

# REPUBLIC DAY SPECIAL

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



## WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF INDIA?

On the occasion of India's Republic Day, how is the 'idea of India' shaping up? **R Sridhar** spoke to a cross-section of people to find out.

**R Sridhar**

Much has been written about and discussed about the idea of India, with the PM recently talking about it in Parliament. "The government's only religion is India first, the only holy book the government follows is the Constitution of India," he had said. However, every one of the 1.5 billion Indians in India and the huge Indian diaspora, will have their own idea of India and it would be interesting to see if they concur with the PM's view. What, then, is the idea of India to the average Indian?

Says Vinit Goenka, member Taskforce – Ministry of

Road Transport, Highways & Shipping, and co-convenor of BJP's IT Cell, "My idea of India is a dynamic youthful nation that's progressing as a cultural and spiritual guide of the world. The enhanced cooperative federalism has improved central-state relations and smoothened the implementation of policies."

Agrees Keith Sequeira, model and VJ, "Our country is one of the few nations in the world that is undergoing start-up evangelism. For me, the idea and the very definition of India has always been and will always be what has been written in our Constitution."

If you were to judge India with an Optimism Matrix, how would she fare?

"While I think we were a 5 on 10 earlier, I think we have risen to a strong 8.5 on 10!" says Sequeira.

There are others however, who are not so gung-ho. Says Pramoud Rao, Managing director of Zicom Electronic Security Systems Ltd., "When the government was voted to power there were great hopes and expectation. Today there is all-round disappointment. My score would be 3 out of 10. Having said that, I guess we must accept that with so much diversity in religion and culture, we will remain prone to contradiction. We need to manage to ensure it does not simmer beyond a point."

According to Worldwide Independent Network Gallup International/Cvoter

survey calculations of Hope Index for 73 major countries in the world, India is placed among top 10 'Most Optimistic Countries' with a net hope score of 47 per cent regarding optimism amongst its citizens.

GenX is pretty upbeat about the future of the nation given the numerous avenues that have opened up, says Neha Sutar, who works for Cognizant Technologies, Pune, "India has always been known for secularism and its culture. There are loads of employment options and other opportunities available now," she says.

Economically, on the positive side of the ledger, India remains the fastest growing economy among major countries. Yet,

growth has been slower than expected.

"I feel every country has two sides and India is the most complex and comprehensively pluralistic society in the world. Considering these factors, India is highly integrated from before and we are on path of growth. Many countries are rich in natural resources and India is rich in human resource and that is the next big thing that world wants. With umpteen developments in different spheres like digital and start-ups, India is going great globally," says Surendra Hiranandani, noted real estate developer and chairman and managing director, House of Hiranandani. "Talking about state of influx, which country globally doesn't have issues? From what we were to what we are, our nation is more one nation than before. When it comes to optimism, I am very optimistic about our country and would give 10 on 10," he says.

Pune-based consultant and interventional cardiologist, Dr Suhas Hardas, sums it up well when he says, "India can weather the storm created by any kind of social, economic, technological or political factors, no matter how many contradictions may occur due to immense diversity (of everything) in our country. I see India at 8/10 on the optimism meter (good but scope to go 10/10). Over centuries, our country has faced multiple challenges, been threatened and scarred too, but has managed to stand its ground. Amidst unfulfilled expectations and remarkable achievements, there is and should always be scope for improvement.

*(With inputs from Swati Soni, Amit Shambaug and Mithila Mehta)*

## VIEW POINT



**Dr Suhas Hardas**  
Cardiologist and Interventional Cardiologist, Pune

Over centuries, our country has faced multiple challenges, been threatened and scarred too, but has managed to stand its ground. Amidst unfulfilled expectations and remarkable achievements, there is and should always be scope for improvement.



**Surendra Hiranandani**  
Chairman & Managing Director, House of Hiranandani

Many countries are rich in natural resources and India is rich in human resource, and that is the next big thing that world wants. With umpteen developments in different spheres like digital and start-ups, India is going great globally.



**Vinit Goenka**  
Member Taskforce - Ministry of Road Transport, Highways & Shipping. He was also co-convenor of BJP's IT Cell

Healthcare and sanitation need to be improved and this is as much a cultural change that needs to be brought about especially in sanitation. The new generation is very aware and the government is also taking initiatives towards changing the mindset. I am sure we would move towards a cleaner India.



**Pramoud Rao,**  
Managing director of Zicom Electronic Security Systems Ltd..

The issues related to intolerance, etc., are political challenges and issues which in a large democracy like ours is bound to happen. India's growth and prosperity will be largely driven by the economic climate and not get affected by sentiment issues which is anyway restricted to a few individuals.



**Keith Sequeira,**  
Model and VJ

Our country is one of the few nations in the world that is undergoing start-up evangelism. For me, the idea and the very definition of India has always been and will always be what has been written in our Constitution

