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Post-Brexit India-UK trade can be lot better: Indian envoy

BY PTI | **UPDATED:** JUN 24, 2017, 02:49 PM IST

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LONDON: Trade and investment patterns between India and the [UK](#) can be much better than current levels as the UK takes a fresh approach to [globalisation](#) post-Brexit, Indian High Commissioner to the UK [Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha](#) said.

Delivering the keynote address at a joint conference by the All India Management Association ([AIMA](#)) and Imperial College London titled 'To Build Walls or Bridges: The Path to a New Economic Nirvana' in London yesterday, the Indian envoy also called on the UK to Make in India for the world.

"The trade and investment between India and UK can be a lot better than what it has been lately. India is now open to the world and the UK is globalising afresh. It is a good opportunity for both countries to grow their economy faster by increasing movement of goods and people. I am sure that this opportunity will not be missed," Sinha said.

"The outcome of the snap elections in the UK has only confirmed that nations are ambivalent about globalisation... India is looking for more trade and investment because it wants to grow even faster. It is inviting everyone to make in India for the world. The UK, for its part, has chosen to reconfigure its relationship with the world," he noted.

There was consensus among the business and political leaders at the conference, held to coincide with the one-year mark of the referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union (EU) on June 23 last year, that protectionism, [Brexit](#) and anti-globalisation will not hold back UK-India ties.

"Some believe that for a country to compete and for its citizens to prosper, we should retreat from globalisation. But as many of us see every day, this is wrong. International collaboration, global competition and inclusive growth are not mutually exclusive...



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"At Imperial we build bridges. More than half of our research papers involve an international co-author. India is at the heart of that. In the last five years, Imperial researchers have published more than 1,200 joint papers with collaborators in India," she said.

Britain's Universities and Science Minister, Jo Johnson, used the event to "send a message to prospective Indian students that they have the warmest welcome" waiting for them in the UK.

management professionals, and Imperial's collaborations with the network.

"There is huge potential for cooperation between the two countries in higher education, scientific and industrial research, innovation and intellectual property," said AIMA President Sunil Munjal.

Imperial College London claims to be among the India- friendly educational institutions in the UK, with the college's Indian student numbers rising above 300 last year. A project between Imperial College and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has received funding through the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) to establish the first and largest collection of DNA in Indian stroke victims.

Its budget runs into Rs 100 crore and it supports approximately 34,000 out of the 70,000 public libraries in India under its various schemes. The irony is that despite such funds, images of ill-maintained public libraries -- laden with dust and poor-infrastructure -- barely prompt a second visit for most library-goers.

Shubhangi Sharma, Executive Director, IPLM, reminded that children are the future of the nation, while also impressing upon the need to invest into inculcating positive aspects into their lives.

"Public libraries can play a very vital role in introducing them to reading at an earlier stage of their lives. We have also seen a decline in people visiting libraries in the past few decades; so if we are able to tap the young population at the right time, it is going to become a lifelong habit for them," Sharma told IANS.

But it is not an easy task. With the advent of internet and digital technologies, more and more information is available online and thus the distance between our children and libraries is ever increasing.

"The first and foremost challenge is digitisation. When so much of information is available at a click on the internet why would children come to libraries? We are therefore trying to equip libraries with modern technology, making them digitised and inclusive places for everybody to visit," she added.

Sharma also said that better infrastructure and facilities are needed in public libraries. Libraries must have enough toilets for both boys and girls, Sharma maintained.

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libraries across the country, but a lot remains to be done. We need to revitalise libraries and bring them back into the mainstream as inclusive knowledge and information centres catering to the 21st century information needs," she contended.

As part of the ongoing programmes, dozens of libraries have been digitised with computers and audio-visual centres. There is also special attention towards building "Children's Corner" in public libraries that cater to young audience with its especially curated catalogues and decorations.

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