

GDP MOMENTUM

India's GDP growth continues to demonstrate resilience and strong macroeconomic fundamentals, reaffirming the nation's position as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies. At a time when several advanced and emerging economies are grappling with stagnation, inflationary pressures, and geopolitical uncertainties, India's steady upward trajectory stands out. The momentum visible in manufacturing, services, infrastructure expansion, and rising domestic consumption reflects a broad-based recovery driven by both policy direction and structural reforms.

The government's focus on capital expenditure-particularly in highways, railways, digital infrastructure, and energy-has created a multiplier effect, stimulating jobs and private investment. Simultaneously, the services sector, especially IT, financial services, tourism, and hospitality, continues to provide robust support to growth. Rural demand, though uneven, is showing signs of improvement with better monsoon prospects and targeted social welfare schemes cushioning rural households.

However, celebrating high GDP numbers alone would be short-sighted. The challenge lies in ensuring that growth is inclusive, sustainable, and capable of generating long-term economic stability. Rising unemployment, especially among educated youth, remains a concern. A growing economy must translate into expanding employment opportunities-both in traditional sectors and in emerging domains such as green technology, artificial intelligence, and advanced manufacturing.

Inflation poses another constraint. While largely under control, price fluctuations in food and fuel still affect household budgets. Policymakers must maintain a delicate balance between maintaining growth momentum and managing inflationary risks through calibrated monetary policies.

The global environment also brings uncertainties. Sluggish global trade, geopolitical tensions, and supply chain disruptions can impact India's export-driven sectors. To mitigate these risks, India must continue diversifying trade partners, strengthening domestic manufacturing through initiatives like Make in India, and accelerating reforms to improve ease of doing business. Strong GDP numbers must be backed by improvements in education, skill development, and healthcare to build a workforce capable of meeting the demands of a rapidly evolving economy.

India's Sporting Rise: From CWG 2030 to Olympic Ambition, a New Era of Global Prominence

■ DR. MANSUKH MANDAVIYA



On November 26th, Wednesday, Commonwealth Sport formally announced India as the host of the centenary 2030 Commonwealth Games, marking a defining moment in the nation's sporting journey. This is far more than a prestigious hosting right, it is a global acknowledgement that India has emerged as one of the most trusted and preferred hosts for major international sporting events, and a nation advancing confidently towards its long-term ambition of hosting the Olympic Games in 2036.

For the international sporting community, this announcement reaffirms a reality that has been steadily taking shape over the past decade. India is now widely regarded as a dependable, high-capacity and athlete-centric host, one that delivers global standards with scale, efficiency and warmth. This reputation has been consistently acknowledged by global sporting leaders. President of International Paralympic Committee, during his visit for the World Para Athletics Championships, praised India's organisational excellence and rapid progress in para-sport. Several international eminent athletes also lauded India's facilities, medical support, competition management and overall athlete experience.

Similarly, the World Boxing President, dur-

ing his recent visit to India to attend the World Boxing Cup Finals, described the country as a pillar of global boxing, commending its professionalism and hosting capabilities. These international endorsements reflect a much broader sentiment. India has risen to a level where the global sporting community entrusts it with events of the highest significance.

This trust is the outcome of a decade of sustained transformation under Modi government across both the sports sector and the economy. India's macroeconomic stability, rising global economic ranking and strengthened fiscal position have enabled a scale of investment in sport unmatched in the country's history. In 2013-14, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports had an allocation of ₹1,093 crore. In 2025-26, the allocation stands at ₹3,794 crore, representing nearly a 250 per cent increase in just over a decade.

