had to break that the world still does not see?

The assumption that tradition and modernity cannot coexist. My journey

blends both. Respecting our roots while preparing for the future has been a constant and deliberate balance.

What is one habit that gives you an unfair edge?

I listen more than I speak. When you focus on absorbing rather than rushing to respond, you gain clarity that others often miss.

What is a failure that became your greatest source of strength?

Early in my journey, I tried to handle everything myself. Over time, I learned that strong teams amplify both intent and execution. Trusting my people made me a stronger leader and a steadier individual.

What is a belief about women leaders you wish the world would retire?

The belief that women must choose between strength and softness. We lead with both, and that combination is a powerful advantage.

What is the next disruption you are preparing your team for?

A future where agility matters more than scale. Across bullion, hospitality, sports, and other sectors, teams that adapt quickly will define the next phase of growth.

What do you want your leadership to be remembered for?

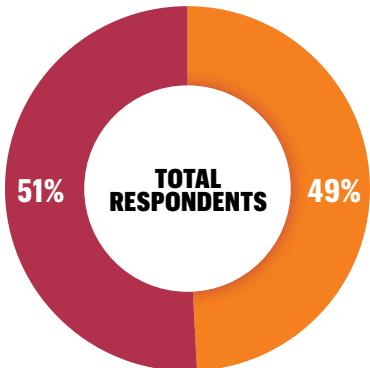
I want to be remembered for creating environments where people felt trusted, supported, and motivated to rise. Impact lasts far longer than any designation.



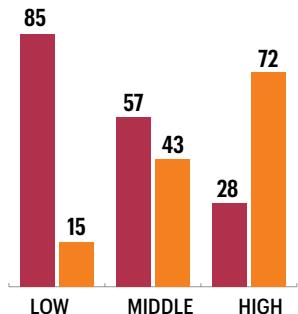
WHERE DO YOU PREFER TO HOLIDAY?

■ DOMESTIC ■ INTERNATIONAL

GEN Z IS SPLIT ON DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL



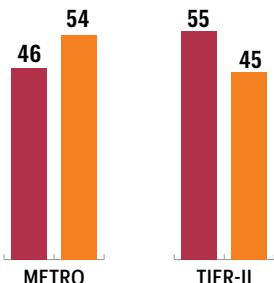
HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

82 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER-II



All figures in (%)

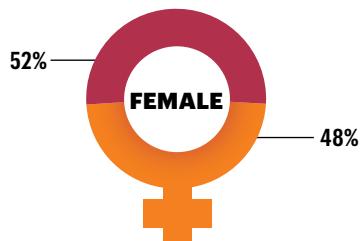
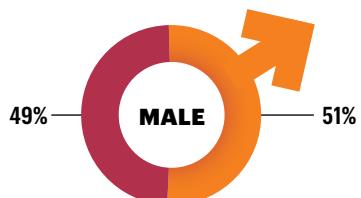
68%

Over two-thirds of post-graduates prefer international holidays

64%

Government salaried respondents prefer international holidays, the highest across occupations

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Domestic | 71% | 65% | 57% | 43% | 31% | 13% |
| International | 29% | 35% | 43% | 57% | 69% | 87% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



एयर कनेक्टिविटी देश में सर्वाधिक एयरपोर्ट

16 एयरपोर्ट
संचालित | 8 एयरपोर्ट
निर्माणाधीन



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial CMOUttarpradesh CMOOfficeUP

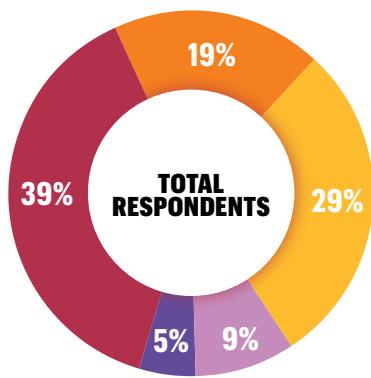


सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

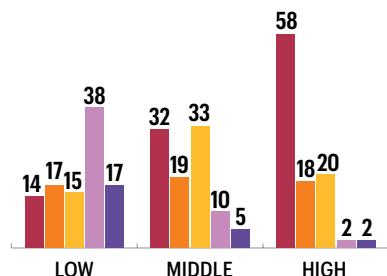
WHAT TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION DO YOU PREFER WHILE TRAVELLING?

■ LUXURY HOTELS ■ BOUTIQUE PROPERTIES ■ RESORTS ■ HOSTELS ■ HOMESTAYS / AIR BNB

GEN Z PREFERS COMFORT & PREMIUM WHILE TRAVELLING



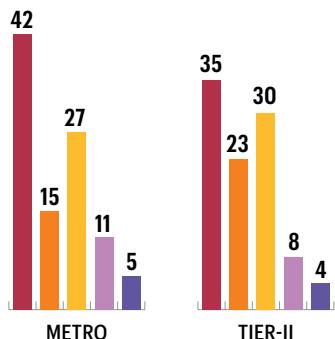
HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

84 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

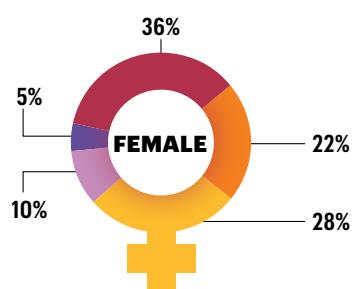
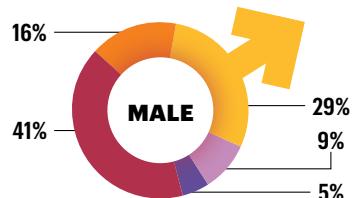
52%

More than half of post-graduates prefer luxury hotels while travelling

47%

Nearly half of entrepreneurs prefer staying in luxury hotels while travelling

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Luxury hotels | 24% | 23% | 34% | 41% | 62% | 64% |
| Boutique properties | 23% | 24% | 15% | 22% | 17% | 8% |
| Resorts | 20% | 31% | 34% | 29% | 18% | 26% |
| Hostels | 24% | 13% | 11% | 5% | 1% | 2% |
| Homestays / Airbnb | 10% | 9% | 6% | 2% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

SEBI INTRODUCES
“VALIDATED UPI HANDLES” TO
ENABLE SECURED PAYMENTS TO ANY
SEBI REGISTERED INTERMEDIARY



Be Smart.
Scan Now.

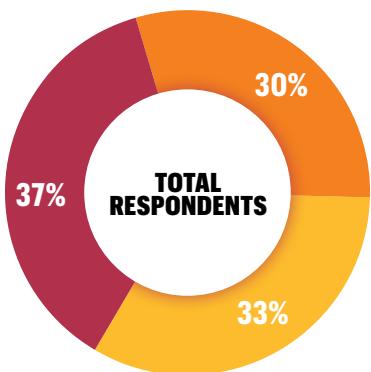


Download the Saarthi App
An Investor Awareness Initiative by SEBI & NSE

WHERE DO YOU SHOP THE MOST FOR EVERYDAY PURCHASES?

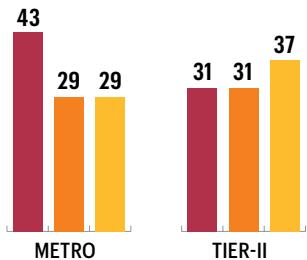
■ QUICK COMMERCE APPS ■ ONLINE E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS ■ PHYSICAL RETAIL STORES

QUICK COMMERCE IS GAINING GROUND WITH GEN Z



86 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



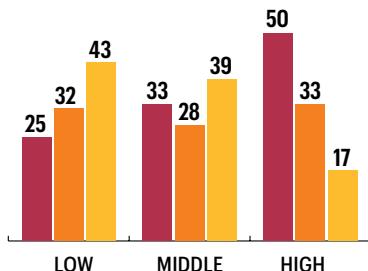
47%

Nearly half of post-graduates shop the most on quick commerce apps for everyday purchases

41%

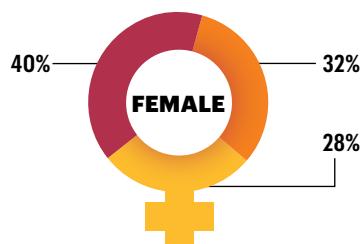
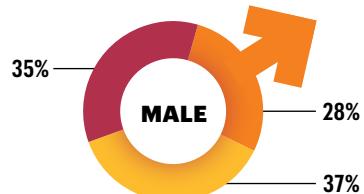
Entrepreneurs shop the most on quick commerce apps for everyday purchases.

HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Quick commerce apps | 26% | 21% | 30% | 41% | 57% | 72% |
| Online e-commerce platforms | 28% | 38% | 33% | 28% | 23% | 24% |
| Physical retail stores | 45% | 41% | 38% | 31% | 20% | 4% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



भारत की पहली रैपिड रेल सेवा

मेरठ से दिल्ली तक 'नमो भारत' का संचालन



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial



CMOUttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP

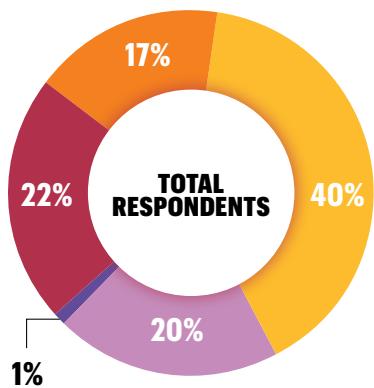


सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE QUICK COMMERCE APPS?

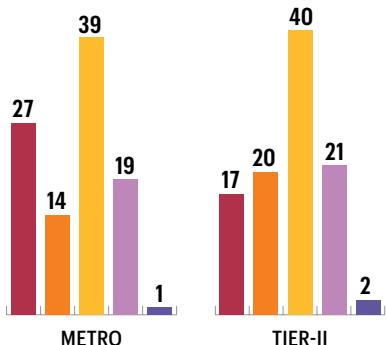
■ MULTIPLE TIMES A DAY ■ ONCE A DAY ■ A FEW TIMES A WEEK ■ RARELY ■ NEVER

QUICK COMMERCE IS A REGULAR HABIT FOR GEN Z



88 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



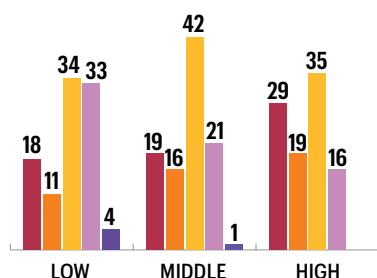
29%

Nearly three in ten post-graduates Gen Z use quick commerce apps multiple times a day.

47%

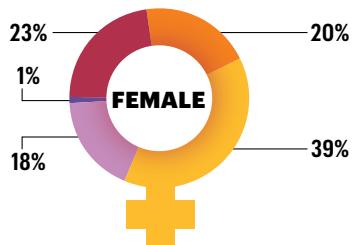
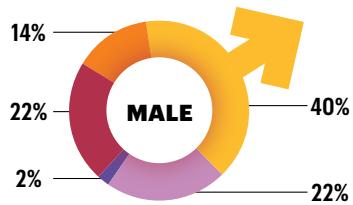
Nearly half of government salaried respondents use quick commerce apps at least once a day

HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



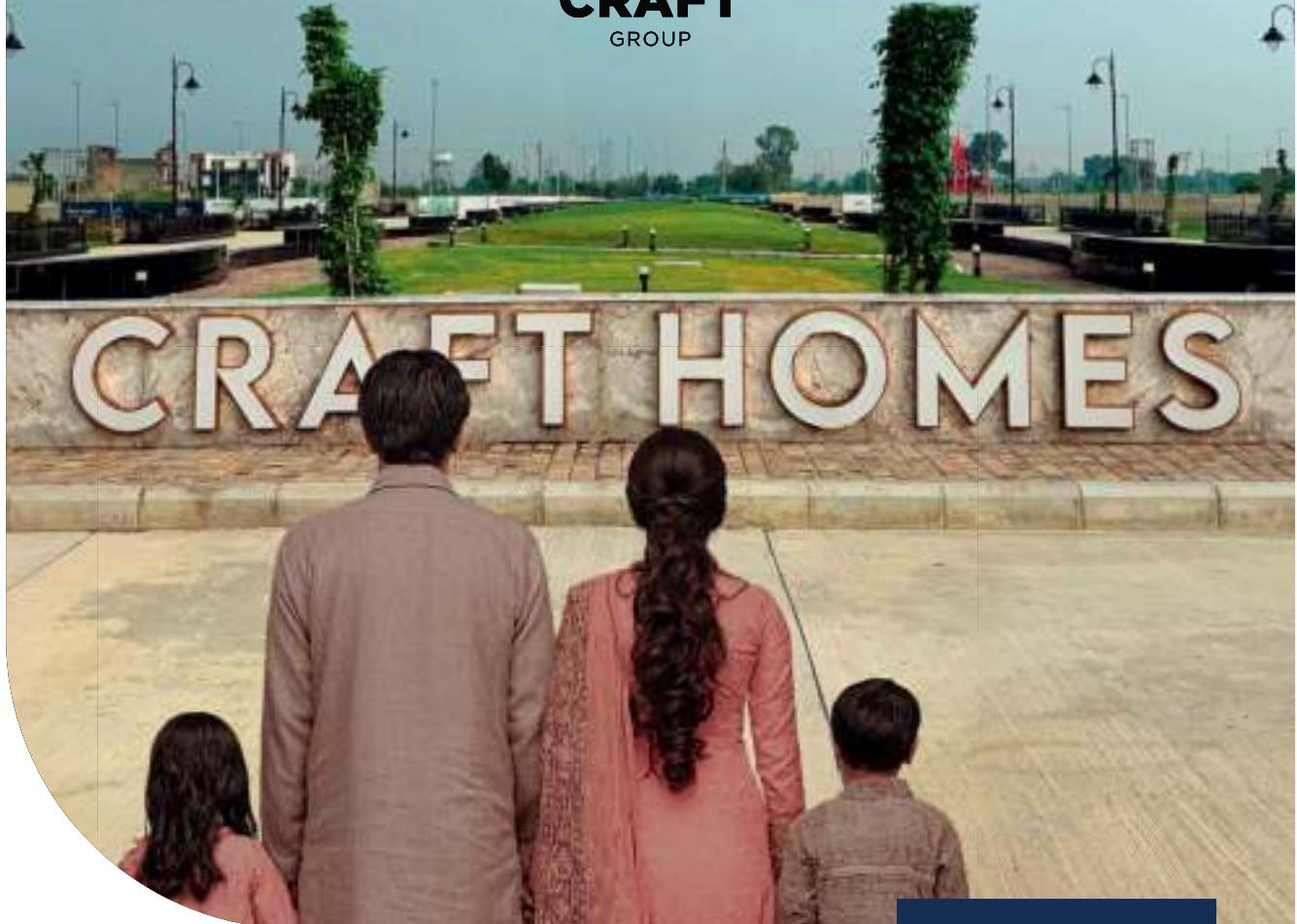
All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Multiple times a day | 12% | 12% | 15% | 27% | 41% | 42% |
| Once a day | 16% | 17% | 19% | 16% | 13% | 18% |
| A few times a week | 42% | 44% | 45% | 38% | 32% | 24% |
| Rarely | 25% | 26% | 21% | 19% | 13% | 16% |
| Never | 6% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 1% | 0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



Upgrade Their Tomorrow, Starting Today.

Not Just Land — A life you'll be proud to pass on.

At **Craft Homes, Sec-27**, Sonipat, we give you **the foundation** to make that dream a reality.

REGISTRY-READY PLOTS | MOVE IN AND BUILD TOMORROW

You can **upgrade your family's lifestyle** and give your children the kind of **neighbourhood** that shapes their future for the better.

WHY CRAFT HOMES?

Premium Community

Complete Infrastructure

24x7 Gated Security &
Clubhouse Privileges

Call / Whatsapp:

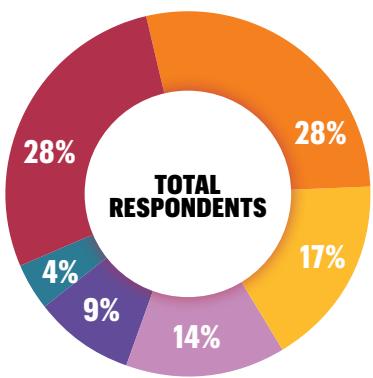
92114 36699

**BOOK YOUR VISIT
TODAY**

WHAT IS YOUR TOP PRIORITY WHEN CHOOSING A JOB?

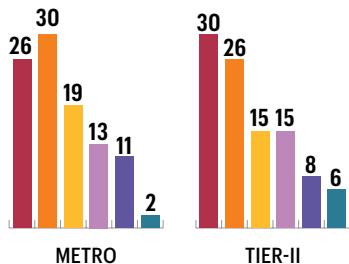
■ SALARY & FINANCIAL GROWTH ■ ROLE & CAREER PATH ■ JOB SECURITY ■ WORK-LIFE BALANCE / HOURS
 ■ WORK-FROM-HOME / FLEXIBILITY ■ LOCATION

ONLY 9% RANK WORK-FROM-HOME AS THEIR TOP PRIORITY



90 |

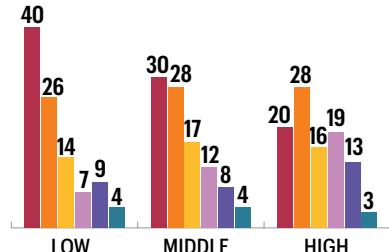
CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)

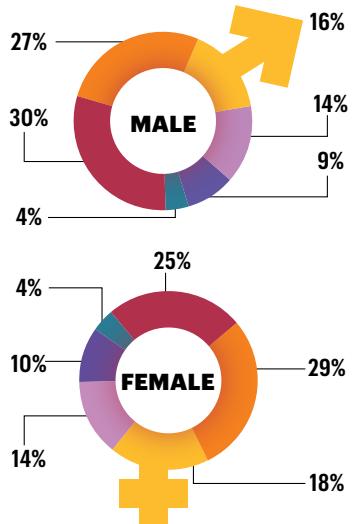


HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Salary & financial growth | 31% | 33% | 33% | 23% | 18% | 15% |
| Role & career path | 28% | 28% | 28% | 30% | 27% | 24% |
| Job security | 18% | 19% | 16% | 17% | 19% | 5% |
| Work-life balance / hours | 10% | 11% | 13% | 16% | 16% | 24% |
| Work-from-home / flexibility | 9% | 5% | 6% | 9% | 14% | 30% |
| Location | 4% | 3% | 3% | 5% | 7% | 3% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

सुपरफास्ट रफ्तार



7 एक्सप्रेसवे | 15 एक्सप्रेसवे विकास
संचालित | के विभिन्न चरणों में



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial



CMOttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP

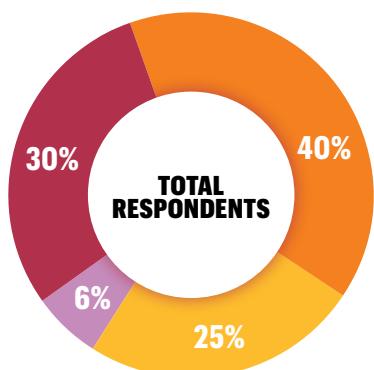


सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

DOES SUSTAINABILITY OR ETHICAL SOURCING INFLUENCE YOUR BUYING DECISIONS?

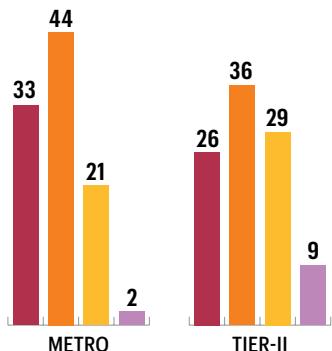
■ ALWAYS ■ SOMETIMES ■ RARELY ■ NEVER

GEN Z CARES ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY



92 |

CITY TYPE: DIVERGENCE IN METROS AND TIER II



All figures in (%)



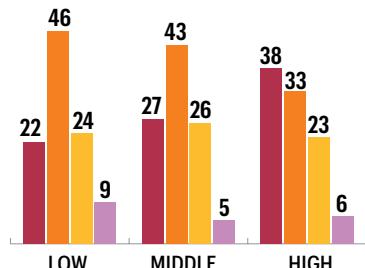
33%

One in three post-graduates say sustainability always influences their buying decisions

43%

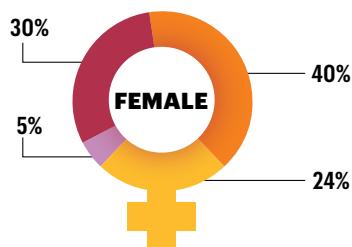
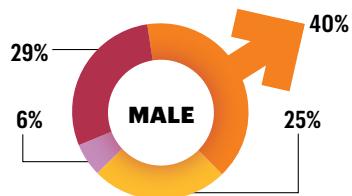
Private salaried respondents say sustainability sometimes influences their purchases

HOW HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHAPES PREFERENCES



All figures in (%)

GENDER TYPE: THE MALE AND FEMALE CHOICES



LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT

| | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2-lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh |
|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Always | 24% | 34% | 29% | 27% | 37% | 23% |
| Sometimes | 47% | 47% | 41% | 36% | 31% | 40% |
| Rarely | 22% | 16% | 26% | 30% | 22% | 34% |
| Never | 7% | 3% | 4% | 7% | 10% | 4% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |



बढ़ी एयर कनेक्टिविटी अब दुनिया दूर नहीं

5 इंटरनेशनल
एयरपोर्ट | 4 संचालित
1 निर्माणाधीन



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार

UPGovtOfficial CMOUttarpradesh CMOOfficeUP



सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

The Indian Tax Paradox



Mr. Pawan Kaushik

Ours is one of the oldest civilisations. We have inherited highly cultured social and familial structure, but when it comes to wealth, why we are so poor? The reason is simple we lack a structured work culture. The situation in our country is such that our laws and corrupt administration are largely responsible for the acceptance of poor work discipline. Honest taxpayers suffer under heavy taxes, while those who evade them often go unpunished, sometimes even protected by the system meant to enforce the law.

There are numerous countries in the world which have become very rich just by way of a strong work culture. Having spent 40 years of my life in Taiwan has made me realise that it is very important for a country to have an extraordinary work culture to be strong financially. This is my firm belief, that healthy competition fosters growth whereas irrational tax laws and other factors push the workforce adversely. People shall come and go, but the Nation shall remain. "**Hum na rahenge, tum na rahoge, ye desh hamara hamesha rahega.**"

Mr. Pawan Kaushik (Commerce & Law Graduate) from a small village in Haryana, is a first-generation entrepreneur and now, NRI based at Taipei, Taiwan.

While pursuing his education, he worked actively in the agricultural fields with his family. These experiences growing up along with the successes of his family's work ethics imbibed a strong sense of an ethical work culture into him at an early age. After graduation, he moved from a small village in Haryana to the commercial capital of India, Bombay. While pursuing his law degree, he learned the ropes of the import-export business by working with an export house.

In this "Mayanagari," Mr. Kaushik quickly observed that manipulation and influence over lawmakers delivered better outcomes than merit. This realisation strengthened his resolve **to oppose such practices**, and he has since been vocal in expressing his concerns.

Later, when he moved to Taiwan, he was delighted to witness its work culture. Seeing this vindicated his belief that a strong work culture makes a monumental difference. During his visits to India, he often shared how this tiny nation, with its efficient work culture and freedom from red-tapism, could reach such heights. Why not India then? The only answer he found was the absence of a congenial, business-friendly environment, one stifled by pervasive red-tapism.

The focus is on transforming the system, not targeting individuals or institutions. Laws are meant to serve the people; therefore, any law that fails in the service of its citizens should be reformed immediately.

Is the GST reform good or bad for the economy?

GST is a good tax reform, but its rates are irrational. Inverted GST rates favour integrated plants and work **against** independent manufacturers, leading to many small independent units being shut down before the government rationalised some rates last year. The changes also created more problems for a few industries, like Man-Made Yarn and the paper industry. The raw material for yarn is still at 18% GST, whereas Yarn GST was reduced from 12% to 5% making difference bigger. And Paper finished product GST is made 0% with no refund of Input Tax Credit (ITC), its raw materials still attract 18% GST. This results in a total loss of ITC and an inability to adjust GST on capital goods. Our laws should be **encouraging investment**, but such GST rate structures are **detrimental** to it.

Are you in favour of a single GST rate or multiple GST rates?

It would have been much better if the GST Act had been made simple with a single GST rate and an additional cess on Luxury, Demerit & Sin Goods. There would have been no classification disputes, but the argument is that we live in a complex country and can't have the same GST rate on *Hawai Chappals* and a Mercedes Benz. Because how do you explain the GST on diamonds - a super luxury - at **only** a 0.25% to 1.5%, while cement, the most basic material for nation-building, gets a rate that was 112 times higher than that of diamonds until last year, which is now only 72 times higher?

Mr. Kaushik **believes money is a by-product of business**; focus on business and the by-product follows. Therefore, if the government saw tax as a by-product of a thriving economy, it would focus on enabling business rather than merely collecting revenue. Our FM and PM have both said repeatedly that once revenue grows, GST on cement would be reduced. It took 8 years for this small reduction.

Are GST rates encouraging or discouraging 'Make in India'?

Inverted GST rates have quietly but decisively set Indian manufacturing back by nearly a decade. The numbers make this impossible to ignore.

A ₹300 crore investment in capital goods attracts ₹54 crore in GST. Raw materials priced at ₹150/kg are taxed at 18% (₹27/kg). After adding value of ₹50/kg, the finished yarn sells at ₹200/kg and yet it attracts only 5% GST (₹10/kg).

The government refunds the ₹17/kg differential in a few months. But the ₹54 crore paid on capital goods remains permanently blocked, with no mechanism for adjustment or refund. This is not taxation; it is capital immobilisation.

Manufacturing runs on rotation, not restraint. That locked ₹54 crore could have powered three to four production cycles, delivering 15–20% returns. Instead, businesses are forced into high interest borrowing, turning productive enterprises into financially stressed ones. **If this is the cost of 'Make in India', the question answers itself.**

How about import duties?

India's import duty structure mirrors the same contradiction seen in GST. Raw materials often have higher import duties than finished products. For example, coated luggage fabric is taxed at 20% while finished bags and luggage are at only 15%. Who, then,

will manufacture bags here?

What's needed is a rational, progressive duty structure that offers incremental protection at every stage of value addition. Nothing should be duty-free. A simple framework would ensure fairness and growth: 5% on basic raw materials, 10% on intermediates, 15% on semi-processed goods, 20% on finished products, and 25% on consumer goods. This allows each stage of manufacturing a modest but essential protective margin.

A clear example: raw materials such as Iron ore, Crude, PTA, MEG, and CPL at 5%; Polyester and Nylon chips at 10%; Man-Made Yarns at 15%; Fabrics at 20%; and Consumer Goods at 25%.

Instead, we see distortions. Plastic granules are taxed at 7.5%, while PET and Nylon chips attract only 5% and their finished products i.e. **Polyester and Nylon Filament Yarn are also taxed at 5%**. This results in zero effective protection, defeating the very purpose of domestic value addition.

Do you find any other irrationality in import duties?

Yes. Consider solar panels. Their import duty, once 44% and now 22%, remains highly detrimental for a country that is still not power-secure. Solar panels are capital goods-imported once-and generate clean electricity for 25–30 years while reducing coal imports and protecting the environment.

Capital goods should attract minimal duties. Instead, high import taxes and restrictions actively discourage industries from adopting renewable energy. With India's power costs already among the highest globally, this policy makes our manufacturers less competitive.

The contradiction is stark. Coal imported from Australia attracts 0% duty-yielding no revenue for the government and offering no incentive for businesses to shift to clean energy.

Mr. Kaushik, you know a great deal about Indian tax laws. You are performing a valuable service to the government by bringing these points to the forefront so they can be rectified. Do you have any other points to add?

I maintain that **healthy competition makes us innovative, creative and sincere, while monopoly breeds lethargy and incompetence**. Our tax laws must be rational to allow everyone to grow and merit to flourish. They should be framed with India's interest paramount and with every entrepreneur, big or small, in mind.

Because of crony capitalism, income disparity in India is among the highest. Since 1986, I have closely observed other Southeast Asian countries and seen how they have grown over the last four decades. The question that bothers me is: why are we still far behind in productivity when our intellectual potential is so strong? **These irrational tax laws are a major hurdle to India's growth.**

Your view on the Indian tax system?

In India, businessmen are often seen as tax evaders, while corrupt bureaucrats are viewed as revenue contributors. This perception is misplaced. Simpler tax laws and rational rates would significantly improve compliance and reduce disputes. **This will directly increase productivity by eliminating unnecessary compliance burdens.**

Economic growth requires trust in entrepreneurs and accountability in administration. Yet bureaucrats continue to exercise disproportionate power. Under the Prevention of Corruption Act, a bribe-giver can be jailed immediately, while prosecuting a bribe-taker requires prior approval from senior officials-approval that is seldom granted. This imbalance weakens enforcement and public confidence.

Businesses cannot survive long delays and the extra costs they create. In India, a slow legal system means that simply refusing to pay a bribe can put a business at serious risk and even shut it down. If officials were held responsible for unnecessary delays and harassment, the excuse of "acting in the interest of revenue" would no longer be valid.

This issue is not new. On NRI Day, former Finance Minister Shri Jaswant Singh Ji admitted: "**We, the government, never encourage business and always create hurdles—but one business we could not**

understand still thrived in India i.e. software."

Judicial accountability is equally critical. Repeated reversals by higher courts should carry consequences, and strict timelines must be enforced. Ultimately, rational tax laws would reduce litigation and restore trust between the state and enterprise.

Mr. Kaushik, how can we make India great and fulfil our dream of 'Make in India'? Do you have any suggestions?

To make "**Make in India**" meaningful, GST must first be fixed. The system needs just two rates: **zero** on fruits, vegetables, raw agricultural produce, and oral medicines, and **15% on all other goods**.

Import duties should be made rational and progressive so that each value addition enjoys reasonable protection from cheap imports and at the same time encourage us to do more "**Make in India**".

Equally urgent is the **immediate refund of GST blocked on capital goods due to inverted duty structures**, along with interest. Entrepreneurs are paying bank interest on what is effectively their own money lying idle as Input Tax Credit (ITC) with the government. No manufacturing economy can function with capital locked instead of circulating.

An entrepreneur's responsibility is to run factories efficiently, but two critical costs remain beyond their control: **power i.e. electricity and bank interest i.e. credit**. Power in India is prohibitively expensive. Competing with China under such conditions is impossible.

The solution is twofold: either reduce power costs substantially or allow entrepreneurs to install their own Solar or Wind power.

However, even here, restrictive banking rules apply. Today, excess solar power is "banked," but only **30% can be offset against grid consumption**, forcing industries to buy costly grid power despite having surplus energy. Why is this so?

Let me give you another example. My unit is in the Prime Minister's home state. Although, my roof is available to install a **5 MW solar plant**, net metering permissions restrict me to a **1 MW solar plant**, even though my unit consumption is 40L units/month. A 5 MW plant would generate only 6L units/month, only a small fraction of our actual requirement. **If industries cannot use their own capital to generate clean power for self-consumption, aggressive promotion of schemes like Urja Awas Yojana rings hollow**. No one can explain this to me.

The second crippling cost is credit. In China and the Far East, interest rates average **4%**; in India, small entrepreneurs pay **15–16%**. In our case, **₹54 crore** in blocked GST (ITC), high power costs and Chinese dumping at **5.0% import duty** led to losses and a credit rating company downgrade from **BBB to BB**, allowing banks to raise interest to **15.77%**. This means banks in India are positioned to kill a running industry that is struggling due to bad government policies rather than supporting it. We survived by selling assets, partially installing renewable energy, and altering our product mix—eventually regaining BBB rating. Many others do not.

My point is this: the government should support such functional industries by correcting its policies, and banks should extend support instead of burdening them with higher interest costs. On one hand, the government offers many incentives and announces schemes like PLI to create new industries but on the other, it does not give enough liberty to entrepreneurs to run existing ones successfully. If those Industries will close, then we will be again dependent on imports for those goods also.

If "**Make in India**" is to succeed, Single GST rate, **basic** import duties must be rationalised giving enough protection to each value addition. In some cases, anti-dumping measures should be enforced.

While rationalising import duty and giving enough protection govt should take Power and Bank Interest costs into consideration which are beyond the entrepreneur's control. **Without correcting these structural disadvantages, manufacturing competitiveness will remain a slogan, not a reality..**



UNDERSTANDING THE CONSUMER

► Gen Z comes with a lot of spending power and is different from other cohorts in how it wants to spend for an experience

► Given their size and ability to spend, most companies have a robust Gen Z strategy

► This cohort uses AI to make comparisons and sift through multiple sources of information



ANNIVERSARY • CONSUMER MARKET

Swipe, Select, but Spend Smart

The purchase behaviour of India's Gen Z reflects a decision hierarchy, driven by product quality, value perception and brand trust, rather than impulse or trends

BY KRISHNA GOPALAN

PHOTO BY HARDIK CHHABRA

► **HUL is reimagining its portfolio, especially beauty. The view is that it is no longer enough to have just higher brand equity**

► **Price & value matter most at lower income levels but steadily decline in importance as income rises**

► **The Gen Z cohort seeks brands that reflect their identity, values and fast-paced lifestyles**

B

BY ALL INDICATIONS Gen Z is a disruptive audience for whom each experience must be unique and devoid of any inhibitions; they push the marketer to the limits of innovation. That's one of the central findings of the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey, too. Given their size in terms of actual numbers and the ability to spend, most companies have a robust Gen Z strategy.

This is not the first time consumer research has thrown up an insight that leads to the birth of an idea. Fevicol Shoeflix is a case in point. A close look at NCCS A homes—a housing classification used by the National Consumer Classification System (NCCS), which is widely used in India for market research, media planning, and audience segmentation—revealed that the average Gen Z consumer had 10-12 pairs of sneakers. Given the high disposable incomes, that was not a surprise.

In fact, the sneakers worn were determined by the occasion. "It could be for badminton, cricket, party or just hanging out with friends," says Sandeep Tanwani, CMO, Pidilite Industries, the entity that owns Fevicol, Dr Fixit, M-Seal, Araldite and Roff brands, among others.

"There is a flaunting value in sneakers, which have a high emotional value as well," he says. This led to the launch of Fevicol ShoeFix, an adhesive specially designed for DIY shoe repair. Obviously, a new approach is needed for a new generation.

To him, the Gen Z audience comes with a lot of spending power. "They define cultural trends, and a big difference compared to other cohorts is how they want to spend for an experience," says Tanwani, who confesses to having seen some Gen Z folks owning 50 pairs of sneakers.

CRACKING THE CONSUMER

The Gen Z cohort exists across the world, but India, as always, is writing its own story. The heterogeneity of our population, a high proportion of youth and technology bridging every conceivable divide across regions make the opportunity quite irresistible.

"It is important to understand that within Gen Z, there are multiple cohorts just with respect to age," says Anand Kumar Jaiswal, Professor of Marketing at the

Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad.

A lot of time has gone into analysing how Gen Z is different, and he identifies a combination of "information capital and digital skill" to describe them. "The power of economic capital in the past lay with the parents. Now, information moving away is a marked change."

For instance, it is obviously a digital-native cohort. "They have never seen an offline world, and with information, they influence purchase decisions in both traditional and high-value product categories. It includes fashion, personal products, food and automobiles," says Jaiswal.

One must look to artificial intelligence (AI) to grasp that point. To him, it is not used just as an information tool, but to make comparisons, sift through multiple sources of information, and come up with detailed information that is incisive and stands out. "Look at a category like cosmetics, where the conversation is now around chemicals and ingredient sources. That is understood well by parents, making them also well-informed," he adds.

The large companies are acutely aware of that. At the second quarter earnings call for FY26, Hindustan Unilever's (HUL's) CEO & MD, Priya Nair, spent time outlining how her company, the big boy of the fast-moving consumer goods industry, will

There are almost 400 million Gen Z consumers in India, and they are driving change and transformation. Companies are reimagining brands as more modern and youthful



सेन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Central Bank of India

सेंट बिज़नेस लोन

बढ़ते व्यवसाय का सशक्त समाधान

Cent Business Loan

Helping You Build, Expand & Excel



Max Loan

₹25 Cr.

- To meet the requirement of all types of traders, manufacturers/Processors
- Nature of facility: OD/TL/NFB
- Max. Loan Amount: ₹25.00 Crore
(For Petrol Pump & Gas Agency: Max. ₹5.00 Crore)
- ROI starts from 7.75%

Eligibility:

- i) All types of traders, Manufacturers/Processors, Proprietors, Self-employed, Professionals registered under GST (unless exempted)
- ii) New & Existing units for financing to Petrol pumps & Gas agencies.
- iii) URC is mandatory

* Terms & Conditions apply

WHAT GEN Z DOES

- The biggest chunk is still studying, showing the potential of this group to push consumption whenever they join the workforce

| Activity | 2024-25 (Million) | % | Share of Rural (%) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Farming | 10 | 2.40 | 90 |
| Salaried | 42 | 9.9 | 44 |
| Business | 59 | 14.1 | 51 |
| Casual labour | 52 | 12.3 | 71 |
| Homemaker | 46 | 11.1 | 64 |
| Students | 113 | 26.8 | 68 |
| Did not work but was seeking | 25 | 6 | 68 |
| Helper in household enterprise | 33 | 7.9 | 70 |
| Others | 40 | 9.5 | 56 |
| Total | 420 | 100 | 65 |

SOURCE PRICE ICE 360° RESEARCH PAPER, AUGUST 2025

100 |



WHAT THEY EARN

- Nearly 40% Gen Z have some form of regular income

| | Rural | Urban | Total |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Total youth population (million) | 276 | 144 | 420 |
| Share of youth (%) | 66% | 34% | 100% |
| Share of youth earning personal income (%) | 38.5% | 41.8% | 39.6% |
| Average annual income of youth (₹) | 1,28,000 | 2,19,000 | 1,59,000 |
| Contribution of youth to household income (%) | 31.4% | 32.4% | 31.8% |

SOURCE PRICE ICE 360° RESEARCH PAPER, AUGUST 2025

ILLUSTRATION BY RAJ VERMA

reimagine its core brands. Specifically, she picked beauty, a key part of HUL's portfolio, and the view was that it was not enough to have just higher brand equity.

"Today, we have almost 400 million Gen Z consumers in India, and they are indeed driving change and transformation. So, we reimagine the brands. We need them to be more modern and more youthful," she said. Importantly, Nair said brands need to be examined comprehensively—from packaging and positioning to product and renovation—across both core offerings and premium innovations, to stay relevant in a changing India.

Clearly, this requires a very incisive and nuanced understanding, one that is different from how marketing was done in the past. Ashish Goupal, CEO – India Core Business, Marico, outlines how his company, known for brands such as Parachute, Saffola, Nihar, Livon and Set Wet, believes that the Gen Z cohort "is particularly interesting from a business opportunity perspective" as it seeks brands that reflect their identity, values and fast-paced lifestyles.

"They just don't demand relevant products but crave authenticity. Their preference for digital engagement and experiential consumption opens new avenues for innovation and growth," he says.

The BT-PRICE Survey analysed purchase behaviour of the Gen Z cohort, found a clear decision hierarchy, driven "primarily by product quality, value perception and brand trust, rather than impulse or trend-following." Among metro residents, graduates and higher-income groups, this emerges



रोजगार का उपहार युवाओं के साथ सरकार

8.5 लाख+ | 2 करोड़+
सरकारी नौकरी | निजी क्षेत्र/एमएसएमई
में रोजगार



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial



CMOUttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP



उत्तर प्रदेश

सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

INCOME DISTRIBUTION OF EARNING INDIAN YOUTH

- India has multiple consumer groups, which means companies need to remain flexible

| Income | 2024-25 Million | % | Share of Rural % |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|
| • Low (Less than ₹60,000) | 12 | 7.5 | 89 |
| • Lower Middle (₹60,001-₹1.2 lakh) | 43 | 26.7 | 74 |
| • Middle (₹1.2 lakh-3 lakh) | 57 | 35.1 | 48 |
| • Upper Middle (₹3-6 lakh) | 33 | 20.6 | 30 |
| • High (More than ₹6 lakh) | 16 | 10.1 | 22 |
| Total | 161 | 100 | 52 |

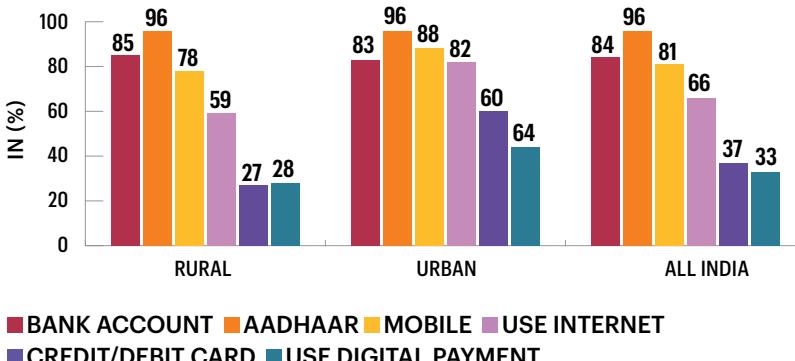
NOTE ANNUAL INCOME AT 2024-25 PRICES;

SOURCE PRICE ICE 360° RESEARCH PAPER, AUGUST 2025

102 |

PROFILING GEN Z

- Huge opportunity in credit/debit cards and digital payments due to under-penetration



SOURCE PRICE ICE 360° RESEARCH PAPER, AUGUST 2025

as the single most important purchase driver. "Price and value for money matter most at lower income levels but steadily decline in importance as income and education rise," the

survey found.

It's not for nothing that marketers spend a lot of time understanding Gen Z. "The sheer size makes it attractive. Plus they drive premiumisation,"

says Nitin Saini, VP (Marketing), Mondelez India. Its Cadbury Silk Desserts range is one example. Biscoff cookies, he explains, were more unique and helped Mondelez expand the premium portfolio.

INDIA'S COMPLEXITY

Multiple consumer groups in the fastest-growing economy globally mean there is a need to remain flexible. Product life cycles have shortened. The rapid rise of direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands shows how much the market has changed. D2C brands can launch, test, and adapt products faster than traditional players through bypassing intermediaries, using digital channels, and relying on real-time consumer data.

And therein lies the complexity. Gopal thinks Gen Z challenges traditional marketing by demanding personalisation, digital-first experiences and, of course, authenticity. In his view, the ability to amplify narratives online makes them a powerful force.

The rise of social media as a primary discovery and engagement platform, the shift towards influencer-driven content and a growing emphasis on sustainability and inclusivity are making brands rethink how they connect with consumers.

The BT-PRICE study found social media plays a decisive but selective role in shaping Gen Z consumption. "As many as 22% purchase frequently after seeing products on social media, and a larger share (38%) do so occasionally, indicating social platforms function more as consideration-stage nudges than direct sales triggers," it states.

Social media accounts for as much as 41% of primary internet use, especially among those in the lower-income bracket and in Tier

THE POWER TO GO FASTER

ENERGISING INFINITE POSSIBILITIES FOR VIKSIT BHARAT



For half a century, we've fueled India's race towards success. With hydro, wind, solar, hydrogen, and nuclear joining our thermal strength, we are fueling your unstoppable rise. So that a nation in speed has the power to go faster.

— NTPC'S CAPACITY MIX —



THERMAL



HYDRO



WIND



SOLAR



PSF



GREEN HYDROGEN



NUCLEAR





"It is important to learn the Gen Z lingo, which led to terms such as dumbbell heel and time waist. Humour makes the brand human, shareable"

SANDEEP TANWANI
CMO, PIDILITE



"We have almost 400 million Gen Z consumers in India, and they are indeed driving change and transformation. So, we are reimaging the brands"

PRIYA NAIR
CEO & MD, HUL

104 |

II centres. "Online shopping remains a secondary activity, suggesting that Gen Z separates discovery and transaction journeys across platforms. Overall, this a cohort that is digitally immersed but increasingly discerning, engaging deeply with content while exercising restraint at the point of purchase," it adds.

In the absence of a precedent or any serious comparison, more effort is needed to understand Gen Z. Raagjeet Garg, Director (Consumer Products Division), L'Oréal India, calls it a "fascinating group" since it represents a

fundamental shift in the Indian consumer DNA. From his position, he thinks they view beauty not as luxury for special occasions but as a daily tool for self-expression.

"They are the curious explorers of the beauty world and not loyal to products just because their parents used it but being hungry for the new. This makes them a high-growth engine as they constantly enter new categories like mascara, sunscreen, serums earlier and more frequently than previous generations," says Garg.

Within Gen Z or for that matter,

within the same age bracket, interests and preferences can be remarkably different. Mondelez's Saini speaks of how Cadbury 5Star, a well-known brand in his portfolio, took the counter-culture route with its "Do Nothing" campaign on Valentine's Day. "The insight was around how youth are facing pressure to be a part of the trend. Now, they could let go of the FOMO (fear of missing out) factor." In line with Gen Z, the media plan also must be very different. "Just that 30-second ad will not be enough and must be complemented by effective storytelling. Digital is a big part of the piece, and one must look at the time spent by Gen Z on social media," he says. Of course, digital allows for specific targeting. "In the case of Silk desserts, we can reach out to consumers who are dessert lovers."

The mobile phone is a key to Gen Z, and Garg says the "unboxing" for them starts long before they touch the physical product. "It is first on the phone, and we realised that to win them over, a product needs to be worthy of stopping them from doomsscrolling." For the Maybelline Colossal Bubble Mascara, L'Oreal, instead of just running commercials, built an immersive Bubble Land to allow them to step into the brand's world.

To appeal to this audience, Marico has spent time on product innovation to modernise its legacy brands. In the case of Parachute Advansed, trending ingredients such as rosemary and argan oil in lighter textures are used. "We have introduced convenient formats like Saffola Cuppa Oats for on-the-go lifestyles and launched trial-friendly packs for Livon. The process involves blending consumer insights with innovation, ensuring products are functional,

Within Gen Z, or for that matter, within the same age bracket, interests and preferences can be remarkably different

Robotic Microplasty can avoid total knee replacement



Dr Gaurav Prakash Bhardwaj

Director - Sports Injury, Joint Preservation & Replacement Surgery, PSRI Hospital, Sheikh Sarai II, New Delhi

Knee arthritis does not always damage the entire knee. In many patients, wear and tear is limited to just one part of the joint. For such cases, knee microplasty offers an effective solution and can often avoid the need for total knee replacement.

Unlike conventional knee replacement, microplasty changes only the damaged portion of the knee while preserving healthy bone, cartilage, and all major ligaments. By saving the natural

The robot doesn't replace the surgeon—it enhances precision and makes results predictable," Dr Bhardwaj adds.

structures, patients experience better balance, smoother movement, and a more natural-feeling knee.

Although microplasty is a smaller operation, it requires exceptional precision and advanced surgical skill. The implant must be placed with absolute accuracy to restore natural knee movement. This high level of precision was difficult to achieve consistently in the past, limiting the widespread use of the procedure.

Mako Robotic-assisted technology has overcome this challenge. A patient-specific 3-D CT scan is used before surgery to create a detailed plan based on the individual's knee anatomy and natural landmarks. During surgery, the robotic system guides the surgeon to execute this plan accurately, protecting healthy tissues and ensuring precise implant placement.

This robotic precision results in smaller incisions, less tissue damage, minimal blood loss, reduced pain, and faster recovery. Most patients regain mobility earlier and return to daily activities with greater confidence.

The goal of robotic microplasty is a "forgotten joint"—a knee that feels so natural that patients forget they have undergone joint replacement and move freely without constant awareness of an artificial joint.

For the right patients, robotic-assisted partial knee replacement delivers excellent, predictable outcomes while preserving the knee's natural function

We can add these quotes -

- 1) Why replace the whole knee when only a part is damaged?
- 2) Microplasty is a smaller operation, but

it demands millimetre-level precision," explains Dr Gaurav Bhardwaj . "Even a small error can affect how the knee feels and moves.

3) The robot doesn't replace the surgeon—it enhances precision and makes results predictable," Dr Bhardwaj adds.

4) The ultimate goal is a "forgotten joint." "A successful knee replacement is one the patient forgets they ever had," says Dr Gaurav Bhardwaj . "It should feel natural, stable, and pain-free in everyday life unrestricted activities

The ultimate goal is a "forgotten joint." "A successful knee replacement is one the patient forgets they ever had," says Dr Gaurav Bhardwaj . "It should feel natural, stable, and pain-free in everyday life unrestricted activities





“(We are) blending consumer insights with innovation to ensure products are functional, stylish and aligned with Gen Z’s aspiration for convenience”

ASHISH GOUPAL
CEO (INDIA CORE BUSINESS), MARICO

106 |



“A 30-second ad must be complemented by storytelling. Digital is a big part of the piece, and one must look at the time spent by Gen Z on social media”

NITIN SAINI
CMO, MONDELEZ

stylish and aligned with Gen Z’s aspirations for self-expression and convenience,” says Goupal.

The part on brand loyalty starts to get a little intricate here. Jaiswal thinks the route to get there will change, and the language is about consumer engagement. “We are really speaking of sharing videos, them going viral or reviews. In this ecosystem, consumer loyalty is challenging to build and sustain,” he says.

If language is critical, no less important is lingo. Pidilite employed AI for its Fevikwik campaign. Using KwikGPT, it fuses random objects that consumers choose to make them quirky innovations. “It is important to learn the Gen Z lingo,” says Tanwani. That led to terms such as dumbbell heel and time waist. For a long time, Pidilite has come to be known for quirky advertising. “Humour makes the brand human and is shareable.”

Ganapathy Balagopalan, Head of Strategic Planning, Ogilvy, the agency that handles Pidilite and 5Star among others, maintains that on lingo, the rule is simple: speaking their lingo is not the same as using their slang. Language takes many forms, among which are targeted digital campaigns or a different brand experience.

Speaking directly to their lifestyles, points out Goupal, is one approach his company has taken. The *Holi* campaign for Parachute Advansed Gold had a playful musical track created with young influencers to resonate with Gen Z.

For Set Wet, it was decided to collaborate with leading gaming creators to drive awareness and consideration for its styling range, to target young males in their native environment. “Young

brands like Set Wet and Livon are kept fresh, dynamic and aligned with Gen Z’s evolving mindset,” adds Goupal.

LOOKING AHEAD

HUL’s Nair, during the earnings call, also highlighted rural transformation as an exciting prospect. Within this, she highlighted “road infrastructure, better electrification, tap water in every home or indeed digital” as truly transforming how consumers become aware of new propositions, new brands and new products. “Therefore, for HUL, it is very critical that we span across this price-product benefit pyramid, transforming our core brands in line with these consumers.”

Goupal maintains that the initiatives taken by Marico go beyond any conventional approach. “It must be understood that they (Gen Z) influence cultural trends, drive rapid adoption of new platforms and expect brands to engage meaningfully across social, gaming and influencer ecosystems,” he says.

The onus on marketers is evident. “They have to adjust to a new reality and must adapt. Else, they run the risk of irrelevance,” maintains Jaiswal. According to him, the 4 Ps (product, price, place and promotion) will remain, though AI and new technology will change the process of decision making. In the past, the emotional route was often the clincher and ensured brand loyalty over time. “Gen Z is open to multiple choices and looks closely at the pros and cons. The cognitive route is one that they easily take,” he says.

In the new and free-spirited India, the strength of Gen Z has to be one of the most remarkable stories. There is clearly a long tail to this most interesting story. **BT**

@krishnagopalan

From Founder to an Admired CEO: Building midfin360 on Vision and Trust



Anbarasan Venkatachalam
Founder & CEO, midfin360



Siddarth Natarajan
Co-Founder & CTO, midfin360

midfin **360**

technology—before scaling. By staying transparent, listening closely to both investors and teams, and leading with accountability, we have been able to grow with resilience, purpose, and trust.

Despite growing financial awareness, many individuals still struggle to convert income into long-term wealth. What mindset shifts are essential for sustainable wealth creation today?

Sustainable wealth creation begins with a shift from short-term reactions to long-term discipline. Investors must avoid chasing trends and instead focus on clear goals, risk awareness, and consistency.

Wealth is built not by timing the market, but by staying invested through a structured approach and periodic reviews. Another crucial shift is prioritising expert guidance over impulsive decisions. When individuals combine patience, diversification, and clarity with the right financial framework, income can be systematically transformed into lasting wealth.

Looking ahead, how do you envision midfin360's role in shaping the future of financial solutions in India, and what milestones define your roadmap over the next five years?

midfin360 aims to become a trusted wealth management platform for India's evolving investor ecosystem. Our long-term vision is to transform how individuals engage with wealth—moving from fragmented, product-led decisions to structured, purpose-driven financial journeys.

With India as our foundation, we are building a platform that meets global standards of reliability, intelligence, and governance, while expanding investment offerings across asset classes. Over the next five years, our goal is to evolve from a domestic fintech into a globally relevant wealth management platform rooted in India.

midfin360 has carved a strong identity in a crowded financial services space. What defining gap did you identify as a founder, and how did that insight become the foundation for building a high-trust brand?

Modern investors today have access to more financial products than ever before, yet they lack clarity on how to manage them cohesively. Investment options are scattered across multiple platforms—mutual funds and SIFs on one app, deposits on another, and other investments spread across different platforms. This fragmentation creates confusion and a lack of transparency for users.

midfin360 was created to address this challenge by bringing all investments into a single, unified wealth management platform. By combining intuitive technology with expert-backed financial guidance, we cater to new-age investors, active wealth creators, and conservative investors alike. Our core belief is that wealth creation should be accessible to everyone, built on simplicity, clarity, and transparency.

