

AMTOI

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NEWS

Shaping Indian
Logistics for
Viksit Bharat
@ 2047

Geopolitics &
Multimodal
Logistics





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About us

AMTOI, The Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India, was formed with the object of organizing Multimodal Transport Operators at the national level and improving the quality of their services. The members of the Association are Multimodal Transport Operators registered with the Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai under the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act, 1993 which also includes some associate members like CFS operators, tank container operators etc. The Association is a non-profit making body registered under the Indian Companies Act and is managed by the Managing Committee comprising of 7 members elected by the Operator members. The Committee is assisted by a Board of Advisors consisting of the representatives of Government / Public Sector Organizations. Also, it has various trade association representatives on its extended board and is thus likened to an apex body. As a unique initiative, AMTOI has set up a forum called the Grievance Redressal Forum (GRF). The objective of this Forum is to create a platform for dispute resolution

and thereby addressing grievances of the members of the trade. The Association has a two-tier membership Ordinary members who are registered as MTOs and Associate members who are not MTOs themselves but who are involved in operations connected with multimodal transport. The Associate members are not eligible for voting rights or contest in the Elections. The Association from time to time has made suggestions for the consideration of Government and in fact the suggestion for amending the Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act and for adopting other related measures. AMTOI has been able to secure representation on Government bodies like the Standing Committee on Promotion of Exports, (SCOPE Shipping and SCOPE Air), Task Force on Multimodal Transport and various other forums of the Ministries of Shipping, Commerce & Finance of the Government of India. The Association is also a member of the International Multimodal Transport Association based in Geneva and has thus acquired international recognition. For the benefit of its members, regular training courses are

conducted be it on tax issues, insurance or other such related subjects. An awaited event of the year is the MULTI-MODAL DAY or an AMTOI DAY which the Association organizes as an 'Annual Day' for the last many years wherein the entire shipping fraternity of Shipping Lines, Ports CFS operators, Freight Forwarders, NVOCC's, CHA's, Airlines, Government authorities in addition to MTO's come together to network and interact with each other under one roof. Members are kept abreast of the happenings in the industry by MULTIMODAL TIMES or AMTOI Newsletter which is published as a quarterly magazine currently and we hope to graduate into a monthly publication which will attempt to capture critical issues that are close to the industry and along with opinions of the industry leaders. Lastly, keeping abreast with the advancing technologies, AMTOI continuously improvises its website and offers tools for various industry players to come together and thus endeavoring to be a leader in its class.





From The **President's Desk**

Mr. Arun Kumar

President, AMTOI
president@amtoi.org

Dear AMTOIans,

In continuation of our theme on Geopolitics and Multimodal Logistics, in this issue we are covering thoughts on Shaping Indian Logistics for Viksit Bharat @ 2047.

Vikassheel to Viksit — Bharat's Economy Rides on the Backbone of Logistics and Supply Chain

Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is more than a government vision—it is the shared aspiration of 1.4 billion Indians. It envisions a nation that is economically strong, globally respected, and socially inclusive by the time we celebrate a century of independence. However, no great economy has ever risen without a sturdy foundation. At the core of this foundation lies the logistics and supply chain sector—the real engine driving Bharat's growth story.

Centuries ago, before colonial exploitation disrupted our trajectory, Bharat commanded nearly 25–35% of the global GDP, surpassing even the combined economic output of Europe. Our per capita income stood at a remarkable \$682—a sign of prosperity and resilience. However, colonial rule left us impoverished and structurally weakened, reducing our GDP share to a meagre 2% by the time we achieved

independence in 1947, with per capita income collapsing to just \$58.

Since then, we have been tagged a 'Vikassheel Desh'—a developing country—a label that no longer does justice to our capabilities or ambitions. The stories of post-war Japan and Germany show us what focused reform, innovation, and public-private collaboration can achieve. Bharat, too, has the potential to reclaim its historical position—provided we act decisively.

While aspirations light the path, only action moves us forward. Bharat cannot aim for Formula One speed while driving on a dirt track. Without a world-class logistics and supply chain system—both in infrastructure and governance—our economic ambitions will fall short.