This surge in investment has powered a nationwide sporting resurgence. Grassroots development has expanded across states through initiatives such as Khelo India and the Asmita Women's League, accompanied by the establishment of more than 1050+ Khelo India Centres that provide district-level access to coaching and facilities. Simultaneously, India has built robust high-performance pathways through the Target Olympic Podium Scheme and the newly introduced Target Asian Games Group, offering top-tier training, sports science, nutrition and global exposure. Infrastructure has grown at an unprecedented pace, with over 350 major

sports facilities built or in progress across the country, creating an ecosystem that can support world-class competitions. This infrastructure development is not just event-specific but is also sustainable and geared towards long-term athlete development, serving as a hub for training, competitions, and future sporting needs for decades to come.

India's hosting capability is equally evident from its track record. Over the past decade, the country has delivered 22 major international sporting events across more than 20 cities, ranging from the Hockey World Cups, Chess Olympiad, FIFA U-17 World Cup, the World Para Athletics Championships and the ICC Men's and Women's Cricket World Cups. Each event has reinforced India's reputation as a country that executes with precision and scale while offering athletes and officials an environment of safety, professionalism and cultural warmth. With the World Police & Fire Games scheduled for 2029, India will further consolidate its multi-sport event experience in the lead-up to CWG 2030.

At the heart of this transformation is the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who has elevated sport to a national priority and integrated it with the larger vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. Policy reforms such as the Khelo Bharat Niti and the National Sports Governance Act, 2025 have modernised governance structures, promoted transparency and established an athlete-first approach that aligns with global best practices. These reforms have strengthened India's credibil-

ity in the eyes of international federations and positioned the country as a proactive and responsible stakeholder in the global sporting system.

The announcement of India as the host of the 2030 Commonwealth Games is therefore not an isolated event, nor the product of a single reform or a single success. It is the culmination of years of sustained investment in infrastructure, in athlete development, in grassroots participation, in governance reforms and in the financial strengthening of the sports ecosystem. It reflects a decade-long commitment of Modi government to build systems, institutions and capacities that now collectively place India as a world's most favourable sporting nation.

India is not preparing to arrive; India has arrived. Over the past decade, the nation has progressed from limited infrastructure and sporadic results to global standing, world-class facilities, consistent international performance and a structured sporting ecosystem that spans every region of the country. The Commonwealth Games 2030 announcement marks the moment when the world formally acknowledges this transformation.

India stands ready - economically, institutionally and sportingly - to shine on the global stage as one of the world's leading sporting nations.

(The author is Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports and Labour & Employment)

8.2% GDP growth signals expanding economic momentum

■ MOHAMMAD HANIEF



India's economy has recorded an impressive GDP growth rate of 8.2% in the second quarter of the 2025-26 financial year, reaffirming the country's position as one of the fastest-growing major economies in the world.

This achievement comes at a time when global markets remain unsettled by geopolitical tensions, inflationary waves, and uneven recovery in advanced economies. India's economic performance, driven by renewed domestic confidence and structural policy support, stands out as a marker of stability and resilience in a turbulent global environment.

The union government has welcomed the newly released figures, describing them as a reflection of the country's expanding economic capacity and the effectiveness of ongoing reforms. The Prime Minister has noted that such growth underscores the contribution of India's workforce, entrepreneurs, and industry, while also highlighting the positive trajectory created by sustained policy initiatives. He has reiterated that the government remains committed to advancing reforms and strengthening systems that improve the ease of living for citizens, ensuring that the benefits of growth extend across all sections of society.

India's economic expansion is characterised by a broad revival across multiple sectors. Domestic demand remains one of the strongest drivers of growth. Urban consumption continues to rise steadily, buoyed by expanding employment opportunities, improved digital access, and enhanced spending capacity. Services associated with travel, communication, retail, and hospitality have seen a substantial revival after a period of prolonged disruption, while emerging service areas such as digital finance and healthcare continue to expand. This transition reflects a shift toward more technology-driven consumption patterns, which in turn support new business models and job creation.

Rural consumption, though influenced by seasonal variations and price fluctuations, has maintained overall resilience. Agricultural stability in



several regions, supported by rural infrastructure improvements, has contributed to steady spending patterns. Smaller towns and semi-urban centres have also become important growth nodes, creating new consumption clusters that broaden the base of economic activity beyond traditional metros.