Trust is not built overnight, especially in financial services. What strategic decisions and ethical benchmarks helped midfin360 earn long-term confidence from clients and partners?

From day one, midfin360 was built on

the principle that trust must precede transactions. As a growing fintech platform, we consciously prioritised transparent regulatory compliance while designing systems that scale responsibly.

Our platform delivers personalised investment strategies aligned with individual goals, supported by robust data privacy and security frameworks. A strong client-first approach ensures that every investment decision aligns with the investor's risk profile and long-term objectives. Consistent customer support, a seamless user experience, and unwavering ethical practices have helped midfin360 build enduring confidence among clients and partners.

Your journey from entrepreneur to an admired CEO reflects scale, resilience, and leadership maturity. What leadership principles have guided you while building midfin360 into a trusted wealth platform?

For me, leadership is about making clear choices and standing firmly by them. Trust is built when leaders set a clear direction, empower teams to take ownership, and remain disciplined in decision-making.

At midfin360, we believe in growing responsibly and doing things the right way. We focus on building strong foundations—people, processes, and



Emerson: Leading Industry Growth with Innovative, Cutting-Edge, Digital Automation Solutions

Anil Bhatia, Vice President and Managing Director for Emerson India business, is the master strategist and architect driving growth for multiple business groups, focusing on providing process automation solutions across various industries. Anil Bhatia has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic vision, earning numerous prestigious awards and recognitions that highlight his impact both within Emerson and across the industry.

Q How do you see Emerson building human capital to drive its tech innovation and sustainable goals?

I personally believe that the three fundamentals that drive Emerson are - Attract, Develop and Retain talent, a dashboard through which we monitor diversity and translate it into a catalyst in driving inclusive growth in a vastly diverse population like India. The advantage India has is that we have a very intelligent young talent that has to be spotted, brought together and trained to build a dynamic synergy to help us innovate in the areas of the varied solutions that we create for industry sectors and green technology. Giving them opportunities for professional and personal growth is the key to retain their loyalty to the brand.

Q Sustainable practices that respect the environment is central to Emerson's agenda. Could elaborate Emerson's strategic partnerships with academia in India?

Emerson is proud to collaborate with esteemed research institutions to drive innovation and sustainability advancements in India by forging meaningful partnerships with premier academic institutions. Following the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference and Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's establishment of India's first Nationally Determined Contribution to limit global warming under the Paris Agreement, Emerson partnered with IITB-Monash Research Academy in 2022 on two PhD research studies in the areas of carbon capture utilization and



ANIL BHATIA, Vice President and Managing Director, Emerson India business

storage (CCUS) and energy transition technologies. The IITB-Monash studies have since led to the development of prototypes for reactor and catalyst designs to reduce energy used in CCUS systems and the development of electricity



consumption models for district level planners.

Also, in 2022, the company established the Emerson Centre of Excellence for Sustainability Studies at the TERI School of Advanced Studies (SAS) in New Delhi to promote and strengthen research-based learning on key areas of sustainability. Creation of the Centre aligns with Emerson's 'Greening With' strategy to develop long-term collaborative relationships with key institutions and government to support sustainability progress. As a leading global automation leader, we celebrate the legacy of working with higher education institutions to spur innovation and growth across the region.

Q How is Emerson contributing to the Government of India's vision of Make-in-India, particularly in terms of local manufacturing?

Over the past 3–5 years, Emerson India has spearheaded a Business Transformation journey that has delivered sustained y-o-y growth and positioned Emerson India as a leader in operational excellence and innovation. A key transformation was the "Make in India" initiative, which focused on expanding and creating new local manufacturing & engineering capabilities while maintaining global quality standards across Emerson's three core sites:

- Emerson Integrated Manufacturing Centre (EIMC), Talegaon (600k sq.ft / more than 2000+ people)

- Mahindra World City, Chennai (150k sq.ft, more than 500+ people)
- Emerson Export Engineering Centre (EEEC), Nashik (61k sq. ft / more than 1000+ people)

These initiatives enabled Emerson India to localize production, reduce dependency on imports, and strengthen supply chain resilience, all the while meeting stringent global compliance and quality benchmarks.

Q Customer-centricity is key to break or make an organization. What do you have to say on this vital aspect?

Emerson's company culture is leading the way with a singular software portfolio, revolving around its customers in the world's most essential industries. The organization helps them explore novel automation technologies and solve their biggest challenges of modern life that stand on shifting sand of time, geopolitics and finicky market trends. Emerson believes in making the world a better place than we found it by striving to be more connected, forward-looking and customer-focused. And we, walk the talk.

Q Emerson seems to have a strong global engagement plan for 2026. Could you share what major industry events you'll be participating in 2026

and how you plan to connect with customers and partners worldwide?

Absolutely. We have an exciting year ahead in 2026 with two major engagements that reflect our commitment to customers, partners, and the broader industry.

To begin with, we're proud to share that Emerson will be participating in **India Energy Week 2026 from 27-30th January**. It's a great platform for us to showcase our latest innovations, engage directly with India's rapidly evolving energy ecosystem, and collaborate on solutions that support the country's growth and sustainability ambitions.

Later in the year, we are taking our customer engagement to a global stage as we host **Emerson Exchange 2026 in Dubai from 19th -21st May**. We will be inviting customers and partners from all over the world to join us for an immersive experience, bringing together the world's leading minds in industrial automation to share insights, exchange best practices, and shape the future of how industries operate, optimize, and evolve. Customers will get to see how modern, software-defined automation and scalable digital systems are enabling unified intelligence, smarter operations, and a more autonomous, sustainable future.

So overall, 2026 will be a year of deepening partnerships and driving meaningful conversations across the global energy and industrial landscape.

Why Gen Z Is a Boardroom Issue Now

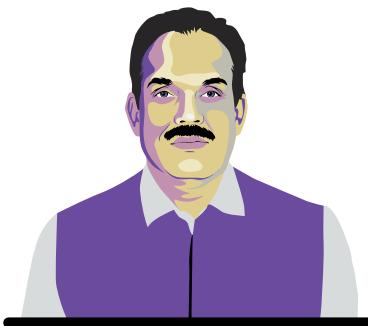
And what CEOs must unlearn to win in the next decade and beyond

110 |

FOR THE FIRST time in decades, India's corporate leadership is confronting a generation that cannot be won with speed, scale or storytelling alone. Generation Z, or Gen Z—those aged between 13 and 29—is not impatient; it moves with intent. It is not anti-brand; it is against tall promises. And it is not rejecting consumption; it is redesigning the conditions under which consumption earns trust.

Data collected during the first fortnight of December 2025, from an analysis of more than 4,300 GenZers across metros and Tier II cities, points to a clear conclusion. They are not asking firms to market better; they are asking them to build better. That is why Gen Z is no longer a marketing problem, it is a CEO question.

Most leadership teams still approach Gen Z as a youthful segment to be decoded through platforms, influencers and formats. That is dangerously incomplete. Gen Z's behaviour cuts across pricing logic, product architecture, credit models, experience design and capital allocation. This generation spends carefully, saves early and upgrades selectively. For instance, over 40% of GenZers already saves 20–40% of their income, even at an early stage of career, while 16% save more than



BY RAJESH SHUKLA
MD & CEO, PRICE

40%, typical of older cohorts.

It prioritises quality over brand reputation, value over visibility, and flexibility over ownership. When asked what most influences purchase decisions, product quality ranks first for 43% of GenZers, consistently ahead of brand reputation (26%) or influencer recommendations (just 6%). This is a generation persuaded by substance.

In effect, Gen Z behaves less like a target audience and more like a risk committee, scrutinising claims, questioning value and delaying commitment until confidence is earned. Nearly 78% say they are either very likely or somewhat likely to switch brands if a better alternative appears.

One of the most persistent misreads about Gen Z is that it lacks aspiration. Gen Z aspires for career growth, financial security, home ownership and global travel. More than 50% say they aspire to buy both a home and a car. What has changed is timing. Big-ticket purchases are postponed, not abandoned. Premium brands are sampled, not rejected.

Even in luxury, nuance matters. Over 70% say they either occasionally or regularly buy premium brands, yet only a minority commits exclusively. The dominant behaviour is trial. Credit, too, is approached cautiously. One-third of GenZers say they never borrow for discretion-

The Human Architect of Marketing's Future: The Prateek N. Kumar Story

In the high-stakes arena of Indian marketing, where digital disruption and consumer volatility are the only constants, Prateek N. Kumar operates on a distinct frequency. As the Founder and CEO of **NeoNiche Integrated Solutions**, Kumar has spent over two decades proving that while data drives insights, it is empathy that drives impact. He isn't just navigating the curve of the industry; he is actively redesigning it.

The Bootstrap to Benchmark Journey

Prateek's entrepreneurial odyssey began in 2011. Eschewing the traditional path of heavy external funding, he built NeoNiche from the ground up as a bootstrapped venture. His thesis was simple yet disruptive: marketing needed a "seamless ecosystem" where strategy, technology, and creativity were no longer siloed.

Today, that vision has manifested into a powerhouse agency that has executed over **3,000 high-impact campaigns** for a global clientele. From experiential marketing to complex automation, NeoNiche's work is characterized by "digital intelligence" wrapped in "immersive storytelling." This relentless pursuit of excellence recently culminated in the firm's inclusion in the **Forbes Globalist 2023** list—a testament to its status as a global leader in transformative brand experiences.

High-Tech Meets High-Touch

With a career spanning nearly 25 years across hospitality, FMCG, and digital media, Prateek identifies as a **Strategic**

Futurist. He is currently leading NeoNiche through its most ambitious phase yet: the integration of AI, AR/VR, and data-driven automation. However, unlike the clinical approach of many tech-driven firms, Prateek's philosophy is rooted in the "Human-First" paradigm. "Technology is the enabler, but the human heart remains the ultimate destination," he asserts. In his view, the future of marketing lies at the intersection of **High-Tech and High-Touch**—using cutting-edge tools to co-create experiences that resonate on a visceral, emotional level.

Scaling with Soul: The Leadership Philosophy

What truly distinguishes Prateek in the Business Today landscape is his "People-First" leadership. He views NeoNiche not as a rigid hierarchy, but as a **talent incubator**. He possesses a rare knack for identifying raw potential and empowering individuals to pivot into strategic roles.

This culture of trust and extreme agility is what allowed NeoNiche to remain resilient through market downturns. By betting on people over processes, he has built an organization that is as empathetic as it is efficient.

"Leadership isn't about being the smartest person in the room; it's about creating a room where the smartest people can thrive."

The Quest for Harmony

To understand Prateek the CEO, one must understand Prateek the man. He is a practitioner of intentional balance—a devoted father to twin boys, a passionate advocate for animal rights, and a dedicated yoga practitioner. For him, mindfulness is not a retreat from business, but a prerequisite for it.

Guided by his lifelong mantra—"I want to leave this world a bit better than when I arrived"—he continues to use his platform, www.prateeknkumar.com, to mentor the next generation of "exponential thinkers." In an industry often accused of superficiality, Prateek N. Kumar stands as a beacon of purposeful innovation, reminding us that the best way to predict the future is to create it with heart.

A Founder Who Built Marketing by Listening First

Long before marketing became obsessed with algorithms, dashboards, and automation, Prateek N. Kumar was focused on something simpler. People. What moves them, what earns their trust, and what makes a brand feel real. That belief has quietly shaped a career that now spans over two decades and continues to influence how marketing is built and experienced.

Prateek's journey did not begin with the intention of building a large agency. It began with curiosity. Early in his career, he moved across industries including hospitality, consumer brands, media, and digital,

observing how businesses communicated and where they fell short. What stood out to him was a gap. Strategy, creativity, and technology were often treated as separate worlds. Brands were speaking, but not always connecting. In 2011, that observation turned into action. NeoNiche Integrated Solutions Pvt. Ltd. was born as a bootstrapped venture, built with limited resources but a clear point of view. The goal was never scale for the sake of scale. It was to create an integrated marketing ecosystem where ideas were grounded in insight, execution was immersive, and technology served a purpose.

Growth followed steadily. Campaign by campaign, NeoNiche earned trust. Over time, the agency expanded into experiential marketing, brand communication, and marketing automation, delivering more than 3,000 campaigns for global brands. Each project carried the same intent. Tell stories that people want to be part of, supported by digital intelligence that makes those stories travel further. With close to 25 years of experience, Prateek's strength lies in his ability to sense change before it becomes obvious. As platforms evolved and technology accelerated, he pushed NeoNiche to adapt early. Not by chasing trends, but by understanding how tools like AI, AR, VR, and automation could enhance emotion rather than replace it. For him, the future of marketing has always been about balance. Technology on one side, human connection on the other.

Recognition came along the way. NeoNiche was named Rising Star of India, Most Admired Experiential Marketing Company, and Emerging Company of the Year, and was featured on the Forbes Globalist 2023 list. Prateek himself has received honours such as Entrepreneur of the Year by ET Now Star Awards, CEO of the Year, Bharat NavNirman Ratan Award, and the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Excellence Award. Yet, those who work closely with him know that titles are not what drive him.

At the heart of Prateek's leadership is a deep belief in people. He is known for spotting potential early, trusting teams with responsibility, and creating an environment where learning is encouraged. Many leaders within NeoNiche today grew into their roles under his mentorship, guided by a culture that values ownership and integrity over hierarchy.

Away from boardrooms and brand plans, Prateek's life is grounded in balance. He is a devoted father to twin boys, an advocate for animal welfare, and a committed yoga practitioner. These roles shape his worldview and influence how he leads with empathy and perspective.

Through his LinkedIn page, Prateek continues to share reflections on leadership, innovation, and the future of business. His guiding belief remains unchanged. To leave the world a little better than he found it. And in a constantly shifting marketing landscape, that intent may be his most enduring legacy.





ILLUSTRATION BY RAJ VERMA

Gen Z is optimising for clarity on what it is paying for, control over when and how it commits, consistency in brand behaviour, and credibility

ary spending, while most borrowing, when it happens, is informal—friends, family or limited credit.

The mistake is to confuse delayed commitment with disinterest. Many companies respond by forcing urgency through discounts, influencer amplification or emotional pressure.

That often backfires.

Across categories, Gen Z is optimising for four things: clarity on what it is paying for, control over when and how it commits, consistency in brand behaviour over time, and credibility between promise and performance. This explains why quick commerce

is used frequently for daily needs by over 60% of urban GenZers, while physical retail dominates categories where trust and inspection matter.

It also explains digital behaviour. While Instagram remains the most influential platform, nearly 40% say they only “rarely” or “sometimes” purchase after seeing products on social media.

The implication for CEOs is unavoidable: growth with Gen Z is progressive, not explosive. The companies that win will be those that design for progression, low-risk entry points, transparent value tiers and clear upgrade paths aligned with readiness, not advertising pressure.

This requires a shift in leadership metrics. Acquisition must give way to retention. Quarterly spikes must give way to lifetime value. Brand salience must give way to brand reliability. It also requires restraint. In a Gen Z world, premature premiumisation destroys trust and trust, once lost, is rarely recovered.

This matters because Gen Z is only at the beginning of its economic journey. Over the next decade, it will drive India's largest wave of first-time asset ownership, premium services adoption and consumption.

In investment terms, Gen Z does not deliver momentum; it delivers duration. That distinction will separate enduring franchises from those that enjoy only temporary relevance.

That brings the conversation back to the boardroom question. Are you building a business that a 22-year-old can start with today and still believe in at 32? Does your model reward caution or punish it?

CEOs who answer these questions correctly will not just win Gen Z market share. They will secure relevance, resilience and renewal for the next decade. That may be the only advantage that truly compounds. **BT**

Views are personal

FOCUS
RAILWAYS

An IMPACT Feature

Business Today

Special feature



Indian Railways

Lifeline to the nation...

Building tomorrow, connecting today



**INDIAN
RAILWAY
FINANCE
CORPORATION**
(A Government of India Enterprise)

Future on Track



IRFC 2.0: Financing Infrastructure through Discipline, Depth, and Domestic Strength



Manoj Kumar Dubey
CMD & CEO, IRFC

IRFC has undergone a visible strategic shift in recent years. What were the key factors that prompted this transition?

The shift was shaped by a broader policy evolution. With Indian Railways receiving full budgetary support for capital expenditure, IRFC experienced a pause

in disbursements. While this reflected the government's strong fiscal position, it also underlined the need for IRFC, as a listed entity, to build a more resilient and diversified business model. That moment encouraged us to re-examine our mandate and position IRFC for long-term

relevance within India's infrastructure financing ecosystem.

How does diversification align with IRFC's original mandate?

Diversification is not a departure from our mandate; it is a fuller expression of it. Our charter allows us to finance assets with backward and forward linkages to railways. Railways do not operate in isolation — they are embedded in logistics, power, urban mobility, and industrial supply chains. By financing these linked sectors, we are strengthening the railway ecosystem while supporting national infrastructure priorities in a holistic manner.

IRFC now competes actively with banks and other financial institutions. What gives you confidence in this competitive environment?

Our confidence stems from structural strengths. IRFC is a zero-NPA institution with one of the lowest cost of borrowing in the system, supported by a strong sovereign linkage. Equally important is our lean operating model — we function purely as a B2B lender, which keeps overheads exceptionally low. When these efficiencies are combined, we can offer competitive pricing while maintaining financial discipline. This has allowed us to compete successfully even in open, market-based bidding processes.

Zero NPAs seem to be a cornerstone of IRFC's philosophy. How does this shape your approach to growth?

For us, zero NPA is not just a metric; it is a mindset. It influences how we select projects, structure risk, and engage with borrowers. With a large balance sheet, asset quality becomes the primary responsibility. This discipline enables us to borrow at finer spreads, attract long-term investors, and deploy capital



confidently. Sustainable growth, in our view, must be stress-free growth.

Refinancing of multilateral loans has emerged as a significant theme. How do you view IRFC's role vis-à-vis institutions like the World Bank?

Multilateral institutions play a critical role during the early, higher-risk phases of infrastructure development. Once projects stabilise, it makes economic sense for domestic institutions to step in. Refinancing allows multilateral agencies to recycle capital into new projects while reducing foreign-exchange exposure for Indian entities. IRFC's role here complements the multilateral system and strengthens domestic financial capacity — a key element of a whole-of-government approach to infrastructure financing.

Urban transport projects are expanding rapidly across India. Where does IRFC fit into this growth story?

Urban rail systems are essential public

infrastructure with significant economic and social returns. However, they are not purely commercial ventures. These projects require patient, long-term capital at reasonable cost. IRFC is well suited to support them because of our low borrowing costs and government-linked orientation. As projects mature and operations stabilise, we see meaningful opportunities to support metros and rapid rail through refinancing or structured lending, often alongside other public and multilateral institutions.

How does this expanded role impact IRFC's financial performance, particularly margins?

Traditional railway financing follows a stable, cost-plus framework. Diversified lending — even when government-backed — offers relatively higher margins. Our strategy is to balance stability with incremental improvement. As the share of diversified assets increases, overall margins improve in a measured and

predictable manner. This ensures that shareholder value creation goes hand in hand with public purpose.

Looking ahead, how do you define success for IRFC in this next phase?

Success lies in consistency and credibility. IRFC must continue to support national infrastructure priorities, complement multilateral efforts, and strengthen domestic financing capability — all while maintaining zero stress on the balance sheet. If we can steadily improve margins, deliver predictable returns, and contribute meaningfully to nation-building through a coordinated, whole-of-government approach, we would have fulfilled our role responsibly.



ILLUSTRATION BY **TANMOY CHAKRABORTY**



Healthy Priorities

Urban India's Gen Z is beginning to treat health as a daily consideration. This change is driven by access to information, rising lifestyle risks and a desire to avoid future illness

BY NEETU CHANDRA SHARMA

TOFTEN starts small. Checking the nutrition label on a pack of snacks before tossing it inside the bag. Skipping a second cup of coffee because sleep was short the preceding night. Mentioning stress or sugar levels in a casual conversation.

Across India's cities, young adults are beginning to factor health more directly into everyday decisions. What they eat, what they buy and how they spend are increasingly being influenced by concerns around fitness, energy and long-term wellbeing.

These patterns come through in the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey conducted by the think tank PRICE for *Business Today*, which covered people aged 18–29 across 12 urban centres, including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, along with Tier II cities such as Indore, Jaipur, Kochi and Surat.

These findings suggest that health awareness among young consumers is spreading beyond a few large metros.

THE INFORMATION LOOP

To understand what underpins this behaviour, experts point to the environment young people live in.

"They are surrounded by constant digital information, covering diet, exercise and ideas around appearance, body image and fitness. This exposure shapes how they think about health and influences daily habits, including exercise routines and lifestyle choices," says Dr Samir Parikh, a psychiatrist at Fortis Healthcare and Chairperson of the Fortis National Mental Health Program and Adayu Mindfulness, a mental health treatment centre.

This growing attentiveness comes against a changing health backdrop. Data from the National Family Health Survey-5 by the Union health ministry show that more than one in four Indian adults is overweight or obese, with the prevalence higher in urban areas.

Among the younger population, concerns around weight, stamina and metabolic health are beginning to enter everyday conversations earlier than they used to.

AWARENESS MATTERS

Urban Gen Z is factoring health into daily choices, even when money limits action

Health awareness in Tier-II cities now closely mirrors that of metros

Disposable income still decides how far health intentions go

Young adults link wellbeing to energy, sleep, stress and future illness

Labels, digital access and peer feedback are driving more cautious consumption

LABELS MATTER

| Do you check labels? | Total Respondents | GENDER | | LEVEL OF PERSONAL INCOME OF RESPONDENT | | | | | | HOUSEHOLD INCOME CLASS | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------|--------|--|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------|------|
| | | Male | Female | Below ₹2-lakh | ₹2lakh to ₹3-lakh | ₹3-lakh to ₹5-lakh | ₹5-lakh to ₹10-lakh | ₹10-lakh to ₹15-lakh | More than ₹15 lakh | Low | Middle | High |
| Yes, always | 36% | 35% | 37% | 31% | 39% | 40% | 37% | 35% | 25% | 32% | 34% | 42% |
| Sometimes | 39% | 39% | 40% | 52% | 42% | 43% | 37% | 28% | 33% | 47% | 41% | 33% |
| Rarely/ Never | 24% | 26% | 23% | 17% | 19% | 18% | 27% | 37% | 42% | 21% | 24% | 25% |

SOURCE: BT-PRICE GENZ CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

Food habits are an example; many respondents say they read nutrition labels or ingredient lists when purchasing packaged foods and beverages. This does not always result in the healthiest choice, but indicates greater engagement with what is being consumed.

118 | Sugar content, fats and additives are more likely to be noticed than they were a few years ago.

At the same time, the digital environment also carries risks. “Misinformation, particularly around substance use or self-managed health advice, can affect decision-making. With artificial intelligence and online tools becoming more accessible, some young people may delay seeking professional medical advice, which can affect timely care and treatment adherence,” says Dr Parikh.

BUDGETS HOLD BACK

Income, however, continues to influence outcomes. A large portion of those surveyed are students or in the early stages of their careers. Limited disposable income means health-related intentions often confront financial limitations.

In practice, this leads to trade-offs rather than strict discipline, with price frequently determining the final purchase. Out-of-pocket

expenses still account for about 39.4% of total health spending in India, creating ongoing affordability barriers for young consumers, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare recently said.

Health Economist Arup Mitra, Professor and Dean at South Asian University, New Delhi, points out that income remains the most binding constraint shaping health behaviour in India.

“Demand for healthcare products is limited in India because income is a major determinant. Limited incomes pose a serious constraint on wellbeing,” he says.

Among younger and young adult age groups, he adds, stronger intervention is required. “For certain age brackets, particularly the young and young adult cohorts, healthcare products must be available free of cost. Costs will have to be highly subsidised, or prices must have a ceiling. Despite privatisation in the health sector, strict regulation is needed when it comes to pricing.”

One notable finding is the similarity between metros and Tier-II cities. Young people in cities such as Surat, Indore and Kochi display awareness levels close to those in larger urban centres. Access to smartphones, social platforms and online information has narrowed earlier differences even if spending

power varies.

India now has over 750 million smartphone users, and urban internet penetration exceeds 70%, including in Tier II cities, enabling young consumers to access health information, peer feedback and product comparisons with ease.

Education and employment status also play a role. Graduates tend to engage more consistently with health information, while students show awareness but less consistency, often because purchase decisions depend on family budgets. As people begin earning independently, habits start to settle.

ONE'S OWN WAY

There is also a strong tendency towards self-reliance. “Health is often viewed as something that can be managed independently, with external intervention seen as a last resort. In this context, access to accurate information becomes critical. Healthy habits do strengthen resilience, but early consultation with healthcare professionals remains important,” says Dr Parikh.

Health concerns extend beyond diet. Respondents link wellbeing to stamina, sleep quality, stress levels and risk of future illness. These concerns influence interest in fitness services, preventive check-ups and diagnostics, even among those who

The Power Couple Behind Aurum Foods: Anant & Anisha

In India's fast-evolving world of luxury hospitality, there are success stories—and then there are stories that redefine the rules entirely. At the center of one such story stand Anant Kumar Ganediwal and Anisha Anand, the visionary co-founders of Aurum Foods, whose synergy of mind and mission has shaped one of the most admired hospitality brands across India.

What started in 2012 as a boutique catering venture has transformed into a multi-vertical powerhouse that now serves over 4 million gourmet meals annually, operates across continents including UAE, Japan, Thailand, and is on track to cross ₹250 crore in revenue by 2027.

But the real story? It isn't just about growth. It's about grit, grace, and giving back.

A Table for Two: Where the Journey Began

When Anant and Anisha joined forces to create Aurum Foods, they were driven by more than profit—they were fueled by a shared belief in excellence and empathy. In the early days, they ran operations out of club kitchens, often rolling up their sleeves—juggling vendor calls with recipe trials, hiring staff in the morning and serving plated dinners at night.

"We always knew food was more than just food," Anisha reflects. "It's a narrative. It's identity. It's how people remember moments."

Their strengths aligned perfectly. Anant, with his sound business acumen and process-driven thinking, brought systems and scale. Anisha, a hospitality expert with over 27 years of experience including a long tenure in aviation, brought empathy, finesse, and cultural depth to Aurum's service DNA.

Tech-Driven Taste Meets Farm-Fresh Soul

Few brands in the premium food sector offer true farm-to-fork control—but Aurum does. With 41 acres of organic farmland in Maharashtra monitored by residue-free farming systems, the company grows mangoes, guavas, dragon fruit, and watermelon without any chemical residue. This isn't just supply chain management—it's a culinary ideology.

Meanwhile, under Anant's leadership, the company has revolutionized back-end kitchen operations through retort sterilization, cold-chain logistics, and smart kitchens—allowing Aurum to serve preservative-free, gourmet-quality meals at scale.

"To scale with consistency, you need data, tech, and soul," says Anant. "We've built systems that empower chefs and respect the ingredient."

Their upcoming ready-to-eat gravies and artisanal sauces, set to launch in Q1 2026, promise to bring five-star taste to everyday homes—with zero compromise on purity.

Empowerment on the Menu

At the heart of Aurum's ethos is a deep, sustained commitment to women's empowerment—not as an afterthought, but as a foundational value.

Over 70% of the company's farms and 40% of its teams are led by women. Aurum has implemented internal growth programs that offer women pathways from entry-level roles to

leadership—creating real equity in an industry traditionally dominated by men.

In partnership with several notable NGOs, Aurum has also distributed over 100 branded food carts to women from underserved communities, training them to become independent entrepreneurs across Maharashtra. This philosophy of empowerment recently extended beyond Aurum. In 2024, Anisha Anand was invited to serve as a jury member for SBI's SaShakti Women Empowerment Initiative in Goa. The program, under the SBI Foundation, supports micro-enterprise creation for women in food, crafts, and wellness. Anisha evaluated dozens of business proposals and mentored finalists—bringing her unique industry insight and nurturing leadership to the national platform.

"To sit across from women who've never had a formal business plan but pitch their dreams with conviction—it's life-changing," Anisha says. "This is what hospitality must also mean: uplifting others."

Culture That Cooks

With over 700 employees across India, Aurum takes pride in being not just an employer—but a builder of careers.

From upskilling women from Northeast India to investing in chefs, event managers, and agricultural teams, Aurum's work culture prioritizes growth, dignity, and ownership.

"We're building a workplace where excellence is nurtured, not just expected," says Anant. "When people feel seen and valued, they serve with pride—and that shows in every plate." Their club management systems have revolutionized member experiences—tripling footfall and boosting satisfaction rates. With 11 live kitchens, 8 club & banquet venues, and over 300 premium events executed annually, Aurum is setting a new benchmark for institutional dining and luxury event catering. In 2025, Aurum was honored as the 'Best Caterer – West India' by Food Connoisseurs India Awards, a recognition of our commitment to excellence, creativity, and heartfelt service. Looking Ahead: From Gold to Global. The next chapter for Anant and Anisha is already unfolding.

FOCUS

With expansion into the global markets by 2026, a flagship 500-seater Aurum Pavilion in Pune, and focuses to enter USA and European markets by 2027, their ambition is as precise as it is powerful.

The year has been one of intentional leadership and impact for the duo.

Having empowered women through mentorship and business support, and blending perspectives with local excellence won Anisha accolades like the prestigious Visionary Leadership



Award (Economic Times Inspiring Women Conclave, West 2025) and the WeddingSutra Award for Trend-Setting Food Design, underscoring her commitment to turning CSR into transformative social change. This milestone amplified Aurum Foods' footprint in premium hospitality, strengthened the ecosystem for women entrepreneurs, and forged a durable path for sustainable, inclusive growth.

"We're not here to grow fast—we're here to grow right," says Anant. "Sustainably, strategically, and with soul."

Their goal? ₹150 crore in revenue. Their mission? To remain a standard of integrity and imagination in the industry.

The Power of Partnership

Spend a moment with Anant and Anisha, and it's easy to see why Aurum thrives. They don't need to mirror each other—they complement each other's brilliance. While Anant builds scalable, tech-forward systems, Anisha ensures the soul of the brand stays intact. Together, they make Aurum more than a company—it's a movement in hospitality.

"We don't aim to be the loudest," Anisha smiles. "We aim to be the most consistent."

"And quietly unforgettable," Anant adds.

Aurum Foods At a Glance

- Founded: 2012
- Founders: Anant Kumar Ganediwal & Anisha Anand
- Meals Served Annually: 4+ million
- Presence: Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Pune, Thailand, Dubai; soon expanding to Singapore and Abu Dhabi
- Women Empowerment: 70% women-led farms, 100+ food cart entrepreneurs
- Live Kitchens: 11
- Clubs & Banquets: 8
- Retail Product Launch: Q1 2026
- Revenue Target: ₹150 crore by 2027

Aurum Foods

One exquisite plate. One empowered life. One bold idea at

remain cautious about spending.

Diagnostics chains have reported double-digit annual growth in preventive health screenings with younger urban consumers increasingly accounting for first-time tests.

"Preventive healthcare in India has moved firmly into the mainstream, with post-Covid awareness accelerating the shift towards early detection and proactive health management across age groups. Consumers are far more engaged in monitoring their health regularly, and this has also brought younger cohorts, including Gen Z, into the diagnostics ecosystem earlier, through first-time preventive screenings driven by fitness awareness, lifestyle choices and digital engagement. This shift in consumer behaviour has been a key growth driver for Metropolis Healthcare," says Surendran Chemmenkotil, Managing Director of Metropolis Healthcare.

120 |

Social media is part of this environment, but not always as a driver of trust. While platforms introduce ideas around nutrition and fitness, many respondents appear sceptical of exaggerated claims. Personal experience and peer feedback carry more weight than endorsements.

Further, factors such as brand perception, ease of access and speed of availability influence choices.

"E-commerce platforms and brand communication, along with peer influence and social conformity, play a role in shaping decisions. All these elements need to be considered together when assessing health behaviour among younger populations," says Dr Parikh.

The survey also points to a change in consumption priorities. Status-led purchases appear less central to this age group. Brand recognition matters, but usefulness and perceived health impact increasingly shape decisions.



"With AI and online tools becoming more accessible, some young people may delay seeking professional medical advice"

DR. SAMIR PARIKH
PSYCHIATRIST, FORTIS
HEALTHCARE, AND
CHAIRPERSON, FORTIS
NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH
PROGRAM



"Consumers are far more engaged in monitoring their health. This has brought younger cohorts into the diagnostics ecosystem"

**SURENDRAN
CHEMENKOTIL**
MD, METROPOLIS
HEALTHCARE

ATTENTION SANS ALARM

A 2025 report by descriptor Burson titled *Gen Z: Calling for Healthcare Connection and Change* finds that Indian Gen Z is approaching healthcare with a largely positive and engaged mindset. The report shows that 78% of respondents experience positive emotions when actively managing their health, pointing to a stronger focus on preventive care, mental health awareness and regular health decision-making rather than crisis-driven treatment.

While digital tools play a growing role, trust in traditional healthcare remains strong, with a majority preferring in-person consultations and relying on doctors and hospitals. Cost, access and misinformation continue to pose challenges, even as health engagement deepens among young adults.

For public health, this behaviour carries implications. A population that reads labels and seeks information is more responsive to preventive measures. India's Gen Z is not rejecting consumption, but it is spending with more caution and asking more questions. As this group grows older and earns more, these habits are likely to influence demand across food, healthcare and lifestyle categories, says Mitra.

Across urban India, a growing number of young households including GenZ are also changing their approach to cookware. Non-stick and aluminium utensils, once seen as modern and convenient, are increasingly being replaced by stainless steel pots and pans.

For Gen Z and millennials, health concerns are extending beyond ingredients to the materials used in everyday cooking. BT

@neetucsharma

THE WILL TO SCORE GLOBALLY WITH OUR CORE VALUES, PERSISTENTLY



Trust &
Mutual Respect



Professional
Excellence



Integrity &
transparency



Responsive
Service



Commitment

- GIC Re, a prominent player in the reinsurance landscape, spans 140 countries, offering innovative solutions that foster a thriving tomorrow.

- Ranked 9th Largest Global Reinsurer Group
(Non-IFRS 17 Reporting Reinsurer - compiled by AM Best)

- A - (Excellent) with Stable Outlook Financial Strength Rating by AM Best

General Insurance Corporation of India

Global Reinsurance Solutions

"Suraksha", 170, Jamshedji Tata Road, Churchgate, Mumbai 400020, India.

• Telephone (Board): +91 22 2286 7000 • Email : info@gicre.in

GMDC Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd.

(A Government of Gujarat Enterprise)

MINES & MINERALS



As India steps into a decade of rapid industrial expansion and energy transition, mineral security has become a national priority. A country that aims to build its own clean energy systems, electronics and defence manufacturing needs assured access to the minerals that sustain these sectors. This is where State PSUs such as Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation play a steady role. Their work goes beyond extraction, shaping long-term resilience and supporting the country's shift towards self-reliance under initiatives like Atmanirbhar Bharat and the National Critical Mineral Mission.

GMDC's expansion reflects this shift

clearly. Commercial coal operations in Odisha, across the Baitarni West, Burapahar and Kudanali Lubri blocks, hold more than two billion tonnes of geological resources and are designed to strengthen India's base load fuel requirement while reducing reliance on imported thermal coal. These projects mark GMDC's transition from a state-focused mining company to a national contributor, supported by cleaner approaches such as Underground Coal Gasification and planned pathways for emerging fuels like blue hydrogen and SynGas.

Alongside coal, GMDC is building capacity in critical minerals that will define

India's technological and clean energy future. The rare earth ecosystem being developed at Ambadungar in Bharuch is one of the country's most integrated rare earth efforts, with the ability to produce Mixed Rare Earth Carbonate and Neodymium Praseodymium oxide for applications ranging from EV motors to wind turbines. The Ambaji copper project strengthens this chain further, with reserves of copper, zinc and lead planned to be processed through a beneficiation plant with a long operational life.

Together, these projects help reduce import dependence and create new industrial linkages within the country. In Gujarat, GMDC continues to anchor the state's energy and industrial landscape. Six new lignite mines across Kutch and South Gujarat will add nearly five hundred million tonnes of reserves that will support MSMEs in ceramics, chemicals and other energy-dependent sectors. These reserves will act as reliable fuel sources that reduce the state's exposure to imported coal and help maintain industrial continuity.

The limestone corridor in Western Kutch adds another layer of capability, with significant reserves and long-term supply agreements that will pave the way for new cement units and a broader value chain development.

All of this reflects a steady and institution-driven approach India will need in the years ahead. Mineral security cannot be built on short-term projects. It requires organisations to think long-term, carry public responsibility and build ecosystems around every resource they develop. GMDC's work across lignite, coal, rare earths, copper and limestone shows how a state PSU can anchor domestic value chains, reduce vulnerabilities and support national missions with grounded execution. In doing so, it strengthens not just industries and regions, but the country's larger path towards self-reliance.



GMDC'S ENDEAVOURS TOWARDS CHARTING INDIA'S MINERAL SELF-RELIANCE



**Seeking
EPC Partners**



www.gmdcltd.com

To Build Rare Earth Processing Facility

GMDC, one of India's leading mining PSUs, invites EoIs from qualified EPC partners to engineer, procure, construct and commission full scale Beneficiation and Concentration plants for its REE programme.

EoI No. **GMDC/KEP/02/25-26**

To Download EoI Document Visit:
www.gmdcltd.com

We invite you to build the future with us

We invite interest from investors and local/global businesses operating in any part of the REE value chain to partner with us at the Gujarat REE hub. This is a chance to become champions of the clean energy movement and also partner with the biggest industries in the world as they establish their operations at the hub.



The REE hub has a wide range of opportunities for investment



REO separation units/equipments

Gujarat's REE hub provides easy access to chemical reagents and technically equipped workforce for global players to set up separation units



Metal and alloys

Transitioning to EVs and wind energy are cornerstones of India's green energy policies. Metal and alloy manufacturers will find ready domestic takers



Electric motor manufacturers

With India's dedicated efforts towards expanding wind energy and other applications, the electric motor manufacturers will find rapid growing domestic market and secure supply of permanent magnets from the hub



Permanent magnet manufacturers

With rapid decarbonization efforts across India, demand for permanent magnets will skyrocket. The hub is a prime opportunity for permanent magnets to become first movers in this growing market



EV motor manufacturers and OEMs

The EV industry is experiencing rapid growth owing to focus on green transition. The hub offers secure supply of key components required for these manufacturers



GMDC's envisioned REE Hub

Illustrative purpose



A centralized venture in form of an international REE Hub to host REE-related activities by collaborating with national and global players to create REE value chain and solve challenges faced in clean energy transition





Seeking Developers for REE Downstream Hub

GMDC, one of India's leading mining PSUs, invites EoIs from qualified Hub Developers or Industrial Estate Developers to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the Gujarat REE Downstream Hub, an investment ready ecosystem for REE based industries.

EoI No.: GMDC/KEP/01/25-26

EoI document available for download from the website:

For detailed scope of work and other relevant information, interested bidders are requested to download the EoI document from the GMDC website: www.gmdcltd.com

Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd.

(A Government of Gujarat Enterprise)

GMDC Ltd. 'Khanij Bhavan', 132 Feet Ring Road, Vastrapur,
Ahmedabad – 380 052

www.gmdcltd.com



Seeking Partners for



Pre-feasibility Study to Advance India's Clean Energy Goals

Underground Coal Gasification



Proposals from experienced consultants and technical agencies are invited to undertake a Pre-feasibility Study.

RFP No.:
GMDC/PP&D/005/25-26

RFP can be downloaded
from our website
www.gmdcltd.com

Proposal Submission: on or before **9th Feb 2026**
till 1700 hours to below mentioned address:

Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation Ltd.
Khanij Bhavan, 132 Feet Ring Road, Nr. Gujarat University
Ground, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad- 380052, India

Decoding Gen Z's Wallet Share

Gen Z prioritises informed choices with value for money taking precedence over brand loyalty. But they show subtle differences in spending behaviour depending on where they live

BY RICHA SHARMA

THEY OWN IPHONES, wear branded clothes, are confident about managing personal finances, but don't make uninformed decisions—the Gen Z generation believes in making informed choices and shunning debt as much as possible.

India's Gen Z in four metros—Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata—are not four versions of the same consumer; they are four separate demand clocks running at different speeds. The BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey found that across all regions, Gen Z dreams converge around home ownership, career growth, and mobility, with over half aspiring to buy both a car and a house.

This generation relies on the use of artificial intelligence (AI)

for making investment decisions, has a higher risk appetite, and maintains a balanced portfolio with gold, mutual funds and fixed deposits making a major chunk of their portfolio.

"They come for investment advice fully prepared by doing a good analysis of their portfolio using AI. Investment advisors are like a second opinion for them, to see if the plan suggested by AI is correct or needs amendments," says Upasana Mondal, a Securities and Exchange Board of India Registered Investment Advisor.

The BT-PRICE survey analyses the consumption behaviour, investment patterns, and spending priorities of the younger generation.

FINANCIAL FACTOR

On savings, they are disciplined, with 39% of the 4,311 people surveyed saving 20–40% of their

income. The survey found that lifestyle borrowing is moderate. Aspirational intent is strong, as 63% aspire to buy both a car and a house; however, timelines are different. Brand loyalty for this group is conditional, driven by a mix of quality (57%) and value for money (19%). Growth in the North for brands will depend on justifying their premium.

Mondal says that Gen Z is more willing to take risks than other age groups, but these risks are not impulsive. Instead, they are based on careful research and informed choices. In contrast, older generations are less likely to rely on AI for investment decisions and often place greater trust in traditional investment advisors.

"They don't take risks blindly and avoid frequent fund switches, realising the impact on capital gain taxation. They look for a long-term, well-balanced

GEN Z'S PREFERENCES



PREFERRED METHOD OF SAVINGS/INVESTMENT

- Gen Z prefers a balanced investment portfolio
- Crypto investment is low in preference



| | Total Respondents (%) | Regions | | | | | Metros | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|--|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| | | North(%) | South(%) | East(%) | West(%) | | Delhi (%) | Mumbai(%) | Kolkata(%) | Chennai(%) |
| SIPs/Mutual Funds | 29 | 26 | 17 | 38 | 38 | | 25 | 35 | 53 | 8 |
| Stocks/IPOs | 25 | 16 | 22 | 45 | 24 | | 22 | 23 | 43 | 15 |
| Gold | 41 | 31 | 41 | 32 | 57 | | 21 | 77 | 22 | 31 |
| Cryptocurrency | 6 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 4 | | 6 | 3 | 5 | 11 |
| Real Estate | 28 | 19 | 21 | 15 | 52 | | 14 | 71 | 4 | 16 |
| Fixed Deposits/ PPF | 40 | 44 | 23 | 30 | 62 | | 39 | 58 | 31 | 20 |
| Others | 32 | 58 | 26 | 31 | 12 | | 48 | 0 | 45 | 32 |

SOURCE BT-PRICE GEN Z CONSUMPTION SURVEY

128 |

portfolio and have exposure to international markets. One of my young clients asked me to draw a Dreamlining plan. It was interesting to hear a goal-based investment plan from them. Also, they are now low on credit card spending, another change from Gen X," she adds. According to the survey, this generation prefers borrowing from family and friends over credit cards.

Regionally, southern India is the most structured in financial behaviour. While only 29% of those surveyed feel confident, they compensate with discipline. About 44% prefer fixed deposits/public provident fund (PPF) schemes, while 31% invest in gold, and 26% in systematic investment plans (SIPs).

West India has come out as the most financially confident market in the survey, with 63% of the Gen Zs surveyed report-

Optimism is high across all four metros, with over 80% of respondents expecting to spend more the next year

ing high confidence in managing personal finances. This confidence translates into premium behaviour, with 34% saying they buy only luxury brands, while 38% said they purchased premium brands regularly. East India presents the sharpest contrast between aspira-

tion and financial stability. The survey found that 52% saved only up to 20% while 20% of those surveyed do not save at all. However, 62% report being confident about managing finances.

Optimism is high across all four metros, with over 80% of respondents expecting to spend more the next year.

That said, spending intentions vary by region. Respondents in Delhi and cities around Jaipur are more inclined towards sharp increases in the near term, while Mumbai favours a steadier, more measured rise. Chennai, meanwhile, strikes a more cautious note, balancing confidence with careful attention to expenses and long-term planning.

ASPIRATIONAL GOALS

Mumbai stands apart in its premium buying behaviour, with 54% of respondents saying they

MG SELECT

FOR THOSE WHO
SET THE RULES.



THE
PRESIDENTIAL
LIMOUSINE

Priced at ₹69.90 LAKH

www.mgselect.co.in

MUMBAI: 8238804111, **THANE:** 9099140000, **PUNE:** 9145743030, **AHMEDABAD:** 7863812993, **SURAT:** 7698855000, **BENGALURU ELECTRONIC CITY:** 9988825111, **BENGALURU CENTRAL:** 6364904184, **HYDERABAD:** 9646977977, **CHENNAI:** 6399223399, **KOCHI:** 7591980000, **KOLKATA:** 9227987936, **JAIPUR:** 9660088994, **DELHI:** 7669561448 / 7669561446, **GURGAON:** 8892008008, **CHANDIGARH:** 6283838403

**Disclaimer : All prices are ex-showroom India. Actual performance figures may differ in conditions other than test conditions. Vehicle body colour may differ due to printing processes. Images used in this ad are for representation purposes only. In view of our policy of continuously improving our products, we reserve the right to alter specifications, features, and designs without prior notice and without liability. All models are subject to availability. Please check details with your nearest MG Select Dealer Partner for latest information. Accessories and features shown in the pictures may not be a part of standard equipment and will differ according to the variant. Available pan-India. Images shown are for representation purposes only and actual products may vary. *T&C apply.

purchase only luxury or premium brands—far higher than in any other metro. In contrast, consumers in Delhi, Kolkata, and Chennai tend to view premium purchases as occasional or situational. This makes Mumbai a premium accelerator market, while other metros function as premium incubation zones, where trust and timing matter more than brand name alone.

The survey shows clear regional differences in spending priorities. While West India moves faster towards experiences and premium purchases, consumers in the North and South

while Delhi consumers are more inclined to reassess their choices. Kolkata's Gen Z stands out for its openness to experimentation. About 38% are likely to switch brands, and fashion dominates spending, with 54% reporting it as their top category, reflecting a strong role of curiosity and cultural identity.

Chennai, meanwhile, depicts a distinct financial behaviour. Half of respondents say they borrow frequently or occasionally from family or friends for lifestyle spending, the highest incidence among the metros.

When choosing a job, Gen Z

across multiple formats like OTT platforms, cinema, YouTube, stand-up comedy shows, and live events. Mumbai presents a peculiar case. Despite being the centre of the Indian film industry, it has the lowest share of spending on cinema (24%) among metros. Instead, young consumers in Mumbai lean more towards stand-up comedy and live events, a preference that is also visible across the western region. In contrast, Gen Z in the eastern region allocates the highest spend to OTT platforms, while cinema sees stronger traction in northern and southern regions.

130 |

Mumbai emerged as the most brand-secure market. An overwhelming 85% say product quality is their primary purchase driver, and just 12% are likely to switch brands

tend to prioritise asset-building before indulgence. East India, meanwhile, places a strong emphasis on upward mobility, even if it means stretching finances. Notably, 84% of respondents nationwide expect their spending to rise over the next 12 months, largely driven by inflation.

Among the metros, Mumbai emerged as the most brand-secure market. An overwhelming 85% say product quality is their primary purchase driver, and just 12% are likely to switch brands—the lowest share across metros. Delhi tells a different story. About 44% are likely to switch brands, and value for money (20%) carries significantly more weight in purchase decisions. In effect, Mumbai tends to reward consistency and proven quality,

prefers a balance between long-term career progression and financial growth, while job security is a distant third across both metro and non-metro cities.

SOCIAL MEDIA

While Instagram dominates discovery across metros, conversion behaviour diverges sharply. In Mumbai, 89% of the respondents rarely buy after discovering products on social media, signalling a highly filtered consumer. In Kolkata and Chennai, however, there are much higher post-exposure purchases, indicating that content reach alone does not translate into commercial impact, and influencer return on investment differs sharply across cities.

When it comes to entertainment, Gen Z spreads its spending

Though e-commerce and quick commerce platforms have changed how the country purchases its daily essentials, Gen Zs in metros, except Mumbai, still prefer going to physical stores for their daily needs. Mumbai stands out sharply in quick-commerce adoption. As many as 83% prefer using quick-commerce apps for daily purchases, while the figure stays below 45% in other metros. Delhi youngsters rely on both quick commerce and physical stores, while Kolkata and Chennai prefer going to the market over delivery at home. Overall, the western region reports 71% preference for quick-commerce apps, compared to under 30% across the other three regions. **BT**

@richajourno

इस परिवर्तनशील समय में निर्यात के लिए दोहरा बीमा
Double assurance for exports in these volatile times.



निर्यातकों के लिए ऋण जोखिम बीमा
Credit Risk Insurance for Exporters

एवं /&

बैंकों के लिए ऋण जोखिम बीमा
Credit Risk Insurance for Banks

आर्थिक अस्थिरता के इस समय में निर्यात के अनुकूल
ईसीजीसी के साथ ऋण जोखिम का बीमा कराएं।

In these times of economic instability, insure
against credit risk with ECGC's export-friendly
credit risk covers.

अधिक जानकारी के लिए ईसीजीसी के निकटतम कार्यालय से संपर्क करें।
For more information contact your nearest ECGC office.



ई सी जी सी लिमिटेड

(भारत सरकार का उद्यम)

पंजीकृत कार्यालय: ईसीजीसी भवन, सीटीएस नं. 393, 393/1 से 45,
एम.वी. रोड, अंडेही (दक्षिण), मुंबई - 400069, महाराष्ट्र, भारत
टेल: 6659 0500 / 6659 0510 • टोल फ्री: 1800-22-4500
ईमेल: marketing@ecgc.in • वेबसाइट: www.ecgc.in

IRDAI Regn. No. 124 | CIN No. U74999MH1957GOI010918 | [@ecgclimited](#)

ADVT. NO. : NMD/198/214

आप निर्यात पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करें, हम जोखिम से रक्षा प्रदान करेंगे. • You focus on exports. We cover the risks.

AGRICULTURE: INDIA'S JOURNEY FROM SURVIVAL TO SUPREMACY - AND THE ROAD AHEAD

India's economic rise is one of the defining stories of the 21st century, and at the heart of this transformation lies a force that has sustained our civilization for millennia—agriculture. From the fertile plains of the Indus and the Ganga to the modern, technology-enabled farms of today, Indian agriculture has travelled a long and inspiring journey. It is this sector that feeds 1.4 billion Indians, provides livelihoods to more than half of our population, and anchors rural India, which remains the backbone of the nation's social and economic stability.

The modern transformation of Indian agriculture began with the **Green Revolution of the 1960s**. At a time when India depended on **PL-480 food imports from the USA**, visionary leadership and scientific excellence changed the course of history. High-yielding seeds, improved irrigation and fertiliser use helped achieve food self-sufficiency. At the same time, the **White Revolution** made India the world's largest milk producer and empowered millions of small farmers through cooperatives. These were not just agricultural milestones but **nation-building achievements** that built confidence, dignity and long-term growth in crop production.

Today, India stands as a global agricultural powerhouse. We have become the world's largest producer of rice, overtaking China, with production exceeding 150 million tonnes. Our rice exports have surged, helping feed populations across

Asia, Africa and the Middle East. India is also among the leading producers of fruits, vegetables, milk, spices, cotton and sugar. Behind each of these achievements stand our farmers, scientists and industry—their collective contribution to national development is truly remarkable. Our farmers work under some of the most challenging climatic and market conditions in the world, while our scientists continuously innovate new seeds and agronomic practices suited to India's diverse agro-climatic zones. Yet, despite these impressive achievements, a deep paradox remains. India's agricultural potential far exceeds its current performance. While we are global leaders in volume, our per-hectare productivity and farmer incomes remain well below those of many developed and even some developing countries. China's agricultural GDP is nearly three times that of India, despite both countries having comparable land

and labour resources. This gap exists not because Indian farmers lack capability or commitment, but because systemic constraints prevent our agriculture sector from unlocking its full potential.

One of the most serious constraints is limited access to modern technology, particularly for small and marginal farmers, who make up nearly **85% of the farming community**. With highly fragmented landholdings, most farmers struggle to access advanced machinery, precision tools, high-quality seeds and modern crop protection solutions. During the recent **Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan**, Union Agriculture Minister **Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan** noted that many of the latest technologies have yet to reach this segment. Without technology, productivity stagnates, costs rise, and farmers remain vulnerable to climate and market risks. Even more damaging is the widespread prevalence of



DR. R. G. AGARWAL
Chairman Emeritus, Dhanuka Agritech Ltd.



counterfeit, duplicate, illegal, smuggled, spurious and substandard agricultural inputs, especially pesticides or plant medicines. Fake seeds, duplicate fertilizers and adulterated pesticides have become a silent epidemic across much of the country. These products do not merely reduce yields; they destroy crops, erode farmer confidence and push families into debt. Recent raids in states such as **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana and Telangana** have uncovered factories producing and supplying **lakhs of bags of fake fertilizers every day** across state borders. The seriousness of the problem is evident from the decision of the **Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to invoke the National Security Act** against those involved in fertilizer counterfeiting and black marketing. This is not merely an economic offence causing losses of lakhs of crores to farmers—it is an attack on India's food security.

