



October 2022

EMPOWERING TIMES



THINKING ALOUD

Not a voice in the wilderness
Jay

PODIUM

Nimish Phadke
Founder MD - FOKIA &
Founder Director - Comfort
Insta Power



WE RECOMMEND

The Great Tech Game
Anirudh Suri

Dear Reader,

The amazing rise of the largest district in India - Kutch, is a story worth telling. Kutch has been a well-known port due to its natural long coastline and harbours. The district was considered economically backward amid frequent droughts, with the devastating earthquake of 2001 leaving the region grief stricken.

Organizations such as the Federation of Kutch Industries Associations (FOKIA) have helped transform the Kutch district into a hub for industrial activities, providing employment to more than 4 lakh people. Quite recently, on the occasion of 75 years of Amrit Mahotsav, the Prime Minister too shared a video based on the rise of Kutch, resurrecting from the debris, to become a flourishing hub of industries, agriculture, and tourism.

Celebrating this great feat, **ET** this month looks at *'The Rise of Kutch: An Industrial Growth Story'*.

In the **Thinking Aloud** segment, **Jay** shares his thoughts on the importance of associations such as the Chambers of Commerce that play a constructive role in voicing the issues that matter to industry. On the **Podium**, Managing Director of the Federation of Kutch Industries Associations (FOKIA), **Nimish Phadke** delves into the re-development of the earthquake-stricken Kutch area, and what makes it a special district that will attract more investments in the near future. In the **We Recommend** section, we review Anirudh Suri's book - **The Greatest Tech Game** - which highlights the author's view that the new world order will be shaped by the battle for technological dominance.

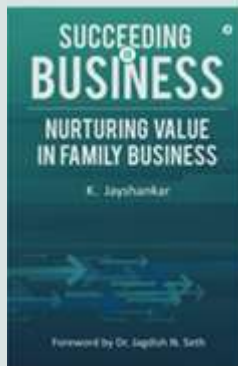
In **Figures of Speech**, **Vikram's** toons are all looking forward to Kutch's growth journey!



Please also [Click Here](#) to check out our Special issue of ET, which is a collation of selected themes that were featured over the years highlighting the changing landscape of the business world. This special edition has been well received and can be [Downloaded Here](#) for easy reading and is a collector's item.

As always, we value your opinion, so do let us know how you liked this issue. To read our previous issues, do visit the Resources section on the website or simply [Click Here](#). You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#) - where you can join our community to continue the dialogue with us!

Succeeding in Business: Nurturing Value in Family Business



What makes some family businesses grow from strength to strength? How do you ensure that value is created and not destroyed when a business passes hands from one generation to the next in the Indian context? How can old families incorporate new ideas to revitalize themselves? Is there a role for professional management in Indian family business?

*This book offers answers to the vexatious issues that families face in their growth journey. The pointers provided can be used as a guide for nurturing the business and to leverage the traditional strengths that family businesses possess. As a counsellor and trusted advisor, the author, **K. Jayshankar (Jay)**, has had a ring-side view of how family businesses have functioned. The practical insights drawn from his experience of four decades has been combined with conceptual elements to become a valuable primer for a family that wishes to succeed in the competitive marketplace that is India.*

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THINKING ALOUD

Not a voice in the wilderness

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An old idea that is still relevant in today's world is the Chamber of Commerce. Reportedly, the first one was created in France, at Marseilles, in 1599, and when this European concept travelled to America, the New York State Chamber came up in 1768. India too has seen such trade bodies with the oldest, Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, set up in 1853. At last count there are over 35 such bodies, at national, regional and local levels. And, of course there are international bodies too.

What makes these bodies relevant in our world is an interesting question. Given their history as associations of merchants and traders, the role that these mercantilists played in advancing their national objectives cannot be underplayed. Keeping in mind that flag followed trade, the rise of colonial powers was in tandem with the role that money played - in some cases where military might was used to respond to traders in trouble. Things may not be quite the same today, though it is not right to discount the role that economic clout plays in shaping political and national policy. Besides the standard functions like providing certificates of origin for exports, and the educational role (by organising seminars, courses, etc.), perhaps the most prominent one is to be the voice of the industry. In a democratic economy, no government can afford to ignore the voice of the industrial and merchant community, and regular consultation is the norm. Keeping track of the pulse of the business community - who often lobby for causes that matter - also ensures that politicians get their funding strategy right. Cynical as this may seem, that is the reality of the world where global interests and business interests are often one and the same.

However, the positive news is that many Chambers of Commerce have become a force for good too. Apart from the fact that these clubs of old men have accepted that women are now playing a significant role in the business world, the impact of such bodies on the social agenda of countries is praiseworthy. Be it issues of climate change, malnutrition, health, or other matters, business bodies have been on the forefront of change in many places, and perhaps more effectively than even government departments have done.

A good example of this positive role is Project Blue Revolution initiated in the water-scarce Kutch district of Gujarat by the Federation of Kutch Industries Association (FOKIA). By bringing together many firms who are otherwise preoccupied with their own agenda, and harnessing their strengths to combat a common problem, business bodies can provide innovative solutions to many intractable issues that society faces. This has also been made possible as such bodies can also align and channelise the corporate social responsibility agenda of many local members towards a common goal.