In the last decade, major strides have been made in physical logistics infrastructure: expressways, dedicated freight corridors, multimodal logistics parks, and port modernization projects are no longer plans but reality. However, regulatory reforms have not kept pace. Without modern, transparent, and responsive governance structures, even the finest infrastructure risks underutilization.

This disconnect must be bridged—

urgently and strategically. The outdated perception of business as a counterpoint to social good must be replaced by a more progressive view: that businesses are equal partners in nation-building. Economic growth, powered by a thriving logistics backbone, is the strongest lever for social transformation.

A Viksit Bharat demands a mindset shift—from control to collaboration, from policing to partnership. Trade associations like AMTOI deserve recognition as Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs), with the autonomy to set and enforce standards with integrity and accountability. Empowering the logistics sector in this way cultivates not only operational efficiency but also a deep sense of responsibility toward national objectives.

Bharat's leadership in information technology gives us a unique advantage in logistics. But technology alone isn't enough—it must be supported by clear laws, consistent policy, and digital-first governance. The promise of "Ease of Doing Business" must translate into real-world simplicity, where compliance is straightforward, fair, and free of unnecessary friction. Most businesses want to comply; they just need a system that facilitates rather than frustrates.

Conclusion: From Aspiration to Action

If Bharat is to transform from Vikassheel to Viksit well before 2047, we must double down on reforms that inspire trust, encourage partnerships, and deliver efficiency. The logistics and

supply chain sector is not just a support system—it is the backbone of our economic ambitions. To the trade community: now is the time to lead from the front. Embrace innovation, demand transparency, and hold yourselves to high standards of professionalism. In doing so, you don't just serve

your businesses—you serve Bharat. Together, through purposeful collaboration and a shared national vision, we can propel our nation towards a future that honours our past and surpasses it. A Viksit Bharat is not just possible—it is within reach.



Trivia

History of Multimodal Logistics

- **Malcolm McLean** is credited with pioneering modern containerization. In 1956, his ship, *Ideal X*, carried 58 truck trailers from Newark to Houston, revolutionizing global trade by standardizing cargo handling.
- The introduction of standardized containers reduced shipping costs by over 90% and significantly speed up cargo handling. Containerization led to the development of specialized ports equipped with cranes capable of handling large containers.
- The standard 20-foot container, known as a TEU (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit), became the global benchmark for container sizes.
- The growth of container shipping spurred the development of logistics hubs and multimodal transport corridors worldwide.



From The Editor's Desk

Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar

Executive Committee Member and Past
President AMTOI | ssb@atc.co.in

Viksit Bharat 2047

Charting the Course for India's Future

“Wisdom consists not in seeing what is immediately before us, But in foreseeing what may be, and to be prepared for it.”

- Niccolò Machiavelli

Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative is not just a vision, but a transformative agenda that holds the key to India's future. It aims to elevate India to a position of innovation, sustainable growth, and inclusivity. The transformative agenda is not just a government initiative, but a collective mission that requires the active participation of every citizen. It's about ensuring a high quality of life for all, while prioritising both people and the planet.

Viksit Bharat 2047 envisions India as a developed nation characterised by robust economic growth, environmental sustainability, social progress, and good governance. This ambitious goal encourages the active participation of every individual, allowing them to contribute ideas through the MyGov portal, fostering a truly collaborative approach to nation-building.

Viksit Bharat 2047 must be assessed in the context of numerous adversities and

adversaries. These entities, at best, have refrained from offering assistance and encouragement for India's growth; often, they have actively or passively supported anti-India narratives or sought to diminish India's stature. The Balkanisation of India was not merely an agenda, but a perceived necessity for certain developed nations. Despite these challenges, India has persevered and achieved greater unity than anticipated. India has demonstrated notable advancements relative to the region.

Viksit Bharat 2047: Setting ambitious goals and high aspirations is of paramount importance. As the world's fifth-largest economy, the fastest-growing major economy, the most populous nation, and the largest democracy, India's citizens possess the capability to mould the nation's future trajectory.

The Viksit Bharat 2047 initiative

requires a realistic assessment of the present, not mere jingoism. For India to transition into a middle-income nation, internal structural issues, rather than external factors, present the primary obstacles. Corporate India's current timidity and short-sighted self-interest hinder progress. Genuine development necessitates growth in scale and active participation in setting standards, fostering originality and creativity, conducting authentic research, and building essential frameworks.