India already has strong laws such as the Seeds Act, the Fertilizer Control Order and the Insecticides Act, along with ongoing reforms like the proposed PMB 2025. The real challenge is not the absence of legislation but weak and inconsistent implementation. When enforcement is lax, illegal operators flourish, honest businesses suffer and farmers pay the price. What is urgently needed is strict enforcement supported by digital traceability, QR-code based verification, accredited laboratories and exemplary punishment for offenders.

Another structural challenge is farmer education and extension. With over **14 crore farmers across 6.5 lakh villages**, no government system, however well-intentioned, can reach everyone effectively on its own. This makes **public-private partnerships** essential. The private sector, with its innovation, field networks and digital platforms, must be incentivised to complement government efforts in research, training and technology delivery. When public institutions and private enterprises work together, farmers gain access to the best of science, markets and modern technologies.

Dhanuka Agritech brings cutting-edge technologies to Indian farmers through partnerships with **six leading Japanese companies**, enabling the introduction of **safer, greener and more efficient crop protection solutions** adapted for Indian conditions. While earlier products were applied in kilograms, today's advanced molecules are used in just a few grams, delivering higher efficacy with a much lower environmental footprint.

To strengthen indigenous innovation, Dhanuka has set up a **state-of-the-art R&D Centre at Palwal**, inaugurated by former Chief Minister **Shri Manohar Lal Khattar**. With **11 specialised laboratories**, it anchors Dhanuka's vision of making Palwal a **model agricultural district**. Through **DART**, the company provides **drone spraying, weather stations, soil and crop sensors, and precision advisory**, while also helping farmers adopt drone-based, technology-driven farming. In addition, a toll-free **farmer helpline (1800 102 1022)** is being run to provide real-time technical support and guidance.

In addition, Dhanuka has signed **MoUs with ICAR and 15 leading agricultural universities** across India, working closely with them on **research, technology validation and extension** to ensure that scientific innovations reach farmers' fields in a practical and scalable manner.

Despite these efforts, India's overall investment in research and development remains alarmingly low. R&D expenditure is only about **0.6% of GDP**, compared with nearly **6% in countries like Israel**. While the Hon'ble Prime Minister has given the inspiring call of "**Jai Anusandhan**," this vision cannot be realised without meaningful investment. Earlier, **DST-recognised companies** were allowed a **200% income-tax deduction on R&D spending**, which played a vital role in encouraging private innovation. The withdrawal of this incentive has weakened research spending at a time of intense global competition, and it therefore urgently needs to be **reinstated and further strengthened**.

India's national vision is bold and inspiring. The Prime Minister has set the target of a **USD 5 trillion economy**

by 2028, with **agriculture contributing nearly USD 1 trillion**, and a **USD 30 trillion Viksit Bharat by 2047**. These goals depend on transforming agriculture, as India's growth will pass through its farms, fields and villages. Agriculture must move from being subsidy-driven to one of **strength, productivity and enterprise**, where farmers earn more from every acre through better technology, assured quality inputs, efficient markets and value addition. The future lies in shifting from hand-holding to **self-reliance**, from giving fish to **providing the nets**. When farmers are trained, informed and protected from fraud, they no longer need perpetual subsidies; they become confident entrepreneurs and contributors to the national exchequer—making agriculture a true engine of India's economy. India has the land, the soil, the scientists, the industry, and the spirit. What we now need is a system that rewards honesty, innovation and farmer empowerment. If we get this right, Indian agriculture will not only feed the nation—it will drive India's rise as a global economic power.



Rewriting India's Beauty Story

Young Indian consumers are no longer buying beauty to look like someone else. They are buying it to understand themselves

BY SAKSHI BATRA

INDIA'S BEAUTY AND cosmetics industry is undergoing a quiet yet powerful transformation. What once revolved around celebrity endorsements and one-size-fits-all beauty ideals is now being redefined by creators and the community.

Gone are the days when you would see only movie stars on billboards endorsing beauty brands. The new face of beauty is a YouTuber explaining ingredients, a 'reel'

creator testing products in real time, or a micro-influencer from a Tier II city decoding skincare routines in a regional language.

ASPIRATION TO INFORMATION

Young Indian consumers are no longer buying beauty to look like someone else. Ingredient-led skincare, retinols, niacinamides, ceramides, peptides and sunscreens have replaced vague promises of 'fairness' or 'instant glow'. Doc-

tors, dermatologists and skin care experts are regularly using social media platforms to raise awareness, which was previously only available to those who could afford experts.

"Young Indians now are fully aware of skincare and home devices and are open to preventative care and treatments for their concerns," says Dr Kiran Sethi, Celebrity Dermatologist & Director of Isya Aesthetics. "Younger generation does ask tougher ques-

THE RISE OF BEAUTY

► **India's beauty industry is undergoing a fundamental shift from celebrity-driven aspiration to creator-led authenticity**

► **Young Indians no longer buy beauty to "look like someone else" but to understand their own skin and hair**

► **Young consumers are willing to spend but demand value, transparency, and performance**



► **Rising disposable incomes, smartphone penetration, vernacular content, and social commerce are driving demand**

► **Male grooming and gender-fluid beauty are becoming more mainstream than they were a few years back**

► **Gen Z views beauty as self-care, wellness, and self-expression—not vanity or gendered behaviour**

tions," she adds.

Sungjelmila Longkumer, a certified cosmetologist, believes that influence has now shifted decisively towards creators and communities because creators do not fear showing flawed but real skin. "People are tired of the 'perfect' airbrushed skin on billboards. They want to see how a foundation actually sits on textured Indian skin in 35°C heat. My community trusts me because I'm a real person, not a star living in a bubble," she says.

The influencer economy has played a decisive role here. Unlike celebrities, creators offer context, education, and relatability. They break down labels, compare price points, talk openly about acne, pigmentation and hair loss, and normalise trial-and-error. Beauty consumption has moved from aspiration to information.

136 |

AFFORDABLE LUXURY

Another defining trend is the rise of affordable luxury brands that deliver premium formulations and packaging without luxury pricing. Young Indians are willing to spend, but they want value, transparency and performance.

This has opened space for digital-first brands that bypass traditional advertising, invest in community-building, and rely heavily on creator-led discovery. Beauty, today, is less about impulse buying and more about curated routines.

"Brands like Minimalist or The Ordinary blew up because they gave us the raw ingredients without the fluff. Also, the homegrown brands that actually understand Indian problems like hyperpigmentation or pollution-proofing are winning. We love brands that feel pharmacy-meets-luxury clinical results with a beautiful, shelf-worthy

MARKET MOMENTUM

\$34 BILLION

India's beauty and personal care market by 2028 from \$21 billion currently

3,500

Number of beauty and grooming products in the online space

96%

Brands operating primarily in the e-commerce space

SOURCE

NYKAA-REDSEER REPORT

aesthetic," says Longkumer.

The Indian beauty and personal care market is poised to reach \$34 billion by 2028, up from \$21 billion now, driven by a surge in online penetration and a growing preference for high-quality, premium beauty products, according to a report by Nykaa and consulting firm Redseer released last year. As e-commerce democratises the beauty business, beauty and grooming products

are fast filling up the online space with more than 3,500 brands, as per the report.

Beauty and lifestyle content creator Rida Tharana says, "The industry is now open to a much wider range of people... different skin tones, skin types, hair textures and everyone brings their own version of what has worked for them." The audiences also note that these products are already used and reviewed. According to her, that makes people feel closer to them and more confident about trying them, as it feels more believable and real compared to traditional ads.

TIER II INDIA LEADS

Perhaps the most underestimated force in India's beauty boom is Tier II and Tier III cities. Higher disposable incomes, deeper smartphone penetration, regional-language content and social commerce have unlocked massive demand. For brands, growth is no longer metro-first.

Fashion and beauty e-commerce platform Myntra has reported that its beauty business is now growing at nearly twice the pace of the broader online category, clocking over 50% year-on-year growth in the last two months alone. As per the company's media statements, beauty now contributes one in every five orders on Myntra, fuelled by explosive adoption among Gen Z and Tier II/Tier III customers.

Myntra CEO Nandita Sinha has been vocal about how Gen Z, which now forms 60% of their beauty user base, is highly experimental and spends nearly twice as much as other cohorts.

Myntra has reported that Tier II and Tier III cities are outpacing metros, with growth rates that are almost 50% higher; new segments like K-beauty, J-beauty,



LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DELHI

SHAPING LEADERS, BUILDING TOMORROW

ONLINE
GD & PI
FOR OUTSIDE
DELHI NCR

ADMISSIONS OPEN 2026-28

APPLICATIONS
CLOSING
SOON

AMONG INDIA'S TOP 15 & DELHI NCR'S TOP 5

Private Business School - Rankings 2025

| | THE TIMES OF INDIA | OUTLOOK | THE WEEK | FORTUNE INDIA | INDIA TODAY | BUSINESS TODAY |
|-----------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Delhi NCR | 1 st | 1 st | 3 rd | 5 th | 5 th | 7 th |
| All India | 4 th | 14 th | 14 th | 14 th | 19 th | 19 th |

PGDM 2026 (4 PROGRAMMES)
(2 Years Full Time)

AICTE, NBA, AIU
APPROVED
PROGRAMMES

- General
- Financial Management
- Research & Business Analytics
- Artificial Intelligence & Data Science





"People are tired of the 'perfect' airbrushed skin on billboards. They want to see how a foundation sits on textured Indian skin in 35°C heat"

SUNGJEMLILA LONGKUMER

CERTIFIED COSMETOLOGIST



"The industry is now open to a wider range of... skin tones, hair textures and everyone brings their own version of what worked for them"

RIDA THARANA

BEAUTY AND LIFESTYLE CONTENT CREATOR

138 |

fragrances and derma skincare are witnessing strong traction.

BEAUTY WITHOUT GENDER

One of the most significant cultural shifts is the rapid growth of male grooming and gender-fluid cosmetics. Gen Z consumers see beauty as self-care rather than vanity - and certainly not as gendered behaviour.

Men are openly engaging with skincare, hair care and even makeup, driven by content that frames beauty as confidence, wellness and self-expression. Products are being designed without rigid gender cues, focusing instead on function, texture and results.

Male skincare is becoming increasingly mainstream. As per Kantar Insights, 'sunscreen for men' saw 61K searches with +59% growth, while branded kits like Hair Fact Kit Male grew +32%.

At the same time, male-specific nutraceuticals like gummies are declining (-34%), suggesting a shift toward functional, result-backed products. From grooming towards preventive skincare and wellness, by aligning with luxury trends, male beauty market is moving to become mainstream."

HYPER-PERSONALISED, HYPER-EXPRESSIVE

What ties these trends together is a deeper shift in the consumer mindset. Beauty is no longer about just following trends; it has become more personalised based on skin type, climate, lifestyle and values.

Algorithms, quizzes, artificial intelligence (AI)-led recommendations, and community feedback loops are shaping routines that feel uniquely individual. In a crowded digital world, beauty has become a language of self-expression. "Personally, I've built

a skincare routine that's very ingredient focused. Earlier, things like fragrance or how a product smelled mattered, but now people are far more conscious about what goes into a product and how it affects their skin," says Tharana.

More people today are researching, experimenting, and forming their own opinions instead of following trends blindly.

"India's Gen Z beauty consumer today is smart and curious... they are open to trying what's trending, but confident enough to trust their own experience, form opinions, and stick with what actually works for them rather than blindly following the herd," adds Tharana.

LOOKING BACK AT TRENDS

Nykaa's Beauty Rewind 2025 report, released in the last week of December 2025, indicates that beauty in 2025 wasn't about chasing what's next; it was about building routines that last.

"Beauty in 2025 wasn't about chasing what's next; it was about moving fast, choosing smart, and switching without guilt. Indian consumers explored freely, followed trends unapologetically, and built routines that evolved with them," it said. From barrier-first skincare to intelligent makeup, indulgent body care and mood-led fragrances, beauty became deeply personal and joyfully flexible.

India's beauty boom is not being driven by glamour alone. It is powered by creators, data, regional voices, and a generation comfortable with questioning norms. In this new economy, beauty is not about perfection. It is about identity. **BT**

@sakhibatrat18



ROCK.
PAPER.



Priced at **74.99 LAKH**

www.mgselect.co.in

MG Cyberster

WORLD'S FASTEST MG

DELHI: 7669561448 / 7669561446, B-1, F-4, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, New Delhi, Delhi 110044, **CHANDIGARH:** 6283838403, Plot no 182/15, Industrial Area, Phase II Chandigarh 160002, **GURUGRAM:** 8892008008, IJB House, H 11, Ext, Sushant Lok III Extension, Sector 57, Gurugram, Haryana 122011

Disclaimer: All prices are ex-showroom India. Actual performance figures may differ in real-world conditions. Vehicle body colour may differ due to printing. Images used in this ad are for representation purposes only. Visit our policy of continuous product improvements wherein we reserve the right to alter specifications, features, and designs without prior notice and without liability.



Devbhoomi *Uttarakhand*

A Destination of
Peace, Adventure,
and Faith



“ Under the guidance of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Uttarakhand is progressing steadily on the path of development. The state government is taking necessary steps to encourage tourists to visit not only for tourism but also to experience the holy shrines. This will allow tourists to enjoy the spiritual and touristic experiences, especially during the winter season. ”

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand



“ There are two main pillars for the creation of a developed India in the 21st century – pride in our heritage and making every possible effort for development. Today, Uttarakhand is strengthening both these pillars. This decade will be the decade of Uttarakhand. ”

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



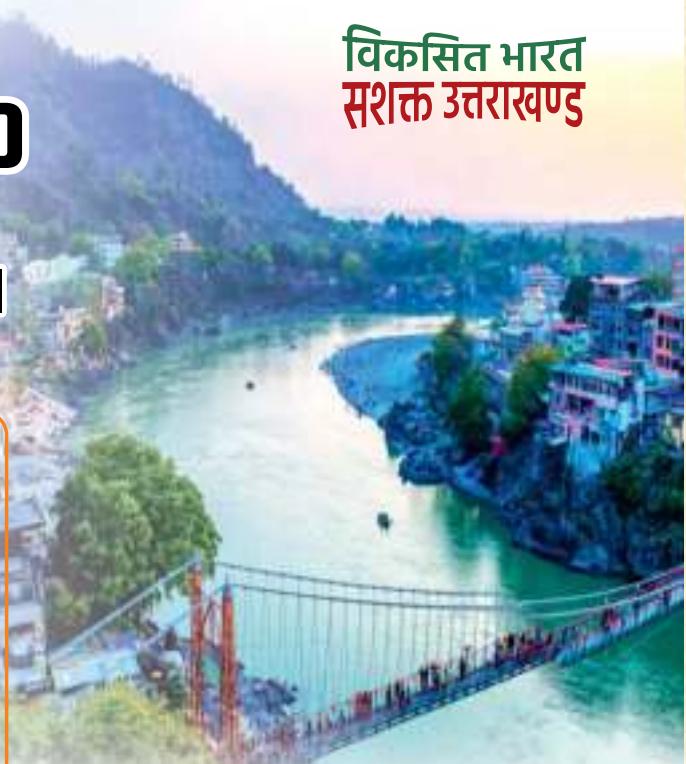
DEVBHOOMI UTTARAKHAND

A Marvelous Confluence of Natural Beauty & Adventure

- Uttarakhand's villages—Jakhol, Supi, Harsil, and Gunji—have been awarded by the Government of India as the Best Tourism Villages.
- Under the Vibrant Village Program, 51 border villages have been selected for planned development.
- Efficient management led to a record number of devotees visiting the Char Dham Yatra.
- For the first time in the state, the winter pilgrimage season was inaugurated.
- Under the Manaskhand Mandir Mala Mission, work is underway to connect 48 temples and other religious sites into a structured circuit.
- Approval has been granted for the master plan of Mahasu Temple in Hanol.

Whether it is eco-tourism, wildlife tourism, or the thrill of unexplored snow-capped peaks, skiing, mountain biking, paragliding, and trekking trails, Uttarakhand offers everything that might otherwise require traveling to multiple

**विकसित भारत
सरकृत उत्तराखण्ड**



countries. The state is now recognized for green tourism, mindful travel, wildlife excursions, and nature-based tourism. Owing to improved tourism policies and high potential, the state has witnessed significant investments in the tourism sector over recent years. Moreover, several major investors are exploring further opportunities in the industry. With its adventurous offerings, Uttarakhand is emerging as a prominent destination for adventure tourism.



Adi Kailash:

The sacred peak of Mansarovar

Adi Kailash and Parvati Kund located in Pithoragarh are now becoming popular as serene and spiritual destinations in the high Himalayas.

Located near the India-Tibet border in Pithoragarh district, Adi Kailash and Parvati Kund symbolize eternal faith and nature's grandeur. Often called the sacred twin peaks of Mount Kailash, Adi Kailash represents a divine reflection of the abode of Lord Shiva. At its base, Parvati Kund is a serene lake, shimmering with mythological significance. Devotees believe that a glimpse of its waters bestows spiritual merit equivalent to a pilgrimage to Mount Kailash.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the region in 2023 brought it to national attention and made it a symbol of sustainable and spiritual tourism. Uttarakhand

The century-old Jauljibi Fair celebrates India-Nepal friendship, celebrating it through trade, culture, and tradition. Held under the banner of Utsav Uttarakhand, the fair unites diverse communities through exhibitions of folk art, handicrafts, and border region art.



The Tourism Development Board is now making the area eco-sensitive, developing infrastructure, including solar lighting, improved trails and homestay-based accommodation, to preserve

its fragile ecology.

Visitors can experience both divinity and adventure, trekking through the serene valleys, gazing at the stars in the crystal-clear skies, and connecting with Himalayan communities. More than just a pilgrimage site, Adi Kailash has today become a symbol of Uttarakhand's harmonious approach to faith, nature, and progress, a destination where the soul truly finds its resonance among the mountains.

Manaskhand Mandir Mala Yojana

A Lifeline for Ancient Temples

Under the Manaskhand Mandir Mala Mission, the state government is carrying out infrastructure-related development work around 48 ancient temples in the Kumaon region. In the first phase, 16 temples have been selected. These include Jageshwar Temple, Golu Devta Temple, Katarmal Sun Temple, Kasar Devi, Nanda Devi, Patal Bhuvaneshwari Cave, Hat Kalika, Purnagiri, Naina Devi, Baleshwar, Kainchi Dham, Varahi Devi, Baijnath, Bagnath, and Chaiti



Bala Sundari Temple.

In addition, the selected temples include Jhankar Sam, Naithna Devi, Vindhya vasini, Mallika Devi, and Syahi Devi in Almora; Mostmanu, Berinag, Malaynath, Thalkedar, and Kotgiri

temples in Pithoragarh; Ataria Temple, Nanakmatta, Moteshwar Mahadev, and Vankhandi Mahadev in Udhampur Singh Nagar; Meetha Reetha Sahib, Guru Gorakhnath Temple, Maneshwar Temple, Baleshwar, and Devidhar in Champawat; Kot Bhramari, Shikhar Bhanar in Bageshwar district; and Golu Devta, Girija Devi Temple, Hanuman Temple, Somwari Mahadev, Devguru Brihaspatidham, and Hanuman Garhi Temple in Nainital district.

Yoga Capital Rishikesh

Nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas, Rishikesh has long been known as the Yoga Capital of the World. Every year, thousands of yoga enthusiasts, spiritual seekers, and wellness travelers from across the globe visit this serene city to deepen their practice, participate in renowned yoga festivals, and pursue yoga training.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has played a significant role in giving Rishikesh global recognition as a premier yoga destination. He has himself practiced yoga in UK on several occasions, underscoring the importance of yoga in achieving a healthy lifestyle.

Rising Paragliding Tourism Uttarakhand's Youth Soaring High

Tourism in Uttarakhand had so far remained largely limited to sightseeing, but now Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's govt. is adding new dimensions to it through adventure tourism. For this, the Tourism Department is providing free paragliding courses to more than 700 youths. Paragliding tourism is growing at certain locations such as Bhimtal in Nainital district and Maldevta in Dehradun. Considering the new possibilities, the Tourism Department is not only



identifying new spots for paragliding but also offering free training to local youth. In this way, with their skills in adventure tourism, young people will not only be able to secure jobs or start self-employment but will also help promote tourism in Uttarakhand.

In continuation of this effort, the government is conducting five different courses, ranging from basic to guided paragliding, in Tehri for youth across 15 batches.

Chasing ‘TFW’

Across travel, hospitality, and food and beverage, India's Gen Z is reshaping how they discover, design, and share their leisure experiences

BY SMITA TRIPATHI

144 |

THAT FEELING WHEN, or TFW, captures a popular Gen Z emotion, often expressed through a hashtag on social media. So, on a Sunday afternoon in Mumbai, when 24-year-old Vaheeshta Das, who works at VFS Global, was planning her next short break, she was essentially #chasingTFW. Like many in her generation, she schedules four or five trips a year around shifting work calendars. The planning process unfolds almost entirely online. Instagram, she says, offers aspiration and aesthetics. Reddit provides candour. AI fills in the gaps.

“Instagram shows the vibe of a place,” Das explains. “Reddit is where people are more honest and unfiltered.” AI tools help her structure itineraries, optimise travel days and discover experi-

ences she might otherwise miss. Used together, these platforms create what she calls a “realistic picture” of a destination before she books, helping her get closer to the ideal TFW.

This layered approach to travel planning captures a broader transformation underway in India’s travel, hospitality and food-and-beverage sectors. Generation Z (those born between 1997 and 2012), long framed as an emerging cohort, has become one of the most influential forces reshaping these sectors.

The Gen Z Travel Playbook

Gen Z is travelling more frequently, planning more strategically and assigning value differently. Data from online travel platforms Cleartrip, Skyscanner, and Klook points to a cohort that treats travel as a recurring, integrated part of life rather than a once-a-year indulgence.

The BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey shows an almost even split between domestic and international travel overall. Out of the 4,000-odd people surveyed across India, 45% in metro cities prefer to travel domestically. The count changes to 55% in Tier II cities. Among the most affluent, nearly nine in ten trips are abroad.

Cleartrip’s Unpacked 2025 report underscores the scale of change. Gen Z travel bookings grew by 650% in 2025, with young people travelling year-round rather than clustering trips around holidays. Cities with strong food, nightlife and cultural scenes—Dubai, Kuala Lumpur, and Bangkok—emerged as top spontaneous international choices. Two-thirds of bookings were made on mobile phones, with UPI and credit cards dominating payments.

Skyscanner’s data paints a



At Ronil Goa, the appeal lies in freedom and vibe: check-ins at the bar, midnight swims, pet-friendly stays and a non-judgemental, social atmosphere



GenZ appreciates dining out, as opposed to ordering in

146 |

TRAVEL TRENDS

- BT-PRICE survey shows an even split between domestic and international travel overall. But this balance shifts sharply with income, education, and geography**



behavioural picture. Half of Indian Gen Z travellers say they plan to make smarter spending choices to maximise holidays, while 52% globally take at least three leisure trips a year. Notably, 40% of Indian Gen Z ended up taking more trips than planned in 2024, suggesting impulse and flexibility being central to their travel habits.

Technology plays a critical role, but it does not operate in isolation. Social media is the primary source of inspiration for 66% of Indian Gen Z travellers, but offline validation still matters. Many discuss itineraries with friends before committing. Travel is also closely tied to wellbeing. More than 90% report feeling less anxious after a trip, and nearly three-quarters plan holidays specifically for wellness.

Klook's internal data shows strong growth in culturally

resonant but less crowded destinations such as Da Lat (Vietnam), Chiang Rai (Thailand), and secondary circuits in Bali. Sustainability features prominently as well, with many Gen Z travellers actively seeking eco-friendly accommodation and quieter destinations.

A New Grammar of Hospitality

For decades, India's hospitality sector operated on predictability: defined seasons, clear separation between business and leisure travel and established ideas of luxury rooted in formality. Gen Z is steadily dismantling those assumptions.

At Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, younger guests now arrive as primary decision-makers. "Earlier, Gen Z travellers were often accompanying families or corporates," says Himanshu Sharma, Direc-



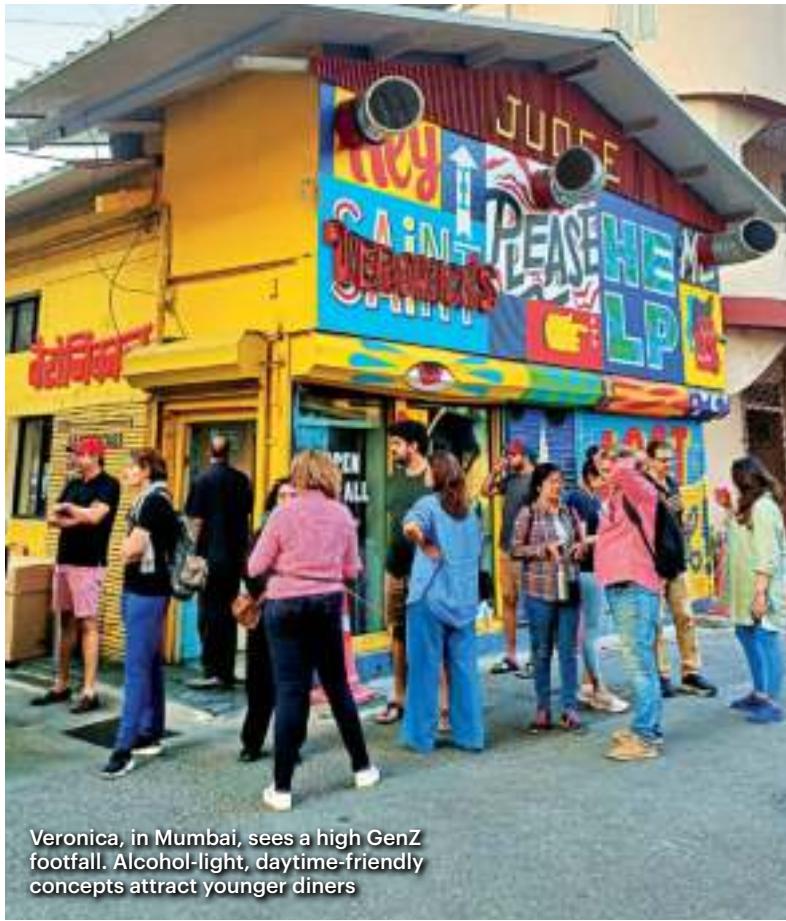
Ram Agarwal
CEO, ProstarM

Sustainability, buoyed by innovative acumen, has played a pivotal role in influencing the growth trajectory of **PROSTARM**, our trend-setting brand, which, over the past decade, has assumed an indomitable standing in this highly competitive dominion of **POWER ELECTRONICS**, which, hitherto, was dominated by MNCs.

Stealthily, we traversed a long and arduous path, frequented by stubborn hiccups, momentarily halting to correct our strategies in tandem with the technological upgradations incited by global advancements in the province of **POWER. GREEN ENERGY**, in league with the expeditious disposition of **ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS**, has taken centre

stage and will soon provide the much-sought-after domestic/industrial-based **POWER SOLUTIONS** in keeping with the globally acclaimed power solutions.

The meteoric rise of **PROSTARM INFO SYSTEMS LTD**, the OEM of **PROSTARM**, can, inter alia, be attributed to the multifaceted business approach which our Core Team has strategically premeditated in concurrence with the visionary approach of our Management. The success story of PROSTARM has been quite enthralling to date, and this milestone has prompted us to venture into the cutting-edge domain of Power Solutions with our Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) in alignment with the Government of India's most ambitious project of achieving 208 GWh of BESS by 2029-30. In furtherance of this dream project, the Company is enthusiastically setting up an ultra-modern Assembly Unit at Jhajjar, Haryana, with an installed production capacity aggregating to more than 5 GWh. Close on the heels, another state-of-the-art manufacturing facility is being constructed in Ahmedabad, the vibrant business centre and the Manchester of the East. This development is expected to enhance the existing production capabilities of our Pune Unit and strengthen the company's commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction. BESS, the flagship of **PROSTARM's** Power Solution portfolio, has significantly shored up the company's stature, reinforcing its position as a leader in innovative energy solutions. The successful listing of **PROSTARM** on both BSE and NSE through its IPO on the 3rd of June, 2025, has further galvanised the Company's growth, elevating it to a position worthy of wide acclaim. We are now strategically positioned to achieve an exponential leap in the dynamic arena of Power Electronics, driving innovation and redefining industry standards.



148 |

Veronica, in Mumbai, sees a high GenZ footfall. Alcohol-light, daytime-friendly concepts attract younger diners

tor of Sales and Marketing at the properties.

Shorter, more frequent breaks have replaced long annual holidays. Weekend staycations, brunch-led getaways and event-driven travel dominate, alongside hybrid work trips. At Moxy Bengaluru Airport Prestige Tech Cloud, a brand designed explicitly around younger travellers, this shift is structural rather than reactive. “We didn’t adapt to Gen Z later, we were built with them in mind,” says Anuradha Venkatachalam, the hotel’s manager.

For Gen Z, design and comfort must coexist. “Instagimmability matters, but not in isolation,” Venkatachalam adds. “Form and

function are inseparable.”

In Goa, Gen Z’s disregard for conventional travel rhythms is even more pronounced. “There is no fixed season or weekday-weekend pattern,” says Pratiti Rajpal, General Manager of Ronil Goa—a JdV by Hyatt Hotel. The appeal lies in freedom and vibe: check-ins at the bar, midnight swims, pet-friendly stays and a non-judgemental, social atmosphere.

Sustainability and local immersion further differentiate this cohort. At Palm Grove Beach Resort in Goa, Eva Agardsdotter, Partner, observes that eco-conscious practices strongly influence Gen Z choices. “They often prefer accommodations that demonstrate real

responsibility towards the environment and local communities,” she says, pointing to the resort’s mud-built Little Palm Grove extension and community-led beach clean-ups. Guests gravitate towards yoga, village walks, night markets and workshops rather than traditional luxury cues.

Redefinition of Luxury

For large hotel groups, these shifts have strategic implications. At Marriott International, Gen Z has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments in India—a trend visible through rising engagement with the Marriott Bonvoy loyalty programme.

“Our research shows that younger travellers are entering the travel ecosystem much earlier and travelling more frequently,” says Khushnooma Kapadia, Vice President of Marketing for South Asia at Marriott International. “What’s important is that Gen Z is not a future audience anymore. They’re already shaping demand, brand expectations, and engagement strategies.”

Social media, she adds, now plays a decisive role.

Across segments, Gen Z consistently prioritises neighbourhood immersion over spectacle. “Luxury for them is access,” says Kapadia. “Access to culture, people, and experiences that feel real.”

Experiential operators see similar patterns. At destinations such as Gujarat’s Rann Utsav and Dholavira, Gen Z travellers gravitate towards participative experiences. “They’re far more interested in local immersion than traditional grandeur,” says Krinal Thaker, Marketing Head at Evoke Experiences, a destination-driven hospitality company. “Luxury is now measured by uniqueness and relevance, not opulence.”

Heritage walks, archaeological storytelling, folk music and stargazing rank high among Gen Z prefer-



From Royal Courts to 850,000 Global Clients: Rambhajo's Four Generations Preserve India's Jewellery Soul Description

As India's 360 million Gen Z consumers seek authentic heritage over mass-produced trends, Rambhajo's 104-year journey—founded 1921 by Shri Kishan Das Gilara, preserving royal court art forms (Kundan, Meena, Polki, Jadau) through four generations, now serving 850,000+ clients across five continents—demonstrates how generational craftsmanship and artisan empowerment create timeless luxury resonating globally.

In 1921, Shri Kishan Das Gilara opened a small rented room in Jaipur, naming his enterprise "Rambhajo's" after his devotion to Lord Ram. Today, 104 years later, that philosophy has scaled into one of the world's leading jewelry wholesalers: 850,000+ clients across five continents, plus sister brand Advit Jewels.

PRESERVING ROYAL COURT ARTISTRY

Rambhajo's specializes in royal court art forms: Kundan (pure gold setting uncut diamonds), Meena (intricate enamelling), Polki (bold uncut diamonds), Jadau (traditional Rajputana technique). These aren't mere categories—they're living heritage requiring master artisans' lifetime dedication.

Under the fourth-generation leadership — brothers Abhishek, Nitin, Prateek, Vipul Gilara — Rambhajo's employs artisans, many of whose associations have extended across three, four generations. "Quality work comes from quality karigars. We have artisans who have literally grown up with us, loyal across generations," says Abhishek Gilara. "All our jewellery is handmade. Our creative directors design from their love for gemstones—given a chance, they would never sell their creations because they are so dear to them."

This artisan empowerment distinguishes Rambhajo's from mass production. No assembly lines—every piece handcrafted, ensuring centuries-old techniques survive. Gen Z's values (ethical labor, cultural preservation, authentic over manufactured) align perfectly with this model.

HERITAGE MEETS CONTEMPORARY INNOVATION

While preserving tradition, Abhishek and his brother's leadership embraces modernity: implementing IT systems (five-year transformation), introducing virtual try-ons and online consultations making Jaipur craftsmanship globally accessible, launching lighter everyday luxury collections alongside traditional bridal pieces (₹5 lakh-₹5 crore range), championing sustainable Polki craftsmanship.

Recognition validates this synthesis: Forbes featured Abhishek (August 2024), Business Today "Inspiring Indian Leader" (September 2024), India Today Power List 2024, Atmanirbhar Bharat Award 2024, International Visionary Award 2024, TEDx Speaker, Padma Shri Nominee. Author of 700+ books on leadership and spirituality, Abhishek embodies the modern jeweller-philosopher: "Believe in disciplined effort, faith, and continuous learning. True success lies in inspiring others while staying

grounded."

GEN Z'S HERITAGE LUXURY APPETITE

Gen Z prioritizes heritage authenticity over brand logos, investment value over fashion trends, craftsmanship stories over celebrity endorsements. Rambhajo's clients seeking "traditional jewellery reminding them of the glorious bygone era of kings and queens" mirror Gen Z's desire for pieces carrying meaning, history, identity—heirlooms worth preserving, not disposable accessories.

The company's regional fusion—blending Mughal aesthetics (Delhi), Rajputana royalty (Jaipur), Deccan flamboyance (Hyderabad), South Indian temple influences—creates jewelry transcending geography, appealing to India's diaspora across five continents.

For Gen Z researching heritage luxury online, for global collectors seeking investment-grade Indian craftsmanship, for modern brides wanting royal court artistry—Rambhajo's 104-year legacy demonstrates that preserving tradition through generational devotion, empowering artisans through ethical practices, and adapting heritage for contemporary tastes creates luxury transcending trends.

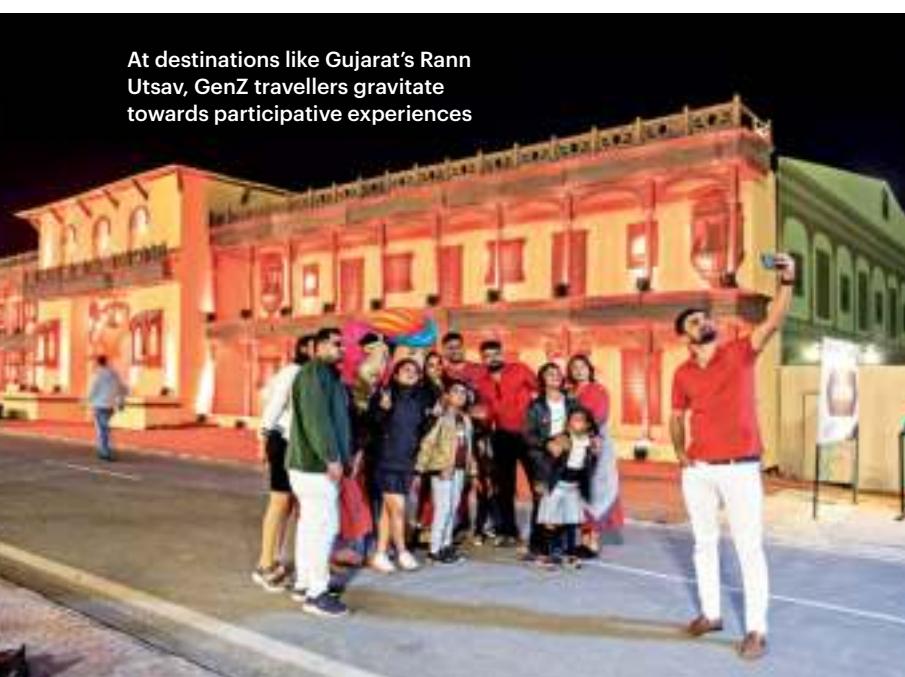


From left to right back line Vipul, Prateek, Nitin, Abhishek Gilara

In front row from left to right Girraj Prasad Gilara and Gordhan Das Gilara

In front single Krishna Vardhan Gilara

At destinations like Gujarat's Rann Utsav, GenZ travellers gravitate towards participative experiences



150 | ences. “What they object to is paying for something that feels redundant,” adds Thaker. “If the experience offers emotional or cultural value, price becomes secondary.”

Amrit Rajaratnam, Managing Director of Island Life Sri Lanka that operates four hotels across the emerald island, says, “Feeling connected to the destination is more important for Gen Z than traditional symbols of indulgence.”

What's on Their Plate

Across cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru, restaurateurs are noticing that younger diners are not simply eating out, they are curating social lives around food, choosing places that feel participatory and visually appealing online. “Sense of community is one thing Gen Z is extremely big on,” says food historian and author Anoothi Vishal. “They want to discover together, not compete through

price points.” That shift has helped propel regional pop-ups, micro-cuisines, and casual formats over rigid fine dining.

At Hunger Inc. Hospitality, the contrast is visible brand to brand. “Veronica’s sees a much higher Gen Z footfall,” says Co-founder Yash Bhanage, noting that alcohol-light, daytime-friendly concepts naturally attract younger diners.

Contrary to stereotypes of delivery-first habits, he observes that Gen Z enjoys being physically present. “From what we see at Veronica’s and Bombay Sweet Shop, they genuinely enjoy dine-in culture.” Yet this cohort is not being directly engineered for. Sameer Seth, Founder and CEO of Hunger Inc., insists that menu development still begins with instinct, not demographics.

“We are never saying, ‘This is what will appeal to Gen Z.’ We ask whether something is genuinely delicious,” he says, pointing to the Coffee Rasgulla Tiramisu. Its popularity among younger diners,

Seth argues, reflects resonance rather than targeting.

Discovery, however, has changed irrevocably. “Social media visibility now complements location. A strong digital presence can offset secondary locations, especially for Gen Z,” says Rajan Sethi, Managing Director of Bright Hospitality that owns brands such as Gurgaon-based OMO, Espresso Anyday, and Ikk Panjab. Over the past three to five years, Gen Z has grown from a peripheral audience to a core customer segment for Bright Hospitality.

Founder & CEO, Sahil Sambhi Brands that includes Japanico, Vietnam and Bawri, among others, Sahil Sambhi, goes further, arguing that aesthetics are inseparable from food. “Dining is becoming more specialised, experiential, and curated,” he says, noting how menu design, layouts, and tone are filtered instantly through Instagram.

Gen Z’s evolving relationship with alcohol is also reshaping menus. AD Singh of the Olive Group describes a move towards lower-intensity socialising. “They want quieter places, low ABV or zero-proof cocktails, and space for conversation,” he says.

Price, too, is more nuanced than assumed. “India has always been value-driven,” Bhanage notes, adding that younger consumers are simply earlier in their earning cycles. Bright Hospitality’s Sethi calls them “price-aware rather than price-sensitive,” willing to pay for ambience, beverages, and experiences that feel socially rewarding.

He adds that they are pushing the industry to be “more fluid, social, and experience-first.” The plate still matters. But so does everything around it. **BT**

@smitabw



निःशुल्क हुई सिंचाई खुशहाली घर आई

16 लाख+ किसानों के बिजली बिल माफ



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial



CMOUttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP



सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

The Gadget Generation

From wearables and audio to smart homes and wellness tech, Gen Z now drives almost 50% of India's \$45–50 billion consumer tech market

BY PALAK AGARWAL

152 |

THEY ARE called Gen Z, but in India's fast-evolving consumer economy, a more accurate label may perhaps be the *gadget generation*. This is a cohort that splurges willingly on travel, concerts and experiences, yet an equally significant share of its discretionary spending is channelled to technology. And no, it isn't just smartphones.

From gaming consoles and audio wearables to healthtech devices, personalised accessories and smart home products, Gen Z's relationship with gadgets is expansive and deeply personal. Technology, for them, is not just functional, it is immersive, expressive and constantly connected. What matters just as much is whether a product aligns with their values: sustainability, authenticity, brand purpose and,

crucially, social validation. For a generation raised on Instagram reels, YouTube reviews and creator-led discovery, a gadget is as much a lifestyle signal as it is a utility.

The numbers show why brands are scrambling for relevance. According to reports, of India's \$45–50 billion consumer tech devices market, almost half or nearly \$20–25 billion is driven by Gen Z, or Zoomers. At an estimated 377 million people today, Zoomers already are the largest generation India has seen. Born into an internet-connected economy where digital consumption was inevitable, technology is the backbone of their lives.

Smartphones continue to anchor this ecosystem. According to the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey, smartphones are at the centre of their digital life, and device choice clearly reflects income, education and aspira-

tion levels. The iPhone dominates smartphone usage in this cohort at 31%, with penetration rising sharply among metro users, post-graduates and those with higher incomes. Usage jumps from 10% in those who earn less than ₹2 lakh to nearly 80% among those earning over ₹15 lakh.

At 23%, Samsung remains the strongest mass-market rival across income groups, while Chinese brands like Vivo, Xiaomi and Oppo resonate with lower-income and Tier II consumers. Despite premium momentum, the ₹25,000–50,000 mid-premium band remains the most popular.

However, spending is also increasingly spilling over into adjacent categories. Wearables, audio devices, wellness gadgets, gaming hardware and smart appliances are finding greater acceptance among young buyers who view technology as an extension of their lifestyle



PHOTO BY HARDIK CHHABRA

rather than a standalone purchase. The shift marks a move away from single-device dependence to an ecosystem of connected, purpose-built products.

“India’s Gen Z is not just the next wave of consumers. They are fundamentally reshaping how

technology is evaluated, adopted, and integrated into daily life,” says Sachin Gupta, MD at German wellness technology company Healy World India, known for its compact wearable health devices, which entered the Indian market in 2019.

Gupta points to a clear genera-

tional shift. Unlike earlier cohorts, Gen Z evaluates technology through the lens of utility, impact and lifestyle fit. “They are far more conscious of how technology affects sleep, focus and mental wellbeing,” he says. As a result, companies like Healy World are

FUTURE FOCUS

Gen Z is the market: With nearly 380 million consumers, it already drives close to 50% of India's \$45–50 billion consumer tech market, making it the most influential cohort today

Smartphones just the starting point: While phones remain central, Gen Z spending is rapidly shifting to wearables, audio, wellness tech, smart homes and gaming

Discovery is creator-led, validation is omnichannel: Purchases begin on social feeds and

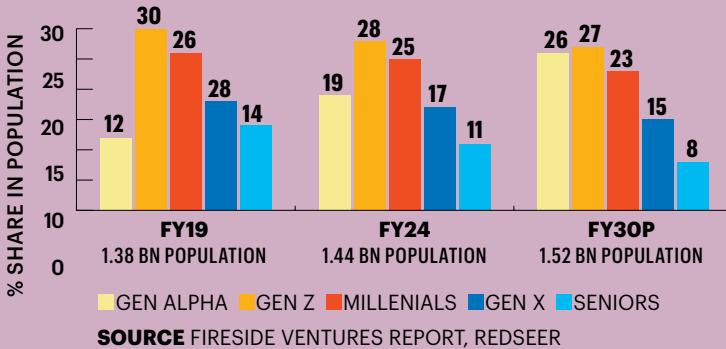
short-form video, but are sealed through experience centres, AR demos and same-day delivery

Purpose beats hype: Gen Z will pay a premium for tech that delivers clear utility, wellness, sustainability and data transparency, but remains value-conscious

Selling to Gen Z requires a new playbook: Winning Gen Z demands content-led funnels, creator credibility, quick commerce fulfilment and lifestyle positioning

YOUNG & POWERFUL

- By 2030, India will have 400 million Gen Z and 350 million millennials—together twice the size of the US population today



WHO WILL FUEL CONSUMER SPENDING?

| YEAR | TOTAL CONSUMER SPENDING | GEN Z-DRIVEN SPENDING | % SHARE |
|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| 2024 | \$2 trillion | \$860 billion | 43% |
| 2030E | \$2.9 trillion | \$1.4 trillion | 46% |
| 2035E | \$3.9 trillion | \$2 trillion | 50% |

E IS ESTIMATE; SOURCE BCG

seeing young consumers actively questioning technology's long-term impact on health and quality of life, and they don't mind spending.

The stakes are high. As per BCG, Gen Z already influences nearly \$860 billion of consumer spending globally. That is projected to swell to \$2 trillion over the next decade. For brands, winning this generation early could translate into long-term loyalty. But there is a catch: Gen Z demands relevance, transparency and authenticity and is quick to disengage if brands fail to deliver.

MARKET AND MOMENTUM

Research rests at the heart of Gen Z's buying behaviour, though not the conventional kind. This is a generation shaped by social media, where discovery is continuous and led by creators. "Today's social media feed isn't just an ad channel; it's the new prime-time television for discovery," says Adarsh Menon, Partner at venture capital firm Fireside Ventures. "That is now at the core of how the new generation shops."

Creators, in many ways, have replaced traditional advertising. Their content—raw, relatable and experiential—carries far more credibility for Gen Z than glossy brand campaigns. A product review, a 'day-in-the-life' reel or a fitness challenge can trigger demand far more effectively than a full-page print ad.

"Gen Z's path to purchase is increasingly shaped by social feeds, short-form video and influencer cues, and then validated through omnichannel journeys and rapid fulfilment options—same day or next day—which they now expect as table stakes," says Anand Ramanathan, Partner and Consumer Industry Leader at Deloitte India. Discovery may happen online, but confirmation often occurs offline through experience centres, in-store demos or augmented reality (AR)-led trials.

INDIA'S SUPPLY CHAIN, NOW FASTER & FRESHER

As quick commerce tightens delivery windows and raises the stakes on freshness, Access Warehousing (Access BiZ) is strengthening its Southern backbone; while scaling toward a PAN-India supply chain solutions, network built for speed, precision and accountability.

Headquartered in Bangalore, Access BiZ has built its operating DNA in high-velocity environments where execution matters more than promises. The company does not just store goods, it solves supply chain problems, reduces risk and enables growth. Across FMCG, retail, automotive, dark store operation, fruits and vegetables, e-commerce and increasingly quick commerce, it manages supply chains that demand speed without sacrificing control.

Its Southern presence, spanning Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, anchors its national ambitions.

With over 300 professionals and a capital-efficient, non-asset-based model, Access BiZ is designed to scale fast and smart. It does not sell warehousing, it protects growth, capital and reputation by delivering structural cost efficiency rather than short-term cuts, achieved through process redesign, improved asset utilisation and scale economics.

Cold storage operations are live across key Southern markets, new temperature control facility coming online, we are meeting explosive demand of quick commerce sector head-on.

For them, thermal mile is critical. From farm-to-fork movements to rapid urban fulfilment, temperature-sensitive goods move through the supply chain without deviation. Through inventory velocity optimisation, layout engineering and demand-aligned storage, the company helps unlock working capital while maintaining service levels. In quick commerce, where minutes matter and margins are thin, discipline preserves value.

PAN-India expansion is demand-led, driven by enterprise clients seeking a single, accountable logistics partner. Access BiZ operates with defined SLAs, performance metrics and leadership-driven governance, ensuring visibility and control across tier-1 and tier-2 cities. Technology-led process control enables real-time oversight across warehouses and line-haul operations, supporting plug-and-play expansion from regional networks to national scale without service disruption.

"Our asset-light approach gives us agility without compromising service quality or control. It allows us to scale in step with our clients, especially in quick commerce."

*Shivraj Desai, Founder & Managing Director,
Access Warehousing Pvt Ltd,
www.accessbizindia.com*



For Indian consumer tech brands like Noise, this isn't new. "India is the country for youngsters. We would be the fastest to absorb any technology that comes in—it just has to make sense in our lives," says Gaurav Khatri, Founder of Noise.

Youth has always been central to Noise's strategy. Nearly 33% of its users are aged below 24, with another 33% between 24 and 34. But Khatri says Gen Z buyers are markedly different from millennials. "They are far more specific about solving one problem at a time," he explains. "For sleep, they want one device. For GPS-led activities, another. They don't want one device doing everything."

This is forcing brands to rethink product design and portfolio strategy. As core technologies mature and innovation plateaus, differentiation increasingly comes from lifestyle relevance. "Consumers today understand wearables far better than they did five years ago," says Khatri. "It's no longer just a watch or a step counter. It's an evolved product designed for specific use cases."

From Deloitte's vantage point, this shift is clearly visible across categories. Wearables, smart home and security devices, gaming and emerging interfaces continue to see strong traction, even as smartphones remain central. "Growth energy now sits in audio—TWS earbuds and smart speakers—because Gen Z's leisure and learning are audio-first," Ramanathan notes. Music, podcasts, creator content and short video dominate daily consumption, making audio devices a natural extension.

Quick commerce availability and omnichannel 'try-and-buy' models are further accelerating adoption. Experience centres, AR demos and same-day delivery are boosting accessory attach rates, a behaviour

Ramanathan likens to patterns seen in travel and leisure, where experience-led choices and premium upgrades are becoming the norm.

Importantly, Gen Z is shopping more mindfully. Deloitte's analyses point to a dual trend—premiumisation coupled with value consciousness. Gen Z is willing to pay a premium when a device aligns with a clear purpose, be it wellness, safety or creativity, and ethics such as clean materials, energy efficiency and sustainability.

eat, and features like touchscreens, long expected in cars and scooters, are now moving indoors.

The opportunity ahead is massive. But tapping this market requires a reset in go-to-market strategies. "Go-to-market is being rebuilt around content-led funnels," says Ramanathan. Creator videos drive awareness, micro-influencers build credibility for niche specifications, and short-form explainers convert interest into action.

For consumer tech companies,

For brands, winning this generation early could ensure long-term loyalty. But there is a catch: Gen Z demands relevance and authenticity

In home technology, for instance, the growing uptake of low-energy smart devices suggests sustainability is a functional specification that can tip purchase decisions when the price difference is modest. Privacy, too, is emerging as a critical factor. While Gen Z thrives on social discovery, heightened anxiety around health and economic uncertainty has made them cautious. Brands that communicate transparent data practices and permission-based sharing are gaining trust, particularly in categories like cameras, smart locks and wearables.

Even the kitchen is being reimagined. "Gen Z consumers are increasingly willing to pay a premium for smart, tech-enabled appliances," says Mahek Mody, founder of Uplience.ai, an AI cooking assistant start-up. Young consumers want greater control over what they

this means rethinking everything from product pages to backend operations. Creator content, live demos and upgrade offers are now embedded into digital storefronts, while physical retail is being augmented with smart shelves and assisted selling. Behind the scenes, AI-led demand forecasting and automated warehouses are helping brands respond to sudden spikes triggered by viral content.

D2C-native brands are leveraging quick commerce for accessories and trials, while legacy players are localising creator strategies across Tier II and III markets, where young cohorts are rising fast.

For India's consumer tech ecosystem, Gen Z is redefining how technology is discovered, evaluated and consumed, one scroll, one reel and one gadget at a time. **BT**

@PalakAgarwal64

Darpan Jayraj Kale: Building Intelligence into India's Urban Traffic Infrastructure with the first integration of Technology with Infrastructure.



Darpan Jayraj Kale
CEO
DPIFS Solutions Pvt. Ltd

As Indian cities grapple with rising congestion, rapid urbanisation, and increasing pressure on public infrastructure, leadership today demands more than vision. It requires the ability to design, finance, execute, and sustain complex systems at scale. Darpan Jayraj Kale, CEO of DPIFS Solutions Pvt. Ltd., operates at this critical intersection where technology, governance, and infrastructure delivery converge.

Under Kale's leadership, DPIFS Solutions has emerged as a specialist in AI-powered Smart Traffic and Intelligent Traffic Management Systems, focusing on real-world deployment rather than conceptual innovation alone. The company designs and implements integrated traffic solutions that combine artificial intelligence, smart signal systems, digital infrastructure, and command-and-control platforms to

improve urban mobility outcomes. A defining feature of Kale's approach is his emphasis on execution through structured delivery models. DPIFS primarily operates on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models, enabling cities to modernise their traffic infrastructure without incurring upfront capital expenditure. By assuming responsibility for design, financing, installation, operations, and long-term maintenance, DPIFS aligns performance accountability with system longevity.

Kale believes artificial intelligence is meaningful only when it delivers measurable results on the ground. At DPIFS, AI is applied to optimise signal timing, reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, enhance emergency vehicle movement, and support enforcement and road safety initiatives. These systems are designed to function continuously in live urban environments, adapting dynamically to traffic patterns rather than relying on static configurations. Equally important to Kale is financial sustainability. DPIFS projects are structured to generate long-term, compliant revenues through smart digital infrastructure integrated within traffic ecosystems. This approach ensures operational continuity throughout the concession period while reducing fiscal pressure on municipal authorities and state governments.