Perhaps the reason why Chambers play a constructive and progressive role is that often they have self-less leaders who advance the agreed common agenda. However, this also calls for systematic operations and good managerial execution. Done well, they are evangelists who boost and safeguard the concerns of their constituency. A fractured body, on the other hand, is an empty shell that survives but does not perform. Truth be told, there are many such

bodies in existence at local levels. Thankfully, the few high performing ones overshadow these failed institutions and serve as a reminder of the potential of such a network that can endorse the power of the collective. Whereas lone voices would be easily isolated and throttled by more powerful agencies, the verdict of a Chamber of Commerce is a credible advocate for issues that matter to industry.

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Podium

Nimish Phadke

Founder MD - FOKIA & Founder Director - Comfort Insta Power



Nimish Phadke is the Managing Director at the Federation of Kutch Industries Association (FOKIA), and the Founder Director of Comfort Instapower. He is an electrical engineer by qualification and has over 20 years of experience in the field of repairing and manufacturing of distribution transformers and industrial products. Over the years, he has been at the forefront of rejuvenating the Kutch-Gujarat region and has been instrumental in making the region an upcoming industrial hub.

ET: What makes Gujarat and specifically, Kutch a land of entrepreneurs?

NP: The enterprising nature of the people of Kutch and Gujarat, a port-based economy, and a very sound ecosystem for the development of trade and industries makes Kutch in Gujarat a land of entrepreneurs.

ET: Bhuj was the victim of a major earthquake in 2001, which devastated the city region and the entire region. Apart from the indomitable spirit of the people, what are some of the reasons that has helped the region to make a comeback economically?

NP: After the major earthquake of 2001, fiscal incentives were declared by the Honourable Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister of India. The state government also echoed the gesture by declaring fiscal incentives in the way of the Sales Tax exemptions. The fiscal incentives were meticulously implemented by the then Chief Minister of Gujarat, the Honourable Narendra Modi. After the announcement of fiscal incentives, Narendra Modi created a socio-economic infrastructure rapidly and specifically ensured that ports like Kandla and Mundra were also developing speedily as Kutch has a large land bank and is the largest district in India with a 45,000+ km area. So, these are a few features which helped Kutch to rejuvenate its economy and after two decades, Kutch has become the powerhouse of economic activities, spearheading industrial development of Gujarat.

ET: What is the size of the total investment that Kutch has attracted in the last 2 decades and who are the major companies that have participated in transforming Kutch?

NP: At present, Kutch has a functional investment of INR 150,000 crores. Most of the investments came after the earthquake. After this calamity and after the announcement of the fiscal incentives by the centre and state governments, most industries have come up in this region ranging from chemical, marine chemical, textile, line pipe industry, FMCG products, mineral processing and mineral excavation, edible oil processing, sugar refineries, salt plants and salt refineries. So, almost all segments of industries are present here and most of the segments in the district are doing wonderfully.

ET: Despite the major investments made, it is believed that Kutch lacks social infrastructure. What are these challenges in your opinion?

NP: Since centuries, Kutch was considered an economically backward district as it had very sparse industrial activities, but is now a developing industrial region. In the post-earthquake era, when industrialization occurred in this region, naturally the kind of industrial and social infrastructure was lacking in this region. But after a journey of two decades of industrialization, we can claim that the industrial infrastructure is considered one of the best in the country and in the world, but as far as social infrastructure is concerned, the tertiary level medical facilities

and world-class educational institutes, and important aspects of human development are lacking. FOKIA is also working with various stakeholders to bring social infrastructure in this region. FOKIA has also brought this to the notice of the state government and the state government is also doing its best to set up social infrastructure. Air and rail connectivity are also an issue. Despite various concerns, looking at the kind of investments the district has, we will have the world's largest renewable energy park which is going to come up at the Indo-Pak border with an investment of around INR 150,000 crore, to be functional by 2027. So, with such huge investments and many more industrial units coming with big investments and big-ticket size, it is important that air and rail connectivity also needs to be improved.

ET: Under your leadership, the Federation of Kutch Industries Association (FOKIA) has come a long way. How do you see the future of the Kutch region? What are some of the initiatives that will accelerate the development of industries in the region?

NP: FOKIA is an umbrella organization of large, medium, and small industries, and associations, whose goal is to further the interests of businesses and socio-economic development of Kutch district. Founded in 2000, FOKIA has come a long way to resolve policy and other related issues faced by trade & industry in the Kutch district. Initially, the initiatives were towards the rejuvenation of the economy after the earthquake. Post the announcement of fiscal incentives, the challenge was to attract global clients and convince them to invest in the region. Unfortunately, the aftermath of the earthquake led to large-scale socio-economic concerns and migration from this arid region. This deterred investments in the region.