The **Indian leadership**, across party lines, has consistently countered the **Challenge of Balkanisation** through **Strong Federal Integration**, **Linguistic State Reorganisation**, and a **National Identity** anchored in **Democratic Pluralism**.

The Balkanisation of India refers:

1. To the fragmentation of the country into smaller,

ethnically or regionally defined states, mirroring the disintegration of the Balkans in the 20th century.

2. For those unfamiliar:

- It describes the risk that internal fault lines—based on religion, language, caste, or regional identity—could be exploited to weaken national unity.

3. For those who have forgotten:

- This idea is not just historical speculation but a persistent geopolitical concern, as adversarial powers and separatist movements have, at times, sought to destabilise India through narrative warfare, insurgency, or identity politics, making the balkanisation thesis a contemporary and strategic challenge, not a relic of colonial paranoia.”

International Logistics: The Lifeline of Viksit Bharat

The realisation of Viksit Bharat 2047 hinges significantly on a robust and efficient international logistics framework. As India aims to become a global economic powerhouse with a targeted GDP between \$30 trillion and \$40 trillion by 2047, the role of international logistics becomes paramount. Enhanced global trade, a target of 7-10% of world trade share (from 2% today), necessitates seamless connectivity, reduced logistics costs, and optimised supply chains.

Key Logistics Targets for Viksit Bharat 2047:

- **A Granular Study of Logistics Costs and Their Components:** Many people

find it uningenious to reduce the overall logistics cost from 13-14% of GDP to below 5% simply because this number is questionable. Besides, a country with our diversity of terrain, commodities, and supply chains needs a more granular microeconomic approach to achieve transformation.

- **Increase freight train speed:** by 600% (from 25 km/h to 150 km/h).
- **Reduce port turnaround time:** matching the compatible time of 2047.
- **Expand expressways, green corridors, mini land bridges, and DFC to carry EXIM (Export-Import) Cargo through Seamless Multimodal Connectivity.** This will facilitate the smooth movement of goods in and out of the country, contributing to the growth of international trade and the economy.
- **Increase investment in warehousing and cold storage** to ensure that warehousing adds value to the product and the customer experience.
- **Ensure Green Logistics:** with 100% freight powered by renewables and electrification.

Substantial investments must be allocated to transportation, digital infrastructure, trade processes, human capital development, and research endeavours to realise these objectives. Establishing a seamless, effective, and technologically sophisticated logistics framework is paramount

to advancing the nation's economic prosperity. The biggest challenge is finding genuine talent and a work ethic at every level.

Multimodal Transport: The Backbone of Growth

Multimodal transport plays a crucial role in achieving the Viksit Bharat vision. It ensures the efficient movement of goods across various modes, optimising time and cost. As we've seen historically with Mumbai's transformation into a commercial hub in the 1860s, the emergence of railways and port-side logistics was critical. Today, the intertwining of railways, steamships, and digital technologies is not merely an upgrade in transportation; it's the foundation of a truly interconnected global trade network.

A Multimodal Transport Operator's Dream:

This initiative aligns perfectly with our aspirations for streamlined operations, cost reduction, and improved reliability. Technological advancements enable the real-time tracking of shipments, optimise routes, and improve supply chain visibility. This aligns with the 'Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047', a strategic plan to revolutionise India's maritime sector for enhanced global competitiveness and resilience, a key component of the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision. The Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 aims to transform India into a global maritime power, leveraging its extensive coastline and strategic location.

Regulatory Compliance and Ease of Doing Business

Regulatory compliance and ease of doing business are not just goals, but fundamental pillars of Viksit Bharat's success. Streamlined policies, reduced bureaucratic hindrances, and digitalisation of processes will enhance efficiency and provide a stable and conducive environment for domestic and foreign investment. The government's focus on transformative reforms across critical sectors, including taxation, power, urban development, mining, the financial sector, and regulatory policies, is a testament to its commitment to a business-friendly India.

The **Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament** is not just a platform, but a vital space for young voices to engage in national discussions and shape the vision for Viksit Bharat@2047. It's a place where leadership, civic participation, and policy discussions are fostered, enabling students to deliberate on key national issues. The insights and ideas generated from these discussions are valuable and integral to shaping our nation's future.