Institutional alignment forms another cornerstone of Kale's leadership. By working closely with municipal corporations, traffic police departments, and urban development authorities, he has positioned DPIFS as a long-term infrastructure partner rather than a transactional technology vendor. This alignment of public interest and private execution has proven essential in a sector where trust, regulatory compliance,

and continuity are key determinants of success.

Kale also brings a long-term perspective uncommon in fast-moving technology sectors. He recognises that cities do not operate on startup timelines. Traffic and mobility infrastructure must endure for decades, adapt to regulatory and demographic change, and scale alongside urban growth.

As India moves toward smarter and more connected cities, leadership will increasingly be defined by the ability to deliver intelligence through executable models. Through DPIFS Solutions, Darpan Jayraj Kale represents a new generation of infrastructure leaders—combining technological fluency, financial structuring, and execution discipline to address challenges that affect millions of urban citizens daily.

DPIFS Solutions Pvt. Ltd. is structured for large-scale execution and long-term concessions, supported by access to institutional capital and global funding partners aligned with infrastructure and smart-city development. The company is positioned to deliver BOT-based traffic and urban intelligence projects not only across India but in international markets, combining financial strength with operational depth. DPIFS also holds proprietary intellectual property in its Smart Traffic Time Systems (STTS), covering system architecture, integration logic with all smart city systems, and operational frameworks with literally zero downtime that enable scalable deployment across diverse regulatory and urban environments. This combination of capital readiness, BOT experience, and owned IP allows DPIFS to execute, operate, and transfer mission-critical traffic infrastructure with consistency, accountability, and global applicability under the leadership of Kale.

Dream Big, Stay Positive, Work Hard
and enjoy the Journey.

Presenting our Exemplary Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) Achievers of 2024"



RASHMI MATENELIYA
Gorakhpur



LATHA C
Namakkal



NINI ZARIN
Thrissur



MANVEET KAUR BHATIA
Jabalpur



MOKSHA RAGINI THOMAS
Kezhake
Vasai



APEKSHA P BOCHARE
Pune



HARSHITA JAIN
Rourkela



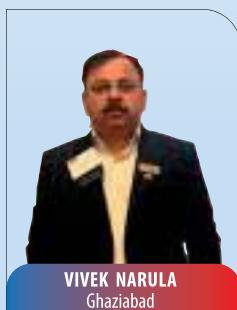
NABANEETA BHATTACHARYA
Kolkata



PATEL DIMPLEKUMARI M
Anand



SANJEEV SINGH LALOTRA
Chandigarh



VIVEK NARULA
Ghaziabad



SUMATHI S
Puducherry



DEEPTI RASTOGI
Moradabad



PRIYA PANDEY
Rewa



NITESH TEJRAJ JAIN
Ghatkopar



RUBY GOYAL
Ghaziabad



MAMATA SWAIN
Cuttack



HASTI SAVAN MORBIA
Gandhidham



BHAVIKABEN CHIRAGBHAI
BALAR
Surat



HEMANT BHIIKA KOTHAWADE
Nasik



SUDHIR BALKRISHNA GOVEKAR
Satara



JAY DARSHAN GOGAD
Nasik



RAJEEV MURARKA
Ranchi



KUSUM LADHA
Jaipur



SEJAL B BIHOLA
Vadodara

From every challenge, they carved a
new path forward.

Presenting our Exemplary Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) Achievers of 2024"



BINITA
Jamshedpur



**DIVISHA RAHUL
ANKLESHWARIYA**
Bharuch



SUNITA VERMA
Churu



RITA AJAY CHAUDHARI
Nasik



DIVAKAR ADDANDI
Karimnagar



NAMIT
Rewari



**GHANSYAMBHAI
TRIKAMBHAI VIRADIYA**
Surat



LALITKUMAR KANTILAL BHANSALI
AHMEDABAD



SANJAY RAMCHANDRA MAHADIK
Satara



SHRUTI CHARAYA
Ludhiana



SHIVANI JAIN
Moradabad



ASHISH JATIN SHAH
Khar



P B JANARDHAN
Chennai



SHALINI DAVID PATRICK
Vasai



NEELAM
Sikar



KHUSHBU PIYUSH JAIN
Mumbai



KARUPPANNAN SELVARAJU
Namakkal



GAURANG KHURANA
Faridabad



BHONSLE SANJEEV MOHANDAS
Khar



RINABEN RAKESH RAMANI
Bardoli



SONIA VISHAL RATHI
Nasik



MITALI
Rewari



MANOSH MANOHAR KHAVTAY
Goa



SUKETU CHINUBHAI SHAH
Ahmedabad



SEEMA KHATTER
Gurugram

Success follows those who turn challenges into chances.

Presenting our Exemplary Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) Achievers of 2024"



RATIRAM KHICHER
Jhunjhunu



SUGANYA S
Dindigul



DEVI SINGH CHAUHAN
Nagaur



ELANGOVAN M
Madurai



MAHESHBHAI KANJIBHAI YADAV
Ahmedabad



HARISH RAMESH SHAHU
Nagpur



RAKESH KIRAN SHAH
Ghatkopar



VIRENDRA ARVINDLAL BALESHWARIA
Surat



SUNEETHA TIPIREDDY
Nellore



PANKAJ KALITA
Nalbari



PRITEE YADAV
Ghaziabad



BRIJESHKUMAR UMEDBHAI PATEL
Ahmedabad



CHANDAN KUMAR
Chhapra



SASHMITA BEHERA
Cuttack



VIJAYAKUMAR R
Theni



HIMANSU BHUSAN DAS
Bhubaneswar



KASHISH NAGDEV
Jabalpur



RINABA DIGVIJAYSINH RATHOD
Gandhinagar



MRIDUL TANEJA
Ambala



ANSHUMEET CHIRAG PORECHA
Jamnagar



RAM BHAJAN YADAV
Bokaro



UDIT KOHLI
Bareilly



KISHOR NARAYANDAS MANGHWANI
Ahmedabad



VISHAL RAHEJA
Hissar



MOHAN REDDY TAPPETA
Tirupati

Presenting our Exemplary Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) Achievers of 2024"



MAHESH PRAKASHCHAND JAIN
Jalgaon



BHAVIN ARVINDBHAI MEHTA
Raikot New



JINALI NIKHILKUAR SHAH
Ahmedabad



DIPESHBHAI MATHURBHAI PATEL
Gandhinagar



KUNJAN RAJENDRA RATHI
Akola



RUPA AMAR LAHOTI
Lucknow



ASTHA JAIN
Saharanpur



PALLAVI SINHA
Hazaribagh



RAVI KUMAR GUPTA
Dhanbad



ANCY RAJU
Bengaluru



LOGANATHAN M
Trichy



SHUBHAM PALIWAL
Ghaziabad



KALYANI SACHIN MANIAR
Rajkot



MINNI GULATI
Ghaziabad



ANUP NARENDRA KUMAR MEHTA
Bengaluru



SARITA JAIN
Satna



DHRUMIT PANKAJ MEHTA
Borivili



SOLA ANIMESH
Warangal



RAKESHKUMAR G MISTRY
Bardoli



JAGRUTI CHANDRASHEEL MEHTA
Ahmedabad



PATEL JYOTIBEN NAGINBHAI
Surat



DIMPLE HARESH WADHWA
Kalyan-West



ASHA VIRAMKUMAR PANCHAL
Ahmedabad



MINATI TRIPATHY
Berhampur



ANAHITA KALI DRIVER
Lower Parel



162 |

A SNAPSHOT

► Gen Z does not view gold as jewellery but a digital haven, say RIAs

► 40% prefer traditional assets like fixed deposits, the survey reveals

► GenZ is using technology to manage risk in investment choices

► It prefers capital appreciation over quick returns promised by riskier investments like crypto

Cautious Money

Investment advisors say the young investor group is using technology to manage risk. They are not just tech-savvy, but data-rational as well

BY AMIT MUDGILL

| 163



Their portfolio preferences suggest an attempt to hedge against inflation through equity exposure

ARECENT INTERACTION WITH a 24-year-old Gen Z client surprised Goa-based investment advisor Upasana Mondal. The young information technology (IT) professional, who had just received his first bonus, used artificial intelligence (AI) to simulate the outcome of a 10-year portfolio, comparing the performance of a crypto asset with that of an index fund, to find out where he should invest.

A few years ago, a client of that age would typically have bought a crypto asset for the fear of missing out, or simply purchased stocks suggested by social media influencers, says Mondal, the founder of financial advisory DreamBluePrintz.

Mondal says members of the Gen Z are using technology for

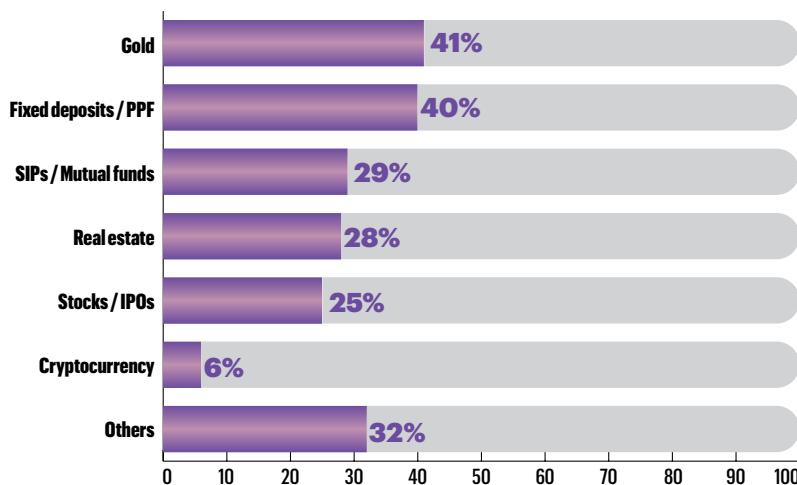
investment choices, showing they are not just tech-savvy, but data-rational as well.

India's Gen Z or Zoomers, the generation born between mid-to-late 1990s and early 2010s, succeeding the Millennials, are maturing as investors in an economy shaped by a digital-first environment and unprecedented access to financial products. Surprisingly, they are preferring capital appreciation over quick returns promised by riskier investments like crypto assets; they are hedging against inflation and currency depreciation through gold while using systematic investment plans (SIPs) as a form of rupee cost averaging to manage equity volatility.

Take 22-year-old Shivam Mishra. The New Delhi-based investor says he saves around 20% of his salary. Out of this, half goes to SIPs in mutual funds. The 22-year-

THE PATTERN

- Gold, fixed deposits, MFs lead Gen Z investment choices



SOURCE BT-PRICE GENZ CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

164 |

old finds bullion, especially silver, an interesting prospect but not because of the surging price of the metal. "It is because of fundamentals, the shortage of physical silver," he says.

Mishra says he has made some investments in cryptos in the past and enjoyed the initial returns. But mounting losses amid geopolitical flare-ups made him pivot. A Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey of 4,300 respondents across 12 cities by PRICE underscores the inference of investment advisors like Mondal about the behaviour of Gen Z investors.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Some 40-41% of Gen Z investors prefer owning gold and fixed deposits (FDs), shows the survey. Among them, 47-48% of the participants, who are government employees, prefer FDs and gold. But

37-39% of privately employed individuals also prefer the traditional assets, highlighting the continued relevance of such products even among young earners perceived to be more amenable to risk.

Wealth preservation remains central to their thinking, the data on respondents aged 18-29 years suggests. Despite Gen Z growing up in a Digital-First environment, crypto currency investments remain only a marginal preference. Only 6% respondents suggest a preference for crypto investments, which did attract 19% of the respondents with education below primary levels.

Asset-building, typically real estate, appears to be gaining traction as participants climb up the income strata. A total of 68% respondents earning ₹15 lakh and above show a preference for real estate investments; 29% prefer Mutual Fund

(MF) investments through SIPs and 25% like to dabble in stocks directly.

Abhishek Kumar, an investment advisor at financial planner SahajMoney, says the behaviour is reflective of a broader transition. Gen Z is navigating a middle path between the caution of earlier generations and the tendency of global peers to experiment and take risks, he says.

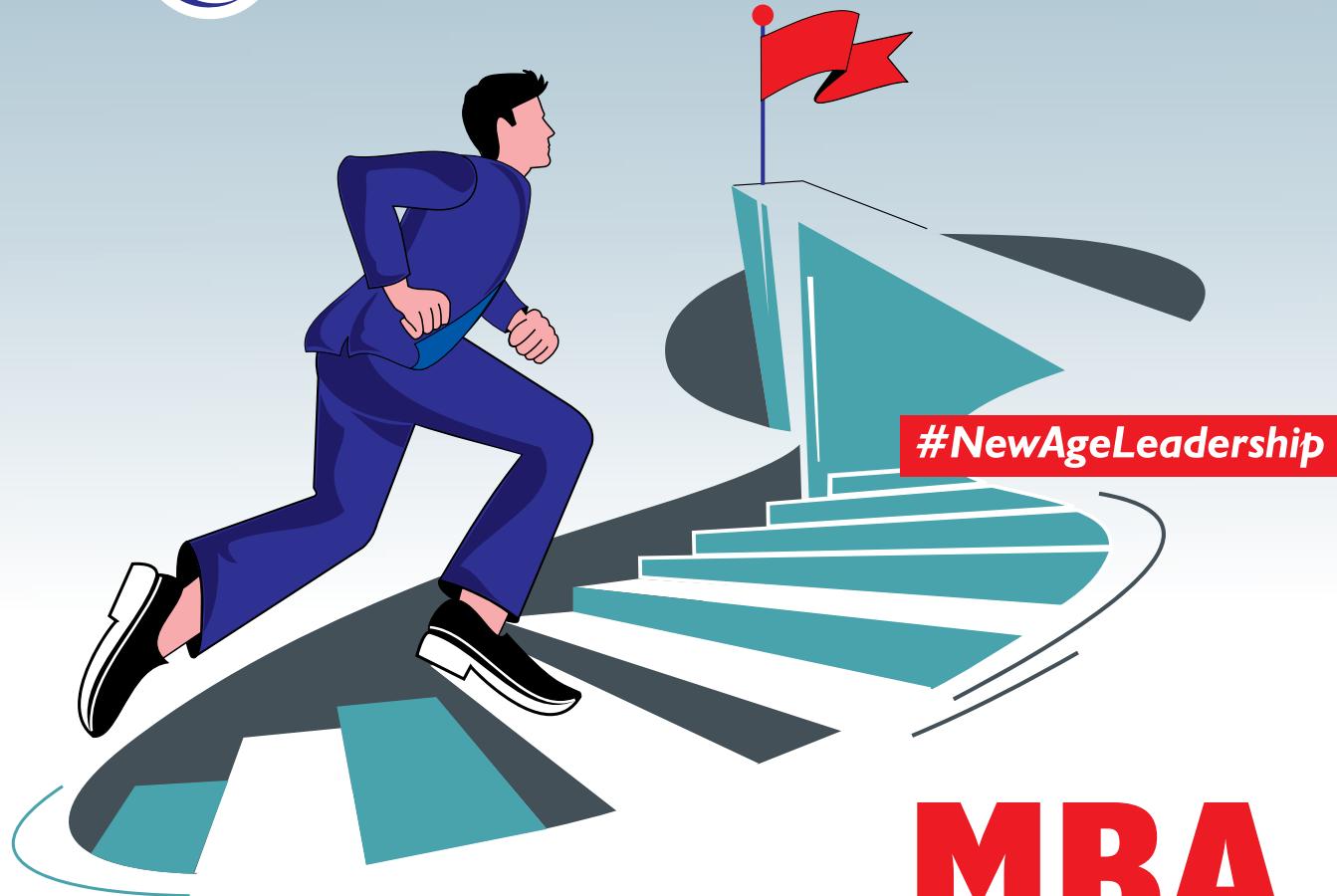
Their portfolio preferences suggest an attempt to hedge against inflation through equity exposure while preserving purchasing power through gold alongside fixed-income investments.

"This generation does not view gold as 'jewellery' but as a 'digital safe haven.' The rise in digital gold and SGBs (sovereign gold bonds) shows they value stability but want the convenience of a digital transaction. The shift away from crypto suggests a maturing mindset," says Mondal.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIATIONS

The survey highlights clear demographic variations. Metro respondents show a higher inclination towards MF investments via SIPs, with 30% preferring the avenue compared with 27% in Tier-II cities. Tier-II respondents show a stronger preference for gold, with 44% favouring the precious metal and 43% going for FDs. Male respondents lean more towards equities and real estate; 51% of women show a stronger preference for gold.

Education continue to shape investment choices. Post-graduates show a higher preference for gold, FDs (51% each), MFs and real estate (40% each). In comparison, respondents with lower education levels show a lesser preference for majority asset classes barring cryptos.



#NewAgeLeadership

MBA

2026-28

HIGHLIGHTS



Highest CTC
of ₹ 41.40 L



100%
case-based
learning



75,000+
alumni pursuing
careers in
India & abroad



Networking with
1000+
companies

The Selection Process for 2026 will be conducted at ICFAI Business School (IBS), Hyderabad from **February 14 to 22, 2026**, for admissions to all Nine ICFAI Business School campuses.

Download QR Code for
IBS App



Android



Apple iOS

Call toll free : 1 800 425 556677

Website : www.ibsindia.org

By occupation, government employees show a strong preference for FDs and Public Provident Fund (PPF) at 48%. Self-employed individuals and entrepreneurs favour real estate, gold and FDs; private-sector salaried respondents maintained a more balanced asset allocation.

Income levels reveal a clear trend towards diversification. Respondents earning above ₹10 lakh annually have a higher participation in real estate and gold; lower-income groups favour FDs, PPF and other savings avenues. High-income households showed the strongest preference for gold at 54%, FDs at 48%, SIPs and mutual funds at 46%, and real estate at 46%.

INSIDE A GEN Z MIND

166 | Advisors say Gen Z investors frequently ask about MF SIPs versus direct equity investing, as well as tax-saving instruments such as Equity-Linked Savings Schemes.

Kumar notes that while Gen Z is quick to open investment accounts digitally, limited market experience leaves many underprepared for volatility. As far as savings go, despite relatively healthy saving rates, most Gen Z members do not maintain an emergency fund and instead channelise savings directly into equities.

Mondal says Gen Z recognises that they have the time but not the bandwidth to track 500 stocks. SIPs allow them to participate in India's growth story without the market volatility of individual stocks.

For a few, says the New Delhi-based Kumar, limited exposure to personal finance education means many are unfamiliar with concepts such as compounding, mechanics of SIPs, FD returns relative to inflation, and long-term wealth protection offered by different asset classes.



"Gen Z is navigating a middle path between the caution of earlier generations and experimentation seen among global peers"

ABHISHEK KUMAR
FOUNDER, SAHAJ MONEY



"With so much AI-generated advice and 'finfluencer' content, the biggest risk is over-analysis. Stick to the basics"

UPASANA MONDAL
FOUNDER,
DREAMBLUEPRINTZ

SAVING GRACE

The PRICE survey shows that 41% of respondents save between 20% and 40% of their income, while 32% save up to 20%. About 13% save 40-60% while 3% reported saving most of their income. These trends showed little variation across genders. Education emerged as a differentiating factor. Around 51% of post-graduates save between 20% and 40% of their income. This proportion declines steadily as education levels drop, ranging from 16% to 38% among graduates, higher secondary, matric and below primary groups.

Gen Z today spends time and effort to learn about investing, says Saurabh Bansal, founder of Finatwork Investment Advisors. He notes that Gen Zs value work-life balance and that they just do not derive identity from their work; they focus on the quality of work.

"I would suggest them to keep 20-30% of their income aside and divide it into three buckets 1) for the next experience (reward oneself for showing discipline) 2) for long term (towards financial independence) 3) risk bucket (investing in an idea they are bullish about)," says Bansal.

Kumar advises Gen Z investors to first build an emergency corpus covering at least six months of expenses and clear high-interest debt before investing. He says equity investments should be considered only with a five- to seven-year horizon alongside diversification across fixed income, equities and assets such as gold.

"With so much AI-generated advice and 'finfluencer' content, the biggest risk is over-analysis. Stick to the basics: low-cost index funds and FD and gold for balancing," says Mondal. **BT**

@amit_mudgill

SEVENSEAS: Setting New Benchmarks in Integrated Logistics

In today's increasingly complex supply chain environment, businesses need logistics partners who combine compliance, reach and execution excellence. Sevenseas has emerged as one of India's most trusted names in freight forwarding and customs clearance, delivering integrated logistics solutions across India and global markets.

With over two decades of experience in the Indian logistics industry, Sevenseas Global Express Logistics Pvt Ltd brings operational expertise and a strong compliance-driven culture. The company operates through 28 strategically located offices across India, ensuring seamless pan-India coverage across all major ports, airports, ICDs and commercial hubs. This extensive domestic network, supported by a reliable international partner ecosystem, enables Sevenseas to manage end-to-end logistics requirements with speed, visibility and control.

Sevenseas is an ISO 9001:2015 certified organization and holds the prestigious AEO-LO (Authorized Economic Operator – Logistics) accreditation from the Government of India—an elite status. Achieving this recognition underscores the company's commitment to stringent compliance, robust operational controls, data security and financial integrity, translating into faster clearances and reduced risk for customers.

The company offers a comprehensive portfolio of services including air and ocean freight forwarding (import and export), customs clearance across all cargo categories, warehousing at strategic locations, domestic transportation through owned and outsourced fleets and specialized handling of project cargo, dangerous goods, pharmaceuticals, reefers and sensitive shipments.

What truly sets Sevenseas apart is its integrated service model, providing customers with single-point accountability and faster turnaround times while minimizing operational complexity. Built on a foundation of trust, experience, and compliance, Sevenseas Global Express Logistics Pvt Ltd continues to be a dependable logistics partner for businesses across industries—3500+ customers itself is a testimony of Sevenseas delivering secure, efficient and scalable logistics solutions aligned with evolving supply chain demands.

"In an era where supply chains demand speed, reliability and seamless coordination, Sevenseas has emerged as a trusted name in India's logistics landscape. Operating since 2001, Sevenseas has steadily evolved from a single office in Bengaluru into a pan-India integrated logistics service provider, backed by 25 years of industry experience and a strong network of 28 offices across the country, we continue to invest in technology, process excellence, and talent to deliver secure, efficient and scalable logistics solutions that help our customers grow with confidence."



THE Gen Z SHOW

How do Gen Z members consume content? The BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey finds it prefers shorter formats that require less attention spans

BY ARCHNA SHUKLA

GONE ARE THE days of “appointment viewing” on a static screen in the living room. Gen Z has pivoted to a multi-screen, digital, on-the-go media consumption ecosystem. This generation seamlessly negotiates a massively fragmented, always-on, mobile-first landscape seeking customised information and experiences.

“Media has three primary use cases—escapism, information, and self-aggrandisement,” says Ashish Pherwani, Leader, Media & Entertainment sector, EY. “This hasn’t changed for Gen Z in as far as the relevance of media is concerned. What has changed is the how, the when, and the where.”

Gen Z, for instance, still wants to stay informed and is an active consumer of news and opinions, but it doesn’t go to legacy media

platforms such as physical newspapers or TV channels. An industry research shows that Gen Z sources its news from targeted sources on social platforms and prefers shorter formats.

According to UK-based consultancy Brand Finance, Gen Z’s attention span has shrunk from 20-30 minutes a few years ago to 8-10 minutes now. This makes formats such as “shorts” and “reels” more popular among them.

General entertainment, however, remains a mixed bag for this generation. The BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey, for instance, finds that Gen Z follows a hybrid entertainment model by blending digital-first formats with selective out-of-home experiences.

Brand Finance, which conducts global research each year with over 2,00,000 respondents for its Brand Valuation report, has similar findings. “Shorts and reels are favoured,

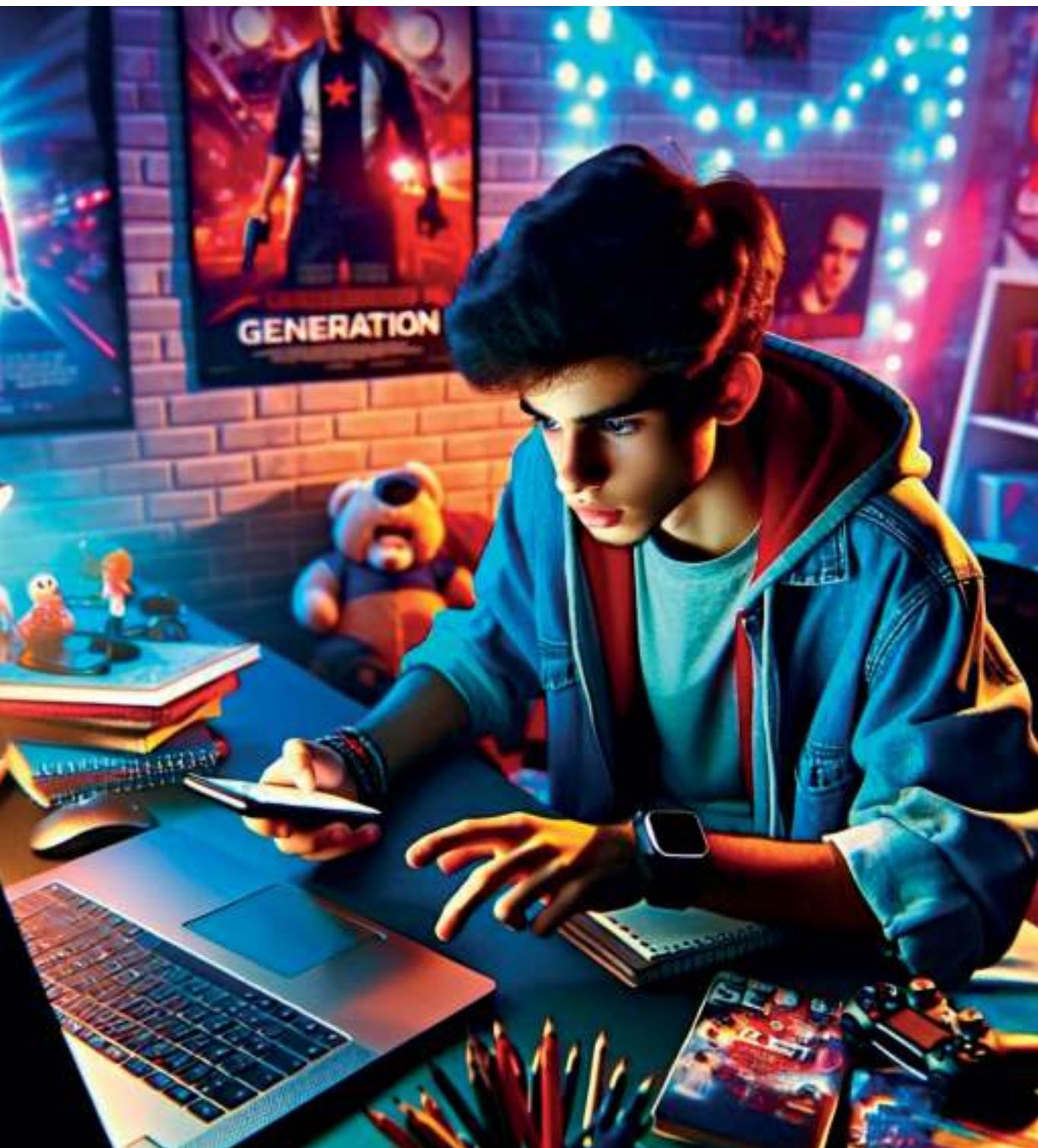
but they do switch to big screens,” says Ajimon Francis, Managing Director, Brand Finance, India.

Claiming that nearly one in two users on JioHotStar platforms belongs is a Gen Z, a spokesperson says the generation responds to engaging content on platforms other than social media, too. “Discovery (of content) may begin with a moment, a highlight, or a live cultural event, but sustained viewing follows when relevance and authenticity align.”

On the big screen at home, Gen Z prefers sports events with cricket still reigning supreme among the male audiences. Reality shows such as Big Boss are popular but so are romance, comedy and action genres for OTT platforms and cinemas.

WANTED ‘PLUS’

Celebrities such as film or sports stars are losing favour among the Gen Z when it comes to seeking



| 169

WHAT THEY ARE WATCHING

► **On the big screen at home, Gen Z prefers sports events with cricket still reigning supreme among male audiences, apart from reality shows**

► **Gen Z still wants to stay informed and is an active consumer of news and opinion, but it doesn't prefer legacy media platforms such as newspapers**

credible information or recommendations of any kind. This consumer set follows “influencers” or individual content creators that have garnered following based on their well-researched and responsible content.

A study commissioned by Meta India in September found that nearly half the festive shoppers interviewed followed influencers and two-thirds of them said that they trusted the brands that collaborated with credible creators.

This is because influencers are seen as “PLUs (people like us)”, and hence, are considered more trustworthy, unlike celebrities who are known to endorse products or information for monetary gains and without any accountability.

Be it media consumption or making purchase decisions, another ally that Gen Z collaborates with is generative AI. The Meta study quoted above found that over 80% of festive shoppers, that included a large section of Gen Z, “harnessed generative AI to spark gift ideas and discover inspiration”.

Likewise, Gen Z would commit to a long-format TV series or a movie in cinemas or on streaming platforms only after some influencer recommends it.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Research from Deloitte, Nielsen, and Horowitz shows that globally, Gen Z is gearing towards free, ad-supported streaming TV, or FAST, over-paid subscriptions. The primary reasons for this shift are the increasing cost of subscriptions.

India is likely to see the same trend as FAST options emerge. Meanwhile, the BT-Price survey shows that of their total entertainment budget, Indian Gen Z spends the most, 52%, on cinemas, followed by 51% on YouTube creators. “This highlights their preference

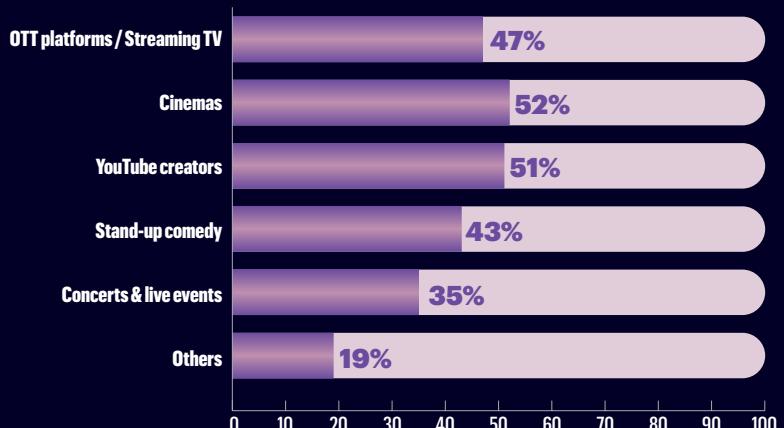


GEN Z METRICS

- **380 Million+ Population**
- **₹1 lakh crore+ Brand consumption**
- **Consumption Trend** Mobile-first digital generation
- **Time Spent** Spends more than three hours every day scrolling social media
- **Popular Hangout Sites** YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat

WHERE THE MONEY FLOWS

- Gen Z pays for both screen and stage



SOURCE BT-PRICE GEN Z CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

Investing is a Game of Strategy, Make Your Move Wisely



In both chess and investing, thoughtful decisions shape the outcome. Every move matters, and success lies in planning ahead, understanding the landscape, and staying focused on your goals.

Here's how investing mirrors the strategic depth of chess:

Set your financial goals

Like defining your endgame, clarity helps guide every decision.



Protect your assets

Just as the king is guarded, your investments need risk management.



Diversify your portfolio

The queen's versatility reflects the strength of diversification.



Build a strong foundation

Position your financial tools like pawns that support your strategy.



Stay alert and informed

Anticipate market shifts the way a player reads the board.



LEARN. PLAN. INVEST.

To know more, please consult your Financial Adviser

Mutual Fund investors need to complete the Know Your Customer (KYC) process, which can be done by submitting completed KYC Form along with the required documents at any AMC's branch Office or official Points of Acceptance. Please refer <https://www.licmf.com/kyc-redressal> to know about KYC documentary requirement, procedure for change of address, phone number, bank details etc. The investors are cautioned to invest only with SEBI registered Mutual Funds, the details of which can be verified on SEBI's website under 'Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure Institutions' (<https://www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html>) For any complaints and grievance redressal, investors can contact the Investor Relations Officer of the respective AMC and if not satisfied with the resolution given by the AMC, he/she can approach SEBI by registering the complaint on SEBI SCORES Portal (<https://scores.sebi.gov.in/>) and/or escalate the complaint through Online Dispute Resolution Portal (<https://smartodr.in/login>).

for both shared cultural moments and creator-led, on-demand content,” says the survey. OTT platforms (47%) remain a core entertainment staple, particularly among metro residents, post-graduates and higher-income groups, finds the survey.

The survey further reveals that live and experiential formats scale sharply with income and education. Stand-up comedy (43%) and concerts or live events (35%) show big takers among affluent Gen Z, entrepreneurs and post-graduates, rising to over 60% at higher income levels.

In contrast, lower-income and less-educated cohorts remain more reliant on free or low-cost digital entertainment.

According to YouTube India, this year marked a shift in the universalisation of content irrespective of its original language. “In 2025, content went global, local, and universal all at once. India’s creators are no longer limited by regional nuances; they are building on them.”

Citing an example, YouTube India says that Mr Beast, its most popular content creator globally, didn’t merely visit India this year but “he moved in digitally with his channel gaining over 47 million subscribers”. This became possible because Mr Beast’s content was made available in seven different audio tracks.

THE GEN Z BRANDWAGON

At 380 million, Gen Z is a large, yet not the mainstream, target group for most advertisers because it has yet to emerge as the bread-winner or the primary decision maker when it comes to big-ticket or household expenses.

Still, this generation spends big bucks on personal hygiene and grooming, apparels, fashion accessories and cosmetics, electronics and gadgets, and services such as



“Content is and will always be the king. Be it GenZ or any other generation, good, engaging and relevant content will always find takers”

ASHISH PHERWANI
LEADER, MEDIA &
ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR, EY

hospitality, travel and indoor as well as outdoor entertainment.

According to estimates, Gen Z consumption, currently, amounts to around ₹1 lakh crore, thus, making it difficult for brands to ignore it or wait till it eventually comes to hold the household purse strings. Besides, brands need to build familiarity and affinity with this customer group for the future, and hence, need to invest in engaging with them even now.

Incidentally, this generation is using social platforms for making purchases too. This has led to “social media driving D2C, or direct-to-consumer, brands in a big way,” says Francis, adding that the “assurance of easy returns, exchanges and refunds is accelerating the phenomenon.”

THE FUTURE

When Gen Z ascends to become the mainstream consumer, the media landscape will likely crystallise into a layered ecosystem where personal will coexist with collective experience. “The future of entertainment is not binary,” says a JioHotStar spokesperson.

Indeed, consumption is likely to remain predominantly mobile-first—unless a newer tech option emerges—and social by default, yet the traditional television screen will retain its utility for “high-impact cultural moments” that demand a shared experience, he says, adding that “platforms that understand and design for this layered behaviour are better positioned to build relevance at scale.”

In other words, it’s not the product but its positioning that requires fresh strategy. Observers say that the product—whether it is a three-hour long film or a 24-hour news cycle—must have the flexibility to be repurposed for myriad short and long format media platforms. **BT**



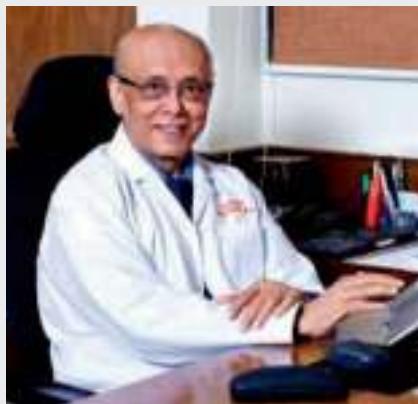
“Using influencers to engage with GenZ is quite effective. But the choice of influencers has to be right”

AJIMON FRANCIS
MD, BRAND FINANCE, INDIA

Adi Arogyam Suman Ramesh Tulsiani Hospital

-The Sunrise of Tertiary Healthcare in Vikhroli East

For the first time ever, the central suburb of Vikhroli East witnesses the dawn of a new era in healthcare.



■ Surgeon Commander Sujit Chatterjee

MD(Veteran)
ADI AROGYAM SUMAN RAMESH TULSIANI
HOSPITAL

A state of the art tertiary care hospital has opened its doors, redefined the standards of medical excellence and brought world class facilities closer to the heart of Mumbai. This milestone is not just about infrastructure—it is about accessibility, trust, and the promise of better health for thousands of families who call this vibrant suburb home.

Healthcare in India has often been concentrated in select pockets of the city, leaving many communities underserved. Vikhroli East, despite its rapid growth as a residential and industrial hub, has long awaited a comprehensive medical institution that could provide advanced care without requiring patients to travel long distances. The arrival of this tertiary care hospital marks a turning point.

At the core of this institution lies cutting edge medical technology. The hospital is equipped with a **high end Intensive Care Unit (ICU)** designed to handle the most critical cases with precision and round the clock monitoring. The ICU integrates advanced life support systems,

ensuring that patients receive the highest level of care during their most vulnerable moments. Complementing this is a suite of **modular operation theatres**, built to international standards. These theatres are designed for efficiency, sterility, and adaptability, enabling surgeons to perform complex procedures with confidence and safety.

The hospital also boasts a **modern Cathlab**, a specialized facility for cardiac interventions. With heart disease continuing to be one of the leading health challenges in India, the Cathlab represents a lifeline for patients requiring angioplasty, stenting, and other advanced cardiac procedures.

Perhaps the most reassuring feature of this hospital is its **24 hour trauma centre**.

Accidents and medical emergencies rarely wait for convenient hours, and the trauma centre ensures immediate response, expert care, and seamless coordination across departments. Whether it is a road accident, a sudden stroke, or any unforeseen crisis, the

trauma centre stands ready to save lives every hour of the day.

Beyond technology and infrastructure, the hospital embodies a philosophy of patient centric care. It is staffed by highly trained doctors, nurses, and support teams who combine expertise with empathy.

The opening of this hospital is more than a local development—it is a symbol of progress for Mumbai's healthcare landscape. It bridges a critical gap in the city's medical infrastructure and sets a precedent for how suburban communities can be empowered with advanced healthcare. For Vikhroli East, it is a proud moment: the suburb has stepped into the future, with a facility that rivals the best in the country.

As the sun rises over this new chapter, the hospital stands as a testament to innovation, resilience, and hope. It is not just a building of bricks and machines—it is a sanctuary of healing, a promise of life, and the dawn of tertiary healthcare in the central suburb.



ADANI GROUP SHAPING THE FUTURE OF INDIA'S AVIATION NETWORK



This image is an artist's rendition and is for illustrative purposes only.

From the eastern gateway of Guwahati to the western frontier of Navi Mumbai, a new generation of airports is reshaping global connectivity. As the aviation map is redrawn, the diversified conglomerate, Adani Group, is helping build the infrastructure that will carry the nation's long-term ambitions forward

India's aviation sector is among the fastest growing globally, driven by rising urbanisation, economic momentum and increasing air travel demand.

Beyond enabling mobility, airports today serve as strategic national assets, driving trade, tourism and global connectivity while supporting millions of jobs and contributing significantly to GDP.

As India expands its aviation footprint, the focus is shifting from a handful of legacy hubs to a wider network of future ready gateways.

At the centre of this transformation is Adani Airport Holdings Limited (AAHL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL), which has demonstrated the ability to deliver complex airport projects across both greenfield and brownfield categories with speed and scale. Currently,

AAHL operates eight airports across India – Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thiruvananthapuram, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Guwahati, and Mangaluru.

In western India, the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) is being developed as a global standard greenfield facility to complement Mumbai, one of the country's busiest aviation nodes. With modern terminals, advanced technology and strong multimodal connectivity, the airport is positioned to enhance India's global aviation presence.

In the east, Guwahati's Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport (LGBIA) has emerged as a critical regional hub. The development of Terminal 2, with operations led by Guwahati International Airport Limited (GIAL), a part of AAHL, strengthens connectivity across the Northeast while supporting cargo movement, trade and tourism, linking the region more closely with the rest of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)), an 11-member regional bloc that promotes economic integration, connectivity and strategic cooperation across Southeast Asia, and beyond.

Together, these projects reflect a broader shift in India's aviation story, one where connectivity is powered by a resilient and distributed network of world class airports built for scale, efficiency and the future.

First commercial flight from Bengaluru landed at NMIA on December 25, 2025





1

NAVI MUMBAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NMIA)

The greenfield airport is connected to national highways, urban arterial roads, metro, suburban railway and water taxis

- **40 mins** from Nariman Point in South Mumbai via Atal Setu
- **60 mins** from the satellite town of Thane
- **35 km** from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA)
- Less than two hours from Pune - India's IT & Auto hub
- Atal Setu (MTHL), Ulwe Coastal Road signal-free road access
- Metro Line 8 will directly link NMIA with CSMIA and Mumbai
- Navi Mumbai Metro extensions
- Suburban rail connectivity via Targhar and Khandeshwar stations
- Proposed alignment of Mumbai Hyderabad High Speed Rail

AIRPORT CODES:

- IATA: NMI
- ICAO: VANM



Passenger Experience

RETAIL OFFERINGS

~1,800 sqm. duty-free space

~5,000 sqm. retail space

110 retail and F&B outlets at the terminal and forecourt

Adani OneApp to serve as a central platform for all commercial offerings

F&B OFFERINGS (Terminal 1)

80

room transit/day hotel; lounges for 500 passengers.

Bombay Bond serves popular Mumbai food & beverages brands

Casual dining - food hall consisting of cuisines from India and abroad

Chef-curated concepts

Artisanal tea concepts

Brewery & bars

Indian street food concepts at arrival forecourt

Within 2 months of operations, NMIA will connect

23 destinations by Feb 2026

SITE: 1,160 hectares (2,866 acres)

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

- Initial Phase - 20 MPPA (Million Passengers Per Annum)
- Final Phase - 90 MPPA

FINAL PHASE:

• Runways: Two parallel runways (3,700m each)

CAT II & CAT III ILS

• **245** Code C stands (138 contact, 107 remote)

• **93** GA aircraft stands

• **10** Cargo aircraft stands



DIGITAL ART PROGRAMME:

- Terminal building showcases Digital Art Programme & Experiential Zone
- Displays culture of India & Maharashtra in digital and physical art
- Platform for established and emerging artists and content collaborators

DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGICAL BACKBONE:

- IATA 753-compliant end-to-end baggage tracking system
- ADS-B solution in AOCC
- Augmented Reality based navigation system for passengers
- AI-powered queue management systems
- AVILO app - Paperless operations and full workflow automation
- App-based Smart Parking Systems
- Digi Yatra across all e-gates from entry to boarding gates

CARGO:

Strategic location for multi-modal cargo connectivity

Cargo Terminal Capacity:

Initial phase: 0.5 MT | Final phase: 3.25 MT

Freighter Stands:

Initial phase: 7 | Final phase: 11

Automation: Digital processes with Information Transparency

Express cargo: Dedicated Express corridor with fast-track lanes

Pharma & Perishable: Dedicated Temperature controlled cool corridors

Dangerous Goods: Specialised zones with safety protocols and trained personnel

Valuables: Secured storage facilities with surveillance and monitoring

Live Animals: Dedicated areas with animal care experts

Regulatory Offices: Customs, Plant Quarantine, Animal Quarantine & Drug Controller

Certifications: RA, RA3, GDP and CEI



SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

40

MW solar power
by final phase

EV deployment and charging infrastructure from day one of operation.

Rainwater Harvesting and Use of Recycled Water, Zero liquid discharge.

Emphasis on Mass Public Transport System to reduce carbon emissions

Automated People Movers (APMs) for internal airport travel

Eco-friendly infrastructure with Natural lighting, energy-efficient HVAC

Green spaces and tree plantation on-site and off-site

Sustainable Aviation Fuel Storage Facility

2

LOKAPRIYA GOPINATH BARDOLOI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (LGBIA), GUWAHATI

Codes: GAU/VEGT

TERMINAL 1:

56 check-in Counters

8 Self Bag Drop Points

10 Aerobridges

5 Bus gates

TERMINAL 2:

Area: 1,40,000 sqm.

Runway: 3,660 metres x 60 metres

Capacity: 13.1 MPAA (Domestic + International)

Peak Hour: 3,879 passengers

CONNECTIVITY:

22 km from Guwahati Railway Station

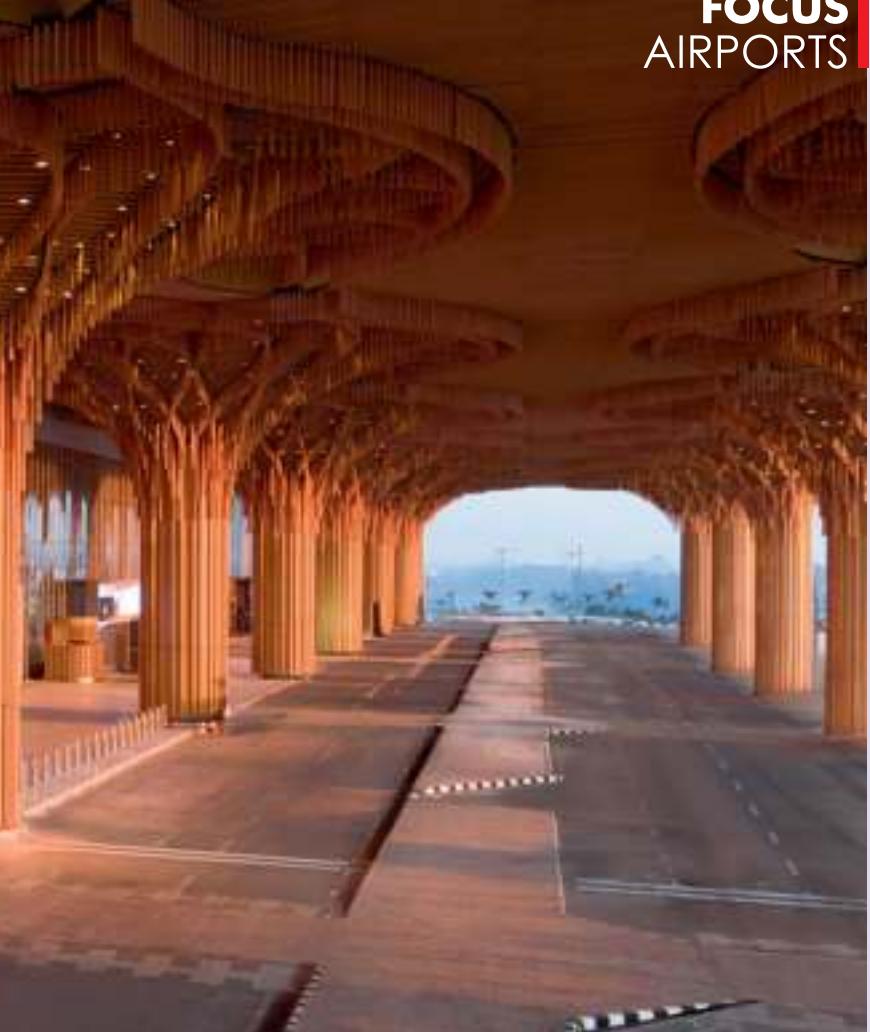
26 km from city centre; connected via NH17 and NH 27

Outbound: Agartala, Imphal, Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata

Inbound: Delhi, Bengaluru (e-commerce, mail, flowers, perishables, avocados)

DIGITAL FIRST PASSENGER EXPERIENCE:

- 30 CUSS (Common Use Self Service) kiosks at T2
- 8 Self bag drop points (first in the Northeast)
- E-gates with Digi Yatra
- CT (Computed Tomography) scanning & ATRS (Automatic Tray Retrieval System)



Passenger Experience

RETAIL OFFERINGS

484 sqm. duty-free

6,000 sqm. retail and F&B

80 outlets across terminals and forecourt

F&B OFFERINGS

Artisanal tea concept

Assamese F&B

Casual dining

Global cuisines

Chef-curated concepts

Brewery & bars

Local street food at arrival forecourt

• FTI (Fast Track Immigration)-TTP (Trusted Traveller Programme) fast-track immigration

DIGITAL ART PROGRAMME:

- International venue for regional & national art
- Immersive digital+ physical art experiences
- Platform for established and emerging artists

PASSENGER AMENITIES:

Transit/Day Hotel: 21 rooms

Baggage: home delivery, left-luggage, repair, wrap and early storage

- Pranaam Meet & Greet Services
- Arrival Forecourt Amphitheatre

CARGO:

Current Capacity: 2,750 MT/yr (Metric Tonnes per year)

SPECIALISED HANDLING:

- Pharma excellence centre
- Perishable temperature control
- Dangerous goods zones & trained staff
- High-security Valuables zone
- Live Animal Management Facilities

SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN SYSTEMS:

- Green roof and skylights
- Solar panels
- EV charging
- Energy-efficient LEDs
- UV-treated HVAC & indoor vegetation
- Integrated Building Management System
- GRIHA Certification
- Zero Waste to Landfill

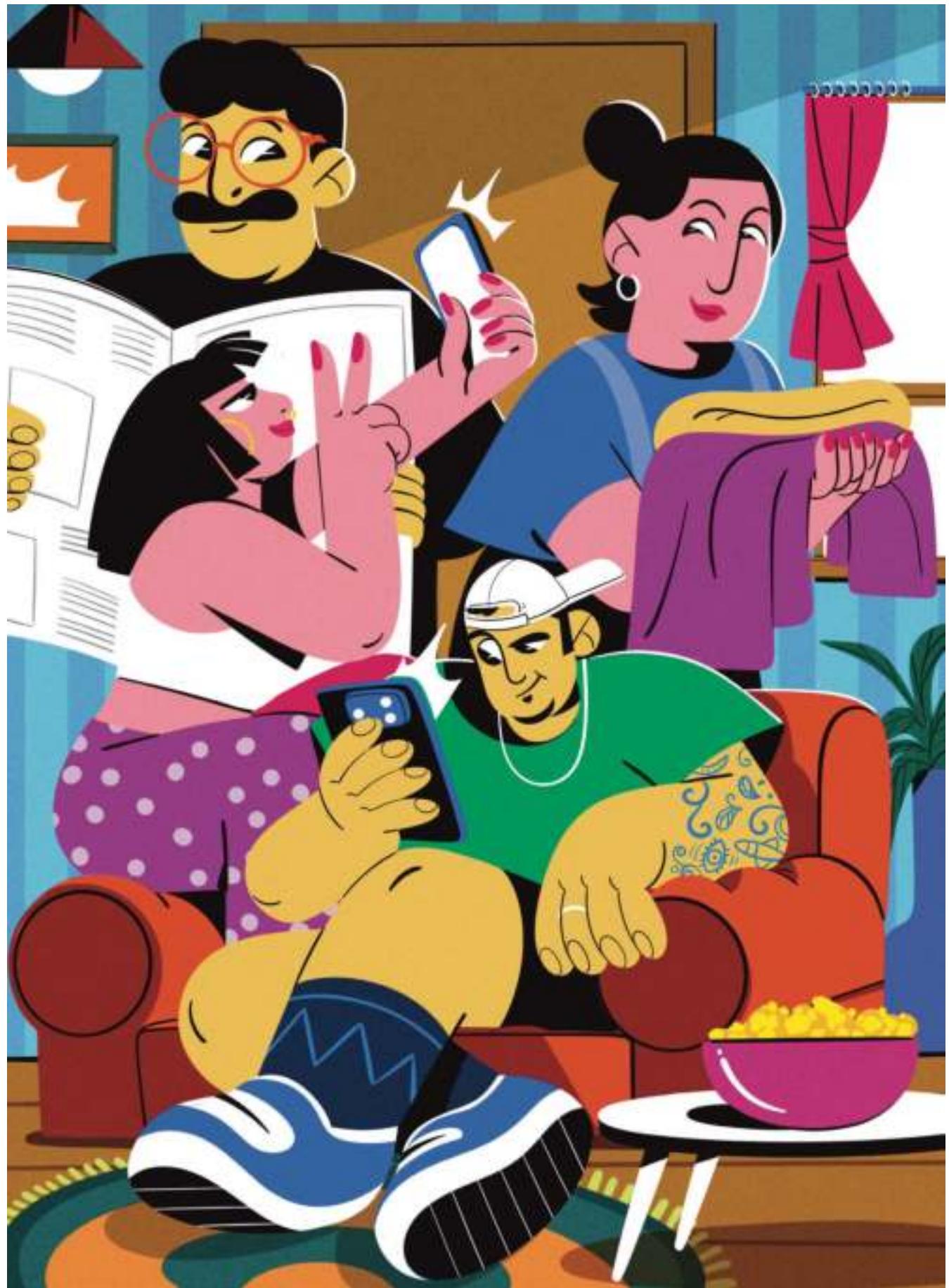


ILLUSTRATION BY **SIDDHANT JUMDE**

Freedom over Sweet Home Alabama

Gen Z is rethinking home ownership, driven less by aspiration and more by arithmetic, mobility, and a deep aversion to being financially locked in for years

BY KARAN DHAR

GEN Z HOMEBUYERS are hard to find, not because they can't afford a house, but because homes that match their lifestyle are increasingly out of their reach, especially in top metros, the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey shows.

Harshit Arora, the 24-year-old founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a bootstrapped marketing startup, earns enough to buy a home in Noida, but has no such plans. "Even if I am earning ₹5 lakh every month, it still doesn't make sense for me to buy property because the lifestyle that I am chasing, the people that I want to network with are sitting in ultra-luxury homes, and I can't afford to shell out ₹5-6 crore on a property loan. It makes more sense to rent than buy," he says.

