With the aim of promoting quality and productivity in the Indian industry, DPIIT organized Udyog Manthan - a marathon of 46 sector-specific webinars between January 4, 2021 to March 2, 2021. Udyog Manthan was organised in association with Quality Council of India, National Productivity Council and industry bodies.

The webinar series focused on covering various sectors of manufacturing and services including toys, leather, furniture, chemicals, tourism, pharma etc. and witnessed over 400 speakers and experts, more than 3500 participants and 18,000 digital audiences over a period of 8 weeks. The sectors covered in Udyog Manthan contribute up to 70% of the country’s GDP.

Each webinar comprised a two-hour session involving discussions led by sectoral and industry experts of a particular sector. The participants of Udyog Manthan included representatives from industry, testing and standardization bodies as well as international organisations. The marathon webinar series acted as a platform for identifying challenges, opportunities, drawing upon solutions, sharing best practices and generating sector specific recommendations.

Providing the keynote address in the valedictory session of Udyog Manthan, Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce and Industry highlighted the importance of quality and said that quality is a collective, organisational effort. The entire mindset of our nation should move to accepting quality as the pre-requisite for our future development and growth. He reiterated that Udyog Manthan is the harbinger of quality and productivity movement in the Indian industrial landscape. The initiative was very well received by the industry and was seen as the beginning of a quality and productivity movement in the country. The government’s efforts in bringing out technical regulations for many sectors are being widely appreciated.
On February 5, 2021 the Hon’ble Minister of Railways; Commerce & Industry; Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution, Shri Piyush Goyal and the European Union Executive Vice-President & Trade Commissioner Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis co-chaired the 1st India-EU High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Trade and Investment.

The dialogue developed as a result of a decision taken at the 15th India-EU Leaders Summit, held in July 2020, with the aim of providing ministerial-level guidance on bilateral trade and investment ties. Discussions in the HLD focussed on emphasising the importance of global cooperation and solidarity in a post COVID-19 era and agreements for further deepening bilateral trade and investment relations through a series of frequent engagements, with the aim of delivering fast results for businesses in these challenging times.

In a significant step forward, the ministers also agreed to meet within the next three months for fast tracking decisions pertaining to bilateral trade & investment cooperation issues like a Bilateral Regulatory Dialogue and an India-EU Multilateral Dialogue to explore further possibilities of cooperation. The ministers concluded the dialogue with the confidence and commitment towards a renewed India-EU commercial and economic partnership reflecting full potential of bilateral commercial relations. Regular interactions for re-initiation of bilateral trade and investment agreements, with an interim agreement, to start with, were also discussed.

On February 6, 2021, Hon’ble Minister of Railways; Commerce & Industry; Consumer Affairs and Food & Public Distribution, Shri Piyush Goyal, and UK Secretary of State for International Trade, Ms. Elizabeth Truss MP met at New Delhi to discuss the India-UK trade and investment relationship. They were joined by the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry from India, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri.

Discussions were carried out on the entire range of bilateral trade and economic relations in a spirit of mutual understanding of each other’s priorities and trade sensitivities. Taking forward their commitment from the 14th JETCO (Joint Economic Trade Committee) on 24th July 2020, India and UK Trade Ministers reviewed the ongoing engagements between the two sides for an ETP, as part of the development of a roadmap that would lead to a potential comprehensive FTA, including considerations on an Interim Agreement on preferential basis.

In a significant step forward, the ministers agreed that this partnership would formally be launched during the visit of the UK Prime Minister to India, later this year. To this effect, the ministers committed themselves to make concrete progress on the trade & investment front to deliver quick gains for both countries including joint timelines for further advances. The ministers also welcomed the deepening of bilateral health cooperation between the two countries, including on vaccines, which is enabling our countries to act as a global force for good during these challenging times. The ministers committed to relaunch the UK-India CEO Forum and agreed on the CEO Forum meeting at the earliest. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to work with businesses to improve the business environment and collectively address the challenges to post-COVID-19 economic recovery.
The first ever digital Union Budget, which is also the first budget of this new decade, was presented on the 1st February 2021, with the view to lay a vision for Aatmanirbhar Bharat in the backdrop of unprecedented COVID-19 crisis. It was designed with an aim to restore growth in the aftermath of heavy economic losses suffered by the country due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The budget discussed measures for multiple areas of work that are within the ambit of DPIIT. In order to improve ease of doing business for the industry, it proposed various measures to reduce regulatory compliance burden by following a systematic approach. It introduced multiple initiatives related to digitization, faceless dispute resolution and simplification and also focussed on decriminalization and simplification measures to make starting and operating a business in India easier.

