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...but bizmen won't give up on Mumbai yet

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Mumbai: Despite instant flooding during rains, pothole-ridden roads and nerve-wracking traffic jams, leading industry and business bodies refuse to write Mumbai off; instead they hope that the country's financial capital will work a way out to retain its premier status.

They agree that the availability of adequate power and good quality of water is a crucial factor for businesses to continue operating from the metropolis.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Associated Chambers of Commerce of India (Assocham), Indian Merchants Chamber (IMC) and Builders Association of India strongly bat for the use of advanced technologies in cleaning rivers and canals and constructing roads.

The industry bodies also make a strong case for the launch of water transport to ease the burden on roads and railways, and generation of energy from waste on a priority basis.

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Some suggest that Mumbai mayor should be directly elected by citizens and be given adequate administrative powers.

FICCI national council member, Sushil Jiwrajka, said, "Mumbai has the best power and water supply system. Even when there are ambitious plans to enhance the public transport infrastructure to connect to the hinterlands, the problem of potholes and flooding during monsoon continue to persist. Unless these are resolved, Mumbai will fail to be recognised as an international financial centre."

Warning that mismanagement of waste disposal is reaching alarming levels, Jiwrajka urges authorities to take urgent steps to convert waste into energy. "To achieve this in a short time, the



mayor should be vested with complete powers," said Jiwrajka, who is also the president of Infrastructure & Logistics Federation of India.

Ninad Karpe, CII's western region chairman, hopes things will improve with the civil society groups exerting pressure on policymakers to upgrade facilities that will bring them at par with international standards.

"Authorities need to ensure that rivers are cleaned in a time-bound manner; that way they do it in Singapore and some other countries," he noted.

Ram Gandhi, former president of Indian Merchants Chamber, said industry and businesses are worried that for the second time in a month, they had to close down their offices, causing huge loss. "If the Bandra-Wroli sealink can remain in perfect condition, why can't similar technology be used in other road development projects in the city? Also, the India Meteorological Department needs to be equipped with every possible modern technology to make near-perfect predictions. Despite all this, businesses are quite optimistic that things will improve in Mumbai," he added.



Securing India's cyberspace

India needs indigenous tools and niche workforce to protect its cyberspace, says PwC-Assocham report

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CREATION OF INDIGENOUS tools along with building human capacity with relevant capabilities is imperative to secure India's cyberspace. While the government should create a robust policy environment and ensure adequate technology support, businesses should not limit their efforts towards cyber resilience merely for compliance, but practise self-regulation, says a report titled 'Securing the Nation's Cyberspace' by PwC-Assocham.

Citizens' participation in mitigating cyber risks is also becoming increasingly important. Promoting a cyber safe culture for responsible cyber behaviour will be key to ensuring security of India in cyberspace, the report said. The UK, US and Australia have benefitted from national public awareness campaigns to drive behavioural change on cyber security.

Sivarama Krishnan, partner & leader—Cyber Security, PwC India said, "Cyber threats can cause crises that can not only lead to national threats, but also affect business continuity, cause financial and reputation loss. Therefore, it is in the interest of businesses that cyber security becomes a priority and not just a mandate to comply with. It is critical that all economic participants in a country pay attention to cyber security and develop adequate measures to identify, protect, detect, respond and recover processes and capabilities in the face of threats. Businesses today need to urgently and proactively invest in it."

'NITI Aayog receives over 5k applications for Mentor India'

• OUR BUREAU
New Delhi

Government of India's think-tank, NITI Aayog has received a 'fantastic response,' with over 5,000 applications for the Mentor India Campaign, Ramanathan Ramanan, mission director, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). He said this at an ASSOCHAM event held in New Delhi recently.

"We want this to be several, we should at least have 10,000-15,000 mentors because the country is big, schools are widely disbursed and we need people to help," said Ramanan while addressing an ASSOCHAM National Conference on 'Empowerment of

SC, ST and women entrepreneurs.' He also said that the link to apply for the campaign is open till September 30. "We are going to build a network of mentors across the country from every professional organisation which is capable of supporting and this is going to be one of the largest mentoring networks across the country."

He said that under the initiative of AIM, the government is trying to build innovators of the future. "AIM has been launched by the Prime Minister to promote innovation and entrepreneurship," he said adding that India needs to develop as a country which can create job creators not

just job seekers in order to employ 1.23 billion people profitably.

Highlighting how the government is embarked on setting up world-class incubators in India of which several women-led incubators are being set up in the country, he said "We are setting up tinkering labs in schools across the country, already 1,000 schools have been set up with tinkering labs which will empower the students to learn latest technologies like 3D printing, IOT devices, miniature electronics, robotics, Wi-Fi, communication devices and so on." He also said that government would be setting up 2,000 tinkering labs before the end of this year.

Petrol/diesel prices not market driven, but tax driven: ASSOCHAM



Consumer is getting restive about a three-year high petrol and diesel prices because he/she feels the concept of market-determined rates was tampered with by frequent tax hikes when the crude oil prices fell steeply and are ruling at exactly half the level of USD 107 per barrel in May, 2014 even after rising in the last three months. "With USD 107 per barrel, the retail price of auto fuel was 71.51 per litre, then how come it is about the same when the Indian basket of crude is trading at half that level at 53.83 per barrel, the consumers would ask. If the prices are market determined, the retail prices should have been less than Rs 40 a litre," the ASSOCHAM note has stated.