Even though his parents urged him to buy an apartment of his own, Arora says he is against the idea purely because prices in recent years have increased more than they did in the past few decades. "Most people end up taking loans that they can't afford. I don't have any loans in my name. But if I buy a property, I am locked in for 20 years. What if I don't want to live in Noida anymore?"

MOVING TO BIG CITY

As migration to major metros increases, more Gen Z individuals from smaller towns are moving to Tier I cities. Without the option of living in their parents' homes, most end up renting, unlike earlier generations, who often stayed in the same homes they grew up in. The rethink about homeownership among Gen Z is also driven less by

aspiration and more by arithmetic, mobility, and a deep aversion to being financially locked in for years.

Danish Pandita, a 28-year-old software developer who works with the German multinational athletic apparel and footwear corporation adidas, did the math to buy a "decent, bare-minimum" home in Gurugram. Low rental yields and a loan that could stretch decades

| 179

NO FANCY FOR OWNERSHIP

▶ While parents still urge Gen Zs to buy homes, most are against the idea

▶ Gen Zs are avoiding owning properties as prices in recent years have risen more than in the past few decades

▶ As migration to major metros increases, more Gen Z individuals from smaller towns are moving to Tier I cities

▶ Without the option of living in their parents' homes, most end up renting, unlike earlier generations, who often stayed in the homes where they grew up

▶ Data survey shows that only 8% respondents earning more than ₹15 lakh are interested in buying a house

▶ About 16% of those earning between ₹5 lakh and ₹10 lakh want to buy a house

into an uncertain future prevented him from rushing into buying a house. "Buying a house is a lot of liability because in metro cities, a decent bare minimum house starts from ₹1.5-2 crore. Life is full of uncertainty; there could be health emergencies in the family. With this uncertainty, taking so much burden doesn't seem logical."

Data from the BT-PRICE survey shows that only 8% respondents earning more than ₹15 lakh were interested in buying a house, as against 16% of respondents earning between ₹5 lakh and ₹10 lakh.

For Gen Z, renting is more than a stopgap before ownership; it's a deliberate lifestyle choice, says Chetan Chichra, Partner, Real Estate, Grant Thornton Bharat. "From homes and cars to luxury goods and travel, this generation prioritises access over possession. It's not that they dismiss the value of assets; they're simply redefining their timeline. For them, stability doesn't mean buying early; it means staying adaptable, financially resilient, and aligned with the lifestyle they aspire to build," says Chichra.

180 |

CHANGING DEFINITIONS

According to a 2025 Knight Frank survey, 27% to 30% of Gen Z prefer renting over buying. "However, for the roughly 70% who aspire to homeownership, significant financial barriers remain," says Shishir Baijal, International Partner, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India.

This generation views home as less of a status symbol and more of a functional, flexible asset, says Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE. Moreover, Gen Z prefers their homes to be in proximity to workplaces, public transport, and other amenities.

Thus echoes the thinking of



"(We are) enhancing digital engagement, offering virtual property tours, flexible financing options and curated homes with wellness-focused amenities"

PRAVEER SHRIVASTAVA
SR. EXECUTIVE VP,
RESIDENTIAL, PRESTIGE
GROUP



"Today, Gen Z is more interested in connected cars, infotainment systems, and tech like ADAS. They are tech-driven"

PARTHO BANERJEE
SENIOR EXECUTIVE
OFFICER, MARKETING &
SALES, MARUTI SUZUKI

Pandita, who values the freedom to move neighbourhoods, or cities, if better amenities or opportunities come along. "At a young age, I don't want too much liability," he says. "I prefer staying on rent because it gives me freedom and choice to move to a different place for better amenities." He also refers to the lower rental yields, adding that if he were to invest, he would rather buy land in a Tier II or Tier III city than a home in a metro city.

Arora believes that in the suburbs of Delhi, like Noida, one ends up getting a 3-3.5% rental yield. "My money sits better in an index fund, and when that index fund gives me 10-12% yield, I take that yield and put it into rent," he says.

GOING BIG

Unlike earlier generations, Gen Z is going for premium and spacious homes, says Prashant Thakur, Executive Director & Head - Research & Advisory, ANAROCK Group. "While those from the lower-income segments are certainly finding housing beyond their reach now, this is not the case with all denizens of this generation. Developers are focusing on those who can buy homes," says Thakur.

Knight Frank India's Baijal says since many Gen Z professionals are in the nascent stages of their careers, often without parental financial backing, developers should innovate with 'co-buying' or equity-sharing models. "By partnering with lenders, developers can offer 'step-up' mortgages, where initial payments are scaled to prevailing earning capacities and increase as the buyer's income grows over time," he explains.

This shift, he says, requires a specialised, youth-centric approach like the established senior living sector. Baijal explains that while senior housing focuses on medical care and accessibility,



Now Brand Building Made Easy

As healthcare brands race to market, a growing number of founders are choosing an unconventional path of building brands without building factories and Invision Pharma Ltd is helping them.

Mukesh Jain's education in pharmaceuticals did not come from classrooms. It came from clinics, distributor warehouses and long conversations with doctors who valued consistency over theory. Nearly three decades ago, without a formal science degree, Jain entered the industry and stayed, learning how fragile healthcare brands become when manufacturing, compliance and regulation are treated as afterthoughts.

For more than fifteen years, he moved through sales, distribution and job work manufacturing, watching founders burn capital on factories, struggle with audits and lose momentum to regulatory delays. The real problem was never branding or demand. It was the capital headache, compliance risk and operational distraction of building backend systems too early.

Those lessons shaped Invision Medi



Sciences, where Jain began by manufacturing his own pharmaceutical brands through job work. The experience taught him quality systems, documentation discipline and regulator expectations. In 2018, he took the hardest decision of his career. He invested in a state of the art facility and repositioned the company as Invision Pharma Ltd, headquartered in Bangalore focused sharply on nutrition and cosmetic manufacturing built for private labels.

Invision Pharma Ltd evolved into an end to end partner. It handled formulation development, clinical validation, quality assurance, regulatory documentation and manufacturing,

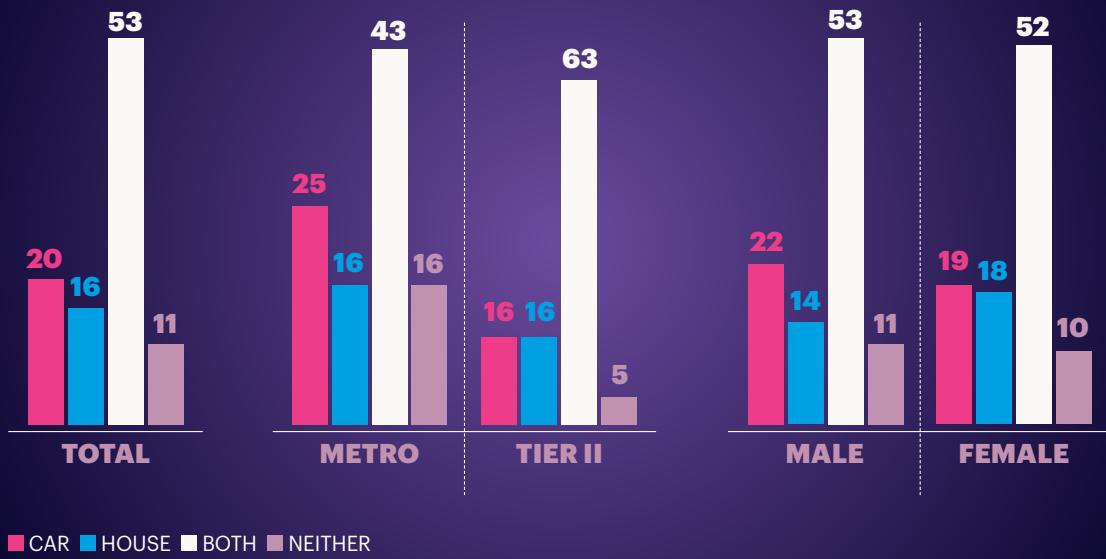
allowing brand owners to accelerate time to market without locking capital into land, machinery or manpower. Tablets, capsules, soft gels, powders, liquids, sachets, cosmetics and skincare products rolled out from modern machinery powered by lean systems.

Demand, not trends, drove innovation. Every product idea passed through consumer relevance, regulatory clarity and long term viability. That thinking led to Who Moved My Protein?, a clean, grass-fed protein brand built on substance rather than hype.

Today, Invision Pharma Ltd quietly manufactures for over one hundred brands across pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, supplements and personal care. Its achievements are measured not in noise, but in brands that scale smoothly, compliantly and confidently.

ASSET-LIGHT

• Across all regions, over half aspire to buy both a car and a house



■ CAR ■ HOUSE ■ BOTH ■ NEITHER

NOTE FIGURES IN %

SOURCE BT-PRICE GENZ CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

182 |

ity, youth-centric housing should prioritise productivity and social integration. “By designing buildings with contemporary amenities, whether integrated co-working spaces, high-speed fibre optics, or content-creation studios, developers can transform the home from a mere living space into a functional ‘earning space’ tailored to the modern workforce,” says Baijal.

THE FUTURE

Young buyers are adopting innovative models like co-buying with friends or family and fractional ownership to overcome the lack of affordability in metros, says CBRE’s Magazine. Developers who cater to affordability, sustainability, and digital convenience are best positioned to capture this segment in the coming years.

Bengaluru-based Prestige Group is aligning its product offerings

and experiences to meet the expectations of Gen Z. “This includes enhancing digital engagement, offering virtual property tours, flexible financing options and curated homes with wellness-focused amenities,” says Praveer Shrivastava, Sr. Executive VP, Residential, Prestige Group. Further, the removal of house rent allowance benefits in the new tax regime underlines the cost of long-term renting and naturally shifts the economic calculus in favour of ownership, says Shrivastava. “We believe this will contribute to an uptick in ownership intent among young professionals, particularly in emerging micro markets where pricing remains accessible,” says Shrivastava.

While owning a house remains a distant dream for a majority of Gen Z, they mostly agree on their second-biggest purchase, a car. Pandita, who bought his first car last year, says it

has become a necessity.

Gen Z customers look for connected cars and other tech features, says Partho Banerjee, Senior Executive Officer, Marketing & Sales, Maruti Suzuki. While buying his first car, Pandita wasn’t much concerned about mileage. Powerful engine, driving experience, service network, and safety rating were on the top of his checklist. “Earlier, fuel efficiency and cost of ownership were the top priorities. Today, Gen Z is more interested in connected cars, infotainment systems, and tech like ADAS. They are tech-driven,” he says.

As far as buying a home is concerned, until prices, products and policies catch up with how this generation lives and earns, renting—once seen as a compromise—has become a deliberate choice. **BT**

@karandhar11

Warehouse


Forwarding


Installation




Project Cargo


Procam Logistics

We don't just move cargo. We move the future—sustainably.



End to End Project



Warehousing
and Distribution



Freight
Forwarding



Multi Modal
Transport



Port & Site Cargo
Coordination



24x7 Client
Service



Asset Based
Heavy Lift



Sustainability
#RootedWithProcam



Business Today

Special feature



INDIA ENERGY WEEK
27 - 30 JANUARY 2026
GOA, INDIA

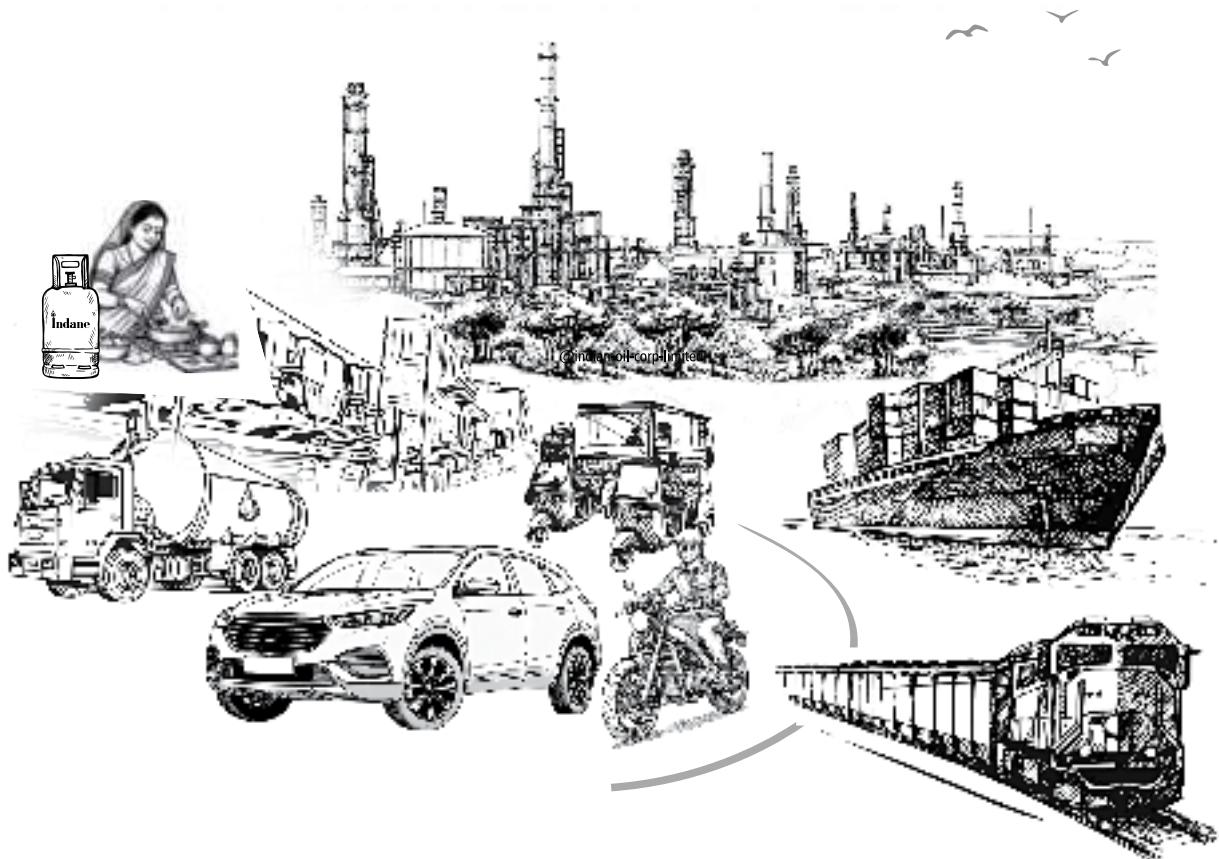




IndianOil



SERVING EVERY MILE, **EVERY DAY** FOR A NATION ALWAYS ON THE MOVE



- IndianOil owns and operates 10 group Refineries with a refining capacity of 80.75 MMTPA
- Total pipeline length operated by IndianOil is over 20,000 Km
- Pipelines throughput of over 100 Million Metric Tonnes per annum
- Operates over 14,000 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- Product sales of over 100 Million Metric Tonnes per annum
- Fuelling journeys across the nation with over 40,000 Retail Outlets
- Over 15 Crore kitchens across India trust Indane LPG



WIND TURBINE BLADES BEING LOADED
AT VOC PORT TERMINAL.



PORt WITH PURPOSE: A CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAIRPERSON OF VOC PORT

Question 1: Let us begin with the Outer Harbour project. The global tender was recently floated under the Hybrid Annuity Mode. Could you give us the latest status?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: Yes, we issued the global tender for the Outer Harbour Development Project on 26 December 2025, valued at approximately ₹14,690 crores to be executed under Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) and DBFOT mode. We moved to HAM from the earlier DBFOT model because it better allocates construction and revenue risks between the government and the developer, making the project far more attractive to serious investors.

This follows the visionary foundation stone laid by the *Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in February 2024, which signalled the Government of India's strong commitment to transforming VOC Port into a major east-coast transshipment hub.*

The project comprises two deep-draft container terminals, each with a 1,000-metre quay and 18-metre draft, ultimately adding capacity for four million TEUs per annum. Prospective bidders have until 7th January to submit queries, with a hybrid pre-application conference scheduled for 8 January. Tender documents remain available until 9th February. We are confident this structure will draw strong, credible bids and allow us to commence construction without undue delay.

Question-2: What measures are being taken to increase capacity in the interim, before the Outer Harbour becomes operational?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: While the Outer Harbour remains our long-term flagship project to transform V.O. Chidambaranar Port into a major transshipment hub on the east coast, the Port is simultaneously and proactively strengthening its existing infrastructure. A series of capacity augmentation initiatives have recently been completed to meet the growing needs of trade.

Key developments include the Tuticorin International Container Terminal, operated by JM Baxi, with a handling capacity of 6 lakh TEUs; North Cargo Berth-III with a capacity of 7 million tonnes for bulk cargo; capital dredging in front of North Cargo Berth-III to achieve a draft of 14.20 metres; expansion of the port turning circle from 488 metres to 550 metres; commissioning of a link conveyor system connecting Coal Jetty-1 to the coal yard; deployment of additional Harbour Mobile Cranes; and induction of a 60-tonne bollard pull tug. All these initiatives were completed in record time, significantly enhancing the Port's ability to handle higher volumes of container and bulk cargo.

In addition, construction of Multi-Cargo Berth No. 10, with a capacity of 6.6 million tonnes per annum, has commenced and is scheduled for completion by August 2026. The Port has also initiated the process of widening the entrance channel from 153 metres to 230 metres to accommodate larger vessels. Collectively, these upgrades support the Port's fiscal year target of handling 50 million tonnes of cargo and one million TEUs.

Questions-3: The port's pioneering green hydrogen initiatives have also drawn national attention. How do these align with the broader vision of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: Under the dynamic leadership and guidance of the Hon'ble Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, *VOC Port has become India's first port to produce and utilise green hydrogen on-site.* In September 2025 we commissioned a 10 Nm³/hr pilot plant (Cost-₹3.87 crore), now powering streetlighting and an EV charging station in the port colony.



GREEN HYDROGEN PRODUCTION FACILITY

“ These efforts directly support the National Green Hydrogen Mission and position Tuticorin as southern India's leading green hydrogen hub for production, storage, and future bunkering. **”**

This achievement has built tremendous momentum. We have allocated 205.72 acres for green hydrogen and ammonia facilities and secured investment commitments of ₹40,000–90,000 crore+ through MoUs with major players including, Amplus Ganges Solar Private Ltd., ReNew e-fuels, and Green Infra (Sembcorp group). We are advancing a 2 x 750 m³ pilot green methanol bunkering facility, supported by our renewable assets: 6 MW solar, 2 MW wind, and over 1 MW rooftop solar.



SOLAR PLANT AT THE VOC PORT

Works are underway for installing 2 MW ground mounted solar plant and 6 MW Wind turbine farm. Additionally, Port is also in the process of initiating the projects like green methanol from solid waste, Smart solid waste management, shore to ship power and deployment of green payloaders and trucks.

These efforts directly support the National Green Hydrogen Mission and position Tuticorin as southern India's leading green hydrogen hub for production, storage, and future bunkering.

Question 4: Water availability is often cited as a challenge for green hydrogen production. How is VOC Port addressing this and other sustainability concerns?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: Water security is indeed critical for electrolysis. To ensure a sustainable supply we have proposed a 5 MLD desalination plant.

All our activities are fully aligned with—and in many respects exceed—the Ministry's Harit Sagar Green Port Guidelines, which emphasizes holistic decarbonisation, zero carbon emissions, biodiversity conservation, and maximum renewable energy integration.

We offer concessions for vessels with high Environmental Ship Index (ESI) scores and actively pursuing for a proposed Coastal Green Shipping Corridor between Kandla and Tuticorin. Additional measures include green mobility projects (EV charging infrastructure, electric vehicles, and proposals for green tugs), all of which reduce emissions while generating employment and attracting international investment.



GREEN TUG

Question 5: Beyond infrastructure and green energy, how are digital transformation and community engagement supporting your vision?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: Sustainability encompasses people, technology, and heritage. We have launched a Digital Twin project, scheduled for completion by March 2026, which will enable smarter, predictive port operations.

On the community side, we continue meaningful CSR initiatives, such as donating CNG buses to local schools. Our green journey is also preserving and promoting Tuticorin's maritime legacy through the newly developed Tamil Nadu Maritime Heritage Museum.



PLANTATION DRIVE AT VOC PORT

Question 6: Looking ahead, what is your outlook for VOC Port in 2026 and beyond?

Shri Susanta Kumar Purohit: 2026 will be a defining year. With robust cargo growth already visible, the Outer Harbour tender advancing steadily, and green hydrogen partnerships rapidly maturing, VOC Port is well positioned to become the premier gateway for southern India.

We are committed to balancing strong commercial performance with genuine environmental leadership, in line with the national vision of Viksit Bharat.

“Sustainability encompasses people, technology and heritage”

-Shri. Susanta Kumar Purohit, IRSSE, Chairperson, V. O. Chidambaranar Port Authority



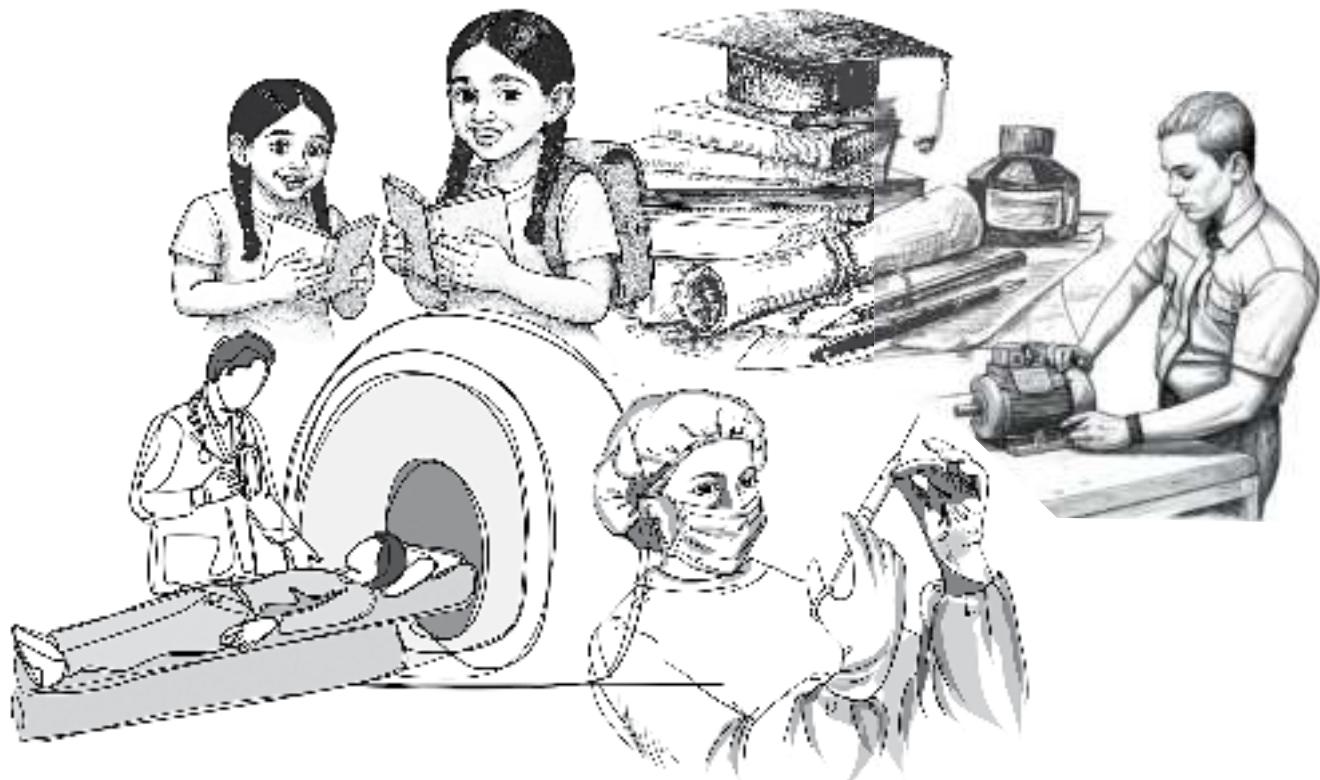
THE GREEN BRIGADE

WINDMILL AT THE VOC PORT



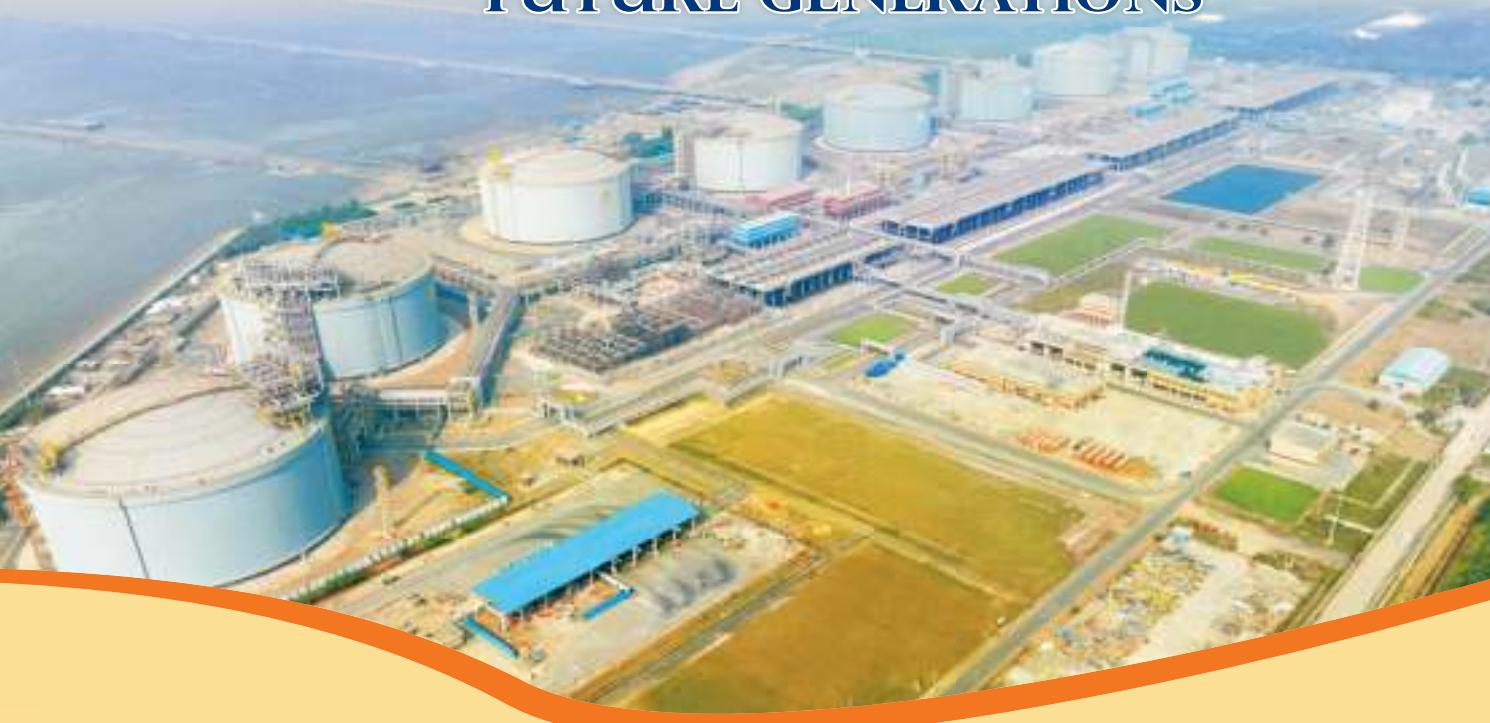
IndianOil

TOUCHING LIVES FUELLED DREAMS



- Over 1.36 Crore lives transformed through CSR initiatives spanning education, healthcare, sanitation, skill-development, environmental sustainability, sports and empowerment
- Bridging healthcare gaps through IndianOil Aarogyam Clinics and Mobile Medical Units, bringing comprehensive medical aid to remote communities
- Empowering youth through skill development, supporting over 15 Skill Development Institutes and numerous ITIs to foster self-reliance
- Enabling education for all with scholarships for meritorious students and support for schools and digital learning infrastructure in rural India
- Strengthening grassroots sports and inclusion. Nurturing para-athletes, rural talent and promoting accessibility through assistive devices and support services

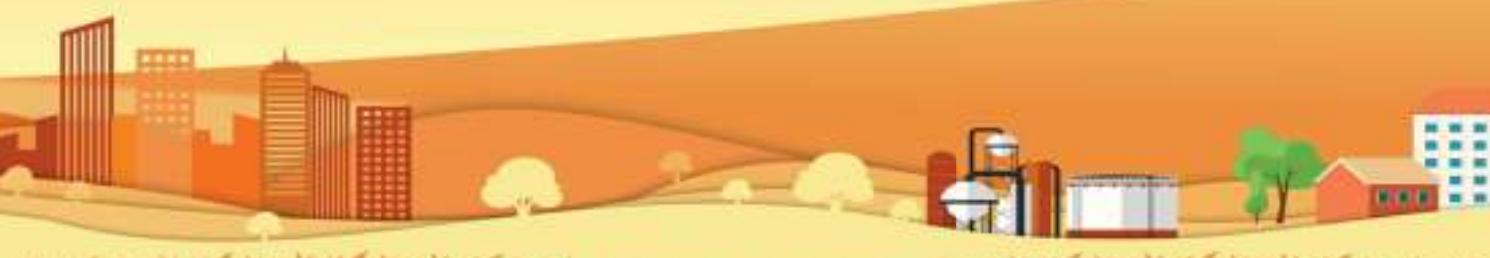
ENVISIONING GREENER INDIA FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



LNG is the cleanest fossil fuel.



Petronet LNG Ltd. is handling approximately
2/3rd of the total LNG demand of the country.



Petronet LNG Limited

Registered & Corporate Office: 4th Floor, Tower-I, World Trade Centre, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi - 110029 (INDIA)



www.petronetlng.in



चिकित्सा सुविधाओं का विस्तार

स्वास्थ्य सेवाएं अपार

80 मेडिकल
कॉलेज संचालित | गोरखपुर व
रायबरेली में एम्स



UPGovtOfficial



CMOUttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP

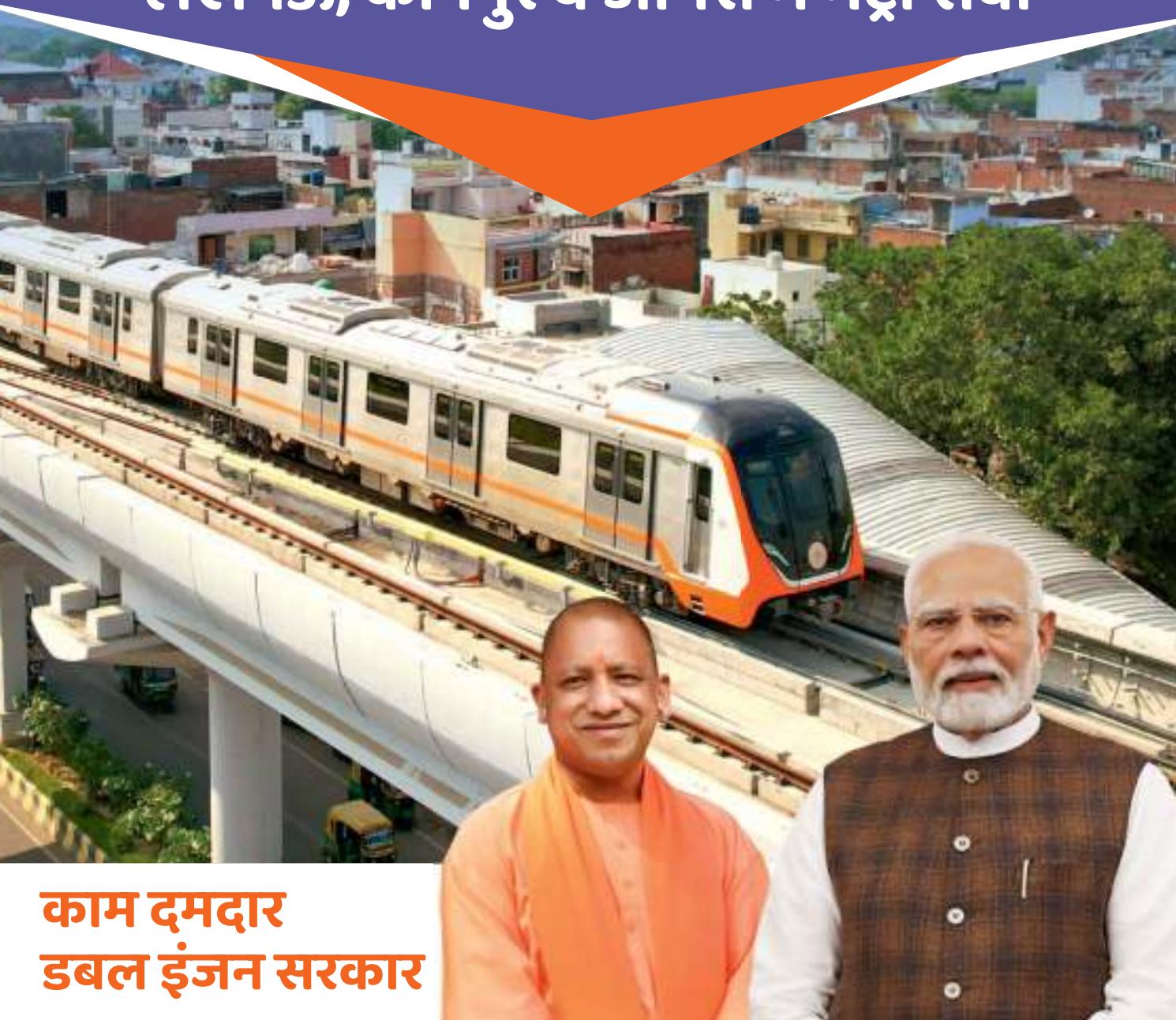


सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश



सबसे ज्यादा शहरों में मेट्रो रेल संचालित करने वाला प्रदेश

नोएडा, ग्रेटर नोएडा, गाजियाबाद, लखनऊ, कानपुर व आगरा में मेट्रो सेवा



काम दमदार
डबल इंजन सरकार



UPGovtOfficial



CMOttarpradesh



CMOOfficeUP



सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

Rewiring the V

GEN Z IS CALLING INTO QUESTION AGE-OLD PRACTICES AT WORKPLACES, TURNING THE TABLES ON TRADITIONAL HIERARCHIES.



workplace

BLESSING ON EMPLOYERS AND ASKING THEM WHAT THEY CAN OFFER **BY MAMTA SHARMA**



THE GEN Z RESET

Gen Z is moving from workforce entrant to decision-maker

Career growth, purpose, and learning now rival salary as job drivers

Behaviour like job-hopping and coffee-badging reflect adaptation, not apathy

Loyalty is measured by impact and skills gained on the job and not by the longevity of the tenure

Organisations must shift from control and hierarchy to trust and coaching

FOR DECADES, Indian workplaces ran on an unspoken bargain: show up, stay loyal, wait your turn and success will follow. Generation Z, Gen Z or Zoomers, never signed that contract.

By 2025, India's Gen Z population (those born between 1997 and 2012) stood at an estimated 377 million, according to the BCG-Snapchat report *The \$2 Trillion Opportunity: How Gen Z Is Shaping the New India*. Once on the margins, Gen Z has now moved firmly into the workforce mainstream, already accounting for one in four workers. The report estimates this share will reach 36% by 2030 and nearly half the workforce (47%) by 2035.

And employers are being forced to confront an uncomfortable truth: the old rules are no longer working.

194 | BEYOND PAYCHEQUES

Gen Z entered the workforce amid overlapping disruptions: a pandemic, economic volatility, rapid digitisation, and now artificial intelligence (AI)-led transformation. According to Anshuman Das, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder of recruitment services firm Careernet, these

conditions have fundamentally reshaped how this generation evaluates work.

Rather than prioritising long hours or rigid hierarchies, Gen Z places greater value on learning, clear career progression, purpose, and flexibility. Roles are assessed not only on pay but on growth potential, quality of mentorship, team culture, and alignment with organisational values alongside expectations of modern ways of working.

This is reflected in the BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey, which shows that salary growth and financial security (28%) and role or career progression (28%) remain top job drivers. Job security (17%) matters among lower-income cohorts, while work-life balance (14%) and flexibility (9%) grow in importance as financial stability improves.

Location remains the least influential factor overall, reinforcing Gen Z's digital-first expectations.

For employers, this marks a fundamental shift in the talent equation. Das notes that Gen Z is vocal, research-driven, and quick to move on when expectations around growth, recognition, or culture are not met. Merit-based advancement is preferred over seniority, leaders

are expected to be digitally fluent, and managers are valued more as coaches than controllers.

Randstad's *The Gen Z Workplace Blueprint* echoes this, describing Indian Zoomers as financially ambitious yet purpose-seeking, technologically confident yet anxious about career stability. Careers increasingly blend full-time roles with side hustles, short tenures, and AI-enabled learning creating both opportunity and volatility for employers.

What unsettles many organisations is not what Gen Z wants but how it behaves while pursuing it.

NERVOUS EMPLOYERS

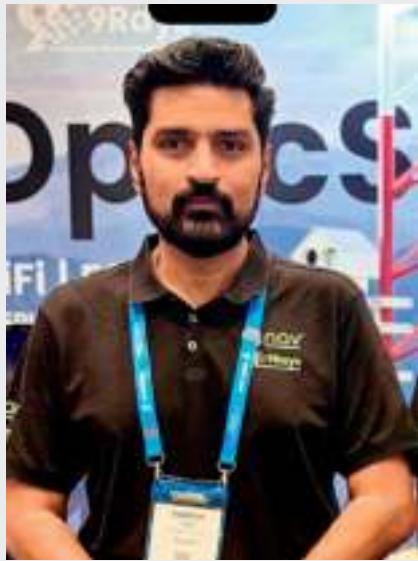
Moonlighting. Job-hopping. Micro-retirements. Bare-minimum Mondays. Coffee-badging. To many leaders, these appear as warning signs of disengagement. But data suggests they may instead be symptoms of a workforce adapting faster than organisational systems.

According to Indeed's 2025 *Workplace Trends Report*, 42% of employers interpret behaviours like job-hopping or brief office appearances (often dubbed coffee-badging), or quiet quitting as signs of disengagement. In contrast, 62% of employees see them as pragmatic strategies to manage careers, navigate uncertainty, and protect well-being. These often coexist with high performance. Younger employees are increasingly optimising for learning velocity, seeking environments where skills compound quickly, exposure is broad, and feedback is immediate.

The shift is particularly pronounced among younger workers. Nearly 68% of entry- to junior-level employees say they are actively experimenting with new approaches to learning and career planning. Around 40% report blending work with side hustles, flexible schedules, or short career breaks. In total, 75% have adopted at least one "modern work behaviour."

While many employers believe they understand Gen Z, execution often tells a different story. Zoomers place far less value on fixed structures and formal hierarchies

Nav Wireless Technologies: Lighting the Next Chapter of Global Connectivity



As the global economy accelerates toward a data-intensive future, the limits of traditional wireless communication are becoming increasingly evident. Congested radio frequency (RF) spectrum, rising security concerns, and the demand for ultra-low latency networks are forcing governments and enterprises to rethink how connectivity is built and secured. Against this backdrop, optical wireless communication is emerging as a credible next frontier — and Nav Wireless Technologies, an Indian deep-tech company, is positioning itself at the center of this shift.

Founded in 2018, Nav Wireless Technologies focuses on LiFi (Light Fidelity) and Free Space Optical (FSO) communication, technologies that transmit data using visible and infrared light instead of radio waves. While RF-based systems have dominated wireless networks for decades, optical wireless offers a fundamentally different architecture — one that promises higher speeds, lower interference, and

enhanced security.

LiFi, in particular, has drawn global attention for its ability to deliver high-speed internet through existing lighting infrastructure. Because light cannot penetrate walls, LiFi networks significantly reduce the risk of external intrusion, making them especially relevant for defence installations, healthcare facilities, financial institutions, and smart manufacturing environments. In an age where cybersecurity is inseparable from national and corporate resilience, this intrinsic security advantage is increasingly strategic. Nav Wireless's relevance extends beyond research and prototypes. In a notable commercial milestone, the company recently deployed what it describes as the first commercial LiFi internet system in the United States, in New York. The deployment is being viewed as a validation of optical wireless technology in real-world conditions and signals a broader readiness of global markets to explore alternatives to conventional WiFi networks.

As countries prepare for the transition toward 6G-era networks, optical wireless solutions are gaining traction as complementary layers that can offload traffic from saturated RF spectrum. Free Space Optical communication, which delivers fiber-like speeds without physical cables, is being evaluated for urban backhaul, smart city infrastructure, and rapid network deployment in hard-to-reach locations. Nav Wireless's work in this space aligns closely with these global infrastructure priorities.

The company has also strengthened its technology pipeline through collaborations with public research institutions, including a technology transfer partnership with C-DAC

(Centre for Development of Advanced Computing). Such collaborations reflect a growing emphasis on accelerating the commercial adoption of advanced research — a critical requirement for countries seeking technological self-reliance without compromising global competitiveness.

Nav Wireless's journey also reflects a broader shift in India's innovation narrative. Long recognised for its software and services capabilities, India is increasingly producing companies that operate at the intersection of hardware, photonics, and advanced communication systems. By building proprietary intellectual property and manufacturing-ready solutions, Nav Wireless represents a new class of Indian enterprises focused on deep technology rather than incremental innovation.

For global policymakers and business leaders, the implications are clear. As digital infrastructure becomes a determinant of economic competitiveness, secure and scalable connectivity solutions will play a central role in shaping smart cities, automated industries, and resilient public systems. Optical wireless communication offers an opportunity to rethink networks not just in terms of speed, but in terms of trust, efficiency, and sustainability.

At a time when global forums such as Davos are increasingly focused on the intersection of technology, resilience, and long-term growth, companies like Nav Wireless illustrate how frontier innovation can emerge from India and scale globally. By turning light into a medium for secure, high-speed communication, Nav Wireless Technologies is contributing to a future where connectivity is not only faster — but fundamentally smarter.

The New Lingua Franca

Coffee Badging: Showing up briefly at the office to mark attendance, then leaving to work remotely

Quiet Thriving: Doing meaningful, satisfying work without chasing titles, visibility, or constant promotion

Quiet Quitting: Doing only what the role requires to protect boundaries and work-life balance—without resigning

Office Peacocke**g:** Redesigning office spaces with perks, aesthetics, and experiences to lure employees onsite

Bare-Minimum Mondays: Doing only essential tasks on Mondays to ease into the week and reduce burnout

Career Catfishing: Accepting a job offer but ghosting the employer by not showing up on the first day

Career Cushioning: Quietly building a safety net through upskilling, networking, and

exploring options to prepare for uncertainty

Boomerang Employees: Professionals who leave an organisation and return later, often in better roles

Leapfrogging (Office Frogging): Intentional job-hopping to fast-track skills, compensation, and culture skipping traditional ladders

Conscious Unbossing: Deliberately avoiding middle management to prioritise autonomy, balance, and mental well-being

Skill Stacking: Building multiple complementary skills instead of following a linear career path

Micro-Retirements: Taking short career breaks for rest, learning, or personal goals instead of waiting till retirement

Quiet Hiring: Companies filling skill gaps internally by reshuffling roles instead of external hiring

Randstad's India findings reinforce this shift: 38% plan to stay in their current jobs for less than a year, underscoring mobility levels far higher than previous generations.

"These are not signs that people don't want to work," says Sashi Kumar, MD of Indeed. "They are signals that people want to work differently." Leaders, he argues, must replace judgement with curiosity. "When we ask what's driving this behaviour, we unlock better conversations—and healthier cultures."

Kumar says careers no longer follow a linear script of study, work, and retirement. Younger workers are questioning whether postponing growth, rest, or exploration until their 60s still makes sense. "Yes, some behaviours stem from burnout," he says. "But there's also a genuine redefinition of ambition. Work still matters, often just after family, but proving commitment by staying late every day feels outdated."

DIFFERENT NOT DISLOYAL

For employers quick to equate mobility with disloyalty, Kumar urges caution. Data from Indeed shows that many employees exhibiting these so-called "disengaged" behaviours are actively upskilling, adopting AI tools, and pursuing multiple learning pathways to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving job market.

This aligns closely with Randstad's finding that 94% of Zoomers in India consider long-term goals when evaluating job opportunities. In this context, loyalty is increasingly defined by contribution. Employees may stay for shorter stints, but they expect those periods to be intense, developmental, and mutually beneficial.

Organisations that recognise this are better positioned to extract value even within shorter tenure cycles. Kumar notes that companies responding with curiosity rather than judgement are far more



Building What Endures: Leadership and the Long View of India's Defence Self-Reliance



Mr. Sahil Luthra
Founder and Managing Director
Vijayan Trishul Defence Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (VTDS)

Milestones and anniversaries invite reflection, not only on what has been achieved, but on what has been built quietly, away from immediacy and noise. In India's defence sector, this distinction carries particular weight. Capability cannot be rushed, credibility cannot be improvised, and leadership is tested not by visibility but by restraint. As India advances its pursuit of strategic autonomy, the transformation of its defence ecosystem is being shaped as much by patience and discipline as by policy intent.

It is within this evolving landscape that **Vijayan Trishul Defence Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (VTDS)** has taken shape, guided by the leadership of **Mr. Sahil Luthra**, Founder and Managing Director. His entry into the defence sector is not a story of abrupt reinvention, but of deliberate alignment between personal conviction and national priority.

Raised in New Delhi, Sahil grew up around individuals connected to India's security and protection ecosystem. The values of discipline, preparedness, and service were not abstract ideas but lived experiences. While his early professional journey unfolded in land banking

and real estate through SL Investors and Developers LLP, the objective of contributing to national development remained central. As India's geopolitical environment grew more complex and the case for defence indigenisation strengthened, his focus shifted decisively toward building long-term capability in defence manufacturing.

VTDS emerged from this shift with a clear understanding of the sector's realities. Defence manufacturing is capital-intensive, highly regulated, and defined by long gestation cycles. From inception, the company has prioritised planning, regulatory alignment, research orientation, and ecosystem integration over immediate production. This measured approach reflects a conscious decision to build foundations first, recognising that premature manufacturing in the defence sector carries lasting strategic and reputational risks.

This philosophy found tangible expression when VTDS secured land in the Jhansi node of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor. More than an infrastructure milestone, the move places the company within a government-supported ecosystem designed to strengthen indigenous defence manufacturing. Defence corridors are intended to integrate skilled manpower, logistics, policy incentives, and industrial capacity, enabling enterprises to grow in alignment with national objectives under Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Integral to VTDS's direction is Ms. **Prikansha Luthra**, Co-Founder and Director. With a professional background spanning journalism and business, she brings balance to the leadership structure through a focus on governance, financial discipline, and

organisational clarity. Her role reinforces the importance of structured execution and responsible decision-making in a sector where accountability and precision are non-negotiable. Together, the leadership reflects an approach that values coherence over haste and substance over spectacle.

What distinguishes Sahil Luthra's leadership is an insistence on preparation before projection. At a time when visibility is often mistaken for progress, VTDS has chosen to strengthen internal systems, evaluate partnerships carefully, and align future capabilities with India's long-term strategic requirements. Manufacturing, the leadership maintains, must follow readiness, not precede it.

Recognition has followed this measured approach. Both Sahil and Prikansha Luthra have received acknowledgements for leadership in defence entrepreneurship, which they view not as milestones achieved but as affirmations of direction. Within VTDS, such recognition serves as encouragement to remain disciplined and focused on the larger objective of contributing to India's sovereign defence capability.

As India positions itself for a larger role in global defence manufacturing and innovation, the sector's future will depend on leaders who understand that strategic strength is cumulative. It is built through consistent choices, institutional thinking, and the willingness to prioritise national interest over short-term gain.

In that sense, the story of VTDS and of Sahil and Prikansha Luthra is less about arrival and more about intent. It reflects a leadership mindset increasingly necessary for India's next phase of growth, one focused on building what endures long after the headlines fade.

Work, Recalculated

CORE WORKFORCE SEGMENT

By 2025, India's Gen Z population stood at an estimated 377 million, accounting for 25% of the workforce. This is projected to rise to 36% by 2030 and 47% by 2035, signalling a deep structural shift (BCG-Snapchat)

PAY AND PROGRESSION STILL TOP PRIORITY

Salary growth and financial security (28%) and career progression (28%) remain Gen Z's leading job drivers. Job security (17%) matters most to lower-income cohorts, while work-life balance (14%) and flexibility (9%) gain importance with financial stability. (BT-PRICE)

198 |

MODERN WORK BEHAVIOURS ARE WIDESPREAD

75% of employees have adopted at least one modern work behaviour such as job-hopping, flexible schedules, side hustles, or quiet quitting. Yet 42% of employers view these as disengagement, while 62% of employees see them as pragmatic (Indeed)

ACTIVELY EXPERIMENTING EARLY IN CAREER

Nearly 68% of entry-to junior-level employees are testing new learning and career models, with around 40% blending full-time work with side hustles, flexible hours, or short career breaks (Indeed)



REDEFINING CAREER, NOT ABANDONING AMBITION

43% of Gen Zs prefer a full-time role with a side hustle, while only 16% want a single-track career. Although

38% of Boomers plan to stay in their current role for less than a year, 94% evaluate jobs based on their long-term goals. (Randstad's 'The GenZ Workplace Blueprint' Report)

likely to build cultures where people choose to stay, grow, and contribute meaningfully.

The findings also show that attempting to restrict these behaviours does not eliminate them, it merely pushes them underground, making them harder for organisations to address constructively. At the same time, attrition has increased by 11%.

Crucially, the data reveals that employees who feel empowered to evolve their skills and work approaches demonstrate a higher intent to stay. Interpreting flexibility, experimentation, and autonomy as threats risks alienating the talent or-

ganisations are trying to retain.

Yet despite mounting evidence, many Indian organisations continue to struggle with execution.

While many Indian employers believe they understand Gen Z, execution often tells a different story. According to Careernet's Das, the gap lies in persistence with legacy hiring and management models. Boomers place far less value on fixed structures and formal hierarchies and far more on speed, transparency, and responsiveness.

Slow hiring cycles, limited digital interaction, and delayed clarity around role progression or compensation can quickly erode trust.

Randstad's research shows that pay, flexible hours, and work-life balance are significantly stronger retention drivers for Gen Z than traditional perks.

To stay relevant, Das argues, annual appraisals must give way to continuous, coaching-led feedback, and performance systems need to be redesigned around skills and learning. Managers must be trained in emotional intelligence and developmental leadership, while flexibility must be embedded into systems.

REALITY CHECK

"Let's be honest... being Gen Z in today's corporate world isn't easy."



ADVANCING ORTHOPAEDIC CARE WITH VISION, PRECISION, AND PURPOSE

Dr. Girish Bhalerao stands at the forefront of modern orthopaedic practice in India as the Founder and Director of Mumbai Ortho Total Clinics, a rapidly expanding network committed to delivering world-class musculoskeletal care. With seven established centres across Mumbai and an increasing presence in tier-two and tier-three cities, Dr. Bhalerao has built an ecosystem that bridges metropolitan expertise with regional accessibility.

DR. GIRISH L. BHALERAO
Founder and Director of
Mumbai Ortho Total Clinics

Sr. Chief Consultant
Orthopaedic Surgeon,
Glenelagles Hospital,
Mumbai

Mumbai Ortho Total Clinics is distinguished by its comprehensive and forward-looking approach to orthopaedics. The organisation offers advanced services including robotic-assisted joint replacement, arthroscopic surgeries for sports medicine injuries, minimally invasive procedures tailored to individual patient needs, spine care, and regenerative medicine for a wide spectrum of musculoskeletal disorders. This breadth of services reflects Dr. Bhalerao's core philosophy: that precision medicine and technological innovation must be seamlessly aligned with patient-centric customisation.

Under his leadership, the clinics consistently employ the most recent logistical frameworks and state-of-the-art surgical techniques, ensuring optimal outcomes for patients with bone and joint disorders. From pre-operative planning to post-operative rehabilitation, systems are designed to uphold international standards of safety, accuracy, and efficiency.

Beyond clinical excellence, Dr. Bhalerao's vision is distinctly inclusive. Mumbai Ortho Clinics is actively working towards establishing hospitals across diverse geographical regions of Western India, with the explicit aim of standardising orthopaedic care irrespective of socio-economic background. By integrating advanced technology with cost-



Dr. Girish Bhalerao with his latest Joint Replacement Robot for all joints Arthritis

effective models of care, the organisation seeks to make high-quality, advanced orthopaedic treatment accessible and affordable to all.

Dr. Girish Bhalerao's work represents more than the expansion of a healthcare network; it signals a transformative shift in how orthopaedic care is delivered in India—where innovation, equity,

and excellence converge to redefine patient outcomes and expectations.



MUMBAI ORTHO TOTAL
End Stop Solution For Bone And Joint Care

Phone: +91 8390172375
Email: girish.bhalerao.mot@gmail.com



"There's a genuine redefinition of ambition. Work still matters, often just after family, but proving commitment by staying late feels outdated"

SASHI KUMAR
MANAGING DIRECTOR, INDEED



"Authority rooted in title must give way to credibility built on skills. Presenteeism must be replaced with outcomes. Annual reviews must evolve into real-time coaching"

ANSHUMAN DAS
CEO & CO-FOUNDER, CAREERNET

200 |

Most workplaces were designed decades ago for a completely different reality," says Pune-based IT professional Dipin Bakshi.