The Budget 2021-22 also stressed on enhancing the investment ecosystem in the country. PLI schemes for 13 sectors, with an outlay of INR 1.97 lakh crore have been launched for a period of 5 years, starting from fiscal year (FY) 2021-22. On the focus given to the infrastructure sector in the Budget 2021-22, the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) covering 217 projects worth INR 1.1 lakh crore has been expanded to 7,400 projects, which will collectively become a vital lever for economic revival and building long-term competencies.

Talking about the steps taken by the government to facilitate all-inclusive growth across various sectors, Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Secretary, DPIIT, said that through the combination of PLI Schemes and the Customs Duty revision, along with certain sector-specific announcements, the Budget will unlock the domestic manufacturing potential across sectors, including renewable energy, heavy industry, agriculture, automotive, textiles and so on. Overall, the Budget 2021-22 focuses on investment promotion, infrastructure development, leveraging private investment and encouraging the social sector, thus creating a promising outlook for the future.

Further to the MoU signed between India and Denmark in the field of IP cooperation, the Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM), DPIIT collaborated with Danish Trademark and Patent Office (DKPTO) and Danish Embassy for conducting the first round of capacity building between the two sides towards sharing best practices on creating Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) awareness.

The capacity building workshop was undertaken as a 4-part series which was initiated in January, 2021 and concluded in February, 2021. The first part, held on January 14, was an introductory session where in the collaborating offices discussed their respective general strategies and work techniques to increase IP awareness. The second and third part of the programme, held on January 21 and February 4 respectively, were facilitated by DKPTO and Danish embassy. While the second part entailed a focused presentation on the different IP campaigns executed by the Danish side, the third part of the series discussed evaluation and analysis techniques of the campaigns executed.

The fourth and final part of the capacity building workshop was conducted on February 18 and facilitated by CIPAM, DPIIT. In consonance with the theme of the session on forming partnerships for outreach, CIPAM shared its rich experience in collaborating with different stakeholders for outreach through a presentation on its association with various government and non-government organisations for targeted IP awareness drives and interventions.
The India Toy Fair 2021 was virtually organised by the Government of India between February 27, 2021 and March 2, 2021.

Speaking at a webinar on ‘Driving Investments to India-Making India the next Global Hub for Manufacturing and Sourcing of Toys’ on the second day of the fair, Dr. Guruprasad Mohapatra, Secretary, DPIIT said that toys are of serious economic concern and a very comprehensive toy master plan has been prepared with various Ministries and State Governments involved to promote the toy industry.

Dr. Mohapatra said that the Government wants Indian toys to achieve both quality and competitiveness and is exploring what kind of incentives are required by the toy industry. The webinar provided an overview of India’s competitive advantages, regulatory support available, guidance on doing business in India and highlighted experiences of toy associations and companies in India.

The second day of The India Toy Fair-2021, being held on virtual platform at theindiatoyfair.in, hosted over 35 eminent speakers from industry, academia and the Government. There were seven panel discussions/webinars and three activities were organised.

Towards establishing a network of Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISC) in India, CIPAM, DPIIT has signed an institutional agreement with Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) to establish the first TISC in Jammu & Kashmir. TISC is a programme of the World Intellectual Property Organization’s (WIPO), initiated for providing innovators with access to locally-based, high-quality technology information and related services, helping them exploit their innovative potential and to and manage their intellectual property (IP) rights. Till date, CIPAM, DPIIT has successfully established 9 TISCs; the current agreement with JKEDI marks the 10th TISC of India.

JKEDI has an experience of filing IPR applications and also organizes several IPR workshops in the State. In September 2018, under the Startup India policy, Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) was launched envisioning the creation of 500 new Start-ups. JKEDI also has an experience in assisting players such as startups & SMEs in getting their invention commercialized and thus boosting the innovation ecosystem of the area.

The objective of the TISC is to stimulate a dynamic, vibrant and balanced Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) system in India to foster creativity and innovation, thereby promoting entrepreneurship and enhancing social, economic and cultural development by establishing a network of TISCs in India. Over 500 TISCs operate worldwide and establishing a TISC in India will give the host institutions access to the global network. TISC will give an impetus to knowledge sharing, sharing of best practices, capacity building, and generation & commercialization of Intellectual Properties.