But FOKIA, with the help of the state and central governments succeeded in convincing them for investments. After a span of 20 years, and with the support of the state and central governments and particularly, Narendra Modi, today we are witnessing that the investments in the pre-earthquake era which was merely INR 2,500 crores has reached INR 150,000 crores today. In the pre-earthquake area, the direct and indirect employment generation was merely 20,000; today it is four lakhs. This industrialisation and the ancillary development have changed the socio economy of this once considered, economically backward region.

The pace of industrial development in Kutch district is very vast, and the spectrum of industries which are yet to come, wants industrial infrastructure and some balanced industrial development. For example, initially industrialization was concentrated in the eastern and southern parts of the Kutch region, but off-late, the

development of marine chemical clusters, the cement industries, and the latest one which is the setting up of the world's largest renewable energy park in the northern and western parts of Kutch district. Even some areas near Bhuj and Nakatana is witnessing some mineral and mineral processing excavations - processing kind of industrial units. With most of these units in the western parts having low population density, the road infrastructure is not at its best so naturally the upcoming and existing industries in this area will want better industrial infrastructure. The important initiative which existing and upcoming industries is seeking from the state government is the setting up of a sea water desalination plant to cater to the water requirements of industries. Currently, the industries are supplied water from the Narmada water source, but primarily as per plans, the Narmada water source was meant for drinking purpose and hence the conflict between the drinking segment and the industrial segment is a constant feature. To avoid such conflicts, it is advisable to have a separate sea water desalination plant in Kutch. The government and FOKIA is in talks to resolve this issue and are working together to set up the plant. But the base of the process is slow and the industries in this area want this process to be expedited so that a sea water desalination plant and water distribution system in the upcoming clusters should come up.

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Mumbai Roti Bank, a non-profit, food rescue organization initiated by Roti Foundation, Mumbai, bridges the gap between hunger and excess food. Started in December 2017 under the able mentorship of former Director General of Police, Maharashtra, Mr. D. Sivanandhan, the organization aims to eliminate hunger, malnutrition and food wastage, many meals at a time. Help make a difference by calling +91 86555 80001 to donate food or by making a contribution.

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We Recommend

The Great Tech Game

Anirudh Suri



The author, Anirudh Suri, is a technology-focused venture capitalist, who through his book, *The Great Tech Game*, evaluates the impact of technology from various perspectives across history, politics, international relations, sociology, behavioural psychology, and philosophy, and weaves a concept of technology from a global view.

We live in an era that will only be dominated by technology. The author speaks about a framework and the drivers that will determine the ability of a nation to succeed in this technology-dominant era. The fight to be dominant in technology is real and every country must have a roadmap to understand and take advantage of technology trends and create enabling environments for nations to not be left behind in the tech race.

Formerly, a policy advisor and a management consultant, Anirudh Suri is the Managing Partner at India Internet Fund, a technology-focused venture capital fund based in India and the US. He has been associated with the Government of India, McKinsey, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington DC, and Goldman Sachs in London. The author draws parallels in the 'Great Games' of the past and how nations related to the defining forces and economic drivers of their periods and how human history was shaped during periods defined by agriculture and trade, colonialism, and industrialization and, finally, capitalism and technology.

Agriculture marked the first great revolution in human economic activity which created surpluses that drove trade. These flows created both interdependence and tension for geo-political conflict and war. In response to these conflicts, world trade and political systems were developed. The book examines many of these themes - surpluses, flows and intermediaries, geo-politics and conflict, monopoly and world trade, and the rise of trade entrepôts. By understanding the patterns of power present in the Great Games of the past, one can derive valuable lessons about how to navigate the complexities of our current Great Tech Game.

Technology is already driving economic growth across all sectors. The newly emerging technology ecosystems are becoming the catalysts for economic growth and disruption across multiple sectors of the economy. The downside - many still see technology as something that is the exclusive domain of technology firms. Technology must be viewed as a factor of production, much like land, labour and capital have and any productive activity requires an optimal combination of these factors. Enterprises which do not fully integrate today's technologies will struggle if they skip the integrating technology with the other factors of production.

If nations are out there in this cut-throat race to be ahead of technology, how does it read for India? The author has chalked out a game plan for India too. As history suggests, India needs a successful strategy to compete successfully in the Great Tech Game by transforming the socio-economic prospects of Indians. Additionally, the country must focus on building out its digital economy rapidly, where technology and data, as factors of production, must permeate all sectors to boost productivity. The need to maintain global leadership in higher value-added IT services as well as brilliance in software-enabled manufacturing, identification of SaaS products, and doubling down on tech innovation in sectors such as agriculture, education and healthcare can form the foundation of its global niche.

The book is a revelation to the power that technology can yield over nations. The impact of the Great Tech Game's seismic shifts in the economic, political, and societal structures of the world is yet to be examined closely, and unless we understand these fundamental shifts, we will find it impossible to choose our moves wisely. Anirudh Suri's book has insights with gravitas that will drive readers to delve more on the future of a new world order.

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THROUGH THE LENS



This month, our in-house nature photographer, **Rupesh Balsara** spots the magnificent Short-eared Owl. These medium-sized owls are frequently seen in the daytime compared to other owls, and largely feed on rodents. A widespread winter migrant of Gujarat, they are also regularly seen in the Little Rann of Kutch area from October end till April.

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