International Perspective:

I am writing this editorial while travelling for business meetings in Da Nang, Vietnam. Hence a short presentation on my hosts:

Distinctive Qualities of the Vietnamese People

1. Patriotism and Bravery:

Vietnam's history is marked by resilience and strong national pride. From resisting colonial powers to overcoming internal challenges, the

Vietnamese have consistently demonstrated courage and determination. This enduring spirit has been pivotal in uniting the nation and fostering a collective identity.

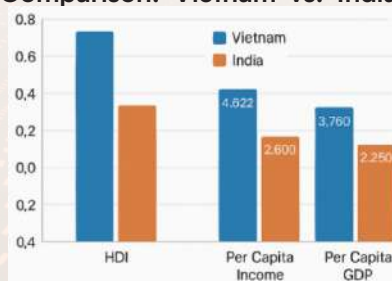
2. Hospitality and Community Cohesion:

Vietnamese culture places a high value on hospitality. Visitors often experience warm welcomes and generous treatment, reflecting the community-oriented nature of society. This emphasis on communal harmony contributes to social stability and collective progress.

3. Work Ethic and Adaptability

The Vietnamese workforce is known for its diligence and adaptability. A strong emphasis on education and skill development has enabled the population to meet the demands of a rapidly changing global economy. High female labour participation and a youthful demographic further bolster the nation's economic potential.

HDI, Per Capita Income, and Per Capita GDP Comparison: Vietnam vs. India



India must translate economic growth into improved living standards and human development

- We need to learn from both the developed and developing worlds equally.
- One thing to recognise is that the region is called Indo-China due to its cultural roots.
- National pride significantly involves acquiring knowledge from individuals who value their heritage, going beyond national boundaries.

Conclusion

Viksit Bharat 2047 is a national mission that requires the collective effort of entrepreneurs, policymakers, citizens, and logistics industry stakeholders. India can achieve its destiny by embracing a growth mindset, investing in education and research, building next-gen infrastructure, prioritising sustainability, and engaging in nation-building. The time to act is now, as we work together to create an economically powerful, socially just, and environmentally sustainable India.

“Let’s work together to create an economically robust, socially just, and an environmentally sustainable India. Viksit Bharat 2047 is not a dream — It is our destiny! And, we will shape it.”

Happy Reading!



Dr. Sharmila Amin

Managing Director

Bertling Logistics India Private Ltd.

As India strides towards its vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047—a developed, self-reliant, and globally competitive nation—the logistics sector stands as a critical enabler. Efficient logistics not only drive economic growth but also enhance trade competitiveness, reduce costs, and improve supply chain resilience. With geopolitical shifts reshaping global trade routes and supply chains, India must leverage multimodal logistics (integrating road, rail, air, and waterways) to strengthen its position as a key player in international trade while fostering domestic economic integration.

1. The Role of Logistics in Viksit Bharat @ 2047

India's ambition to become a \$30 trillion economy by 2047 hinges on a robust logistics framework. Key initiatives like the National Logistics Policy (NLP), Gati Shakti Master Plan, and Bharatmala-Sagarmala projects aim to reduce logistics costs from ~14% of GDP to global benchmarks (~8%).

- **Infrastructure Development:** Expansion of dedicated freight corridors, port-led industrialization, and

inland waterways will enhance connectivity.

- **Digital Transformation:**

AI-driven supply chains, IoT-enabled tracking, and blockchain for transparency will optimize efficiency.

- **Sustainability:**

Green logistics through electric vehicles (EVs), hydrogen fuel, and coastal shipping will align with net-zero goals.

2. Geopolitics and India's Logistics Strategy

Geopolitical tensions—China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Russia-Ukraine war, and Red Sea disruptions—have underscored the need for resilient supply chains. India must capitalize on its strategic location by:

- **Strengthening Multimodal Corridors:**

- **IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Corridor):** A game-changer to counter BRI, integrating railways and ports for faster Europe-Asia trade.

- **Chabahar Port:** Enhances

access to Central Asia and Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan.

- **Act East Policy:** Linking Northeast India to ASEAN via road, rail, and waterways (e.g., Kaladan Multimodal Project).

- **Domestic - International Synergy:**

Leveraging PM Gati Shakti to synchronize infrastructure projects with global trade routes.