India's industrial landscape has shown renewed dynamism. Manufacturing has strengthened, supported by higher production levels, sustained demand for domestic goods, and increased confidence among businesses. Policy incentives encouraging domestic manufacturing have attracted fresh investments into sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, renewable-energy components, and automotive products. The shift in global manufacturing preferences, with companies seeking diversified and stable supply chains, has increased India's appeal as a potential industrial hub.

The construction sector continues to be one of the strongest pillars of the current growth phase. Nationwide infrastructure expansion-covering highways, express corridors, rail modernisation, port upgrades, airport development, and urban housing-has generated wide-ranging economic activity. These initiatives not only propel demand for construction materials but also play a crucial role in employment creation. The scale of public

infrastructure spending has produced a ripple effect across allied industries, generating incentives for private participation and supporting thousands of small and medium enterprises connected to supply chains.

India's investment climate has also strengthened. A sustained rise in capital formation indicates growing confidence among investors. Public-sector expenditure on infrastructure, digital connectivity, and energy systems has laid the foundation for long-term economic momentum. A series of reforms implemented over recent years-ranging from improvements in tax compliance to digitisation of administrative services-have contributed to a more transparent and predictable business environment. These measures have helped streamline processes, reduce barriers, and increase the ease with which businesses operate.

Financial institutions have shown improved health, with stronger balance sheets and rising credit flows to priority sectors. Lending to small and medium enterprises has expanded, supported by government-backed credit mechanisms. This has enabled smaller businesses to participate more effectively in the recovery process and further strengthened the interconnected structure of the economy. Digital payments continue to grow rapidly, deepening financial inclusion and enabling quicker busi-

ness transactions across rural and urban areas alike.

Even as India's domestic sectors show strong results, the global environment remains mixed. Export sectors face external pressures due to slower international demand and fluctuations in commodity markets. Despite these headwinds, India has managed to maintain a steady export performance by expanding its presence in sectors such as engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and electronics. Agricultural exports have also shown resilience in several categories. Traditional export industries, including textiles and gems and jewellery, continue to be affected by global market softness, but the diversification of export baskets has helped reduce overall impact.

The services export sector remains one of India's most stable global strengths. Technology services, business process management, consulting, and financial services continue to attract international demand. India's skilled workforce, growing digital capacity, and expanding knowledge sectors have played a key role in maintaining a strong services export position, even during periods of global uncertainty.

Employment trends, while still adjusting to pre-pandemic patterns, show gradual improvement. The expansion of construction and manufacturing has supported large-scale labour absorption, particularly in urban and semi-urban regions. The services sector has opened significant opportunities across varying skill levels, supported by the growth of logistics, retail, education, digital platforms, and healthcare. The rise of gig-based and platform-based employment has diversified income opportunities for young workers, particularly in urban centres. At the same time, government initiatives aimed at skill development and digital training continue to bridge gaps between labour supply and industry demand.

Inflation remains a concern, particularly in food categories influenced by seasonal and supply-chain disruptions. Although core inflation has moderated, food prices continue to fluctuate, affecting household budgets.

Policymakers maintain a cautious approach to inflation management, balancing price stability with the need to sustain growth. The Reserve Bank of India's approach has remained focused on ensuring stability in the financial system while providing monetary conditions that support economic expansion.

The government has emphasised that the recent GDP performance reinforces the importance of continuing reforms and strengthening the ecosystem that enhances ease of living. Efforts are under way to improve digital access, expand affordable housing, enhance transportation infrastructure, and increase access to healthcare and social protection. A key focus moving forward will be ensuring that the benefits of economic growth translate into tangible improvements in quality of life and reduced disparities across regions and social categories.