One of the most damaging, he says, is gossip-driven leadership, where informal conversations and personal bias outweigh skills and performance. In one large organisation, Bakshi recalls, rumours became a quiet tool of power triggering self-doubt, anxiety, and a steady loss of confidence that eventually pushed him to seek therapy.

For Gen Z, he argues, silence only protects unhealthy systems. "Older generations believe staying quiet keeps the peace. But silence solves nothing. Speaking up isn't disrespect, it's responsibility," he says, recalling how calling out unrealistic deadlines initially felt uncomfortable but ultimately helped his team.

Bakshi also challenges rigid hierarchies that treat authority as unquestionable. "The boss is not always right. Leadership should be collabora-

tive. Questioning isn't rebellion it's progress," he says.

When it comes to well-being, Bakshi is clear that mental health cannot be separated from work itself. "Burnout comes from pressure, poor leadership, and unrealistic expectations." His bottom line: "Gen Z isn't rejecting work...we're rejecting unhealthy work cultures."

THE NEW WORKPLACE

At Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI), the shift from "human resources" to "human relations" reflects a deeper rethinking of what work should feel like for the next generation. According to Mahesh Medhekar, Vice President, human relations, the intent is to move away from transactional employment models and build a relationship-led culture grounded in trust, psychological safety, and shared purpose.

MBRDI operates a trust-based working model that gives employees

autonomy over where and how they work, without rigid mandates. For Zoomers, particularly in R&D and engineering roles, this autonomy is complemented by self-regulated leave practices, team-designed schedules, and opportunities for horizontal career movement to build skills across functions. The emphasis, Medhekar notes, is on outcomes, collaboration, and connection.

Besides, culture is critical. "MBRDI prioritises psychological safety and inclusive leadership, assessing managers on empowerment, agility, and purpose," Medhekar explains.

Perhaps the most defining shift is Gen Z's embrace of AI. Indeed's report shows that 71% of Indian workers use AI to validate ideas, plan careers, or solve work problems.

Kumar believes AI is on track to become both invisible and indispensable. "AI will make growth more accessible," he says. "Think about it—there was a time when email felt futuristic. Now it's just... there. AI will follow that same path."

Over the next few years, organisations that succeed with Gen Z will move beyond pay-led attraction to offer growth, purpose, and human-centred work. Learning, Das emphasises, must be positioned as a core organisational value embedded through mentorship, micro- and gamified learning, internal mobility, AI skill-building, and clear career paths within the organisation.

Equally important, says Das, is what leaders must actively unlearn. "Authority rooted in title must give way to credibility built on skills. Presenteeism must be replaced with outcomes. Annual reviews must evolve into real-time coaching."

At its core, Gen Z is asking a simple question: does work fit into a full life or does life exist around work? The reset that Gen Z is pushing for may feel uncomfortable, but it is also the clearest blueprint for the future of work. **BT**



Dr D Y Patil Educational Complex at Akurdi provides state of the art infrastructure to support quality teaching learning. Students are provided with excellent opportunities which help them demonstrate their cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills. Ample up skilling avenues are provided to the students that makes them contribute value in the professional world and pursue their dreams.

D Y Patil College Of Engineering, Akurdi

Dr. D. Y. Patil Prathishthan's, D.Y. Patil College of Engineering, was established in 1984. The college spreads over 10 acres of land with 08 Engineering disciplines. The Institute approved by AICTE, New Delhi and affiliated to the Savitribai Phule Pune University, has been granted Autonomous status from the Academic Year 2024-25. The Institute with excellent & ambient infrastructure well-equipped laboratories, with highly qualified, motivated, and dedicated faculty members. Students are encouraged to actively participate in National and State level co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

Major Highlights:

- An Autonomous Institute
- ISO 21001: 2018 TUV SUD Certified for quality and continuous improvement.
- All eligible programs accredited by NBA.
- Recognized with NPTEL awards for excellence in online learning.
- Ranked All India No. 1 VLAB Nodal Centre by IIT Bombay.
- Implementation of SHL Employability Assessments
- International student study tours and global exposure programs
- Provision of seed money and financial support for student projects and research
- Team Predator in SAE BAJA competition 10 Awards with AIR 1–2025, 2024 and 9 Awards with AIR 1–2023, 2022, 2021

Courses Offered:

- Civil Engineering (UG-PG)
- Computer Engineering (UG-PG)
- Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering (UG-PG)
- Information & Technology (UG)
- Instrumentation & Control Engineering(UG)
- Mechanical Engineering (UG-PG)
- Artificial Intelligence and Data Science (UG)
- Robotics and Automation (UG-PG)

Placements Highlights:

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| 15K+ Students Placed | 52 LPA Highest Package | 50,000+ Alumni |
| 1000+ Empanelled Recruiters | 150+ University Toppers | |

Our Elite Recruiters:



NRI Quota Open: AY 2026-27



Curious Consumption, Controlled

Cocktails

The nights look the same, but the glass doesn't—Gen Z is curating its buzz rather than chasing it

BY SONALI

WHILE EYEING A table split between lager, Picante, and neon-green fizz, Vikas Narula, Co-founder of Depot48, thinks out loud: "They're not ditching margaritas, they're adding matcha and kombucha to the mix." The man behind the culture-forward bar in the capital is speaking about Gen Z's drinking habits. "They want range. It's not a switch; it's a spectrum."

Narula's hypothesis raises a pertinent question: Is this generation really sober, or are they just 'multi-tasting'?

"If anything, they're more curious and experimental," adds Narula.

JUST SOBER-CURIOS

By most measures, Gen Z really is rethinking its relationship with alcohol, even if they haven't typically broken up with it. The trend

is global. According to market research company Circana's 2025 "Sober Curious Nation" update, nearly two in three (65%) Gen Zers said that they planned to drink less in 2025, and roughly four in ten said they wanted a fully dry lifestyle.

The motivations are very personal. "I hate the physical aftermath—the vomiting, nausea, hangover," says Sheya Kurian, a 27-year-old working in Delhi.

Health, money, and especially mental health dominate; a sizable Gen Z cohort reports going alcohol-free specifically to protect their anxiety, sleep, and productivity.

Salloni Ghodawat, CEO of Ghodawat Consumer Ltd, running the non-alcoholic beer brand Coolberg, reflects on this trend. "At the core of this movement is a profound shift in values. Indian youth are more health-conscious than ever before." Rohan (name changed), a 26-year-old fitness enthusiast who quit drinking in 2022 to focus on

weight loss and workouts, says, "I've stayed sober since then and never looked back."

Bacardi's cocktail trends report, tracking global patterns for a spirits giant with a strong India footprint summarises the shift this way: "Gen Z isn't drinking less, they're simply drinking earlier, lighter, and with more intention."

The BT-PRICE Survey shows that 10% of Gen Z consumes alcohol; 13% consume cigarettes only. It also highlights that 17% consume both.

FROM "MOCKTAIL" TO THE ZERO-PROOF ERA

If Gen Z is damp rather than dry, the no- and low-ABV category has been one of the earliest and clearest beneficiaries. According to an Invest India report, 'Seed to Sip-India's rise as a hotspot for beverage investments,' India's non-alcoholic beverages market will possibly reach \$88.25 billion in 2027, up from \$38.03 billion in 2022, a CAGR of 18.3%.

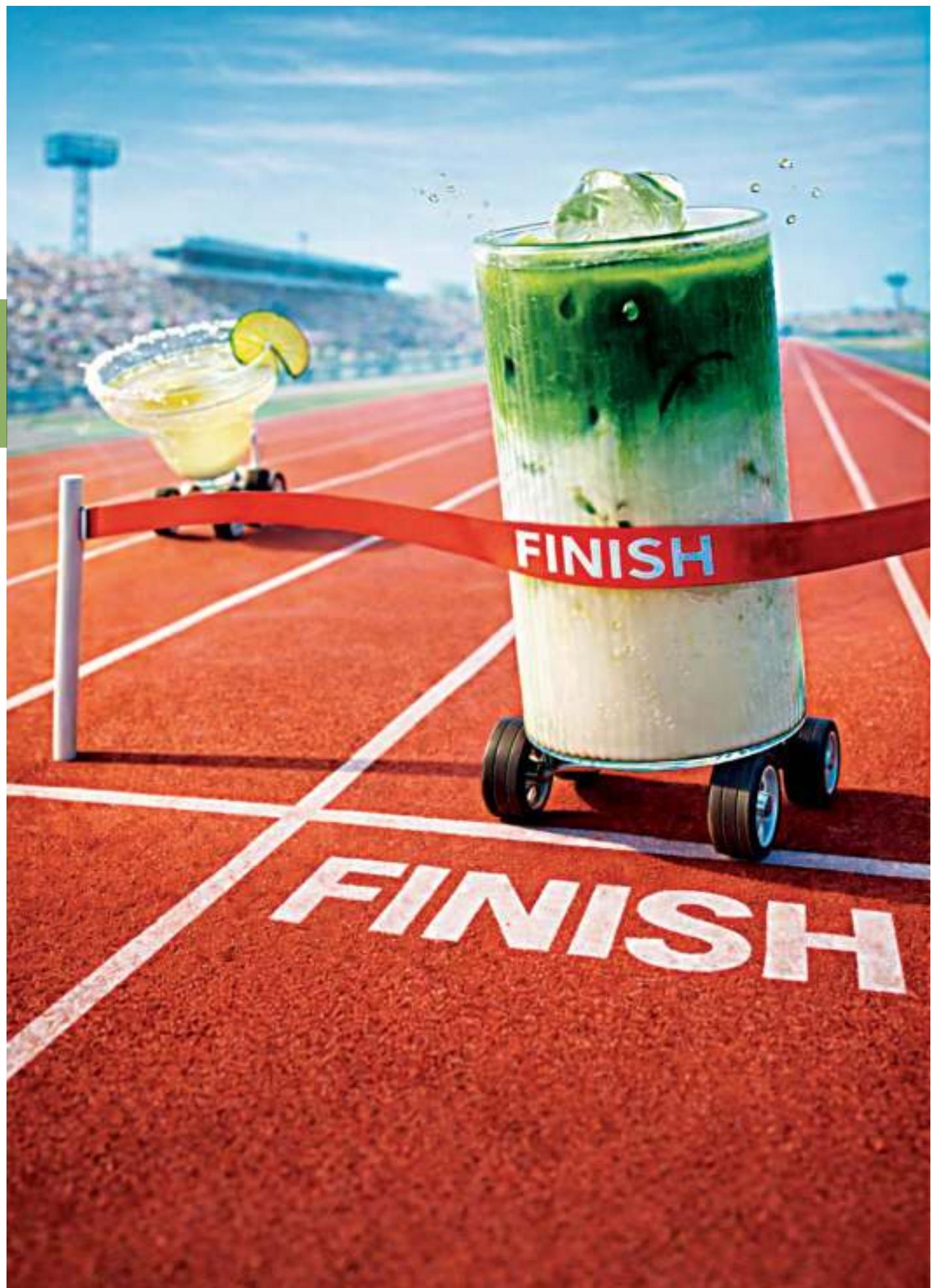
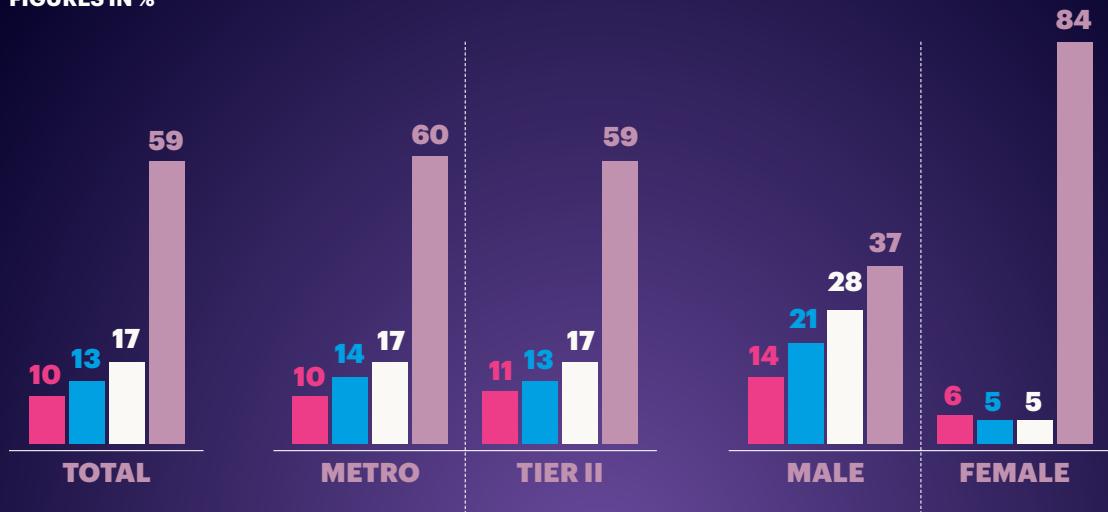


IMAGE BY HARDIK CHHABRA/AI

STAYING SOBER

- A clear majority say they don't regularly consume either alcohol or cigarettes

FIGURES IN %

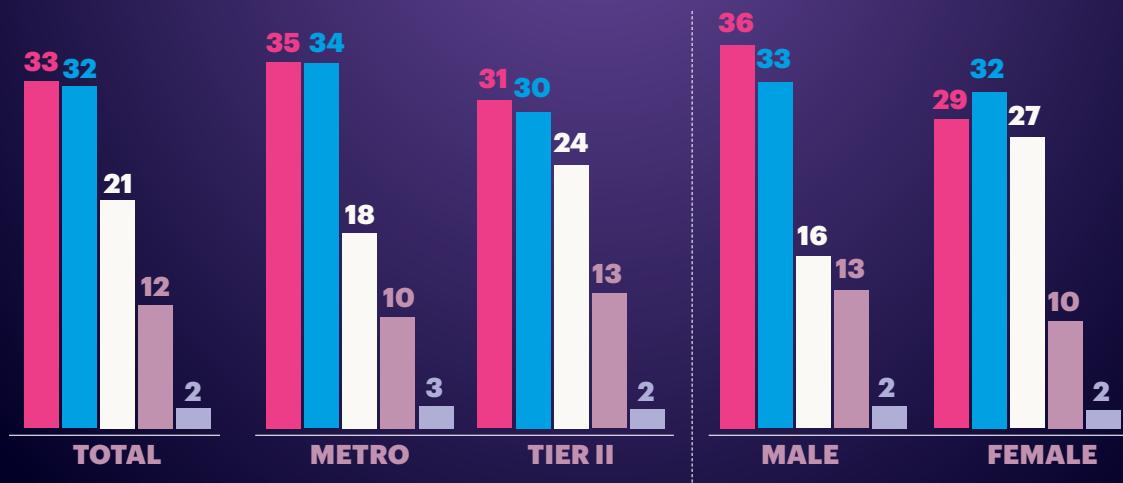


■ ALCOHOL ONLY ■ CIGARETTES ONLY ■ BOTH ALCOHOL AND CIGARETTES ■ NEITHER

SOURCE BT-PRICE GENZ CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

TEA, COFFEE, THEN EVERYTHING ELSE

- Zoom out from your regular bars, and India's consumption data shows how crowded the daily beverage stack already is



■ TEA ■ COFFEE ■ FRUIT JUICE ■ ENERGY DRINKS ■ OTHERS

SOURCE BT-PRICE GENZ CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR SURVEY

That shift has pushed non-alcoholic drinks far beyond novelty. “Requests for no- and low-ABV menus have become almost integral with clients,” says Sai Harish, Head of Marketing & Communications at flavour manufacturer MONIN India. For brands behind the bar, the

change shows up in flavour choices. “Yuzu, matcha, berry blends, tropical fruits, and spice-forward profiles have gained strong traction,” Harish notes.

For Vansh Pahuja, founder of Sober, billed as India’s first non-alcoholic distilled spirits brand,

the shift was driven less by flavour trends and more by lived gaps in the drinking culture.

INDIA’S SOBER STORY

While global surveys tell one part of the story, India’s metro cities are writing their own version.



PROGRAMS OFFERED

Medical

- M.B.B.S.
- M.D.
- Anatomy | Physiology | Biochemistry | Pharmacology | Pathology | Microbiology | Community Medicine | Forensic Medicine | Dermatology | Pediatrics | General Medicine | Radio-Diagnosis | Psychiatry | Respiratory Medicine | Anesthesiology

Engineering

- B.E.
- Civil Engg | Mechanical Engg | Computer Science & Engg | Information Science & Engg | Robotics & Artificial Intelligence | Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- M.Tech
- Structural Engg | Computer Science & Engg | Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning | VLSI Design & Embedded Systems | Infrastructure Management | Robotics and Artificial Intelligence

Natural Sciences

- B.Sc (PCM) | B.Sc (MBBSc) | B.Sc (CS)
- M.Sc (CS) | M.Sc (Chemistry) | M.Sc (Bio-Chemistry)
- M.Sc (Microbiology) | M.Sc (Physics)

Commerce & Management

- B.Com | BCA | BBA | MBA

Allied Health Sciences

- B.Sc. Optometry (PTM) | B.Sc - Cardio-Care Technology (CCT) | B.Sc. Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) | B.Sc. Emergency and Trauma Care Technology (ETCT)
- B.Sc. Medical Imaging Technology (MIT) | B.Sc. Clinical Psychology | B.Sc. - Renal Dialysis Technology (RDT) | Bachelor in Physiotherapy (BPT) | B.Sc. - Anaesthesia & Operation Theatre Technology (AOTT)
- M.Sc. - Clinical Psychology

Education - B.Ed (Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP))

Pharmacy

- D Pharm, B Pharm, Pharm D, M Pharm | Pharmaceutics | Pharmaceutical Chemistry | Pharmacy Pharma Regulatory Affairs | Practice | Pharmaceutical Analysis | Pharmacology | Pharmacoepidemiology

Nursing

- General Nursing and Midwifery |
- B.Sc Nursing
- M.Sc - Community Health Nursing | M.Sc - OBG Nursing
- M.Sc - Mental Health Nursing | M.Sc - Child Health Nursing (Pediatric) | M.Sc - Mental Health
- Nursing (Psychiatric) | M.Sc OBG Nursing

PhD

- Medical Science | Engineering | Nursing | Pharmacy | Commerce | Management Education | Natural Sciences

FACILITIES



BG Nagar-571448, Nagamangala Taluk, Mandya District, Karnataka, India

For Admissions: +91 9886108095 | +91 9845567500

admissions@acu.edu.in

www.acu.edu.in



"They [Gen Z] were raised in that period of COVID where they really understood the wellness aspect... This is the generation that really reads the label"

VANSH PAHUJA

FOUNDER, SOBER, INDIA'S FIRST NON-ALCOHOLIC DISTILLED SPIRITS



"At the core of this movement is a profound shift in values. Indian youth are more health-conscious than ever before"

SALLONI GHODAWAT

CEO, GHODAWAT CONSUMER LTD, RUNS THE NA BEER BRAND COOLBERG

206 |

At bars in Delhi and Bengaluru, non-alcoholic gin and whiskey cocktails are increasingly appearing on bar menus so guests can “party with non-alcoholic spirits”.

“Bengaluru cafés see stronger non alcoholic uptake because of the work-from-laptop crowd. Delhi bars, especially early-evening and pre-gig hours, trend more towards low-ABV,” says Depot48’s Narula.

However, at Depot48 in Delhi, the numbers don’t scream complete sobriety, but they do whisper moderation, suggesting the balance that Gen Z wants to maintain.

Among 22–28-year-olds, “70–80% of the spend for this age group is still classic alcohol,” says Narula. “Mocktails and zero-proof drinks are growing, but they don’t dominate the bill.”

Backing this argument, Vishaal Shah, co-founder of Unsobered Moe’s Art, an ABV platform, adds, “Mindful drinking, low-ABV options, and hangover-free weekends do show up, and the interest for them

is growing, but they’re working off a very small base.” In terms of business for bars, Pahuja argues that having a non-alcoholic menu helps increase the sale of alcohol.

In a group of four where one person doesn’t drink, “they are more likely to convince everybody else that ‘I know a bar where they have a fantastic cocktail programme, but they also have something for me.’ So those four people are choosing your bar... because you have an option for both.”

MATCHA OVER MARGARITA

If zero-proof spirits are building a parallel rail next to alcohol, matcha is reigning the slots where coffee, energy drinks, and even “casual mid-week” drinks used to sit.

“When we started Bree Matcha, the gap in India was very clear,” says Co-founder Siddharth Shah. “Boomers had their chai, millennials have their coffee, so matcha would find a home in Gen Z audiences.”

According to global reports,

Gen Z increasingly uses functional drinks—matcha, kombucha, and adaptogenic lattes as mood tools and social signifiers, rather than just caffeine delivery systems.

Then come the matcha “raves”.

Matcha’s dual pull—pretty and practical—tracks neatly with Gen Z’s broader beverage choices.

VIBE-FIRST, BUZZ-LATER

There is a clear rejig of priorities. As global analysts of Gen Z drink trends put it, this is a generation that “chases experiences rather than categories.”

But earlier generations did versions of this too; they just didn’t have the language. “The behaviour has evolved, the intent has changed, but the participation hasn’t disappeared,” Shah says.

So, what sits in a young Delhiite’s glass in 2030? Pahuja imagines a world where that one-in-five NA drinker in his bar becomes one-in-two. Harish envisions menus where nearly half of the listed beverages are no- or low-ABV. Siddharth Shah sees matcha not only replacing second coffees but also quietly occupying “casual alcohol moments” across the week.

Ghodawat reflects on a changing attitude just this year. “In 2026, ‘sober is the new cool’ will be more than a slogan. It will be the reality shaping how a new generation of Indians chooses to celebrate confidently, raising a glass of something clear, creative, and alcohol-free,” she says.

If the 2010s sold the fantasy of bottomless brunches and blackout nights, the 2020s are selling something subtler, something soberer: a carefully composed feed where you can down a Picante on Friday, make a 6 A.M. run club on Saturday and still post your matcha at golden hour—vibe intact, buzz optional. **BT**

@not_sonali

BASAI: Positioning Biologicals as a tool to improve farmer profits and sustainability

As global agriculture pivots toward sustainability, India's biological agri-input sector is entering a defining moment—and BASAI has emerged as the industry's most influential, unifying voice.

In a landscape where biological inputs are increasingly critical for sustainable farming, the Biological Agri Solutions Association of India (BASAI) is positioning itself as the sector's guiding force. Established in 2019 as a not-for-profit under Section 8, BASAI today represents 53 corporate members, multiple farmer groups, and leading national and international CROs—together forming a powerful coalition for change.

The role BASAI plays is vital. Despite growing interest in biologicals, awareness remains low, misconceptions abound, and the market continues to be flooded with counterfeit products masquerading as "bio" solutions. "The lack of scientific understanding and regulatory clarity has held back an industry that could transform Indian farming. Farmers are increasingly using biologics in their toolbox to mitigate effects of climate change, improve fertilizer use efficiency, produce residue free food and regenerate soil compromised for fertility," notes BASAI President Sandeepa Kanitkar. "Our mission is to correct that—through knowledge, collaboration and strong governance."

Over the past few years, the regulatory landscape has begun evolving. Biofertilizers/Organic fertilizers/Biostimulants have entered the Fertilizer Control Order



Vipin Saini
CEO of BASAI



Sandeepa Kanitkar
President of BASAI

(FCO 1985), and bio-pesticides have clearer registration pathways under the Central Insecticides Act. Yet the challenges are complex, spanning awareness gaps, quality control, farmer trust, and harmonization with global standards. BASAI was formed precisely to address these systemic issues and to ensure that biological products are seen not as alternatives, but as essential components of modern agriculture as per and Chief Executive Officer Mr Vipin Saini.

ITS VISION IS AMBITIOUS:

- To be the ethical and authoritative voice of the biological agri-input industry
- To partner with the government on compliance and regulatory refinement
- To ensure only safe, high-quality products reach farmers
- To promote sustainable agriculture through balanced use of biologicals, fertilizers, and crop protection
- To coordinate global best practices and steward the industry's long-term growth

This vision aligns strongly with India's policy push toward organic and natural farming. Flagship schemes—from Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) to MOVCDNER in the Northeast—are promoting organic clusters, financial assistance for bio-inputs, and strengthened certification frameworks. Start-ups too are being nurtured through the Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship programme under RKVY, which has already supported more than 1,700 agri-innovators.

Meanwhile, major institutions like ICAR and SAUs are accelerating biopesticide research, enhancing shelf life, and expanding production infrastructure. These initiatives collectively create fertile ground for BASAI's advocacy.

Yet BASAI's leadership believes that sustainable agriculture must progress beyond policy and production. "Biologicals will redefine the future of Indian farming, but only if farmers trust the ecosystem," says another senior member. "Our goal is to make biological inputs mainstream, credible and globally competitive."

Building India's Future, One Fastener at a Time

How Landmark Crafts transformed a humble screw into a symbol of industrial independence and became the invisible force behind India's infrastructure revolution

In 1999, while India's technology sector celebrated lucrative Y2K contracts and pharmaceutical giants courted global markets, two brothers from Ghaziabad were obsessed with something decidedly unglamorous: screws. Pankaj and Vipin Lidoo had identified a critical vulnerability in India's booming construction sector. Self-drilling screws, essential components for the color-coated sheet technology transforming Indian architecture, were available from only one source: Taiwan. The entire construction industry was hostage to foreign suppliers for something as basic as a fastener.

"We realized that India's infrastructure dreams were literally being held together by imported fasteners," recalls Pankaj Lidoo, now Managing Director of Landmark Crafts. "Every construction delay, every cost overrun, every stretched project timeline happened because builders had to wait weeks for specialized screws to arrive from across the Indian Ocean."

The Lidoo brothers saw more than an inefficiency. They saw a business opportunity wrapped in a nationalist mission. Rather than profit from the import trade, they chose the harder path: multiple research trips to Taiwan, substantial R&D investments, and complex technology transfer negotiations. By the early 2000s, they had established India's first indigenous manufacturing facility for self-drilling screws in Ghaziabad, betting their future on a product most entrepreneurs considered too mundane to matter.

The timing proved prescient. As India's infrastructure spending accelerated



Pankaj Lidoo

Director
Landmark Crafts Ltd



Vipin Lidoo

Managing Director
Landmark Crafts Ltd

through the 2000s, Landmark's products became the invisible sinews of national development. Delhi Metro's pioneering phases, BHEL installations, and Indian Railways projects all relied on fasteners stamped "Made in India" for the first time. The company had achieved what seemed impossible: making India self-reliant in a critical industrial component while simultaneously building a profitable enterprise.

But the Lidoo brothers understood that one size fits all wouldn't work in a country as diverse as India. In Himachal Pradesh's timber-heavy construction zones, they supplied wood-specific solutions. Along Karnataka's coastline, anti-corrosive variants battled salt-laden air. For metro systems spanning multiple cities, they provided customized fastening solutions. This geographic and application-based customization became their competitive edge.

"In every assembled product, there is a fastener holding the structure strong and safe," Pankaj explains. "We provide the strength you may not see, but you can always trust."

Today, Landmark operates ISO 9001:2015 certified facilities in Panchkula, backed by a CRISIL SME-1

rating that validates their operational excellence. Their portfolio has expanded beyond self-drilling screws to include aluminium blind rivets and drywall screws, with concrete wall screws currently in development. A strategic network of marketing offices ensures nationwide reach, making Landmark's products accessible across India's vast geography.

The company's journey mirrors India's broader manufacturing evolution: from import dependence to indigenous capability, from reselling foreign technology to supplying the nation's most critical infrastructure projects. Landmark embodied "Make in India" decades before it became official policy, proving that industrial self-reliance isn't just rhetoric but achievable reality.

In an era dominated by unicorn valuations and digital disruption, Landmark Crafts represents a different metric of success: measured not in market buzz but in structural integrity, not in venture funding but in the quiet confidence of industrial self-reliance. Sometimes the smallest components enable the biggest transformations. And sometimes, the most profound revolutions happen one screw at a time.

From 153 US FDA-Listed Products to AI Diagnostics: Lords Mark Industries Powers Gen Z's Preventive Healthcare Revolution

As India's 360 million Gen Z consumers demand healthcare that predicts rather than treats, Lords Mark Industries' breakthrough—securing US FDA registration for 153 orthosurgical products while pioneering AI-driven diagnostics and genomic testing—demonstrates how indigenous innovation can democratize preventive healthcare at global scale.



Lords Mark Industries Ltd. (LMIL) has achieved what few Indian medical device manufacturers have: US FDA registration covering 153 orthosurgical products—from Lord's Activeguard knee braces, compression stockings, hernia belts, and cervical collars to Lord's Joywipes disinfectant wipes and elastic bandages. Every product is manufactured within LMIL's Silvassa facility operating on internationally benchmarked protocols: ISO 13485:2016, WHO-GMP, CDSO certifications, validated processes, and compliance frameworks meeting stringent US FDA requirements.

"This milestone goes beyond regulatory recognition," says Sachidanand Upadhyay, Managing Director. "It reinforces our belief that world-class medical devices can be designed, manufactured, and regulated from India at global scale. Being one of the companies to secure US FDA recognition for 153 orthosurgical products reflects the strength of our Silvassa manufacturing platform, our regulatory discipline, and our long-term vision to position India as a trusted source of globally compliant healthcare solutions."

This FDA breakthrough strengthens LMIL's access to highly regulated markets—United States, Latin America, Middle East—for institutional supplies and hospital partnerships. Through Lord's Mark Global LLC (US subsidiary), LMIL joins a select group of Indian



Mr. Sachidanand Upadhyay

manufacturers with established FDA recognition, reinforcing India's growing global MedTech presence.

PREDICTIVE HEALTHCARE INNOVATION

LMIL's innovation extends beyond rehabilitation products. One DNA provides saliva-based genetic testing delivering affordable insights into disease predispositions—cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disorders—empowering preventive choices years before symptoms appear. The Renalyx platform integrates AI-driven kidney care: early detection, smart dialysis devices (world's sixth CE-certified brand), and analytics-led monitoring addressing chronic conditions through preventive screening.

Institutional collaborations amplify impact. Partnerships with IIT Bombay (Shape Dx™ sickle cell test for ₹650 Cr Ministry project) and BARC (25-year cancer/TB detection agreement) translate research into field-ready solutions. LMIL's diagnostic reagents achieve 99.7% accuracy with 24-month shelf life. At the Indo-European Business Forum 2025 (House of Lords, London), LMIL received the 'Innovation

in Diagnostic Devices' Award—the first Indian diagnostics company honored.

SCALING ASIA'S LARGEST AMBITIONS

LMIL's Dadra & Nagar Haveli facility supports audacious targets: Asia's largest biochemistry reagents plant (2027) and medical device facility (2028). This infrastructure enables what Gen Z expects: preventive diagnostics priced accessibly, genomic testing democratized beyond metros, chronic care technology deployed rurally through E-Smart Clinics (portable health kiosks with on-site testing and teleconsultation).

From ₹306 Cr (FY23) to ₹555 Cr (FY24)—81.6% growth—LMIL scales as Gen Z's preventive healthcare adoption accelerates. The upcoming NASDAQ-BSE dual listing positions LMIL among global MedTech leaders.

As Upadhyay concludes: "We're building the foundation for India's MedTech leadership—demonstrating that India's most valuable export will be predictive innovation, accessible genomics, and connected care ecosystems designed for generations prioritizing wellness over treatment."

@themermaidsscales

@Matgonian



Krutika / Age 27



13.1
Million



8.2
Million



Recent Highlight: Bandra-Worli Sea Link OOH Feature

Gaurang Patel / Age 28



2
Million



26
K



Highest Paying Brand Deal
₹3 Lakh+

ANNIVERSARY • CONTENT CREATORS

The Rise of The Contentpr

@kavya_mahajann



Kavya Mahajan / Age 23

 Instagram

320
K



Highest Paying Brand Deal
₹5 Lakh for a Reel+Story

@priyamyonzon



Priyam Yonzon / Age 23

 Instagram

159
K



Highest Paying Brand Deal
₹2.5 lakh for a Reel

As Gen Z content creators turn their influence into enterprise, work and income are getting redefined in India's digital economy

reneurs

BY PRASHANTI MOKTAN

USED TO SHOOT after 10 pm when my parents were asleep. It was work during the day, YouTube at night. My sleep schedule was ruined, but one video changed everything." Meet 28-year-old Gaurang Patel, aka Matgonian, a Gen Z gamer with over 2 million followers. He quit his full-time job as a software engineer after his creator income surpassed his salary at the 700K-subscriber mark.

Gaurang isn't the only Zoomer who has pivoted to the social media content space. From beauty to gaming, young creators now drive a new labour market across sectors, as publishers, marketers, performers, analysts, founders, and increasingly, employers.

That's because Gen Z is truly the first generation to come of age on social media platforms. "In

212 | India, the creator landscape is undergoing a foundational shift where individuals are evolving into 'Contentpreneurs', the next-generation start-ups of the media and entertainment industry," says Gunjan Soni, Managing Director, India, YouTube.

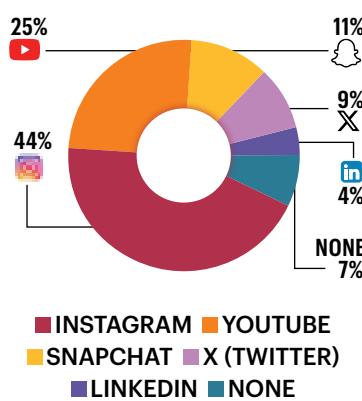
India's creator ecosystem is already a powerful economic force as 2-2.5 million creators influence an estimated \$350-400 billion in annual consumer spending, and this is projected to touch \$1 trillion by 2030, as per a 2025 BCG report.

The impact and potential of this ecosystem is clear and the entrepreneurial zeal mirrors evolving consumer behaviour. The BT-PRICE Gen Z Consumption Behaviour Survey reveals that 41% of Zoomers use the internet primarily for social media. They're not just consuming content there; they're acting on what they see. A good 22% of Gen Z respondents said they frequently



THE INFLUENCE ECOSYSTEM

Instagram leads among social media platforms in influencing Gen Z's purchase decisions



purchase products or services after seeing them on social media, while 38% do so occasionally. But there's a clear winner among the platforms: 44% said Instagram influences their purchase decisions, followed by YouTube at 25% and

Snapchat at 11%.

As a result, marketers no longer see creators as just add-ons to digital campaigns, but as credible drivers of consideration and purchase. Akansha Baliga, Marketing Lead for skincare brand Plum, says, "Reach is just a hygiene metric for us. The real signal sits in the comments; you can tell who watched the content till the end, - who's asking genuine questions, and who's actually considering a purchase. That's how we separate creators who drive decisions from those who just drive views."

CREATIVE WORK

The lives of creators unfold at the intersection of creativity and commerce. Yet for many Gen Z creators, the journey did not begin as a strategic career pivot. Krutika, who gained online fame as The Mermaid Scales, started with outfit posts. "After some time, I started

FROM DISRUPTION TO DURABILITY: WHAT WILL DEFINE ENTERPRISE LEADERS IN 2026

Let's be honest: We have heard an unending litany of words like "unprecedented", "pivot" and "resilience" in the last five years. We've "pivoted" till we're dizzy, and we've called so many things "unprecedented" that the word has lost all meaning.



DINESH ARORA,
Partner and Advisory Leader, PwC India

In all my interactions with business leaders, the mood is shifting. The fatigue of constant crisis management is real. Leaders are done with merely reacting.

2026 marks the beginning of a new chapter. As technology cycles accelerate and global geopolitical shocks become a baseline condition rather than an anomaly, it is not sufficient to merely respond to shocks; we need to start underwriting the future.

The era of purely "managing disruption" is over. We are entering the age of "durability".

Durability isn't just a stronger version of resilience. Resilience is about bouncing back; durability is about not needing to bounce back in the first place. It is not about building walls to withstand a storm; it is about building windmills to harness it. For enterprise leaders in 2026, the question is no longer "How do we survive the next crisis?" but "How do we build a model that gets stronger because of it?"

The architecture of the durable enterprise

In 2026, a "future-ready" organisation looks fundamentally different from the digital transformation poster children of 2022. It's messier, perhaps. But it's infinitely more solid.

Operational agility: From "just-in-time" to "just-in-case"

For decades, we worshipped efficiency. Lean supply chains were the gold standards. However, the last 5 years have exposed the fragility of this model. The smartest leaders I know are decoupling "agility" from "fragility." They are building what I call "antifragile operations". This means:

Strategy as a compass, not a map: Organisations will still need their 5-year vision statements. In a noisy world, that long-term 'North Star' is often what keeps us honest. But leaders need to stop treating the path to that vision as a

straight line. Dynamic, scenario-based navigation makes the route fluid towards our 5-year goals. We should constantly stress-test our own business models against potential geopolitical or technological shocks to find weak points before the market does.

Sovereignty as a strategy: The plan to create a semiconductor fab ecosystem in India is a prime example of moving from "just-in-time" global dependence to "just-in-case" domestic capability. We are not just diversifying a supply chain; we are insulating India's ecosystem from future geopolitical shocks. That is anti-fragility.

Institutional trust is the new currency

In a world flooded with deepfakes and algorithmic bias, trust is the rarest and most valuable commodity. For India Inc., which is increasingly serving the world through Global Capability Centers (GCCs) and transnational exports, trust is the ultimate moat.

Governance in 2026 is no longer a back-office compliance function; it is a front-office competitive advantage.

Institutionalising legacy: Future-ready leaders have started shifting gears. Large, family-owned consumer businesses are entering a decisive transition phase. As some of India's most recognisable heritage brands bring in long-term institutional capital, it signals a shift from founder-led stewardship to professionally governed scale. The journey is no longer about preserving popularity—it is about building globally trusted institutions designed for continuity across generations.

Selling trust, not just tech: Leading Indian IT and digital services firms are redefining their AI value proposition. Instead of competing purely on model sophistication, they are embedding explainability, governance, and responsible-use frameworks into their offerings. In doing so, they are responding to a clear client need: confidence in how AI decisions are made. In 2026, the product is not just intelligence—it is the integrity surrounding it.

ESG as DNA: India's large industrial and energy conglomerates are moving sustainability from narrative to infrastructure. Investments in large-scale green energy and clean manufacturing assets point to a strategic shift—treating sustainability as a long-term growth driver rather than a regulatory requirement. ESG is becoming embedded in capital allocation, operating models, and executive accountability.

The "adaptive" culture

Technology does not innovate; people do. The only asset on a balance sheet is a workforce that can unlearn and relearn at speed.

The workforce of 2026 spans five distinct generations, each with a unique psychological contract. We see a younger cohort demanding "purpose and radical flexibility, colliding with an older cohort that often prioritizes "stability and structural clarity." The durable leader will stop viewing this as a conflict, instead they will start balancing these priorities by marrying the digital intuition of the youth with the institutional wisdom of the veterans to forge a **multi-generational alloy**.

The great reskilling: We are past the "Great Resignation" and are now in the "Great Reskilling". TCS set the benchmark, not by firing, but by training over 3.5 lakh employees in Gen AI skills. They didn't go to the market to buy a new workforce; they built a durable one from within.

Psychological safety is non-negotiable. You cannot have innovation if people are terrified of being wrong. Durable cultures are places where "bad news travels fast"—where employees feel safe flagging risks early, preventing small cracks from becoming systemic failures.

The leader's job is not to be the smartest person in the room anymore. AI took that job. The leader's job is to be the human anchor, become **The Chief Interpretation Officer**. The leader needs to help teams make sense of data and ensure that technology serves the human mission, not the other way around.

The leadership mandate for 2026

So, what does all this mean for business leaders? Personal reinvention is the need of the hour. The command-and-control CEO has long become obsolete. In 2026, a successful leader needs to be a **systems thinker** - comfortable with ambiguity. They will rarely have 100% of the data, but they must still act with 100% conviction, while retaining the humility to course correct.

They also need to be a **diplomat** - As businesses navigate complex geopolitical landscapes, the ability to build bridges—between governments, communities, and diverse workforce demographics—is a core business skill.

The road ahead

India Inc. stands at a unique vantage point. We have the digital infrastructure. We have the demographic advantage. We have the hunger. But to turn all of this potential into global leadership, we must shift our gaze.

We must stop being surprised by chaos. We must stop treating stability as the norm and disruption as the exception. By embedding durability into our strategy and our culture, we do more than just endure the future. We define it.

Let 2026 be the year we stop reacting to the world and start building a world that can rely on us.

posting videos and truly enjoyed content creation. It became something I genuinely looked forward to, and I feel that shift changed everything for me,” she says.

Kavya Mahajan, who splits his time between content creation and contributing to his family’s real estate firm Property Station, recalls how he started posting aesthetic images and videos during college. “I like creative direction. There is always a storyline in my videos,” he says. As his content began hitting over a million views organically, brand deals followed. But with success came challenges, including payment delays that stretched for months. He explains, “Now I ask for 50% advance and send a legal notice over delays.”

For Priyam Yonzon, what began as instinctive posting became her chosen means of livelihood after a reality show appearance and an exclusive retail partnership. At 23, she earns purely through brand campaigns. “When I look at people who are around my age, they are still looking for jobs,” she says. But she is quick to underline the discipline the profession demands, “If you want to sustain yourself, you cannot treat it simply like a side hustle. I shoot, edit, style and plan everything myself. I am a one-person army.”

There are niches here. For instance, in gaming, earnings flow in via views, memberships for special content, affiliates and brand partnerships.

Plus, YouTube tools like Super Chat, Super Stickers, and Channel Memberships, are helping with earnings, with over 45,000 channels in India earning from these products in a single month.

Over 40% of eligible creators in India are enrolled in its shop-

THE BIG BUCKS



Creator-influenced spending in India projected to exceed \$1 trillion annually by 2030*



Annual Income Potential: Mega creators (1 Million+) can go well into double-digit crores; macro creators (500K-1 Million) ₹20 lakh to ₹1.5 crore



Income Potential Per Post: Mid-tier creators (100K-500K): ₹75,000 to ₹3 lakh; micro creators (10K-100K): ₹15,000 to ₹1 lakh; nano creators (1K-10K): ₹2,000 to ₹15,000

SOURCE INCOME ESTIMATES BY INDUSTRY EXPERTS;
*2025 BCG REPORT -
'FROM CONTENT TO COMMERCE: MAPPING INDIA'S CREATOR ECONOMY'

ping affiliate programme, says Soni of YouTube. While YouTube Shorts can work best for reaching new audiences quickly, Gaurang believes long form is the real game. “With good engagement comes great earning opportunities that are generally much higher in long form,” he adds.

THE MONETISATION GAME

As the creator economy matures, the search for the “right fit” has become critical for both brands and creators. Sitting between the two is a fast-growing layer of talent-management companies and social media managers.

Social media consultant Mayank Jha describes the evolution of content creation simply, “From hobby to business to professional ecosystem. That has been the journey of the last decade.” There are clear distinctions between creators based on their following: Nano (1,000 to 10,000), micro (10,000-100,000), mid-tier (100,000-500,000), macro (500,000 to 1 million) and mega (over 1 million). Rate cards are now far more standardised. Fashion and beauty drive campaign volume, while technology and auto often command the biggest cheques, particularly in long-form video formats.

Being in the business of developing laptops and tools for gamers and content creators, Bruce Lin, NB Marketing Manager of South Asia at MSI, observes how “nowadays, creating quality content isn’t the biggest challenge for young talents; it’s about integrating their creativity effectively and standing out in a competitive landscape”.

Aditi Shrivastava, Co-founder and CEO of digital media company Pocket Aces, says the pandemic accelerated the adoption of short-form and self-shot creator content. The company’s talent

TWO FORCES. ONE UNMATCHED PERSPECTIVE.



SIDDHARTH ZARABI

RAJDEEP SARDESAI

JANUARY 19TH - 23RD

DAVOS
BRAINSTORM

STATE PARTNER



ANDHRA PRADESH
India's Sunrise State

INDIA TODAY'S AUTHORITY AND BUSINESS TODAY'S EXPERTISE

Exchange Partner



Knowledge Partner



www.businesstoday.in



@BusinessToday



@Business_Today



@Business_Today



@BusinessToday



@BusinessToday

WATCH ON

businessstoday.in/wef-2025
youtube.com/@BusinessToday

management vertical, Clout, manages about 250 creators and talent contributes more than a third of the parent company's business. Annual earnings could range from ₹20 lakh to ₹1.5 crore for macro creators while mega creators may earn well into double-digit crores.

As earnings rise and brands chase phone-first consumers, an inevitable question arises: Is content creation a viable sole income? Jha puts it bluntly, "A majority of the current youth want to be creators. They start their channels, but only a handful of them can stick to it." Turning content into meaningful brand deals takes consistency and persistence.

work on alternate weeks doing what I enjoy." This is a flexibility most traditional jobs don't offer.

The silver lining lies in a steadily levelling playing field, powered by deeper internet penetration and social media platforms rolling out creator-friendly tools and new monetisation pathways. Brands, the biggest drivers of this ecosystem, are expanding their 'creator budgets' as online exposure continues to convert into real consumer demand. Plum considers creators a part of the acquisition engine. "Creator-led content meaningfully influences our digital customer acquisition, even when it isn't the final click,"

digital collaborations via direct partnerships. "We also provide international stages for young talents through the MSI Creator Award, hosting creation contests and offering cash rewards and trips to world-class exhibitions like Adobe Max in the US," says Lin.

Looking ahead, creators are placing greater emphasis on short-form content, even as a parallel shift toward deeper storytelling formats gains traction. Shrivastava chimes in, "Reality content is going to become big on social media as younger people like raw and authentic content." She is also bullish on podcasts and micro-drama formats. "The creator," Shrivastava says, "is steadily becoming the nucleus of the media ecosystem itself." More are likely to follow in the footsteps of contentpreneurs like Kusha Kapila (UnderNeat) or Aanam C (Wearified), focusing on building their own brands.

For all the scale, capital flows and a viable professional pathway that now orbit the creator economy, the people driving it are still struggling to explain this to their families.

"My mother thinks I am acting for the brands. Indian parents believe a nine-to-six job is discipline and real work," says an amused Kavya.

Becoming a Gen Z creator ensures autonomy and income potential but it also means operating in a volatile environment of shifting attention spans. What cannot be ignored is the influence this group now exerts on culture and consumption. For now, India's Gen Z creators with their rizz are just out here stacking brand collabs, manifesting big bucks and no cap, hoping the creator economy, just like the content they create, absolutely slaps. **BT**

says Baliga.

"Even a nano creator can easily earn ₹2,000 to ₹15,000 for a branded video or post," says Jha. Soni sees today's creators moving away from a single-format approach to building resilient businesses using a multi-format flywheel. She highlights how YouTube Shorts, with over 650 million monthly logged-in viewers in India, serves as the primary on-ramp for creators to find new audiences, while long-form video becomes a trust-building engine, where creators can develop their digital IP.

Brands, too, are increasingly helping creators not just to jump-start their journeys but to support them as they grow. MSI maintains a 20% year-on-year growth in

216 |

Becoming a Gen Z creator ensures autonomy and income potential but it also means operating in a volatile environment of shifting attention spans

Gaurang, the gamer, cautions creators against quitting their jobs too early. His income is split between platform monetisation and brand deals, but his expenses mirror a production-house budget. Krutika seconds this, as many creators often underestimate hidden costs like the time spent on planning, shooting, and editing. She adds, "As content becomes more professional, production expenses and the need for a team also increase."

With scale comes pressure. "From the day you lock a brand campaign till the day it goes live, you're under pressure. Background, outfit, hair, makeup — everything is pre-approved," says Priyam. On the flipside, she beams, "I only

A New Grammar of Consumption

Consumption, for Gen Z, is a not a response to a need but to constant exposure



BY SANTOSH DESAI
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR,
THINK9 CONSUMER
TECHNOLOGIES; CEO,
FUTURE BRANDS

LIVING INSIDE A digital world changes everything. Unlike previous generations for whom technology was a facility, something one used for a reason while remaining outside, Gen Z is the first generation that lives inside it. No wonder physical reality is termed 'off-line', acknowledging that the default is 'on-line'.

The other fundamental shift is in the fact that this generation experiences itself as individuals in a way that is unprecedented. The very act of living inside their phones, through which they share a unique one-on-one relationship with the outside world, and one where every whim of theirs is read as a command, gives them a feeling of specialness that works at a visceral level. It also makes consumption a part of their search for identity.

The need to constantly put oneself on public display through social media means that this identity must be performed minute by minute. Consumption becomes a costume drama of their beta selves, perpetually seeking to find a version of themselves that is more appropriate in a changing context.

Which is why the attempt to find coherence in their actions is often frustrating. These are not contradictions—imply reactions to a world of constant stimulation where one flits through several versions of one-

self in a single day. The belief, for instance, that Gen Z is drawn to ideas of sustainability might get rudely challenged when the same person opts for a fast fashion product in the next breath.

Gen Z also sits at a peculiar junction, sandwiched between stability and volatility. This is a generation that has seen all concepts change—the meaning of work has transformed, benchmarks of success have gone haywire with 19-year-old billionaires, relationships have become complicated, choices have multiplied, and the pressure to constantly define oneself is relentless.

This means that consumption becomes significant even at the granular level. And indulgence is sought on a daily basis, beginning with the smallest items. A cup of artisanal coffee, a health bar, a new skincare regimen, a new D@C brand curated by an influencer—all of these become small highlights in a day. They help pepper the day with meaning much like social media, giving small dopamine hits that keep one going. They are also vital instruments in the never-ending projecting of constructing and broadcasting one's ever-evolving identity.

Experimentation becomes much easier when one is constantly in hunting mode. The cost of failure is low, and the opportunity to try anything once is all around. A 19-year-old in Indore can develop a "Tokyo mini-



218 |

ILLUSTRATION BY **SIDDHANT JUMDE**

Gen Z has been tasked with creating new rules and then living by them, and consumption is a key part of their sense-making apparatus

mal” phase, a “thrift-core” phase, a “quiet luxury” phase, a “streetwear drop” phase, and a “clean girl” phase, often without leaving their room. The point is not the fixedness of taste. The point is the freedom to try on versions of the self.

This is also the reason why brands

are no longer the last word on meaning. In particular, legacy brands face the challenge of not being specific or differentiated enough. They cater to too wide an audience to be useful for defining identities sharply. In the meaning-making world, they are blunt instruments that do not

offer the excitement of the new. The other truth is that Gen Z does not treat brands with reverence—they do not passively receive brand stories. They play with them, remixing them, making memes out of them. The delivered brand may not be what the brand intended; brands are often made or broken in the comments section.

In a world where the distance between desire and fulfilment has narrowed rapidly, thanks to quick commerce and instant payments, consumption becomes a function of mood rather than need. The meaning of impulse widens, and aligns with momentary needs that arise and must be fulfilled now. Consumption becomes like a little break from a routine, a way to dress up a moment with a little spice. Boredom, stress, pangs of insecurity become triggers for purchase—the category is not key, which emotion a brand caters to in the moment is.

Gen Z is interested in brands that have ‘purpose’ but this phenomenon is often both overstated and misunderstood. Mere proclamation of virtue does nothing. If a brand is genuinely invested in a cause or a larger goal and demonstrates this through its actions, then that registers. But it is by no means the single most important factor.

The behaviour of Gen Z is often seen to be a cipher, but this is really not the case. They cannot be understood in terms of older generation because their life context is so different. But put the two together and this generation begins to make sense. That doesn’t mean that their behaviour is predictable, just that it is explainable. This is a generation that has been tasked with creating new rules and then living by them, and consumption is a key part of their sense-making apparatus. **BT**

Views are personal

HSNC University, Mumbai

A Legacy Reimagined for India's Innovative Future-Ready Learning



Vice Chancellor Col. Dr. Hemlata K. Bagla: Leading with Vision & Academic Excellence

As India's higher education ecosystem undergoes a generational shift driven by multi-disciplinary learning, employability and social impact, **Hyderabad Sind National Collegiate University (HSNC University)**, a State Public University, has emerged as a compelling national example of how legacy institutions can successfully reinvent themselves for the future. Established in 2020 under the Rashtriya Uchehatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) initiative, HSNC University represents a unique collaboration between the Government of Maharashtra and the Hyderabad (Sind) National Collegiate (HSNC) Board.

At the helm of this transformation is **Vice Chancellor Col. Dr. Hemlata K. Bagla**, whose leadership has been instrumental in shaping the University's academic vision, governance standards and institutional culture. "At HSNC University, we believe higher education must prepare students for a lifetime of learning, leadership and responsible citizenship. Our focus is on building academic depth, ethical values and real-world relevance in everything we do," **Dr. Bagla** notes.

HSNC University draws strength from more than seven decades of academic excellence through its three distinguished constituent colleges: H.R. College of Commerce & Economics, K.C. College of Arts, Science & Commerce and Bombay Teachers' Training College. These institutions have long been synonymous with quality education in Mumbai and beyond. As a University, HSNC has leveraged this credibility to create a contemporary academic ecosystem aligned with NEP 2020.

In a short span of five years, the University has significantly expanded its academic portfolio through the **launch of eight new schools: Niranjan Hiranandani School of**



Management & Real Estate (NHSMRE), D.M. Harish School of Law (DMHSL), Chellaram School of Yoga & Wellness (CSOYW), School of Applied Sciences (SAS), School of Performing Arts (SOPA), School of Humanities & Social Sciences (SHSS), School of Interdisciplinary Studies (SIS) and School of Engineering & Technology (SOET); spanning management, law, applied sciences, performing arts, engineering & technology, interdisciplinary studies, humanities and yoga & wellness.