3. Multimodal Logistics: The Way Forward To achieve seamless connectivity, India must:

- **Enhance Rail & Waterways Share:** Increase rail freight share from ~27% to 40% and promote coastal shipping under Sagarmala.

- **Develop Logistics Hubs:** Integrated hubs like JNPT, Mundra, and Vizag should evolve into transshipment centers.

- **Policy Reforms:** Faster clearances, unified digital platforms (ULIP), and PPP models for infrastructure.

Conclusion

For Viksit Bharat @ 2047, India's logistics sector must evolve into a

globally competitive, tech-driven, and geopolitically agile network. By prioritizing multimodal integration and strategic

partnerships, India can emerge as the logistics gateway of the Global South, fueling inclusive growth and geopolitical influence.

Feature 2

Shaping Indian Logistics for Viksit Bharat @ 2047



Mr. Bal Malkit Singh

Executive Chairman, Maharashtra State Punjabi

Sahitya Academy, Government of Maharashtra

Former President, All India Motor Transport

Congress, AIMTC

As India strides towards the visionary goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047-Viksit Bharat @ 2047-logistics will serve as one of the most critical pillars to achieve this ambition. An efficient, agile, and sustainable logistics ecosystem is essential not only for driving economic growth but also for creating inclusive development across regions, sectors, and communities.

Current Landscape and Emerging Challenges

India's logistics sector, currently valued at over USD 250 billion, is undergoing a paradigm shift. The government's focus on infrastructure modernization, digital integration, and multimodal connectivity through initiatives like PM Gati Shakti, Bharatmala, Sagarmala, and the National Logistics Policy has laid a robust foundation. However, as we look ahead to 2047, there is an urgent need to address persistent bottlenecks-fragmented networks, high logistics costs (nearly 13-14%

of GDP), inconsistent last-mile connectivity, and regulatory hurdles.

To transition from a developing to a developed logistics ecosystem, India must adopt a futuristic and holistic strategy, integrating technological innovation, environmental sustainability, and human-centric planning.

Vision 2047: A Framework for Logistics Transformation

1. Multimodal Integration

A future-ready logistics system must seamlessly integrate road, rail, air, inland waterways, and coastal shipping. This multimodal synergy will optimize transit times, reduce fuel dependency, and boost cost-efficiency. Dedicated Freight Corridors, logistics parks, and smart warehousing must be scaled rapidly to support this transformation.

2. Green and Sustainable logistics

Viksit Bharat must also be Harit Bharat. The logistics sector must lead the charge towards green transport-adopting electric and hydrogen-powered trucks, LNG based freight corridors, solar-powered warehouses, and carbon-neutral logistics hubs. Policy and incentives must support these transitions while encouraging industry-wide adoption of ESG goals.

3. Digital Empowerment

Technology will be the great enabler of India's logistics revolution. From blockchain-enabled transparency to AI-driven route optimization, and from drone deliveries to digital freight marketplaces, the sector must leverage every innovation to eliminate inefficiencies and boost scalability. The Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) and e-LOGS portal are steps in the right direction.

4. Skilled Workforce

and Inclusive Growth

As automation and digital tools reshape logistics, India must invest in skilling and reskilling its workforce—from truck drivers and loaders to logistics analysts and planners. Additionally, a developed India must ensure the participation of women and youth in the logistics economy through targeted initiatives.

5. Strengthening Last-Mile and Rural Logistics

For India to truly become Viksit; rural and Tier 2/3 regions must be well connected to supply chains. Decentralized warehousing, cold chains

for agriculture, and efficient last-mile delivery systems must reach even the remotest corners.

Public-Private Partnership: The Engine of Growth

Achieving this vision will require close collaboration between the government and industry. Policies must be co-created with input from logistics stakeholders, while private players must invest boldly in innovation and infrastructure. State-level logistics policies must align with the national vision, supported by incentives, single-window clearances, and efficient dispute resolution mechanisms.

Conclusion:

Logistics as the Lifeline of Viksit Bharat By 2047, India aspires to be a \$30 trillion economy—powered by smart cities, robust manufacturing, resilient agriculture, and world-class services. None of this will be possible without a logistics ecosystem that is intelligent, inclusive, and innovative.