Looking ahead, India's economic prospects remain robust. The combination of strong domestic demand, renewed industrial activity, expanding services, and sustained investment forms a stable foundation for the coming quarters. The government's approach-anchored in policy continuity, infrastructure expansion, and reform-driven governance-seeks to create conditions that support long-term growth. While global uncertainties will continue to influence external sectors, India's structural strengths and diversified economic base position it favourably among emerging economies.

The 8.2% GDP growth rate is more than an indicator of short-term recovery; it signals a broader economic transformation under way. It reflects the growing strength of sectors that have adapted to new realities, the contribution of citizens and businesses across the country, and the policy environment that continues to push for greater transparency, efficiency, and inclusion. As India moves further into the fiscal year, the economic narrative is marked by confidence and a renewed sense of possibility, with a clear national focus on ensuring that growth translates into improved opportunities and living standards for all.

(The author is a senior analyst)

National Milk Day: Remembering the Father of White Revolution

■ DR. BANARSI LAL

Every year 26th of November is celebrated as the National Milk Day across India to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Verghese Kurian, the Father of White Revolution in India. This day honours the millions of farmers whose commitment sustains the country's leadership in milk production. On this day awareness is created on milk as a global food. On this day the importance of nutrition and economic importance of milk and dairy products for the mankind is highlighted. Dr. Kurian was born on November 26, 1921 in Kozhikode, Kerala. He was instrumental in transforming India from a milk-deficient nation to the world's largest producer of milk. He led initiatives that contributed to the extensive increase in milk production in India termed as the White Revolution. In 1998, India surpassed the USA as the world's largest producer of milk. This day signifies the transformative impact of India's dairy sector, a key contributor to nutritional security, rural development and economic growth. This particular day provides an opportunity to focus attention on milk and publicise the activities connected with the milk industry. India is 1st in milk production with 239.30 million ton per annum and contributes about 25 per cent of world production followed by USA. Govt. has taken numerous steps to increase milk production significantly. The per capita availability of milk in India is about 471 gms/day. Following the visit of Prime Minister, Sh. Lal Bahadur Shastri to Anand district of Gujarat in 1964, the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) was created in 1965 with a mandate to support creation of Anand dairy pattern cooperatives across the country through Operation Flood (OF) programme. Dr. Verghese Kurian was the first Chairman of NDDB. Building on the achievements of the Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union, the precursor to Amul, the NDDB launched Operation Flood in 1970. The programme aimed to increase rural milk production and develop a streamlined system that enabled cooperatives in milk-rich regions to supply milk efficiently to major urban markets. Presently dairy sector provides livelihoods to 8.5 crore rural households. This success is driven by initiatives such as the Rashtriya Gokul Mission

and the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme which stress on enhancing breeding, improving genetic quality and improving animal health. This day helps to increase the awareness on all aspects of natural milk such as its natural origin, nutritional value and various milk products including its economic importance. Various health organisations take part in the celebration of this day and also to disseminate the message of milk importance to the common man through the various promotional activities.

Milk is considered as the significant place in India's nutritional landscape, providing high-quality animal protein and essential nutrients. Milk is a great source of various nutrients required by the body such as calcium, magnesium, zinc, phosphorus, iodine, iron, potassium, folates, vitamin A, vitamin D, Riboflavin, vitamin B12, fat etc. Milk provides instant energy to the body as it contains high quality proteins. On this day articles, news, press releases etc. are published to highlight the nutritional benefits of milk among the people. Free milk camps are also organised to distribute the free milk among the children. Various programmes such as essay writing, quiz competitions, sports activities, group discussions etc. are organised in schools, colleges, universities and various other educational institutions. Milk is an important liquid for everybody. Milk helps us to have a better health and to maintain it for achieving our goals of life. On this day every information about the positive effects of milk on the body is provided to the people. Milk helps to develop the body muscles and solves the problem of weakness in the body. Mother milk is also very essential for the children to keep them healthy and fit. Now-a-days people are trying to maintain their body by various types of exercises and Yoga. They are also consuming various types of weight gaining powders without thinking about their side effects. There is urgent need to develop the awareness on the positive effects of the milk on our bodies so that we can achieve our goals in our lives. Now-a-days people eat many types of junk food but that can be harmful for the body. Milk contains every type of nutrients which make our body healthy and fit. Milk has many uses for the different people and various types of products can be made from it.

In Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir about 80% of population lives in the rural people and about 60% of the state's revenue is generated by the agriculture and animal husbandry sector. Dairy farming is a potential source of additional income for the rural people of J&K state. The contribution of dairy sector to the national income is invaluable. This sector provides insurance against crop failures. This sector helps in increasing the crop production by providing the drag power, organic manure and cash income on a regular basis. Although India ranked first in milk production but the productivity of milk in hilly areas of J&K is very less. Maximum milk is produced in certain parts of the state. Lack of technological dairy information sources is one of the reasons of low milk production for the farmers of hilly areas. The major occupation of the rural people of J&K is agriculture and livestock rearing is the major source of income and employment. Agriculture and allied sectors contribute about 38% to the state gross domestic product of which 11% is contributed by the livestock. Dairy sector not only generates income and employment among the farmers but also supplements the varied nutritional requirements of the individual. Livestock rearing is an integral part of rural J&K. Department of Animal Husbandry of J&K and SKUAST-Jammu and Kashmir are providing the technological guidelines to the farmers and also providing the frozen semen of pedigree bulls to the veterinary dispensaries.

India has a milk shortage and was dependent on imports during the 1950s and 1960s. India is the largest cattle producer in the world and has large animal diversity and is first in buffalo while second in goat production in the world. 13 per cent of world's cattle population and 57 per cent of world's buffalo population is found in India. Buffaloes contribution towards the milk production in J&K is lesser (0.27%) as compared to the national average (1.84%). Buffaloes breeding programmes can be taken in Jammu and Kashmir. There is dire need of cross breed and Jersey bulls in the state to improve the cattle breed. The emphasis should be given to the use of advanced breeding tools to increase the breeding bulls for expansion of artificial expansion in the state. Clinical animal health services with capacity

building for superspeciality and advanced medicinal interventions need to be developed. Animal diseases and parasites need to be managed according to the different agro-climatic zones in the state. Focus should be given on important diseases like foot and mouth disease, mastitis, tuberculosis, metabolic disorders etc. for the safety of animals. Imbalanced animal diet in dairy animals affects their production, reproduction and health. Area specific dairy mineral mixture should be given to the dairy farmers to fulfill the diet of dairy animals. The efforts for the improvement of breed of animals are wasted without proper nutrition. The annual fodder need of J&K is deficit by 60%. From the last one decade the area under fodder in the state is stagnant.

Training on scientific cultivation of fodder should be imparted to the farmers and improved/hybrid seed of different fodder crops should be timely provided to the dairy farmers. Research should be in conversion of agricultural products into cattle feed. In hilly terrains still there are certain habitations which lack road connectivity. There is need to develop the infrastructure of dairy plants especially in the hilly areas so that milk collection can be increased. Also there is need to have bulk coolers, refrigeration systems and also to develop the organized markets in the rural areas which further can help in rural development. The focus should be given on small dairy farmers who lack availability of nutritious feed, timely institutional credits, fodder availability in off seasons of the year, timely quality veterinary care etc. Superior breeds of animals are not available in the rural areas. The rural areas can purchase the superior breeds of animals if institutional credit is provided to them. There is need to have proper linkage between the scientist, extension workers and farmers. The research in livestock production should be according to the socio-economic conditions of the farmers. Dairy technologies should be made by the scientists according to the socio-economic, size of dairy farm, market approach of the farmers and also the agro-ecological conditions of the region. On this day the efforts of farmers and cooperatives are acknowledged who shape a productive, resilient and forward-looking dairy sector.

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