

# Give approval to in-flight Wi-Fi services: Assocham

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi, 28 December

Pitching for an early approval to the proposal of providing in-flight Wi-Fi services over the Indian airspace, the Assocham today said that the move would not only enable the fliers stay connected even when they are mid-air but also improve flight safety.

The Assocham secretary general DS Rawat, in a letter to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has also said that various customer surveys findings also suggest that travellers expect to stay connected via their smart devices and laptops even while flying.

The copies of the letter have also been marked to home minister Rajnath Singh, civil aviation minister Ashok Gajapati Raju and

communication minister Manoj Sinha. Globally, many airlines are already offering Wi-Fi for passengers, but they currently have to switch off the facility when they enter the Indian airspace as such services and phone calls are not allowed on flights under the present regulations.

"In Flight Connectivity (IFC) promises to substantially improve safety of airlines as it enables flight tracking in respect of aircraft in near real time reporting latitude, longitude, altitude, true heading and ground speed; streaming of flight data recorder off the aircraft in real time; and facilitating real time intervention for safety and security based on flight data monitoring," the Assocham said in the letter.

A large number of coun-

tries and airlines have already operationalised the in-flight connectivity, the Assocham said in the letter adding, even Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal have permitted IFC in planes over-flying their territory while India is yet to take any decision.

"As a result, each time an aircraft equipped with IFC enters Indian air space, it is forced to switch off the service to the passengers till it passes the Indian skies, causing hardship to the passengers," Mr Rawat said.

Significantly, Mr Raju had early this month told Parliament that "the department of telecommunications has already moved a proposal for providing in-flight connectivity for voice, data and video services for consideration of the committee of Secretaries."

## Needed, a comprehensive national MSME policy

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The MSME sector contributes 8 per cent to the GDP, whilst employing more than 80 million people.

Growth in micro and small enterprises has been consistent over the past five decades due to a combination of government support, implementation of technological enhancements, and support by the banking sector.

In 2016, initiatives have been taken by the Centre as well as State governments to improve 'ease of doing business' and to make Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) more globally competitive - such as the Udyog Aadhar Memorandum framework for revival and rehabilitation of MSMEs, which enables banks/creditors to identify enterprises in the stage of initial stress and thus take corrective action, and A Scheme for Promoting Innovation, Rural Industry and Entrepreneurship (ASPIRE), among others.

### Impact of demonetisation

The historic paradigm change through demonetisation, conceived by the Prime Minister, is strongly expected to have a long-lasting favourable impact. But, at the same time, there is a mammoth task ahead for the Prime Minister to make this a success.

In case of SMEs, most will be unsure of payments coming from customers for some time. Currently, businesses and MSMEs dependent on cash for daily operations have been hit badly and though the Centre increased withdrawal caps, it will still be a few months before the situation stabilises.

The Centre should immediately act to enhance awareness amongst Indian SMEs about the importance and benefits of cashless transactions and digital payments, and in addition to that, deliberate on the role trade associations and other SME stakeholders could play to assist in this transition.

Hopefully, the Centre will soon take measures to restart the money wheel in the market again. This could happen in several forms - early announcement of GST and Banking Transaction Tax, elimination or drastic reduction of service tax and VAT until GST is introduced, or something else. This will encourage people to spend without having the fear of tax.

### Suggestions for 2017

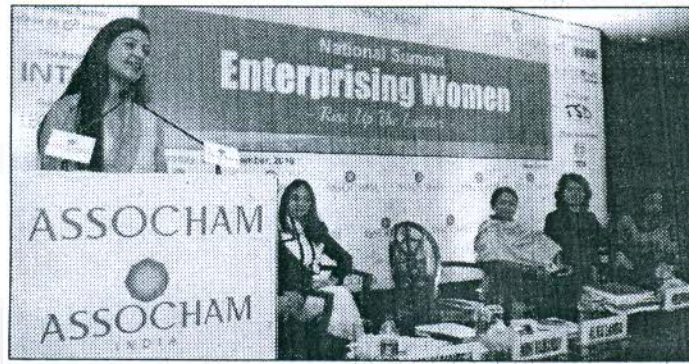
The Centre must notify the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Amendment) Bill, 2015, which seeks to enhance the existing limit for investment in plant and machinery, considering inflation and the dynamic market situation. At the moment, there is no integrated approach for the development of MSMEs despite the fact that it accounts for 40 per cent of India's manufacturing and 45 per cent of exports. Therefore, the Centre should come out with one comprehensive policy.

Several areas of concern relating to the GST law and its implementation, must be addressed. It is equally important to provide special incentives for the promotion of export, such as freight subsidy and marketing support.

*The writer is Chairman, ASSOCHAM National Council on SMEs*

## महिलाओं का देश के विकास में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान

नई दिल्ली (ओ0 वॉ0)। संसाधनों को ओर अच्छी तरह से महिलायें देश के विकास में अपनी विकसित कर रहें है। वहीं गांव की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं। महिलाओं को भी इससे जोड़ा जा आज महिलायें कई महत्वपूर्ण रहा है। औद्योगिक क्षेत्र में भी विभागों की जिम्मेदारी निभा रही महिलाओं की दक्षता परिपूर्ण है।



हैं। वहीं सरकार भी महिलाओं के विकास के लिए कई महत्वपूर्ण कार्य कर रही है। यह कहना था एसोचैम द्वारा आयोजित 'इन्टरप्राइसिंग वूमन राईस ऑफ दी लिडर' में।

केन्द्रीय मंत्री कृष्णा राज का कहना था कि बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ, कौशल विकास व महिला कोश आदि अन्य व्यवहारिक कार्यक्रम केन्द्र सरकार संचालन कर रही है।

हम कई नितियों के तहम महिला विकास व रोजगार के

उन्होंने कहा कि औद्योगिक घराने महिलाओं की अधिकारिता व न्याय संगत के लिए अपने संस्थागत फंड से महिलाओं के विकास कार्यों में सहयोग कर सकते हैं। सम्मेलन में उपस्थित आम आदमी पार्टी की विधायक अलका लाम्बा ने बताया कि हमें सबसे पहले पुरुष मानसिकता को बदलना होगा तभी महिलाओं के विकास में अग्रता आएगी। तभी महिलाओं का विकास भी सम्भव है। महिलाएं आज हर तरह के चुनौती पूर्ण कार्य कर रही है।