

**DG Keynote – India National IP Conference
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Your Excellency, Mr. Som Parkash, Minister of State, Ministry of Commerce and Industry,

Mr. Rajesh Kumar Singh, Secretary of the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade,

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,

Namaste!

It is a great pleasure to join you for this year's National IP Conference on my first visit as DG of WIPO. Thank you for your warm hospitality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a year when the world is looking to India for leadership and action, you have an inspiring innovation story to tell, one that goes back thousands of years.

Think of the legendary mathematician Aryabhata and his gift to the world, the use of zero. This discovery unleashed the true power of numbers and helped to create modern mathematics, one of the great drivers of human progress and commercial exchange. Today, this groundbreaking discovery is taking on new life as a cornerstone of the digital transformation, and an essential building block behind every chip, each smartphone, and path-breaking technologies like generative AI.

Think also of Ayurveda, the timeless and all-encompassing “science of life”. Developed by the great Indian sages thousands of years ago, it asks us to consider mind, body, and soul in unison. It is now winning new popularity around the world as a science of wellbeing and a way of life.

India understands that there is no contradiction between cutting-edge innovation and the wisdom of our ancestors. When I meet with Indian inventors and creators there is a

deep sense that a rich past and heritage is the very foundation for modern and transformative discoveries.

This way of looking at innovation deserves greater attention.

It is a perspective that IP and innovation should be viewed holistically, and that ideas, innovation, creativity and IP should not be an end in themselves, but a way to build a better, fairer and more sustainable world.

This is why India's decision to make innovation a strategic national priority is so important.

Policies like the Make India Initiative, Digital India and Startup India are helping to accelerate your journey to becoming a developed nation by 2047 and building Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The results are truly remarkable.

The number of IP applications in India more than doubled between 2011 and 2021, surging from 250,000 to over 570,000, with patent applications increasing one-and-a-half times, and trade mark and design applications increasing two-and-a-half times. India is now the world's fourth largest trade mark filer and on track to move even higher, given the strong momentum of growth.

Critically, home-grown IP is driving these rises. Domestic filers made 100,000 patent applications in the past five years, up from 58,000 in the five years before. The trends are very similar for other types of IP as well, with resident filings increasing by at least two and a half times for both trade marks and designs over the past 10 years.

But as well as growing numbers, this is about growing impact.

The number of patents filed by women grew four times in the last year alone, and there has been a doubling in the number of AI patents since 2018. As India's IP landscape matures, it is becoming more inclusive and future focused.

All this translates into good jobs and sustainable growth. India is home to one of the world's most vibrant startup ecosystems, with over 100,000 startups. Unicorns are flourishing, with the combined value of India's more than 100 unicorns nearing 3 million Crores.

The trends are equally positive when we look at the creative industries and India's innovation ecosystem.

With the creative sector, consider these three facts. Arijit Singh out-streamed Beyonce last year. Bollywood continues to produce more films than Hollywood. And major streaming platforms like Netflix and Disney are investing recording-breaking amounts in Indian content. In all, India's creative economy is now a 30 billion dollar industry and creative exports are up 20% last year, generating over 11 billion dollars for the economy. All this is reflected in India's performance in the Global Innovation Index.

From 81st position in 2015, India now sits in 40th place. For the past 13 years you have overperformed on innovation relative to development level, a record very few countries can match, with India now a global leader in areas like ICT exports, venture capital investments, and the proportion of graduates in science and engineering.

But as well as creating opportunity, the growing strength of India's innovation ecosystem is helping you change the course of human history. As Prime Minister Modi has put it, 'when India reforms, the world transforms.'

In August, India became just the fourth nation to land on the moon and the first to land successfully on its south pole. The success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission captures how India is transforming into a high-tech society and knowledge-based economy, where scientific know how, government ambition and private capital come together to create a dynamic ecosystem, boasting cutting-edge technology, a leading space agency, and a growing network of space startups.

These achievements are changing how the world sees India. In my conversations with ministers, businesses, and IP leaders, you are viewed as an emerging IP and innovation powerhouse, and with many lessons to share with the world even as you continue your innovation journey.

Supporting India to harness innovation to drive growth at home and around the world will be at the heart of WIPO-India cooperation in the years ahead.

Yesterday, with Minister Goyal, we signed a new WIPO-India Action Plan, to deepen our strategic ties and bring benefits to innovators and creators across the country. This framework marks an exciting new phase in our cooperation, with a focus on SME development, skills building, the creative industries, and enhancing IP office operations.

We are taking immediate steps to put this plan into practice, inking agreements to deliver a new Joint Master's Degree in IP with the Delhi National Law University, cooperate more closely with Indian partners on judicial issues, and support a new cohort of health technologists from developing countries through the government's Biodesign program.

Today, we take another step forward, with the launch of an Indian version of WIPO's popular IP Diagnostics Tool for SMEs.

This free, online kit has already helped over 22,000 SMEs to identify their IP assets around the world. By tailoring the tool to India's business landscape, and by translating it into India's six main languages, starting with Hindi, we hope to support more firms to grow their business through IP, in what is the world's largest SME market.

But as I have mentioned, our work together is not just focused on India, but the world.

Last month, I was at the UN General Assembly in New York, where Prime Minister Modi spoke about India's evolution from non-alignment to Vishwa Mitra, a friend of the world.

As more countries across the Global South turn to innovation, creativity, technology, and entrepreneurship to drive future growth, India's innovation journey can support scaled-up South-South cooperation.

Successes like India Stack show how government can spur demand for new technology and through this financial and social inclusion.

The India Innovation Index, inspired by WIPO's work, is a powerful tool for boosting innovation performance across India, including in rural areas. It can also be adapted by other big developing countries.

And this week, I've seen first-hand how the inspiring Atal Tinkering Labs, part of the Atal Innovation Mission, are bringing curiosity and a spirit of innovation to millions of young minds in 10,000 schools across the country.

I know that other countries are studying these and other policy initiatives closely and we stand ready to work with India to share these lessons with the world.

And of course, Indian ideas and inventions have an important role to play in overcoming common challenges and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Take climate change, the very definition of an issue where progress depends on engagement between north and south, and east and west.

Last week's flash flooding in Sikkim was yet another tragic reminder of the dangers posed by extreme weather.

One important aspect of fighting climate change, whether through adaptation or mitigation, is the development of new technologies and their deployment on the ground. That's why WIPO GREEN, our online tech matching platform, connects providers and seekers of green tech the world over. Already, its database contains 130,000 technologies from 140 countries, leading to a thousand matches.

Our work is to convert these matches into marriages, so that the connections made by WIPO GREEN become strong partnerships that lead to tech deployment and tangible impact.

With over half the patents granted in India in recent years relating to green technology, there is scope to pool our strengths to get more of these ideas into the hands of those who can use them.

So let's continue to work together on climate, and across the SDGs, to benefit the planet that we all share.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

India's IP story is one of tremendous growth. The challenge now is to deliver practical measures that bring the benefits of IP to all Indians. This is the best way of ensuring that IP, innovation, and creativity deliver transformative growth today and in decades to come, with WIPO your steadfast ally and partner on this journey.

But alongside Indian inventions, we need Indian ideas. As well as helping to build a knowledge-based society at home, the wisdom, spirituality, and humanism in Indian thought, can help strengthen the global IP system by reinforcing the critical link between innovation, social progress, and a better, fairer, and more sustainable world for all – a vision of IP that is shared by WIPO.

Thank you very much. Dhanyawaad.