As someone who has spent decades in the Indian transport and logistics landscape, I am optimistic that with decisive leadership, public-private synergy and a future-focused mindset, we can shape a logistics sector that becomes the true lifeline of Viksit Bharat.

Feature 3

Shaping Indian Logistics for Viksit Bharat @2047 Geopolitics & Multimodal Logistics



Mr. Vipin Vohra

Chairman - Continental Carriers Pvt Ltd.

As India marches ahead with the vision of becoming a \$30 trillion economy and a global powerhouse by 2047 — the centenary year of independence — the logistics sector stands as both a backbone and a catalyst for this transformation. The interplay between geopolitics and multimodal logistics is poised to define India's strategic positioning in global trade, economic resilience, and supply chain sovereignty. We believe the journey toward Viksit Bharat @2047 will be driven by an integrated, technology

driven, and geopolitically agile logistics ecosystem.

The Geopolitical Canvas: Risks and Realignments In an increasingly multipolar world, the global trade and logistics landscape is being redefined by

- New regional partnerships and trade corridors are emerging, with countries like India joining hands with like-minded nations to enhance economic cooperation and

build alternative trade routes (such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor),

- A growing shift in global trade patterns, with countries rethinking their supply chain dependencies and focusing more on building trusted trade partnerships and sourcing closer to home,
- Supply chain disruptions from pandemics, climate events, and conflicts (e.g., Russia-Ukraine, Red Sea crisis),

- Rising trade restrictions, where countries are placing more controls on imports and exports to protect their own industries, affecting the smooth flow of international trade, and
- Alternative routes and corridors gaining importance to bypass traditional chokepoints and reduce reliance on vulnerable regions.

India, strategically located between East and West, is uniquely positioned to leverage these developments. The key lies in converting **geopolitical uncertainty into logistical opportunity**. Initiatives such as **Chabahar Port**, **INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor)**, and the recently announced **IMEEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor)** offer India alternative and resilient trade routes that can reduce dependency on volatile geographies and give Indian exporters a competitive edge.

Additionally, India's efforts to deepen global trade ties through **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** are expected to significantly boost cargo flows. The proposed **FTA with the UK** may see **tariff reductions on nearly 90% of traded goods**, enhancing bilateral trade volumes. Similarly, the **FTA negotiations with the United States** are underway and, once concluded, could unlock substantial opportunities for Indian exports. These agreements will not only increase cargo movement but also necessitate stronger multimodal infrastructure to handle higher trade volumes efficiently.

Multimodal Logistics: Engine

of Efficiency and Resilience

To harness this geopolitical opportunity, India must strengthen its **multimodal logistics framework**—seamless integration across **air, sea, road, rail, and inland waterways**. Multimodality not only improves cost and time efficiencies but also enhances resilience by providing route and mode redundancy during crises.

Key areas of transformation include:

1. Infrastructure Development

Government schemes like **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan**, **Bharatmala**, **Sagarmala**, and **UDAN** are already reshaping India's physical logistics backbone. The rollout of **Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs)**, **Multimodal Logistics Parks (MMLPs)**, and **Dry Ports** is vital in improving last-mile and hinterland connectivity.

CCPL is proud to have pioneered **India's first Greenfield Air Freight Station (AFS)**, a model that decentralizes and decongests airports, brings efficiencies in air cargo handling, and exemplifies how private sector innovation can complement public infrastructure goals.

2. Digitalization and Technology

A digital logistics ecosystem that facilitates real-time visibility, predictive analytics, electronic documentation, and blockchain-led transparency will be a cornerstone for **Viksit Bharat**. Initiatives like **ULIP**

(**Unified Logistics Interface Platform**), **e-LOG**, and **National Logistics Data Bank (NLDB)** are welcome steps.

The industry is steadily adopting modern digital tools such as **cloud-based transport management systems (TMS)**, **electronic data interchange (EDI)**, and **automation in cargo handling** to enhance visibility, coordination, and operational efficiency across the multimodal value chain. These tools are helping operators streamline processes, reduce turnaround times, and build agile, customer-responsive supply chains. Emerging technologies like AI, IoT, and machine learning are further expected to transform logistics operations—optimizing route planning, enabling remote monitoring, and supporting predictive maintenance.