Together, these Schools enable flexible, multidisciplinary pathways and offer undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma and certification programmes designed to meet evolving industry needs. Today, HSNC University **engages a diverse cohort of over 13,453 learners, signalling its growing relevance and reach at the national level.**

A defining feature of HSNC University's approach is its emphasis on experiential and industry-integrated learning. Curricula are consciously designed around Industry 4.0

framework, incorporating internships, live projects, research exposure and hands-on training. Initiatives such as *Streetpreneurship* exemplify this philosophy, where classrooms extend into communities and learning is anchored in real economic and social contexts.

"We want students to understand India as it is and to develop solutions that are relevant, ethical and impactful," says Dr. Bagla.

Beyond academics, HSNC University has invested in modern infrastructure, digital learning environment with modern libraries, computer labs, state-of-the-art auditorium and streamlined student services, including a centralised Student Facilitation Centre offering online academic support. Student-friendly campus facilities, including a modern cafeteria, contribute to a comfortable and engaging learning environment. Campus life is vibrant and participative, enriched by student-led clubs, cultural festivals, Fit Bharat Club, innovation challenges, hackathons and community outreach.

Equally central to the University's identity is its commitment to inclusivity, equity and student well-being. Through scholarships, mentoring, accessible infrastructure and mental health initiatives, HSNC University works actively to remove barriers to higher education and foster a culture of belonging. Its collaboration with external partners such as Mariwala Health Initiative on mental health awareness and British Council on sustainability and climate literacy further reflects a holistic, globally aligned understanding of education's role in nation-building, in line with **NEP 2020** and the United Nations **Sustainable Development Goals**.

HSNC University stands as a timely example of a University that honours its past while decisively shaping the future, one that is preparing globally-competent, socially-conscious and future-ready graduates for India's next growth chapter.

Why Gen Z is Living Now

They have made a quiet decision that if the world is uncertain, they will not postpone happiness. That's not carelessness. That's courage.



BY ALPANA PARIDA
FOUNDER & CEO,
TVARRA

Gen Z grew up seeing careers disappear overnight, cities shut down, oceans rise, and “safe” companies lay off people on a call

EVERY GENERATION has a savings story. For those of us who were born before the '80s, it was built on fear. Growing up in post-Independence India or the liberalisation decade, frugality was not a virtue; it was survival. Saving was an insurance policy against scarcity with unstable jobs, limited credit, weak safety nets, and social expectations that one must “settle down” early.

Fear of job loss. Fear of illness. Fear of the one rainy day that would surely arrive and stay. We saved first, lived later, and congratulated ourselves for our discipline.

Gen Z watched us from an early age and reached a different conclusion. “You saved, and the rain still came.” Theirs was a different psychological economy.

They grew up seeing careers disappear overnight, cities shut down, oceans rise, and “safe” companies lay off people on Zoom. So, when we tell them to save for tomorrow, they politely smile and use their maxed-out credit cards to book a trip.

This isn't irresponsibility. It's realism with a will to live life fuller, not merely wealthier. The YOLO generation isn't hedonistic. It is emotionally honest.

Looking at their drivers of consumption across categories, we see

very different behaviours shaped by their world view.

THE WEEKEND BINGE

Where we drank occasionally to escape, or to unwind, Gen Z drinks in bursts—to celebrate. They don't nurse a nightly drink; they demolish weekends. Alcohol isn't a coping mechanism, it's a punctuation mark in the living of life.

Hence, they binge on weekends and have dry weekdays. They prefer craft beers over “my father's whisky”; low-alcohol, flavoured, Instagram-friendly drinks.

For our generation, owning a vehicle was a milestone. First job, first EMI, a legitimate pride enhancing dent. Gen Z looks at this and asks, “Why would I commit to metal for seven years?”

They want movement, not mortgages. A car isn't adulthood anymore. It's baggage. It's an albatross.

This BUY vs USE behaviour is evident across many high-value categories like real estate, jewellery and furniture. If people owned to feel safe, Gen Z uses things and moves on. We bought gadgets hoping they would last. Gen Z buys them assuming they won't. They don't mourn obsolescence. They plan for it.

Phones are traded like moods. Headphones are fashion. Watches talk back. If a device doesn't inte-

grate, update, or photograph well, it's out. Longevity has been replaced by fast paced life choices.

QUANTUM LEAPS

Money is where the generational difference is widest. Previously, we thought about money incrementally. If our post-tax return beat the fixed deposit rate, we felt clever. A few percentage points here, a bonus there, maybe a second home someday. Wealth was something you accumulated patiently, like silt.

Gen Z thinks in quantum jumps.

They are not interested in beating the system by 2% or even 10%. They invest early, experiment freely, and talk casually about markets our parents still whisper about.

They don't dream of incremental salary hikes. They dream of unicorns. We talk about compounding, they talk about breakouts.

To them, saving ₹50 lakh over 10 years feels almost pointless when they've seen people make or lose that much in a single market swing or start-up exit.

They've watched 22-year-olds join

start-ups that become billion-dollar companies, millionaires appearing overnight, and content creators earning more in a year than executives do in a decade. In that context, incremental thinking feels... quaint.

When Gen Z spends on travel, concerts, or pop-ups, it's not because they're running away from life. They're collecting proof that they lived. An experience today is worth more than a promise tomorrow. Because tomorrow, frankly, looks suspicious.

WHAT BUSINESSES MUST UNLEARN

Many brands still communicate using the grammar of deferred living:

- Buy now, enjoy later
- Premium equals quality

Instead, Gen Z responds to flexibility over certainty, transparency over authority, design and values over legacy and immediate relevance over long-term promises

To GenZers long commitment sounds like an emotional hostage situation. They want brands that sound human, not parental. They're not disloyal. They're just not sentimental about corporations.

Here's the uncomfortable part.

Gen Z has watched us do everything "right" from saving diligently to compromising joy, deferring dreams and still facing burnout, anxiety, and regret. So they've made a quiet decision that if the world is uncertain, they will not postpone happiness. That's not carelessness. That's courage.

If we want Gen Z to save for tomorrow, we must first make tomorrow feel worth saving for. Until then, they will keep living loudly, loving briefly, upgrading often and choosing more life than work in the work-life balance.

And maybe, just maybe, they're not wrong. **BT**

Views are personal





SCAN HERE

UP YOUR BUSINESS GAME WITH
Business Today
ON WHATSAPP



TURN ON THE NOTIFICATIONS TO GET DAILY BUSINESS UPDATES

SAVE BIG WITH OUR ANNUAL OFFER



SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS

- 1 year unlimited access to all digital issues
 - Daily newsletter
- Ad-Lite access to premium web content
 - Multiple device access

CLICK TO SUBSCRIBE

India's Passport to Global Leadership

There is a new opportunity for India to build a global forum in Asia but for the world



HE STORY OF India and Davos has seven parts to it: the Opening, the Opportunity, the Objectives and Strategy, the Institutional Partnership, the Challenges, the India Team and finally, the New Opportunity.

224 | The Opening: The connect to CII (AIEI) in 1984 came from Rahul Bajaj, an early participant at Davos. The introduction to the World Economic Forum (WEF) that he made, and then monitored the progress, was the beginning of all that followed. From 1985 to 2025 there was a 40-year collaboration between WEF and CII, unique in the world.

The Opportunity: Slight signs of opening of the Indian economy were visible in the mid-'80s, but it seemed like an opportunity for CII to expand its reach to the world through WEF, having already built its international work through trade fairs, industry missions and overseas offices, and try to bring the world to India to support its growth. Only a few believed, then, that WEF could be a window for India, but the risk was taken. In retrospect, it was a good risk to take for India, the Indian economy and industry.

The Objectives and Strategy: The early objectives were to build interest in India, build its image, re-



BY TARUN DAS
FORMER DIRECTOR
GENERAL, CONFEDERATION
OF INDIAN INDUSTRY (CII)

Davos remains important because of West's still significant investible resources, and technology

lationships, confidence and investments. These never changed.

A dual strategy was followed. An annual India Economic Summit (IES) was held in partnership with WEF in Delhi in addition to participation in Davos. The WEF would bring foreign participants to the IES and CII would get Indian corporates to join WEF (as members) and participate in Davos, where business leaders of the world gathered. This collaboration rapidly evolved into including the Government of India and, later, the states. The strategy worked over time and, in the '90s, with the economic reforms of Manmohan Singh, the world beat a track to India. In the same period, the Indian interest in Davos was significantly enhanced, bordering on euphoria.

So, Davos became the platform for India to build its global image, expand its global network, consolidate its global influence and use this one place, high in the Alps, to take steps to become a global player.

Institutional Partnership: WEF and CII built a unique partnership, with WEF signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with CII, never done before with anyone else. The WEF organised an annual dinner for the Indian delegation on the opening day at Davos. WEF welcomed new member companies



| 225

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TANMOY CHAKRABORTY

from India recommended by CII. The WEF also mostly respected the recommendations of CII as speakers at Davos. It also recognised the India reception organised by CII, a highlight of the week, plus Indian fashion shows, musical performances to project Indian culture, which presented the country as more than just a business destination. CII also deputed a staff member to WEF to work with their team year after year.

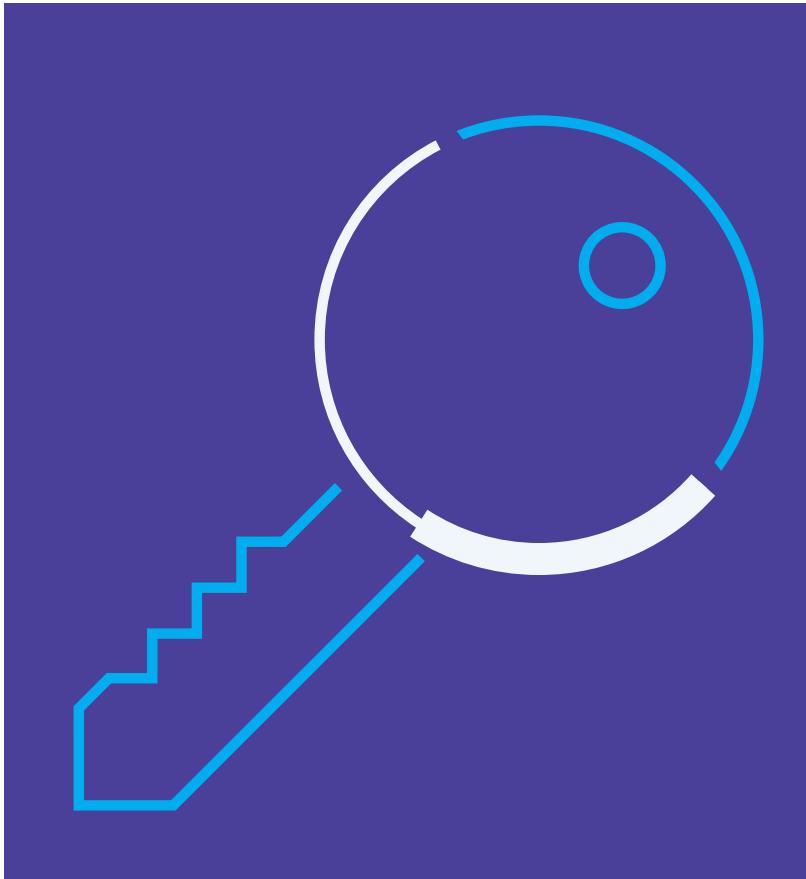
This partnership had a central figure in WEF, Colette Mathur, who was responsible for India. This relationship, the mutual trust and respect, enabled India to steadily achieve its objectives. The Government of India recognised her role, bestowing her with a Padma Award.

Challenges: The WEF however, under Klaus Schwab, the Chairman, had its own priorities.

First, the US. Second, Europe.

And only third was Asia. In Asia, China was a priority, naturally, as it galloped into the centre of the economic world.

But India persisted and edged in to make its presence felt in Davos, climaxing with the “India Everywhere” Programme at Davos 2006 under the leadership of Nandan Nilekani. The programme gave India a dominant presence that year. India truly “stormed” Davos.



226 |

Davos formed a key component of India's global economic strategy based on the trusted partnership between the government and industry. This brought the best results

The other challenge was that WEF was not really an institution. Schwab was the single dominant force in the WEF, and the West spoilt him with access to heads of governments.

Also, after Colette Mathur retired, continuity in the WEF in dealing with India was lacking, seemed transactional and with short memorie s of all that had been achieved to-

gether. But CII persevered patiently so that India, and Indians, received attention and respect.

The Indian Team: Indian Prime Ministers provided leadership to the Davos opportunity for the country. Perhaps the most dynamic leadership has been provided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from his time as Chief Minister of Gujarat through to his personal participa-

tion in Davos in 2018 and virtual addresses in 2021 and 2022, during Covid times.

In addition, state Chief Ministers used Davos as an opportunity and platform to bring investments to their jurisdictions, led notably by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

Apart from state leadership, the states also set up their own pavilions at Davos to project the attractions of states for investment. Davos, therefore, formed a key component of India's global economic strategy based on the trusted partnership between the government and industry. This teamwork brought the best results for India.

New Opportunity: The WEF, meanwhile, has gone through its own challenges with Schwab's exit and the installation of a new leadership. There is rethinking across the world about the WEF and new competition is emerging.

However, Davos continues to be important because of the West domination of international institutions, still significant investible resources, technology (especially the US) and continuing commitment to Davos.

However, Asia is the region and the continent for growth. China has its own Boao Forum, but that has not made waves. There is, therefore, a new opportunity for India to build a global forum in Asia but for the world. And, learning from experience, it can be structured differently, be much more inclusive, and way more connected to the Global South.

Conclusion: The story of Davos will continue, and India must be there, but is it also time for a new book to be written centred on Asia? It could even be in partnership with WEF's new leadership, a win-win all around. **BT**

Views are personal

Thematic Funds of Funds: Trend-Focused Investing

In today's dynamic investment landscape, thematic funds of funds have become a popular choice for investors who want to balance diversification with targeted exposure to specific market trends. These funds let you invest in promising themes or ideas—like technology, renewable energy, or consumption-driven growth—while spreading your risk across multiple underlying mutual fund schemes. Essentially, they offer a smart way to explore new opportunities without putting all your eggs in one basket.



Sandeep Garg
Managing Director
VSN Fininvest Pvt Ltd

What are Thematic Funds of Funds?

A thematic fund of funds is a mutual fund that invests in other mutual fund schemes that are aligned with a specific theme. Unlike sectoral funds that focus on a single industry, thematic funds concentrate on a broader investment idea or trend, such as digital transformation, renewable energy, emerging markets, or consumption-driven growth. By investing in multiple underlying funds, a thematic fund of funds offers both theme-based exposure

and risk diversification.

Key Features

- 1. Diversification Across Schemes:** Instead of investing directly in stocks or bonds, these funds allocate capital across multiple mutual fund schemes, reducing concentration risk
- 2. Thematic Exposure:** Investors gain access to a carefully selected theme that reflects a long-term growth story or market trend
- 3. Professional Management:** Fund managers select the underlying schemes and monitor them to ensure alignment with the theme
- 4. Simplified Access:** These funds offer retail investors an easy way to invest in emerging trends without the need to analyze individual stocks or sectors

Benefits of Thematic Funds of Funds

- 1. Focused Growth Potential:** Thematic funds aim to capture opportunities in fast-growing trends and sectors
- 2. Risk Management:** Diversifying across multiple funds reduces the risk associated with any single underlying fund
- 3. Convenience:** Investors benefit from expert fund selection and rebalancing handled by professional managers

Things to keep in mind

Long-Term Horizon: Thematic funds are best suited for investors with a long-term perspective (typically 5 years or more) due to the potential volatility in theme-specific markets.

Risk Appetite: As these funds often invest in equity-heavy schemes, they are more suitable for investors with a higher risk tolerance.

Theme Performance: The success of the investment is linked to the growth of the underlying theme, which may be affected by economic cycles, regulatory changes, or technological disruptions.

Who should consider investing?

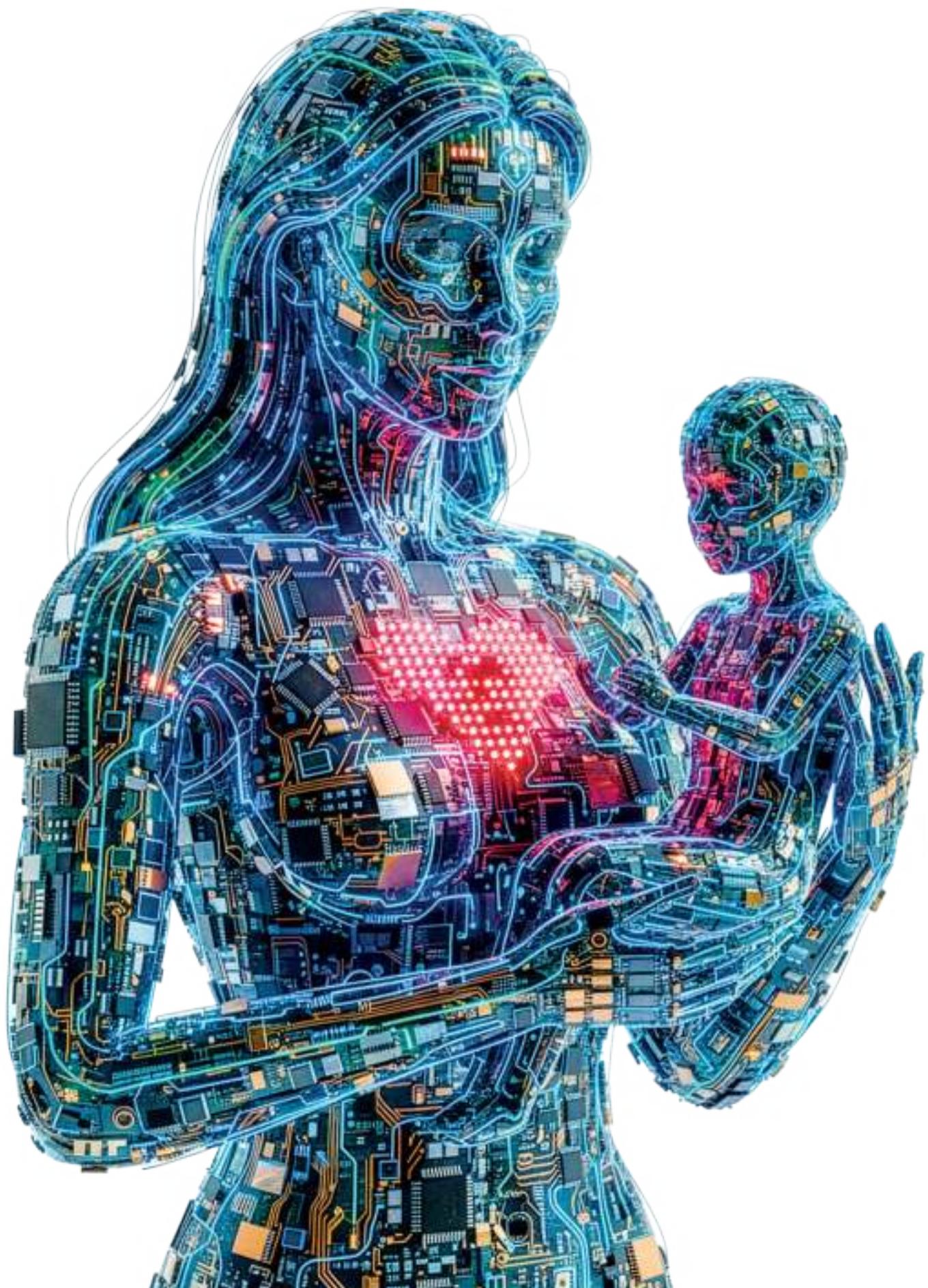
Thematic funds of funds are ideal for: investors looking to align their portfolios with long-term trends or market innovations. Those seeking professional management of diversified thematic investments and individuals willing to take moderate to high risk in pursuit of higher returns.

Also, investing in a thematic fund-of-funds is generally tax-efficient. Capital gains realized after a holding period of at least 24 months are taxed at 12.5 %.

Conclusion

For investors aiming to combine strategic market exposure with professional fund management, thematic funds of funds provide a compelling solution. By focusing on emerging themes and diversifying across underlying schemes, these funds offer both growth potential and risk mitigation, making them a valuable addition to a long-term investment portfolio.

However, investors should remember that thematic funds carry the same risk as direct thematic exposure; primary among them is the potential for underperformance if the chosen theme fails to materialize as expected. Thus, it is prudent to allocate only a modest portion of a portfolio to thematic funds and keeping the balance in more diversified assets.



Equity as an Operating System

The only credible measure of our seriousness will be whether the last woman, in the last village, experiences progress as a lived reality

FOR GLOBAL LEADERS, equity is often discussed as an aspiration. In India, we have learnt, sometimes painfully, that equity is something far more exacting. It is a delivery problem.

It is measured not by declarations made on global stages, but by whether a woman reaches care in time, whether a frontline worker has the tools and authority to act, whether a referral works at two in the morning, and whether dignity is embedded in systems rather than appended after failure. Equity succeeds or fails at the point of execution.

This conviction is central to the Alliance for Global Good: Gender Equity and Equality, launched at Davos in 2024. The Alliance was created to close a persistent gap in global development efforts: the distance between intent and outcomes. Across health, education, and enterprise, its mandate is simple: convert proven ideas into scalable, investable models that travel across borders.

Within a year, that mandate translated into action. At Davos 2025, partnerships were formed with the Commonwealth Secretariat to expand women's entrepreneurship and sustainable economic opportunity, and with the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum to cre-



BY SMRITI IRANI

**YOUNG GLOBAL LEADER,
WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM;
CHAIRPERSON, ALLIANCE
FOR GLOBAL GOOD:
GENDER EQUITY AND
EQUALITY, CONFEDERATION
OF INDIAN INDUSTRY**

ate pathways for women's leadership in traditional energy sectors.

Nowhere is the importance of this approach clearer than in India's maternal health journey—one that carries lessons far beyond our borders. When India's Maternal Mortality Ratio declined from 130 (2014–16) to 88 (2020–22), this was not simply statistical progress. It was evidence of systems beginning to function with greater reliability: expanded institutional deliveries, higher coverage of skilled birth attendance, and growing trust between families and the health system, as reflected in NFHS-5 data.

But progress raises the bar.

Once scale is achieved, quality becomes the true test—consistency across geographies, the strength of last-mile clinics, the speed of emergency obstetric response, the resilience of blood supply and transport systems under pressure. As I emphasised elsewhere, the last mile is only as strong as the last clinic.

This is why women's health cannot be treated as a narrow sectoral issue, confined to pregnancy and childbirth. Maternal outcomes are shaped long before labour—by nutrition, anaemia, adolescent health, mental well-being, awareness, timely antenatal care, and continuity after birth. Women's lives do not occur in silos, and neither should our

systems. The same continuum that defines women's health also defines their economic participation.

Over the past year, one of the most important shifts I have observed is the growing recognition that women's health is not a "social sector" expenditure. It is a national productivity imperative. Healthy women anchor resilient families, stable workforces, and stronger economies. Weak systems, by contrast, extract invisible costs for decades—through lost wages, disrupted education, preventable illness, and intergenerational disadvantage.

This is where multistakeholder platforms must earn their relevance.

They are instruments of accountability. In India, we have learnt that ideas become impact only when budgets align with priorities, procurement supports outcomes, human resources are trained and retained, and measurement is honest. A report that gathers dust is not knowledge—it is performance.

If health is one axis of equity, technology is the other—and their intersection will define the next decade. Gender equity will not survive the AI era on goodwill alone. Algorithms will increasingly determine who is hired, who accesses credit, who receives skilling opportunities, who is visible to health systems,

its launch in 2018, C4IR India has directly impacted 1.25 million citizens through initiatives spanning AI-enabled agriculture, healthcare access, and urban development. The significance lies not only in the number, but in the method: policy shaped by real-world pilots, and pilots designed to scale responsibly.

At a time when technology often outpaces regulation and ethics, India's experience demonstrates that it is possible to move fast without breaking trust—if guardrails are built early, stakeholders are engaged honestly, and citizens are treated as partners rather than endpoints.

As we approach Davos 2026, the message I bring is not one of triumphalism, but of disciplined optimism. India's maternal health gains show what is possible when the state, the workforce, and communities align around a shared purpose. They also remind us that national averages can conceal deep inequality, and that the last mile will always be the most expensive—and the most important.

The Alliance and the Forum reflect a belief that global platforms must graduate from conversation to consequence. C4IR India reinforces a deeper truth: the future will be governed either by intentional design or by accidental bias.

Davos has never lacked for participation. The challenge is durability. Can we build mechanisms that outlast the moment—linking capital to outcomes, innovation to safeguards, and ambition to human dignity?

If India has a contribution to make to this global conversation, it is this: equity is not a virtue to be admired. It is an operating system to be built. And the only credible measure of our seriousness will be whether the last woman, in the last village, experiences progress not as a promise—but as a lived reality. **BT**

and who is misinterpreted by them. Responsible innovation must therefore become non-negotiable.

This is where India's evolving role in the global system matters. We are no longer only a site where development is implemented; we are increasingly a place where solutions are built at population scale. Our experience with digital public infrastructure, large-scale service delivery, and last-mile governance offers a transferable principle: design for scale, measure for equity, and refine continuously.

The Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR) India exemplifies this approach. A 2025 WEF publication notes that since

230 |

Women's lives do not occur in silos, and neither should our systems. The same continuum that defines women's health also defines their economic participation

The Women's Collective Forum was designed to do precisely that: move the conversation from sentiment to structure, and from structure to results. By convening parliamentarians, health leaders, researchers, and industry, the Forum has focused on women's and child health priorities in a manner that is policy-ready and implementation-driven. In late 2025, it convened the Advancing Public Health Outcomes Forum on disease control and immunisation, releasing four flagship public health reports in collaboration with ICMR institutions and IIT Kharagpur's Centre of Excellence in Affordable Healthcare.

These reports are not endpoints.

Views are personal

Upendrra Rai: The Strategic Mind Behind One of India's Fastest-Growing News Networks



Upendrra Rai

Chairman, Managing Director, and Editor-in-Chief
Bharat Express News Network

In an era marked by rapid information flow and heightened public scrutiny, the role of journalism has evolved beyond reportage into one of responsibility, balance, and public trust. Upendrra Rai, Chairman, Managing Director, and Editor-in-Chief of Bharat Express News Network, stands as a defining figure in this transformation, one who has consistently aligned editorial leadership with national consciousness and institutional integrity. With over 28 years of experience in Indian journalism, Upendrra Rai's professional journey reflects intellectual depth, operational foresight, and a sustained commitment to ethical media practices. A journalist by vocation and a thinker by temperament, he is also a respected writer, orator, and motivator whose influence extends beyond newsrooms into policy dialogue, youth engagement, and cultural discourse. Upendrra Rai's career spans some of India's most prominent media institutions, including Sahara News Network, Star News, CNBC-Awaaz, and Tehelka. His tenure as CEO and Editor-in-Chief at Sahara India Media and Tehelka added strategic and editorial dimensions to his already accomplished reporting career. Over the years, he became closely associated with investigative journalism, examining complex subjects related to governance, public accountability, and financial transparency, work that consistently resonated with national audiences. Recognizing early shifts in media consumption and the growing importance of independent platforms,

he founded The Printlines Media Group, laying the groundwork for a future-oriented media ecosystem. This vision culminated in the launch of Bharat Express News Channel in 2023, a decisive step toward building a multi-platform, high-impact news organization. Under Upendrra Rai's leadership, Bharat Express News Network has experienced accelerated growth in television viewership and digital reach, positioning itself among India's fastest-growing news networks. The channel's editorial philosophy emphasizes accuracy, impartiality, and timeliness, principles that have helped it earn credibility across diverse demographics. Programming on Bharat Express reflects a strong alignment with national priorities, cultural values, and constructive public dialogue. Its digital platforms have further strengthened engagement by offering breaking news, current affairs coverage, and in-depth analysis, ensuring relevance in a digitally driven media environment. Expansion plans into print and business media are already underway, reinforcing the network's ambition to become a comprehensive media institution. Beyond daily news operations, Bharat Express has successfully organized more than ten large-scale conclaves under Upendrra Rai's stewardship, creating platforms for dialogue on governance, economy, culture, and youth participation. Flagship initiatives such as the Bharat Literature Festival and the Ghazipur Literature Fest have brought together prominent voices from the fields of film, media, and literature, reflecting wide participation from across the creative and intellectual spectrum. In addition, Kavyanjali, conceived as a literary tribute to the celebrated poet Gopal Das Neeraj, stands as a thoughtful homage to his enduring contribution to Indian literature. Upendrra Rai's engagement with ideas extends into authorship. His books, *Hastakshep* and *Nazariya* (Both in Hindi), reflect analytical depth and social awareness, offering readers perspectives on contemporary issues through the lens of lived journalistic experience. These works reinforce his reputation as a media professional who values reflection as much as action. His engagement with young people has been marked by direct interaction and dialogue across various platforms and public engagements. Often invited to connect with students and emerging professionals, Upendrra Rai has

interacted with the youth," where discussions have focused on education, media literacy, evolving career pathways, and the responsibilities that accompany an informed and aware society. These interactions underscore his belief in constructive conversation and mutual learning, rather than one-way discourse. Rooted in his native village, Upendrra Rai's philosophy of social contribution is guided by a principle he often articulates: what one gains from education must be returned to society. Translating belief into action, he donated ₹50 lakhs to his village school for the establishment of a library and supporting educational facilities, an initiative designed to expand access to knowledge for future generations. His environmental contributions are equally substantial. By participating in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam," and facilitating the planting of trees, he demonstrated a sustained commitment to ecological balance and community well-being. Upendrra Rai's contributions to journalism and public life have been acknowledged through numerous national and international honors. These include the Star Achiever Award (2006), Star Patrakar Ratna Puraskar (2007), Indian Television Academy Award for Best Performance in Hindi News Channels (2007), Bharosa Patrakar Samman, National Unity Award (2010, Hubli), Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Award for Iconic Media Personality, Lions Club Award for Social Service, and the National Excellence Award from the World Book of Records, London (2019). In 2024, he was conferred with the National Chetna Award at the Global Summit. As Chairman and Editor-in-Chief, Upendrra Rai continues to steer Bharat Express News Network with clarity of purpose and institutional discipline. His leadership model integrates editorial independence with organizational growth, ensuring that expansion does not compromise credibility. Looking ahead, his vision for Bharat Express is firmly aligned with the evolving needs of New India, building platforms that inform responsibly, encourage meaningful dialogue, and contribute constructively to democratic discourse. In doing so, Upendrra Rai is not merely expanding a media network; he is shaping a legacy of journalism grounded in integrity, insight, and service to society.

BEST Management Advice

ABHIJIT BHADURI, TALENT & LEADERSHIP ADVISOR;
FORMER MICROSOFT GLOBAL HEAD OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**"GEN Z VALUES
KIND LEADERS
WHO PRIORITISE
TEACHING,
TRAINING"**

Q With career paths becoming non-linear, what core skills should Gen Z prioritise?

Skills expire fast, some in just 18 months. Focus on what machines cannot replicate: asking better questions, connecting unexpected dots, and working with people who are very different from you. That can be your superpower. Master one technical skill deeply, then stack adjacent capabilities around it. Here is the mindset shift: your parents built one career in one ecosystem.

Start in Career 1.0 (mastering one domain) but keep other hobbies and interests alive. That hobby you could monetise while employed becomes Career 2.0. Eventually, you will learn to operate across multiple networks simultaneously, which is Career 3.0.

When organisations barely last 15 years and you will live to 100 (in 1947, life spans in India were less than 35 years. Today it is more than 70), your adaptability matters infinitely.



Q How can Gen Z use job mobility strategically rather than letting frequent moves work against them?

Job hopping gets criticised, but strategic mobility builds breadth of experiences. Each move should answer: am I expanding my network into new sectors, or acquiring skills unavailable here? Your resume should tell a story of intentional capability building, not random wandering.

Consider the Career 2.0 approach: maintain

Job hopping gets criticised, but strategic mobility builds breadth of experiences... Your resume should tell a story of intentional capability

one anchor role while building new skills through consulting or projects. This gives you stability while exploring.

Q What career mistakes do you see Gen Z making repeatedly and how can they course-correct early?

The biggest mistake is treating jobs as destinations rather than development programmes. Invest heavily in human skills that AI cannot touch. The second mistake is waiting for perfect clarity before moving. Third is neglecting your relationships during good times. Fourth is over-indexing on salary early. Finally, stop seeking permission. If you see a problem, propose solutions.

Q What do managers need to unlearn about control, loyalty, and performance to retain Gen Z talent?

Gen Z values kind leaders who prioritise teaching, training, and cultivating young talent through authentic leadership and collaboration. Control through micromanagement triggers. Unlearn loyalty as tenure.

Redefine leadership as impact, not hierarchy. Your role is not supervising but removing obstacles and accelerating their growth. Finally, unlearn hiding vulnerability. **BT**



DELL Technologies

Canon
Delighting You Always

CISCO

Ericsson

ciena

Your Organisation can Make a Difference

Critical metals worth \$63 billion are lost when electronic waste is unscientifically recycled and dumped in landfills.

Recycle your e-waste responsibly and help enable a circular economy in India.

Source: Global E-waste Monitor 2024

ACT NOW!

Contact us to arrange e-waste collection drives at your organisation.

+91 9289236008



Scan the QR code to chat



MASTER EVERY MOMENT.

THE X3



Dynamically longer and wider, the new X3 is primed for versatile activity. Explore new worlds with its sporty spirit, as you uplift your passion for adventure. Its stunning design featuring a glowing grille, and digital integration that facilitates connected control, drives you to embrace a lifetime in every moving moment.

GST Benefit Pricing Starting at ₹ 71,20,000*.



LONGEST CAR IN THE SEGMENT.



ADAPTIVE SUSPENSION.



UNIQUE GLOWING GRILLE.



HEAD-UP DISPLAY.



DRIVING ASSISTANT PLUS.

*Ex-showroom price advertised is specific to the BMW X3 xDrive20 M Sport. Terms and conditions apply. The model, equipment and possible vehicle configurations illustrated in this advertisement may differ from the vehicles supplied in the Indian market.



KNOW MORE.

#ChooseSpeedChooseAP

Business Today

On Stands | Online | On Air



A Strategic IMPACT Initiative

 Andhra Pradesh leads India's investment pipeline, commanding ~25% of total proposed investments (FY26)

 Among India's fastest states for project approvals, with single-window clearances accelerating on-ground execution

 ₹13+ lakh crore in investment commitments, spanning tech, energy and manufacturing

 11%+ GSDP growth, positioning AP among India's fastest-growing large states

 Global capital magnet for AI, data centres and renewable energy

 Over 1 million jobs unlocked, cementing AP as India's next growth powerhouse

INDIA'S SUNRISE STATE ANDHRA LEADS INVESTMENT

Built on ambition, speed and long-term vision, Andhra Pradesh is shaping India's next chapter of global growth and opportunity

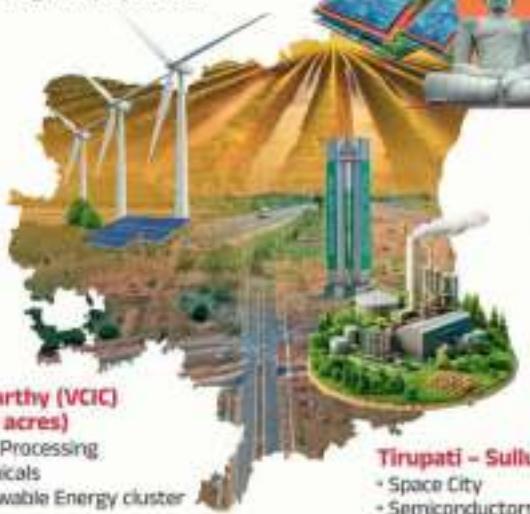


ANDHRA PRADESH

INFRASTRUCTURE THAT UNLOCKS INVESTMENT

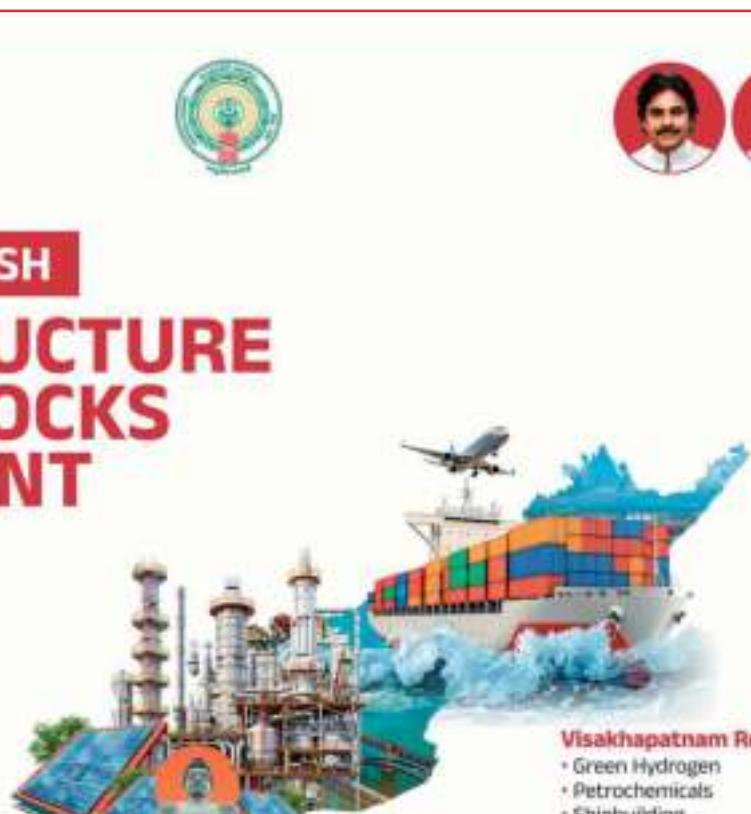
Orvakkal (HBIC) (Phase-1, 2621 acres)

- Drone City
- Advanced manufacturing & logistics hub with plug-and-play utilities



Kopparthy (VCIC) (2596 acres)

- Food Processing
- Chemicals
- Renewable Energy cluster



Visakhapatnam Region

- Green Hydrogen
- Petrochemicals
- Shipbuilding
- Port-led Industries

Amaravati Economic Corridor

- Finance
- Quantum Valley
- Deep Tech
- R&D

Krishnapatnam (CBIC) (2006 acres)

KRIS City – Integrated manufacturing hub

- Automobiles
- Textiles
- Pharma
- Electronics

Tirupati – Sullurpetta – Lepakshi Belt

- Space City
- Semiconductors
- Aerospace & Defence
- Electronics



Ports & Maritime Network

Operational : Visakhapatnam, Gangavaram, Krishnapatnam, Kakinada Deep Water, Kakinada Anchorage, Rawra

Greenfield : Ramayapatnam, Machilipatnam, Mulapeta, Kakinada Gateway SEZ

Shipbuilding Hub : Dugarajapatnam Port

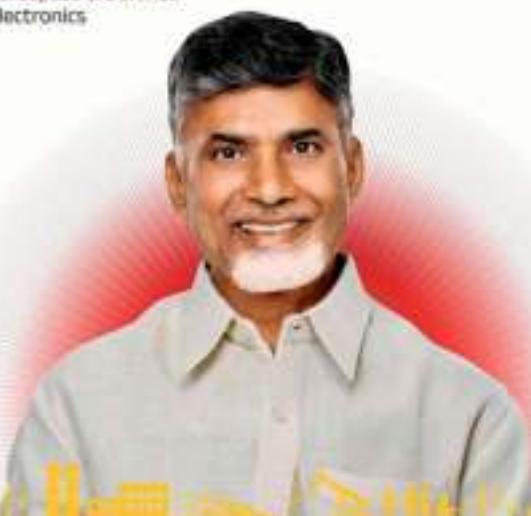


Statewide Industrial Scale

600+ industrial parks across 1.45 lakh acres



Built along strategic industrial corridors and ports, Andhra Pradesh is creating plug-and-play industrial destinations that reduce risk and accelerate investment decisions.



ANDHRA PRADESH - Infrastructure first. Investment follows.

Leadership That Builds the Future: The Andhra Vision 2047

The return to office of N. Chandrababu Naidu as Chief Minister marks a renewed commitment to institution-led, long-term governance. Anchored in Swarna Andhra Vision 2047 and aligned with the national aspiration of Viksit Bharat 2047, Andhra Pradesh is advancing towards a future shaped by economies of scale, executional speed, and policy stability. The ambition is to build a USD 2.4 trillion economy by 2047. Momentum is tangible: GSDP expanded by 11.28 percent in Q2 of 2025–26, decisively outperforming the national average.

The Swarna Andhra Vision 2047 is guided by ten guiding principles that define the state's long-term development pathway—Zero Poverty; Population Management & Human Resource Development; Skilling and Employment; Water Security; Farmer-Agri Tech Integration; Global Best Logistics; Cost Optimisation in Energy & Fuel; Product Perfection; Swachh Andhra; and Deep Tech across All Walks of Life. Together, these principles form the strategic framework guiding governance reforms, investment policies, and sectoral initiatives across Andhra Pradesh.

Infrastructure and Strategic Advantages

The state holds a unique strategic position as the only Indian state traversed by three national industrial corridors, supported by the third-longest coastline at 1,053 kilometres. These advantages are reinforced by state-wide industrial land banks and rapidly expanding port capacity set to cross 700 million metric tonnes.

Energy security further underpins competitiveness. Andhra Pradesh is a power-surplus state with over 20 GW of installed capacity, nearly 40 percent of which comes from renewable sources, providing long-term reliability and cost stability for industry.

With nearly 71 percent of the population in the working-age bracket, AP draws on a talent base of over 38 million people, positioning human capital as a central driver of growth.

Kaushalam, a state-wide initiative that systematically assesses and maps recent graduates, has over 15 lakh individuals registered, and actively connects this talent pool with industry requirements. Complementing this, Naipunyam, an AI-enabled platform, manages the full talent lifecycle, from counselling and training to certification and placement.

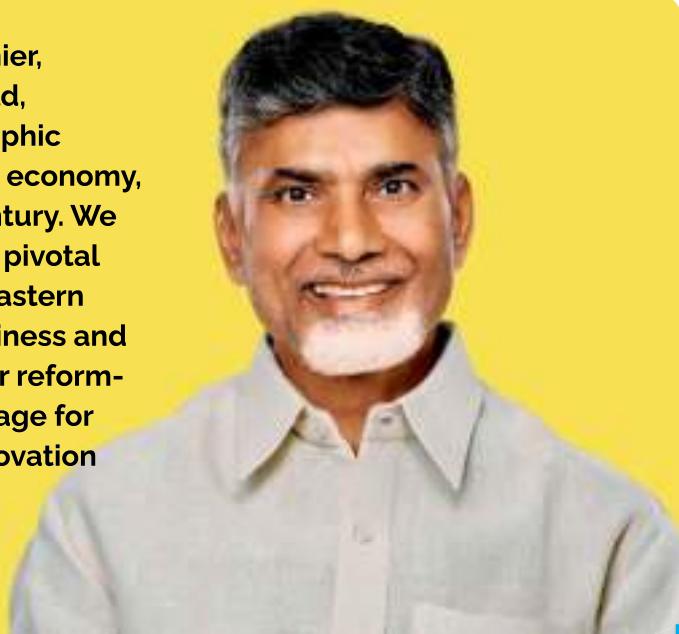
Innovation in Andhra Pradesh extends

beyond technology adoption into the design of governance itself. Digital platforms, data-led decision-making, and real-time monitoring are being applied to public administration to improve responsiveness, accountability, and service quality. This focus on innovation is closely tied to the transition from Ease to Speed of Doing Business. Through a single-desk portal and Cabinet-level clearances led by the SIPB, project approval timelines have been cut by nearly 60 percent. Over the past 18 months (till December 2025), 197 projects with investments of ₹8.55 lakh crore have been approved, with the potential to generate over 8.2 lakh jobs, boosted by 20+ new generation industrial policies. Large IT (worth 1.25 lakh cores) and electronics investments (worth 36k crores) have moved from intent to approval in under two months, while even mega manufacturing and energy projects (worth 4.24 Lakh crores) have been cleared within six months.

The governance approach underpinning this journey is decisive, consultative, and outcomes-driven, with a strong emphasis on speed of delivery. Continuous engagement with industry, investors, youth, and institutions ensures that policies remain practical, responsive, and globally benchmarked.

"Andhra Pradesh is constructing a premier, integrated growth platform for the world, leveraging its geographic and demographic strengths. As the fastest-growing major economy, India is poised to define the coming century. We are powering India's rise by anchoring a pivotal hub for realigned supply chains on its eastern coast, driven by the speed of doing business and the speed of delivering governance. Our reform-oriented ecosystem is a distinct advantage for investors, engineered to accelerate innovation from vision to velocity."

N. CHANDRABABU NAIDU
Honourable Chief Minister



Speed of Doing Business: Andhra Pradesh's New Efficiency Code

Early into our Government's term in 2024, it all started with a Zoom call with Aditya Mittal, CEO of Arcelor Mittal group. We discussed what would become one of the most consequential private sector industrial investments in India's recent history – a 24 million tonnes per annum greenfield steel plant in Andhra Pradesh.

The commitment we made was simple and unequivocal: land and all statutory approvals would be delivered with speed, certainty, and integrity. What followed has since become a defining example of our governance philosophy. In a little over five months, about 3,000 acres of contiguous land were handed over to ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) – an outcome that would have seemed improbable not too long ago, but which is now becoming routine in Andhra Pradesh.

This is the essence of what we call the

"Speed of Doing Business." In a world where capital is mobile and decisions are made in real time, speed is no longer a convenience - it is a competitive advantage. Global supply chains are being redrawn. Tariff barriers are rising, geopolitical risks are reshaping trade flows, and businesses are rethinking where they manufacture, innovate, and invest. In this rapidly changing landscape, what investors value most is not lofty promises, but the ability of governments to act decisively and deliver on time.

Andhra Pradesh has consciously aligned itself with this new reality. In just 18 months, we have attracted investment commitments of over ₹11 lakh crore. In 2025, our state emerged as India's most attractive investment destination, accounting for more than 25.3% of all proposed investments, and more than the next two states combined. These numbers are not accidental. They are the result of

institutional reforms that place speed, accountability, and coordination at the heart of governance.

A crucial pillar of this transformation is the credibility of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. "Brand CBN" is not a slogan; it is an institutional asset built over decades. Corporates trust him because he knows he brings long-standing relationships, a deep understanding of industry, and an unwavering commitment to seeing projects through. There is also a term that many in industry now use with a mix of respect and reassurance – "Naidugiri". It reflects a simple truth: governments are not perfect, challenges arise, markets fluctuate, but Andhra Pradesh will stand by its investors, especially when times are tough.

Building for the Future

Looking ahead, the pace of change will



only accelerate. Artificial intelligence, data centres, global capability centres, and advanced manufacturing are redefining the contours of economic growth. Technology cycles are shortening, and assumptions can change overnight. Not long ago, we believed India was comfortably energy surplus; today, we face new constraints and rising demand. In such an environment, agility and speed become the ultimate differentiators.

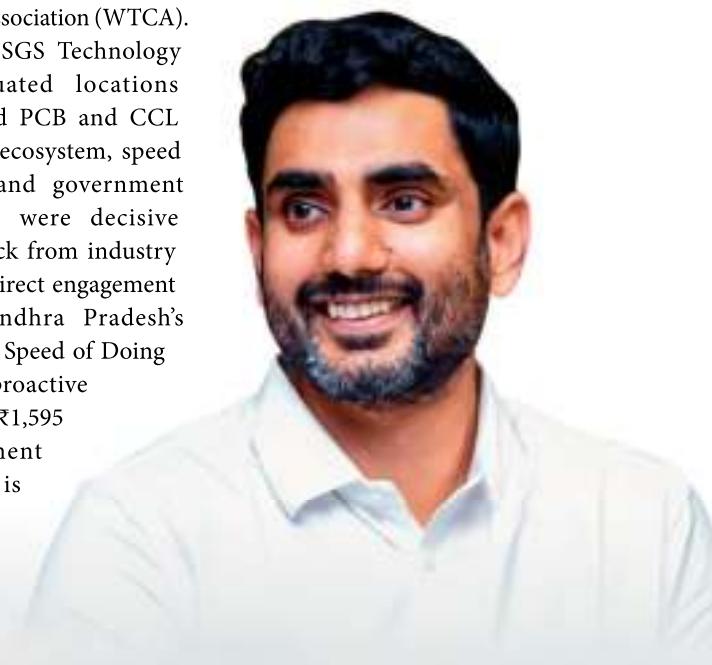
Andhra Pradesh's new efficiency code is built for this future. By compressing timelines, breaking silos, and empowering decision-makers, we are ensuring that the state moves at the speed of enterprise. Our goal is not merely to attract investment, but to create a governance model where time itself becomes a public good. In the decades to come, it is this speed, when combined with trust, that will define our success.

"The Government of Andhra Pradesh has played a pivotal role in enabling World Trade Center Visakhapatnam, transforming our vision into a tangible, high-impact development. Built on clear communication, professionalism, timeliness and accountability, this partnership reflects the state's strong institutional approach to investor facilitation. Our ₹1,250 crore mixed-

use development over 30 acres in Visakhapatnam, comprising Grade-A office spaces and integrated commercial infrastructure, is expected to generate over 15,000 direct and indirect jobs. Encouraged by the pace of execution, we have also signed an MoU for an additional ₹1,000 crore expansion.

Andhra Pradesh's ability to combine speed of decision-making with proactive governance reinforces our confidence in the state," said Mr. John E. Drew, Chairman, Board of Directors, World Trade Centers Association (WTCA). "When Syrma SGS Technology Limited evaluated locations for a greenfield PCB and CCL manufacturing ecosystem, speed of execution and government responsiveness were decisive factors. Feedback from industry peers and our direct engagement highlighted Andhra Pradesh's strong focus on Speed of Doing Business and proactive facilitation. Our ₹1,595 crore investment at Naidupeta is expected to generate over 2,100 jobs, with the State swiftly

addressing requirements related to power, water, and skilled manpower. The combination of fast decision-making and institutional reliability strongly influenced our choice, gave us confidence to commit our largest investment to date. We see Andhra Pradesh as a long-term partner and are optimistic about working with the state as electronics manufacturing ecosystem continues to scale," Said Mr. J S Gujral, Managing Director, Syrma SGS Technology Limited (India).



From Land to Launch: Accelerating Business through Efficient Land Governance

Across the world, competitive economies are distinguished not merely by capital or talent, but also by the quality of their land governance systems. Andhra Pradesh has recognised land as the first point of contact between government and enterprise, and therefore as a decisive factor in providing economic momentum. AP's reforms are guided by a clear objective: convert land administration from a source of uncertainty into a platform of confidence. Through technology-led systems, comprehensive record reforms, and aligned policy instruments, AP is building a land governance architecture that supports faster decisions, lower risk, and seamless project execution across industrial, infrastructure, and agri-based sectors.

Digitisation of Land Administration

Andhra Pradesh has undertaken a structural shift towards digital land administration anchored by WEBLAND 2.0, a unified platform integrating land records across departments. Core processes, including record verification, change of land use (CLU), land conversion, and updates, are now largely digital, traceable, and time-bound. The rollout of Digital Pattadar Passbooks has further strengthened title security by providing authenticated, tamper-resistant ownership records. These reforms reduce discretion, eliminate information asymmetry, and ensure that land data is accessible, reliable, and auditable, aligning Andhra Pradesh with global best practices in digital cadastral and land transparency. Unclear titles and legacy disputes are among the largest sources of project risk globally. AP is addressing this challenge through a state-wide Land Resurvey and Record Regularization programme that scientifically re-maps land parcels, corrects historical inaccuracies, and updates records using modern surveying technologies. This is complemented by structured dispute resolution mechanisms and strengthened legal safeguards, ensuring enforceable rights and long-term stability. By institutionalising

certainty at the record level, the state is enabling enterprises to plan with confidence and avoid downstream delays.

To accelerate project timelines, Andhra Pradesh has operationalised a ready land bank of over 17806 ha, strategically aligned with industrial parks, logistics hubs, agro-processing zones, and infrastructure corridors. These parcels are pre-identified, largely litigation-free, and integrated with trunk infrastructure planning. Transparent APIIC allotment regulations bring uniformity, predictability, and clarity to land allocation, significantly reducing pre-development risk and shortening time-to-groundbreaking.

Land reforms are tightly integrated with sectoral growth strategies. LIFT Policy 4.0 and the Single Desk Portal align land availability with approvals, incentives, and infrastructure provisioning, creating complete investment ecosystems rather than isolated assets. For the Capital Region, the new Land Pooling Rules offer a participatory and orderly framework for planned urbanisation and economic development, balancing growth with stakeholder equity.