3. Sustainability and Green Logistics

Multimodal logistics allows for optimization of carbon footprint by combining fuel-efficient modes such as rail and waterways. With growing international scrutiny on ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) standards, India must embed **green logistics** practices into its infrastructure and operations

CCPL is actively exploring **electric fleets**, **solar-powered warehouses**, and **consolidated freight movement** to contribute to India's net-zero ambitions. The future lies in **climate-smart supply chains** that are both

cost-effective and compliant with global green mandates.

Air Cargo as a Strategic Enabler

As global trade accelerates in high-value sectors like electronics, pharmaceuticals, and e-commerce, **air cargo** becomes an indispensable mode for time-sensitive logistics. With the forecasted rise in **cross-border e-commerce** and India's emergence as a manufacturing hub under PLI schemes, strengthening air cargo capacity is essential.

CCPL advocates for:

- Developing **regional cargo airports**,
- Promoting **freighter aircraft acquisition**,
- Supporting **air freight stations** across tier-2/3 cities, and
- Facilitating **customs clearance digitization**.

We envision India becoming a **hub for transshipment and express logistics** across South and Southeast Asia by 2047.

Policy Ecosystem: The Need

for Cohesion and Reform
Multimodal logistics depends on harmonized policy and regulatory frameworks across ministries and states. Current gaps in **intermodal coordination, multiple licensing regimes, and fragmented compliances** must be addressed.

A unified **National Multimodal Transport Policy**, focused on:

- Single-window clearances
- Cargo insurance harmonization
- Fiscal incentives for modal shift
- Regulatory facilitation for private investment,

...will unleash the sector's potential.

Private Sector as a Catalyst

The private sector must not merely be a participant but a **co-architect** of India's logistics revolution. Companies like CCPL are investing in multimodal capabilities, warehousing, digital tools, and training, aligned with national goals.

Public-private partnerships (PPP), ease of doing business, and access to global best practices will define our competitiveness.

Way Forward: A 5-Point Agenda

for Viksit Bharat Logistics

- 1. Geopolitical Risk Mapping:** Build logistics strategies aligned with trade diversification and corridor diplomacy.
- 2. Multimodal Integration:** Enable true mode-agnostic cargo movement with digital and physical interoperability.
- 3. Skill Development:** Upskill logistics workforce in tech tools, compliance, sustainability, and multimodal planning.
- 4. Innovation & Investment:** Foster start-up ecosystems and FDI in logistics parks, AI tools, and cold chain systems.
- 5. Resilience & Redundancy:** Build supply chains that can withstand geopolitical shocks, climate events, and pandemics.

Conclusion: A Vision Rooted in Capability and Agility

India's logistics sector is no longer a support function—it is now a strategic instrument of national ambition. To realize **Viksit Bharat @2047**, we must build logistics systems that are **geopolitically intelligent, digitally integrated, environmentally sustainable, and operationally seamless**.

Trivia

Air Waybill (AWB)

The AWB serves as a receipt for goods and a contract of carriage between the shipper and the airline. AWBs are typically non-negotiable, meaning they cannot be transferred to another party.



**Mr. Arjun Bhalla
&
Mr. Maurya Modi**
Warehousing Association of
India



As India marches toward its ambitious goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047 - **Viksit Bharat @ 2047** - the logistics sector stands as both a critical enabler and a transformative force. In an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape, India's logistics ecosystem must evolve from reactive and fragmented to agile, resilient, and strategically integrated. At the core of this transformation lies the concept of **multimodal logistics** - the seamless movement of goods through integrated networks of rail, road, air, inland waterways, and coastal shipping.

This article explores how global geopolitical trends are reshaping logistics strategies and how India can leverage multimodal logistics to secure its economic sovereignty and realize its Viksit Bharat vision.

The Geopolitical Landscape and Its Logistics Implications

Geopolitics today is defined by a dynamic mix of power realignments, regional conflicts, strategic competition, and evolving trade paradigms. India's logistics framework cannot

remain insulated from these global currents.

1. The Rise of Geoeconomics

Global trade patterns are undergoing significant shifts. The **China+1 strategy**, triggered by global overreliance on China during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing tensions, has opened up new opportunities for India to emerge as a key node in global supply chains. However, capitalizing on this requires India to have **world-class logistics infrastructure** that assures reliability, speed, and cost-efficiency.