Revenue Clinic Model for Grievance Redressal

Recognising that land-related grievances are among the most significant sources of delay and uncertainty for citizens and enterprises alike, Andhra Pradesh has institutionalised the Revenue Clinic Model as a structured, outcome-driven grievance redressal mechanism. Unlike conventional, sequential grievance handling, Revenue Clinics operate on a single-day, multi-level, diagnosis-first approach, bringing all Revenue Officers onto a common platform. Issues are categorised upfront, verified against digital land records, and resolved through on-the-spot decisions, time-bound action-to-be-taken (ATT) notes, or immediate initiation of statutory processes. Civil disputes are clearly identified and guided to appropriate legal forums, including District Legal Services Authorities. By combining

transparency, accountability, and direct citizen interaction, the Revenue Clinic Model converts grievance redressal from a reactive exercise into a confidence-building institution, significantly reducing repeat visits, procedural ambiguity, and downstream investment risk. Together, WEBLAND 2.0, Digital Pattadar Passbooks, Land Resurvey and Record Regularization, a structured and outcome-driven grievance redressal mechanism, Capital Region Land Pooling Rules, LIFT Policy 4.0, the Single Desk Portal, and APIIC allotment regulations form a unified, future-ready land governance framework designed for scale, speed, and stability.



"Land governance is the foundation on which trust between the state and enterprise is built. Our reforms are driven by a simple principle: clarity at the start prevents conflict later. By digitising records, resolving legacy issues, and aligning land systems with economic policy, Andhra Pradesh is ensuring that land becomes a facilitator of growth, not an obstacle. Our commitment is to provide certainty, transparency, and continuity so that development moves forward with confidence and the benefits of growth reach every region of the state."

ANAGANI SATYA PRASAD
Minister for Revenue, Registration
and Stamps, Government of
Andhra Pradesh



Made in Andhra: Industries, Innovation & Infrastructure

Aligned with the World Economic Forum's theme of "A Spirit of Dialogue", Andhra Pradesh is shaping an industrial growth model founded on collaboration between government, industry, and innovation ecosystems. Through progressive policies, integrated infrastructure, and investor-centric governance, the state is fostering meaningful dialogue that translates into globally competitive manufacturing and sustainable economic growth.

At the recently concluded Partnership Summit 2025, Andhra Pradesh reaffirmed its strong industrial momentum, with the Industries and Commerce Department signing over 190 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs). These MoUs represent a cumulative proposed investment exceeding ₹2.8 lakh crore (USD 31.08 billion) and have the potential to generate more than 5 lakh jobs across manufacturing, infrastructure, and allied sectors. The scale and diversity of investor participation underscored growing domestic and global confidence in the State's industrial ecosystem.

Since June 2024, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has translated investment intent into on-ground action through swift

policy and administrative approvals. The Industries and Commerce Department has approved and issued Government Orders (GOs) for over 100 large and mega industrial projects, reflecting a strong emphasis on investment grounding and time-bound decision-making. In parallel, the state has facilitated land allotments and approvals for more than 2,000 MSME units, strengthening decentralised industrial growth, local employment, and supply-chain depth. Together, these milestones highlight Andhra Pradesh's focus on execution, investor confidence, and inclusive industrial development.

Industrial Policy Reforms

Andhra Pradesh has undertaken one of the most comprehensive policy reform exercises in the country, with over 20 investor-centric policies introduced across key sectors to support industrialisation, innovation, and infrastructure development. For the Industries and Commerce sector, this reform agenda is anchored in the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Policy (IDP) 4.0, 2024–2029, which serves as the State's overarching industrial framework. IDP 4.0 is designed to provide policy certainty, investment clarity, and execution



"Guided by a spirit of dialogue, Andhra Pradesh is building an industrial ecosystem grounded in partnership—between government, industry, innovators, and communities. Our focus is on listening, collaborating, and acting with speed and certainty, so that global investors find in Andhra Pradesh not just opportunity, but a trusted long-term partner."

T. G. BHARATH
Minister for Industries,
Commerce & Food Processing,
Government of Andhra Pradesh



efficiency through simplified incentives, time-bound approvals, and a strong focus on grounding investments. Complementing the umbrella policy, the government has rolled out a suite of sector-specific “child policies” under IDP 4.0, enabling targeted support aligned with industry needs and global market trends.

Key policies include the AP MSME & Entrepreneurship Development Policy 4.0 (2024–2029) to strengthen MSMEs and local enterprise creation; the AP Food Processing Policy 4.0 (2024–2029) to drive value addition in agri-based industries; the Andhra Pradesh Aerospace and Defence Policy 4.0 (2025–2030) and Andhra Pradesh Space Policy 4.0 (2025–2030) to support high-technology manufacturing; and the AP Leather & Footwear Policy 4.0 along with the AP Textile, Apparel, and Garments Policy 4.0 to boost labour-intensive sectors.

In addition, the Andhra Pradesh Policy for Establishment of Private Industrial Parks with Plug-and-Play Industrial Infrastructure (4.0, 2024–2029) enables rapid creation of industry-ready parks.

Andhra Pradesh offers a wide spectrum of investment opportunities across large, medium, and MSME segments, supported by a progressive policy framework under Industrial Development Policy 4.0 and its sector-specific child policies. The state is actively promoting large and mega industrial parks, alongside sector-focused

industrial ecosystems such as Drone City, Aerospace & Defence (A&D) City, Bulk Drug Parks, Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Regions (PCPIRs), Toy City, and food processing parks. These projects are designed to attract anchor investors, integrate MSMEs into value chains, and accelerate export-oriented manufacturing.

At the grassroots level, the Hon’ble Chief Minister’s vision of “One Family, One Entrepreneur” is being operationalised through the development of MSME parks across all 175 Assembly constituencies, creating decentralised industrialisation, local entrepreneurship, and employment generation.

Strategic Infrastructure and sectoral strengths

The state’s natural and built assets provide a strong foundation for industrial growth. Andhra Pradesh has a 1,054-km-long coastline, the third longest in India, supporting port-led development and global trade. With 600+ industrial parks and industrial ecosystems at various stages of development, and integration with 3 National Industrial Corridors—Visakhapatnam Chennai Industrial Corridor (VCIC), Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC), and Hyderabad Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (HBIC)—the state offers unmatched connectivity linking ports, highways, rail networks,

and production centres. This infrastructure enables cost-efficient logistics, rapid scale-up, and seamless access to domestic and international markets.

Andhra Pradesh has demonstrated strengths across electronics manufacturing, EVs and batteries, pharmaceuticals and bulk drugs, food processing, textiles and apparel, aerospace and defence, green energy, and logistics-led industries. A strong MSME base, skilled workforce, and policy-backed sectoral clusters allow investors to leverage both scale and depth, positioning the state as a resilient and globally competitive manufacturing destination.

JAKSON Group is in the process of establishing India’s largest green hydrogen/green ammonia production facilities in the Kakinada and Visakhapatnam districts, with a total capacity of around 1MTPA. The proposed investment is approximately ₹13,000 crore, and the project is expected to generate around 3,000 employment opportunities.

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) is developing India’s largest greenfield integrated steel plant in Anakapalli district near Visakhapatnam, with a planned capacity of 24 MTPA. With an estimated investment of ₹1,47,162 crore, the project has the potential to create up to 61,000 jobs, positioning Andhra Pradesh as a major hub for advanced manufacturing and industrial value chains.

Andhra Pradesh - India's Silicon Line: Powering Trade, Technology, and Transformation

Andhra Pradesh is integrating digital innovation with coastal connectivity, positioning Visakhapatnam as the state's technology and innovation capital while leveraging its coastline for global trade and logistics. This reflects a balanced growth model where tech ecosystems, port-led infrastructure, and regional development projects converge to create sustainable economic corridors. By combining future-ready digital capabilities with world-class connectivity, Andhra Pradesh is building a resilient foundation for international investments, inclusive growth, and long-term competitiveness—a transformation that redefines Vizag as the epicentre of innovation and global engagement.

Coastal Infrastructure Expansion

Andhra Pradesh is executing a high-investment plan to develop ports, fishing harbours, and shipyards along its 1,053 km coastline, ensuring maritime

infrastructure every 50 km. Four greenfield ports—Ramayapatnam, Machilipatnam, Mulapeta, and Kakinada Gateway—are targeted for operations by 2026–27, adding 110 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) capacity in Phase I. The central government has agreed in principle to establish a shipbuilding cluster at Dugarajapatnam, reinforcing the state's ambition to become a maritime and industrial powerhouse.

Vizag is set to host a USD 15 billion Google hyperscale AI data center (1 GW), projected to create approximately 188,000 jobs and add ₹10,518 crore annually to the state's GSDP. 23 port-connectivity road projects, spanning 432 km with an outlay of ₹18,485 crore (USD 2.05 billion), are underway. Two dedicated freight corridors will link AP to central and eastern India. High-speed rail corridors under the National Rail Plan are being conceptualised, and AP LINC has cabinet approval as the nodal agency for integrated logistics planning and financing.

The AP Maritime Policy actively promotes



"Our vision goes beyond building ports; we are creating a fully integrated logistics ecosystem – connecting sea, road, rail and air – to enhance efficiency, support industry, and drive sustainable growth."

B. C. JANARDHAN REDDY

Minister for Infrastructure & Investment, Government of Andhra Pradesh





"This is the decade for India's East Coast to propel India's growth story and AP stands prepared to capture the opportunity and realise the development potential. The region holds key strengths: proximity to major Asian markets, abundant resources and talent, and connectivity to the hinterland."

M.T. KRISHNA BABU
Special Chief Secretary
(Infrastructure & Investment),
Government of Andhra Pradesh

port-driven clusters, shipbuilding, over and above the incentives extended by the central government. A separate Logistics Policy is being finalised to bring a dedicated focus on the logistics sector's improvement. Supportive IT and data centre policies offer incentives such as prime coastal land and subsidised power to encourage investment in digital infrastructure.

Investment Opportunities

There is significant potential for investors in ports, fishing harbours, shipbuilding clusters (e.g., Dugarajapatnam's 2,000-acre, ₹3,500 crore shipyard), data centre ecosystems, logistics parks, and green energy projects. Andhra Pradesh's 1,053 km coastline, 6 operational ports, 4 greenfield ports under development, 2 rail-line projects connecting central & Eastern India, 3 industrial corridors connecting inter-state growth centres and a state-wide optical fibre grid with subsea cable landing infrastructure provide unmatched connectivity. Shipbuilding, marine engineering, renewable energy (green

hydrogen/ammonia), AI/data services, and coastal logistics are emerging as marquee strengths.

"Deep-water port opportunities and forward-thinking policies here offer potential to reposition India on global ocean routes. But the full value of ports can only be realized with strong inland logistics – multimodal connectivity and last-mile infrastructure," said Mr. Vivek Sharma, Head, Public Policy & Regulatory Affairs, APM Terminals.

Among the prominent global investors anchoring in Andhra Pradesh is A.P. Moller – Maersk, the Danish shipping and logistics giant. The company's port-operating arm, APM Terminals, has inked a landmark agreement with the state to develop and modernize ports. In August 2025, APM Terminals committed around ₹9,000 crore to develop world-class terminals at the upcoming Ramayapatnam, Machilipatnam and Mulapeta ports. This investment, creating about 10,000+ jobs in AP, underscores Maersk's confidence in the state's growth story





Gateway to Digital Andhra: Technology, Innovation, Drones, Trust, and The Quantum Leap

Andhra Pradesh is emerging as a leading hub for digital and industrial growth, driven by governance reform, robust infrastructure and a deep talent base. Strategic investments across IT, GCCs, electronics, data centres, drones and quantum technologies are enabling the state to attract global enterprises while delivering scalable growth and employment opportunities.

Andhra Pradesh's technology-led growth is anchored in a fundamental shift in governance delivery through real-time governance. This was demonstrated during Cyclone Mointha, where predictive analytics, digital dashboards and inter-departmental coordination enabled 72-hour early alerts, the evacuation of around 10,000 people from high-impact and the dissemination of over 1.1 crore safety messages. More than 12,000 grievances were tracked and resolved in real time. This execution capability has strengthened institutional credibility and investor confidence.

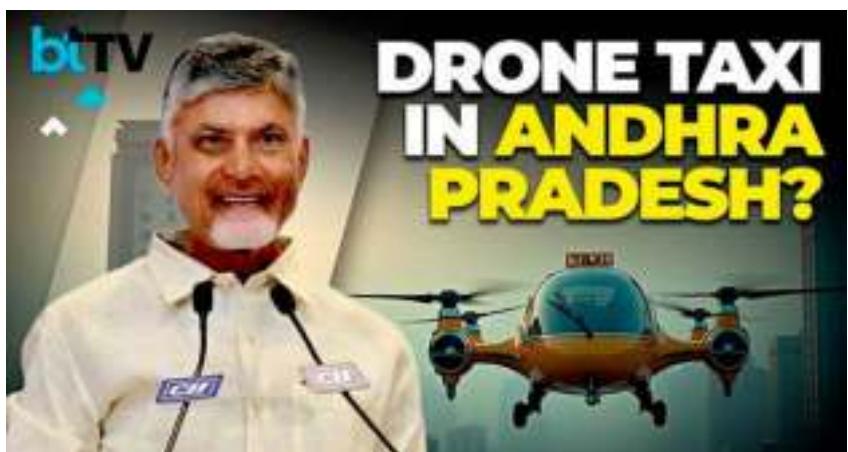
This governance foundation is enabling rapid expansion of digital and industrial infrastructure, with Visakhapatnam emerging as the state's IT and GCC

hub. The city combines strong physical connectivity, robust digital infrastructure and a deep, industry-ready talent pool, supported by more than 120 technology firms already operational in the city and over 250 engineering institutes across the state, with a cost structure that is 20-30 percent lower than Tier-1 metros. With hyperscale data centre investments such as Google's AI Hub and Sify being established and several more projects in the pipeline, supported by proximity to undersea cable routes and reliable power, Visakhapatnam

is being positioned for its next phase of growth as an AI City.

Policy Ecosystem and Innovation Adoption

Supporting this is a robust policy ecosystem, including the IT & GCC Policy, LIFT Policy, Electronics Manufacturing and Electronics Components Manufacturing Policies, Semiconductor and Display Fab Policy, Data Centre Policy, Innovation and Startup Policy, which together offer a range of incentives and land allotment at nominal





MoU being exchanged with Anant Raj Cloud at the CII Partnership Summit 2025 at Visakhapatnam

rates. Tailor-made incentive packages are extended for large investments. The state is also developing electronics manufacturing clusters across Kuppam, Orvakal, and Kopparthy, among other regions in the southern part of the state, strategically located closer to metros and ports.

Innovation adoption in Andhra Pradesh spans multiple frontier technologies. The Drone City in Orvakal and Space City in Tirupati and Sri Sathya Sai districts are being developed as unified ecosystems for drone manufacturing, testing, research, and product development, as well as satellite assembly, testing, and launch-linked services. Quantum Valley at Amaravati, being developed with L&T, will feature a dedicated quantum technology park, talent development programmes, and global research incentives, with IBM developing a 156-qubit Heron quantum processor and TCS focusing on quantum algorithms and applications.

This technology and infrastructure push is complemented by an emerging startup ecosystem anchored by the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub, targeting 20,000 startups and 1,00,000 jobs, supported by 10 Centres of Excellence operating on a hub-and-spoke model and programmes such as Future Founders and Rise-Up MSME, among others. Talent readiness is further strengthened through Kaushalam, the state's talent intelligence and hiring platform, providing industry access to over 2 lakh verified, job-ready candidates, with several lakh more in the assessment pipeline to ensure sustained talent availability.

Taken together, these governance, infrastructure, policy and innovation initiatives are translating into tangible investment outcomes. Over the last 18



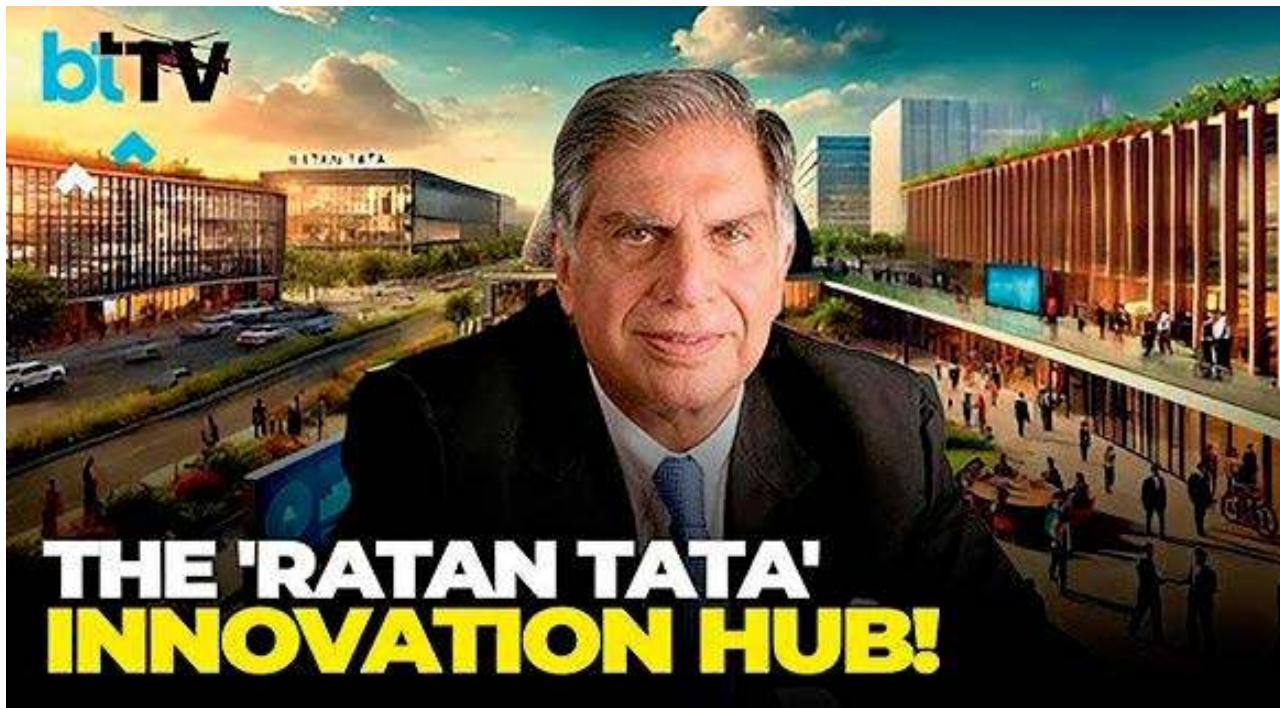
MoU being exchanged to establish Quantum Valley in Amaravati, marking a major step in Andhra Pradesh's quantum technology ambitions



Announcement of the Google AI Hub with an investment of \$15 billion

months, the state has issued Government Orders in record time to over 28 companies across IT, GCCs, electronics and data centres, representing investments of ₹1.95 lakh crore (USD 21.65 billion), while another 53 companies have signed MoUs

at the recently held CII Partnership Summit for an additional ₹1.97 lakh crore. Together, these 81 projects carry a cumulative employment potential of 3.07 lakh jobs. This approach is translating policy ambition into measurable economic and employment



THE 'RATAN TATA' INNOVATION HUB!

outcomes, positioning the state on a clear path toward becoming a \$2.4 trillion economy by 2047, aligned with the Swarna Andhra vision.

Partner Perspectives: Sattva and IBM

"Cities that succeed in the next phase of growth are those that align governance, talent, and institutional capability into strong economic platforms. Andhra Pradesh stands out for its foresight and proactive leadership, creating an environment that encourages long-term investment and gives developers the confidence to build at scale. We value the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu and the Hon'ble Minister Shri Nara Lokesh in shaping this enabling ecosystem."

Across Andhra Pradesh, investment momentum is increasingly visible in on-ground expansion rather than announcements alone. Established manufacturers and digital infrastructure players are scaling operations across multiple locations, signalling confidence in the state's long-term trajectory. Daikin Airconditioning India Pvt Ltd, India's largest air-conditioning manufacturer and an established player in the state, is expanding its facilities at Sri City with a proposed investment of ₹2,475 crore (USD 275 million), creating over 5,000 jobs and strengthening advanced electronics-led manufacturing. In addition, Daikin has also recently signed an MoU to establish a Finished Goods Factory, with an investment

of ₹2,500 crore (USD 278 million) and employment potential of 2,500 jobs. Alongside this, Anant Raj Cloud has signed an MoU to develop ₹4,500 crore (USD 500 million) worth of data centres and IT park in Guntur district, reinforcing the state's digital infrastructure backbone. Together, these investments reflect a pattern of sustained expansion across manufacturing and digital infrastructure.

"India's push toward digital leadership, advanced education, and future-ready infrastructure signals a bold national ambition. IBM is honoured to partner with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to deploy IBM Quantum System Two, powered by the 156-qubit Heron processor, India's largest quantum computer, at the Quantum Valley Tech Park in Amaravati. This milestone represents a decisive step in India's quantum journey and closely aligns with the vision of the National Quantum Mission. This initiative will strengthen national capabilities, nurture talent, accelerate research and industry collaboration, and build a resilient innovation ecosystem where quantum technologies drive inclusive growth and deliver long-term impact for India," said Sandip Patel, Managing Director, IBM India.

The listing of Knowledge Realty Trust in August 2024 as India's largest REIT, sponsored by Sattva and Blackstone, underscored our governance-led approach. In Visakhapatnam, this translates into the ₹1,500-crore, 30-acre Sattva Vantage Vizag

Campus, envisioned as a mixed-use urban anchor that supports enterprises, jobs, and sustained economic growth. Vizag represents the next chapter of India's urban evolution, and we are proud to partner in this journey," said Bijay Agarwal, Managing Director, Sattva.



"Through strong governance, targeted policies and cluster-based development across all regions, Andhra Pradesh is positioning itself as a global hub for IT, GCCs, electronics and frontier technologies. Investments in quantum and emerging domains underscore the State's shift toward high-tech, R&D-driven economic growth."

BHASKAR KATAMNENI

Secretary, ITC & C Department,
Government of Andhra Pradesh



(Skyroot Aerospace's
Infinity Campus in
Hyderabad)

Aerospace & Defence Corridors: Powering India's Next Strategic Manufacturing Frontier

Andhra Pradesh is building an integrated aerospace, defence, and space manufacturing ecosystem anchored by 6 specialised aerospace and defence clusters and a dual-hub Space City. With advanced testing infrastructure, defence-ready industrial parks, and a dedicated SpaceTech fund, this initiative is critical to positioning the state as India's strategic East Coast hub for high-technology manufacturing, innovation, and national security.

Cluster-led Development Model

The 6 aerospace and defence clusters are part of a cluster-led development model focused on naval systems, aircraft components, aerospace electronics, missiles and ammunition, unmanned systems, and advanced testing and prototyping.

Visakhapatnam has emerged as the anchor for naval systems, shipbuilding, defence electronics, and MRO, supported by the Eastern Naval Command and port-led logistics. Inland clusters at Lepakshi-Madakasira, Jaggaiahpet, Tirupati, Donakonda, and Ananthapuram are being developed for precision manufacturing, electronics, propulsion-related systems, and advanced materials.

A major milestone is the launch of Space Policy 4.0 and the announcement of Space City, a dual-hub space ecosystem across Shri Sathya Sai and Tirupati districts, spanning over 1,000 acres, with end-to-end testing, integration, and satellite manufacturing capabilities. Anchor investments by defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs) such as Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), and

private players such as Bharat Forge, HFCL, Skyroot, and JK Maini (Raymonds) have reinforced supply-chain depth and credibility. Andhra Pradesh's 1,053 km coastline, deep ports, multimodal logistics, proximity to ISRO-SHAR Sriharikota, and strong engineering talent base position the state as India's eastern hub for naval systems, MRO, defence electronics, aerospace structures, unmanned platforms, and space-linked manufacturing.

Investor Insights

"Skyroot chose Andhra Pradesh for its strategic expansion on account of its policies for supporting startups in expansion, its incentives to spacetech companies, and quick decision making and turnaround by the government. Our rockets go beyond just providing launch services. By making spaceflight accessible



and affordable, we aim to bring to earth the limitless possibilities of space. The proposed expansion in Space City, Andhra Pradesh, will fast-track this journey, enabling us to rapidly develop advanced technologies, manufacture rockets at scale, and provide on-demand access to space for startups and companies across India and beyond,” said Pawan Kumar Chandana, Co-founder and CEO, Skyroot Aerospace.

Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a DPSU of Ministry of Defence, Govt. of India, is setting up a new production facility named ‘Defence System Integration Complex’ in the industrial park located in the Sathya Sai district of Andhra Pradesh. This facility will be utilised for catering to the growing need of modern, state-of-the-art defence equipment for Indian defence forces.

“The Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) is providing excellent support in all areas to ensure ease of setting up the infrastructure facilities by BEL. The close coordination by APIIC in helping BEL to include in the capital incentive scheme under ‘AP Industrial Policy (4.0) 2024-29 is highly commendable. Due to unwavering support from the state government, BEL is confident

of setting up its production facility by March 2029.

“The proactive approach by AP Govt through various government departments and agencies, to help industries in providing necessary infrastructure such as land, roads, power, water, and coordinating with different state and central departments to obtain the necessary clearances, licenses, etc. through the ‘Single Window’ system is attracting industries and fostering entrepreneurship. This is ensuring speedy economic development in this region and business growth across the state. It is really a big step towards ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ in the defence and aerospace field and a giant leap towards India’s dream of becoming a ‘developed country’ by 2047,” said Jayprakash Sonawane, Sr. Dy. Gen. Manager, Project Management Group - Missile Systems, Bharat Electronics Limited. “We remain deeply thankful to the government of Andhra Pradesh for the exceptional ease of doing business demonstrated throughout our engagement. Our interactions with APEDB and APIIC have been particularly noteworthy. The single window clearance system, the dedicated point of contact and the clarity with which all requirements were communicated significantly streamlined the journey for our leadership team and reinforced the state’s reputation for investor-centric governance. As an investor, we have closely observed the strong momentum in Andhra Pradesh’s economic transformation. The state is rapidly evolving into a high-growth ecosystem across manufacturing, technology and innovation-led industries. Our investment in Andhra Pradesh will create an impact in terms of employment, capability building and local value creation,” said Goutam Maini, MD, JK Maini-Raymond Group.

Key investments include BDL’s propellant and weapon systems manufacturing facility at Donakonda with an investment of ₹1,200 crore, HFCL Limited’s artillery ammunition and TNT filling facility at Madakasira with an investment of ₹1,040 crore, and Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited’s defence energetics unit in Sri Sathya Sai district with an investment of ₹1,000 crore.

Beyond individual projects, these investments are catalytic in nature, enabling deep-tier supply chains, MSME participation, and advanced testing and integration capabilities. Collectively, the A&D ecosystem under Policy 2025-30 is expected to generate over one lakh

direct and indirect skilled jobs and attract investments of up to ₹1 lakh crore over the policy period.

Through focused policy support, infrastructure-led development, and close coordination with central ministries and defence agencies, Andhra Pradesh is positioning itself as a nationally significant A&D manufacturing powerhouse, contributing decisively to India’s Atmanirbhar Bharat mission and long-term strategic self-reliance.



“Under the Industrial Development Policy 4.0, Aerospace & Defence Policy 2025-30, Space Policy and 18 more industrial-friendly sectoral policies, Andhra Pradesh is transitioning from a project-led approach to a systems-driven industrial ecosystem. With anchor investments in the A&D domain of over ₹5,000 crore already committed by BEL, BDL, Kalyani Strategic Systems, HFCL and Skyroot, we are developing six integrated A&D clusters that combine manufacturing, energetics, electronics, and advanced R&D. This ecosystem is backed by best-in-class speed and ease of doing business through our Single Desk Portal 4.0 and APIIC GIS Portal, ensuring rapid land identification, approvals, and execution. Together, these enablers are designed to attract ₹1 lakh crore in investments and generate over one lakh skilled jobs, positioning Andhra Pradesh as India’s leading East Coast hub for strategic manufacturing under Atmanirbhar Bharat.”

N YUVRAJ, SECRETARY
Industries and Commerce and
Food Processing, Government of
Andhra Pradesh

Green Energy Corridors: Building India's Hydrogen and Renewable Power Hub



The Green Energy Corridor (GEC) is a massive national infrastructure project designed to facilitate the seamless transmission of renewable energy from high-potential zones to high-demand centres. Leveraging its 1053 km coastline, Andhra Pradesh is using this infrastructure to channel wind and solar power towards coastal industrial hubs. This synergy positions the state as a premier destination for green hydrogen, turning natural resources into sustainable economic growth. Andhra Pradesh is leading India's transition into a "Green Economy". As of late 2025, the state has moved from planning to massive execution, securing record-breaking investments and launching pioneering policies. The state formally launched AP Green Hydrogen Valley Declaration, setting a roadmap to produce 1.5 million metric tonnes of green hydrogen annually by 2029. AP's installed renewable capacity (excluding large hydro) crossed 10,309 MW on 30 November 2025. Including large hydro, the

total clean energy capacity is approximately 13,488 MW, making up nearly half of the state's total power mix. A 1680 MW Pumped Storage Hydro Power Project under the 4,760 MW Integrated Renewable Energy Storage Project, was commissioned recently in Nandyal District.

Enabling Policy Environment

This AP Integrated Clean Energy (ICE) Policy 2024 is an ambitious roadmap to attract ₹10 lakh crore in investment and create 7.5 lakh jobs. It aims to shift the state from basic power generation to a complete "Green Economy" value chain by generating 160 GW of total renewable energy capacity, 1.5 million metric tonnes of green hydrogen/ammonia per year, 22 GW of pumped storage power and 25 GWh of battery storage.

To this end, the state is offering attractive incentives to renewable energy projects in the form of capital subsidies, concessional land lease rates, and reimbursement of water, electricity and other duties.

The Sustainable Electric Mobility Policy (4.0) focuses on decarbonising transport and making AP a leader in EV manufacturing, with a goal of achieving 100% electrification of the state transport (APSRTC) fleet. On the demand side for consumers, it offers purchase incentives up to 10% of the ex-showroom price at the point of sale, a 100% exemption on road tax and registration fees for five years, and scrappage bonuses for trading in old petrol or diesel vehicles for EVs. For manufacturers, it provides MSME support through 35%-45% investment subsidies on capital costs and establishes a ₹250 crore R&D fund to foster innovation in battery technology and drivelines. To bolster EV infrastructure, the policy aims for a charging station every 30 km along "Green Corridors" and mandates EV charging points in all new apartments and commercial buildings exceeding 5,000 sq. m.

Investment Opportunities

Andhra Pradesh has structured its policies



to invite investments across the entire energy value chain and has set a target of ₹10 lakh crore in total investments by 2029. With its renewable energy power potential, including 299 GW from solar, 123 GW from wind, and 43 GW from pumped hydro, and vast barren or semi-arid lands in key areas, the state offers opportunities for global conglomerates. Leveraging its strategic ports—Visakhapatnam, Mulapet, Kakinada, Machilipatnam, Ramyampatnam, and Krishnapatnam—AP is inviting investments in green ammonia plants to convert hydrogen into ammonia for efficient global shipping, as well as hydrogen refuelling stations to support heavy-duty trucks and buses along major industrial corridors.

After notification of AP ICE Policy 2024, land has been handed over and groundbreaking has been done in 16 projects with an investment of ₹97,843 crore (USD 10.86 billion) and employment potential of 2,61,510 jobs. Another 6 projects are ready for grounding with an investment of ₹27,960 crore (USD 3.10

billion) and employment potential of 11,330 jobs. Land acquisition is in progress for 23 projects worth ₹66,320 crore USD 7.36 billion). The DPR and feasibility studies are ongoing for 7 projects worth ₹82,003 crore (USD 9.10 billion)

During the Partnership Summit 2025 held in November 2025 at Visakhapatnam, 49 MoUs were exchanged with a proposed investment of ₹4,54,175 crore (USD 50.41 billion) in solar, wind, green hydrogen, pumped hydro, biofuels and manufacturing sectors, with an employment potential of 2,48,029 jobs.

To handle the massive influx of renewable power, AP is developing a state-of-the-art Green Energy Corridor Phase-III, estimated at ₹21,800 crore. The project includes 350 km of new transmission lines and nearly 9,000 circuit km of network to evacuate power from the renewable-rich Rayalaseema region to the industrial hubs of the North Coastal districts. A new 765 kV link between the Southern and Eastern grids (Srikakulam, AP to Angul, Odisha)

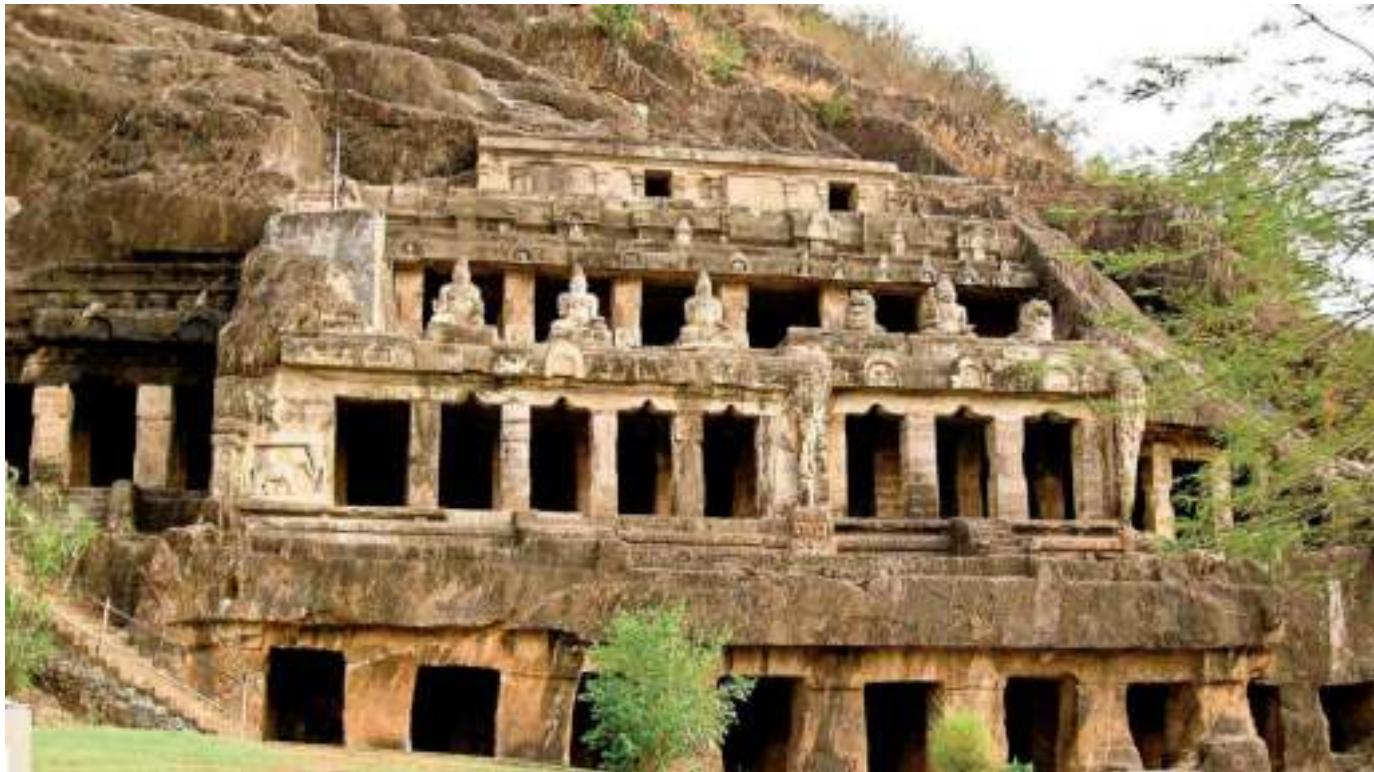
is being established by POWERGRID to facilitate large-scale, inter-regional power transfers. The implementation of Renewable Energy Management Centres (REMCs) ensures real-time monitoring and grid stability.

By integrating these elements, Andhra Pradesh is not just contributing to India's Net Zero 2070 goal but also creating a scalable blueprint for industrial decarbonization, delivering stable and affordable clean power to data centres, steel plants, and refineries. "AP is fast emerging as a clean energy leader. At ReNew, we always believe the energy transition should be both ambitious and inclusive. AP has been a key partner in this vision. Today, we come together to celebrate AP's legacy and the new Haritha Hrudayam.



"Andhra Pradesh has set definitive renewable energy targets: 78.50 GW solar, 35 GW wind, 22 GW pumped storage, 25 GWh battery storage, and 1.50 million tons of green hydrogen annually. The state aims to mobilise ₹10 lakh crore investments, generate 7.50 lakh jobs by 2029–30, and achieve net-zero emissions by 2047. An integrated governance framework underpins these objectives, combining policy incentives, skill development, and public-private partnerships. This framework accelerates clean technology deployment, strengthens energy security, and drives sustainable economic growth. With these strategies, Andhra Pradesh is advancing at the speed of doing business, ensuring rapid execution and measurable progress toward its renewable energy and sustainability goals."

K. VIJAYANAND
Chief Secretary, Government of
Andhra Pradesh



Discover Andhra Pradesh: Heritage, Coastline, and the Rising Hub of Health Tourism

Andhra Pradesh is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, spiritual significance, and diverse natural landscapes. Home to major pilgrimage centers such as Tirupati, Srikalahasti, and Amaravati, the state attracts millions of devotees annually. Its geography ranges from the scenic Araku Valley and Eastern Ghats to the pristine beaches of Visakhapatnam. Wildlife sanctuaries, bird reserves, and tiger habitats add to its ecological richness, while vibrant festivals like Ugadi, Sankranti, and Dussehra showcase its living traditions. Andhra Pradesh is witnessing a decisive transformation in its tourism journey, anchored in vision, policy reform, and purposeful execution. Over the past year, the state has laid strong foundations through the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Policy 2024–29, identification of 7 anchor hubs, and the rollout of over 25+ thematic circuits spanning spiritual, coastal, riverine, eco, adventure, and heritage tourism. Landmark initiatives such as positioning

Tirupati as the 'Spiritual Capital of the World', development of beach circuits with Blue Flag certification, river cruise tourism on the Godavari and Krishna, and global investor outreach have marked significant milestones in the state's progress. Under this policy, tourism has been accorded industry status, enabling ease of investment, fiscal incentives, and faster approvals. The policy framework focuses on sustainability, digital enablement, capacity

building, and experiential tourism, shifting the sector from high-volume to high-value outcomes.

Compelling Investment Opportunities

Andhra Pradesh today offers compelling opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs. From hospitality, resorts, and convention centres to cruise tourism, adventure sports, eco-lodges, film tourism,



and wellness destinations, the state's strategic assets—its 1054 km coastline, sacred temple towns, rich Buddhist heritage, rivers, forests, and vibrant culture—provide unmatched potential. Strong sectoral strengths include robust domestic footfalls, improving air-road-rail connectivity, proactive governance, and a growing skilled workforce. To translate this potential into measurable outcomes, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has adopted a structured, investment-led execution model. This includes proactive project identification across anchor hubs and thematic circuits, investor-ready land parcels, single-window clearances, and continuous engagement with domestic and global investors. Focused efforts on PPP-led development, anchor hospitality brands, and large-format destination projects have ensured that policy intent is backed by on-ground action. This approach has enabled Andhra Pradesh to move rapidly from vision to execution, creating a visible pipeline of projects across the tourism value chain.

The impact is already visible. The tourism sector attracted over ₹25,000 Cr (USD 2.78 billion) of investment over the last year. The state has sanctioned over 4,597 room keys, which is nearly one-third of India's total classified rooms sanctioned in the past year. Of the 27 projects sanctioned, 3 projects have been inaugurated, 12 projects are under development and 10 projects

are ready for foundation in January 2026. Further, the Department of Tourism has received DPRs for ₹4,850 Cr (USD 538 million) with 4,088 room keys.

The state is on track to achieve its mission of attracting investment of ₹50,000 Cr (USD 5.55 billion), adding room inventory of 20,000 and creating 3 lakh jobs by 2029.

Anchor Investments

Varun Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. identified strong tourism potential and rising demand for luxury accommodation in Visakhapatnam and Amaravati. Guided by the AP Tourism Department, the Varun group has expanded its presence in hospitality sector in the major cities of Andhra Pradesh. It is developing the iconic Taj Varun Bay sands 5-star seafront hotel with 374 keys, and a 5-star hotel with Novotel brand at Amaravati.

"The Oberoi group is investing in the state to develop world-class infrastructure and has committed to the development of its tourism ecosystem. The group is constructing 5-star resorts and hotels in Visakhapatnam, Tirupati and Gandikota with 420 keys, with employment generation for 7000 persons. The group is closely working with the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh in promoting tourism. Andhra Pradesh has immense potential in tourism, and it resonates with the vision of the state government under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister," said Mr. R. Shankar, President, Corporate and Legal Affairs, Oberoi Group.



"Andhra Pradesh is on the brink of a tourism transformation, harnessing its rich heritage and diverse landscapes. With over 25 thematic circuits and 7 anchor hubs, we are shifting toward high-value tourism—aiming to raise average visitor spend to ₹25,000, expand hotel capacity to 50,000 rooms, and attract investments exceeding ₹50,000 crore (USD 5.55 billion). By 2029, tourism will contribute ₹2.4 lakh crore (USD 26.64 billion) to the state's GSDP and generate 3 lakh jobs, driven by technology, sustainability, and community-led growth."

KANDULA DURGESH

Hon'ble Minister for Tourism,
Government of Andhra Pradesh





Agri, Food, Aqua: Andhra Pradesh Leads the Way

Andhra Pradesh is emerging as a national and global leader in agriculture, food processing, and aquaculture by combining scale, sustainability, and technology-led interventions. The state's strategy enhances farmer incomes, builds resilient value chains, reduces post-harvest losses through agri-tech and world-class logistics, and demonstrates a scalable model of climate-resilient farming, positioning Andhra Pradesh as a preferred destination for agri-investments.

Andhra Pradesh has built one of India's most robust agri-food-aqua ecosystems, anchored in production leadership, deep infrastructure, and strong institutional capacity, with agriculture and allied sectors contributing 35.3% of the State's GSDP, a gross value added (GVA) of ₹2.32 lakh crore (USD 25.75 billion), and a growth rate of 10.7%, making it the principal driver of economic growth, livelihoods, and rural transformation. To drive focused growth, the state has identified 11 key crops as 'Growth Engines'—paddy, maize, jowar, bajra, ragi, red gram, black gram, Bengal gram, groundnut, sunflower, and sesamum—to enhance farmer incomes and strengthen the agri-based economy, forming a core pillar of the Swarna Andhra @2047 vision. Ensuring that crops cultivated with significant effort realise better prices, the state is enabling targeted, end-to-end value

chain development and value addition. Community-managed natural farming (APCNF) is a central pillar of Andhra Pradesh's agricultural transformation, reducing input costs, restoring soil health, and improving farm resilience to climate stress. By scaling chemical-free, regenerative practices across diverse agro-climatic zones, natural farming is enhancing net incomes, strengthening ecological sustainability, and positioning Andhra Pradesh as a global reference for climate-resilient agriculture.

Agri-tech and Precision Farming

Widespread adoption of AI, IoT, drones,

robotics, GIS-enabled water management, and real-time monitoring is accelerating productivity, efficiency, and climate resilience. Andhra Pradesh is advancing toward a drought-resilient future by ensuring assured and sustainable water availability through improved water use efficiency (WUE) and precision delivery of the right quantity of water, at the right time, to the right place. The state leverages satellite imagery and vegetation indices (NDVI, EVI, SAVI) with AI to detect parcel- and village-level crop stress, supported by AI-based pest and disease forewarning, image-based diagnostics with remedial advisories, real-time dashboards for prices, crop conditions, and scheme compliance, and





APAIMS 2.0, a unified digital platform for schemes, crop planning, input advisories, risk alerts, and market intelligence—along with online drone services, uberisation of farm machinery, and integrated fertiliser management systems.

The state has developed extensive agri and food processing infrastructure, including 4 MoFPI-approved mega food parks, multiple integrated food parks, and a growing network of MSME and nano food processing parks. Rayalaseema is already an established horticulture hub, delivering high-value crops with superior water-use efficiency. This strength is now being scaled through the ₹40,000–41,000 crore (~USD 4.55 billion) Purvodayam development framework, reinforcing cluster-based horticulture, processing, and export infrastructure.

Andhra Pradesh is India's leading aquaculture and shrimp-producing state, contributing around 30% of the country's fish production and over 30% of national shrimp exports, underpinned by a fully integrated ecosystem of hatcheries, feed mills, processing plants, cold-chain infrastructure, and port-led logistics.

The Andhra Pradesh Food Processing Policy 4.0 provides a strong, investor-friendly framework to enhance value addition across agriculture, horticulture, livestock, and fisheries. It offers capital subsidies up to 50% for FPOs and SHGs, SGST reimbursements, MSME support, and development of 77 MSME parks and 175 nano food parks, targeting ₹30,000 crore (USD 3.33 billion) investments and 3 lakh jobs.

Complementing this is the globally



"Under the dynamic leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh is transforming agriculture into a sustainable, high-income sector through advanced technologies, precision farming and strong market linkages. Aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047 and Swarna Andhra 2047, the state follows five core principles—water security, demand-driven crops, agritech, food processing and government support—backed by RSK-level action plans and proactive market interventions."

KINJARAPU ATCHANNAIDU
Minister of Agriculture, Government of Andhra Pradesh

recognised APCNF programme, which is scaling regenerative, climate-resilient farming to reduce input costs and enhance farm profitability.

There are significant opportunities in high-end food processing, export-oriented aquaculture, value-added horticulture

clusters, agri-technology, cold-chain and logistics, clean-energy-enabled processing, and global branding of agri products. Strategic assets include diverse agro-climatic zones, a 1053 km coastline with major ports, strong research and skilling institutions, and a large, experienced farmer base. Andhra Pradesh's core strength lies in integrating scale with traceability, quality certification, and seamless global market access.

Anchor Investments: Reliance and Ananda

Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd., through Reliance Consumer Products, is developing an integrated food park (₹768 crore-USD 85 million, 100 acres) and a beverage manufacturing facility (₹1,622 crore-USD 180 million) in Orvakal, Kurnool, to create approximately 4,500 jobs. Godavari Mega Aqua Food Park, located at Bhimavaram and managed by the Ananda Group of Industries, is one of the largest private aquaculture enterprises in Andhra Pradesh, housing a fully integrated ecosystem that includes BMC hatchery, advanced farming operations, processing plants, feed mill, aqua laboratories, and an in-house R&D unit. With an investment outlay of ₹1,000 crore (USD 111 million), the park employs around 1,500 people across its units and operates as a 100% export-oriented unit (EOU) with global certifications from USFDA, EU, and BAP. While historically a major exporter to the United States, the enterprise is now actively diversifying into new international markets in response to evolving global trade dynamics, including U.S. reciprocal tariff measures.

Andhra Pradesh's Urban Transformation: Paving the Way for Global Investment



Andhra Pradesh is embarking on a bold journey to redefine urban development through a strategic blend of infrastructure, innovation, and sustainability. At the heart of this transformation are Visakhapatnam and Amaravati, twin urban anchors that represent the state's forward-looking approach to growth. Visakhapatnam, a thriving coastal metropolis, is evolving into a global Bay City, while Amaravati, the planned capital, is envisioned as India's most liveable and climate-resilient administrative hub. Underpinned by integrated master plans, modern mobility systems, and digital governance, the state's cities are being positioned as engines of investment and innovation, offering future-ready ecosystems to global stakeholders.

Visakhapatnam and Amaravati are spearheading Andhra Pradesh's urban renaissance. Vizag, guided by the Visakhapatnam Land Use Plan 2041, is emerging as a global Bay City—anchored by port infrastructure, fintech corridors, and a 6,800 sq. km metropolitan vision. Amaravati, with over 217 sq. km of identified capital city area under the AP Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) Act, 2014, is being developed as a next-generation administrative and economic hub, with the potential to generate approximately 1.5 million jobs by 2050. In 2025 alone, Amaravati has reactivated infrastructure projects spanning

roads, stormwater systems, trunk utilities, and core administrative complexes. This momentum has been reinforced by strong investor interest, with investment intent of around ₹50,000 crore (USD 5.55 billion) mobilised during the CII Partnership Summit, reflecting growing domestic and global confidence in the state's urban growth agenda.

Integrated Master Plans and Smart-city Infrastructure

Both cities are anchored in integrated master plans that blend spatial order with economic scale. Mobility upgrades, including the ₹11,498 crore (USD 1.28 billion) Visakhapatnam Metro, supported by Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and regional ring roads are reshaping transit networks.

Smart-city infrastructure is scaling across Visakhapatnam, Amaravati, Kakinada, and Tirupati, backed by ₹6,852 crore (USD 761 million) across 279 projects under the Smart Cities Mission. These include command-and-control centres, IoT-based urban services, and e-governance platforms. With clear zoning for IT, housing, logistics, and recreation, and blue-green networks reinforcing climate resilience, the model extends to Vijayawada, Tirupati, Rajahmundry, and ports like Machilipatnam and Ramayapatnam. Collectively, all these initiatives signal a bold commitment: to build cities that are not only

globally competitive today, but resilient, inclusive, and innovation-driven for decades to come.



"Our ambition is to transform Andhra Pradesh into a global symbol of sustainability where infrastructure development, innovation, and environmental harmony go hand in hand. Amaravati is being developed as a model green capital, showcasing climate resilience, smart infrastructure and clean energy. Andhra Pradesh is open for business."

PONGURU NARAYANA

Minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh: Building a Global Talent Capital for the 21st Century

Andhra Pradesh is advancing a transformative human capital agenda, embedding education, skills, and workforce readiness into its growth strategy. By 2029, the state envisions a globally benchmarked lifelong learning ecosystem that integrates schooling, higher education, industry linkages, and global labour markets—positioning Andhra Pradesh as a strategic partner for sustainable economic development.

Learning Excellence in Andhra Pradesh (LEAP) anchors the state's talent strategy, aligning education with National Education Policy 2020 to build a unified human capital pipeline. Key reforms include early skill exposure from Class 6, reaching 3.2 lakh students across 1,599 schools with vocational infrastructure and trained instructors; National Skills Qualifications Framework-aligned vocational education in 744 junior colleges for 93,000 students, embedding 100% on-the-job training; industry-linked technical education via ITIs and polytechnics, achieving 98% seat utilisation and 94.6% placement rates; curriculum modernisation introducing AI, digital literacy, and problem-solving skills; and AI-driven governance to monitor learning outcomes and institutional performance.

As Hon'ble Minister for IT, Electronics, Communications, Human Resources Development & Skill Development Shri Nara Lokesh has noted in policy forums, education reform in Andhra Pradesh is no longer about expanding access alone, but about ensuring global relevance, employability, and lifelong adaptability.

Market-driven Skilling Partnerships

Building on LEAP, Andhra Pradesh has developed a market-driven skilling architecture aligned with industry demand. Partnerships with Microsoft, Oracle, Infosys, and Suzlon will train 300,000 youth in AI and cloud computing within a year, prioritising rural talent. Beyond digital skilling, institutions are aligned with clusters in electronics, green energy, logistics, aquaculture, IT, MedTech, and



manufacturing through 83 Government ITIs with 169 industry MoUs, CSR-supported advanced labs by Siemens, Schneider Electric, Mahindra & Mahindra, and others, and structured apprenticeships and internships integrated into pathways. According to the Hon'ble Minister, training institutions must function as extensions of industry ecosystems rather than isolated campuses—a principle now embedded across Andhra Pradesh's skilling reforms.

AI-powered Talent Platform

Naipunyam, an AI-powered unified platform, manages the entire talent lifecycle—counselling, training, certification, and placement. It integrates AI career guidance, Aadhaar/DigiLocker-linked credentials, QR-enabled certificates, and employer dashboards, consolidating millions of records for transparency and scale. As Shri Nara Lokesh affirms, Naipunyam will connect skill centres, integrate training and credentialing, and align job categories across 36 sectors—creating a seamless, industry-driven talent pipeline for workplace readiness at scale.

The state is building international workforce pipelines through overseas career programmes for 22,500 youth; German-language training for 2,300 nursing students, of whom 55 achieved B2 proficiency; and high-value placements in Japan, Europe, and the GCC with packages up to ₹20 lakh.

Andhra Pradesh is emerging as a trusted

source of globally competitive talent. Global technology leaders view Andhra Pradesh's policy-driven talent strategy as a key enabler of investment. Infosys underscores the state's focus on industry-aligned digital skilling, strong academic foundations, and scalable ecosystems. Its partnership reflects confidence in Andhra Pradesh's ability to deliver job-ready, globally competitive talent through stable policy and digital governance.

Andhra Pradesh is building strategic alliances with global technology leaders to equip youth for emerging technologies and global careers. A landmark partnership with NVIDIA has launched India's first AI University in Amaravati and trained 10,000 engineering students, positioning the state as a national AI talent hub. As Hon'ble Minister Shri Nara Lokesh emphasizes, "By equipping 10,000 students with cutting-edge AI skills and supporting our startup ecosystem, we are laying the foundation for a future-ready economy driven by innovation, research, and entrepreneurship."

In parallel, collaborations with Oracle deliver advanced skilling in cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data management to 50,000 students, while quantum computing programmes through WISER introduce research-led curricula and labs. Coupled with international mobility initiatives, these efforts reinforce Andhra Pradesh's vision of becoming a technology-driven innovation powerhouse.

LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS POWERING ANDHRA PRADESH'S GROWTH STORY



In Association With



ANDHRA PRADESH
India's Sunrise State
#ChooseSpeedChooseAP



Watch the series — scan here



CONTACT INFORMATION

Investor Help Desk (10:00 AM to 5:30 PM IST) (Monday to Friday) | Tel: 8639875975