2. Strategic and Competition Realignments

Tensions in the Indo-Pacific, disruptions in the Red Sea, and Russia's war in Ukraine have exposed vulnerabilities in global logistics. **Suez Canal blockages, chip shortages and energy price volatility** have made it clear: **resilience trumps efficiency** in the new global order. India must therefore position its logistics infrastructure to be **strategically autonomous yet globally integrated**.

India's Strategic Geography

India's location gives it a unique advantage. It is situated at the crossroads of major maritime trade routes and is adjacent to volatile yet economically vital regions. As such, logistics is not just an economic lever but a **geopolitical instrument**. Developing **coastal economic zones, land ports and transshipment hubs** can turn India into a **logistics gateway to South Asia and beyond**.

Multimodal Logistics: The Backbone of Viksit Bharat

To align with Viksit Bharat @ 2047, India needs a **future-ready logistics sector**—one that is digitally enabled, environmentally sustainable, geopolitically resilient, and economically inclusive. **The National Logistics Policy (NLP)** launched in 2022 and the ongoing rollout of **PM Gati Shakti** are important milestones. But a quantum leap will come from the widespread adoption and optimization of **multimodal logistics**.

1. What is Multimodal

Logistics ?

Multimodal logistics involves the use of two or more modes of transport in a unified system, leveraging each mode’s comparative advantage. For example:

- **Railways** for long-haul bulk movement
- **Highways** for last-mile connectivity
- **Waterways** for low-cost cargo movement
- **Air** for time-sensitive and high-value goods

A true multimodal system ensures integration, **interoperability, and information sharing** across modes.

2. Current Challenges

Despite progress, India’s logistics sector faces several hurdles:

- High logistics cost
- Fragmented infrastructure
- Inefficient modal mix (over-reliance on road transport)
- Regulatory bottlenecks
- Limited digital integration

If India is to reduce logistics cost to **single-digit levels** and boost global competitiveness, these challenges must be tackled through systemic reform

Geopolitics Meets
Multimodalism: Strategic
Synergies

How can geopolitics and multimodal logistics reinforce each other to shape India’s future?

1. Strategic Corridors and Alliances

India is investing in **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** as an alternative to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Similarly, **INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor)** offers access to Central Asia, Russia, and Europe via Iran. These corridors must be supported with **domestic multimodal nodes**—like **logistics parks, dry ports, and railway freight terminals**—that interface efficiently with international routes.

2. Border Infrastructure and Regional Trade

Improving logistics infrastructure at borders—such as **Integrated Check Posts (ICPs)** with Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan—can enhance regional trade and counterbalance Chinese influence. These ICPs must become **smart trade hubs** with multimodal access, warehousing, and digitized customs.

3. Island Territories as Strategic Hubs

Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands can serve as **multimodal logistics and transshipment centers**, enhancing India’s maritime reach and enabling quicker deployment of goods and naval assets in case of

geopolitical tensions.

Key Pillars of Transformation

Achieving multimodal excellence by 2047 will require sustained focus on five strategic pillars:

1. Infrastructure Modernization

- Develop **35+ Multimodal Logistics Parks (MMLPs)** under **Bharatmala**
- Expand **Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs)**
- Accelerate port modernization through **Sagarmala**
- Boost inland waterways via **Jal Marg Vikas Project**

2. Digital Integration

- National Logistics Data Bank (NLDB) for **end-to-end visibility**
- Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) for **data convergence**
- IoT, AI, and blockchain for **predictive and secure logistics**

3. Policy Reforms and Incentives

- Rationalize regulations across transport modes
- Incentivize **modal shift** to rail and waterways
- Introduce a **Green Logistics Fund** to promote EVs and sustainable practices

4. Skilling and Employment

- Establish **logistics universities and skill centers**
- Promote **female participation** in the sector
- Develop **future-ready skills** in supply chain analytics, warehousing automation, and cold chain management

5. Security and Resilience

- Create **logistics war rooms** for real-time monitoring during crises
- Secure critical infrastructure from cyber and physical threats

Strengthen **dual-use logistics infrastructure** (for both civilian and defense use)

Vision 2047: What Will Success Look Like?

By 2047, a successful Indian logistics system should:

- **Rank in the top 10 of the Logistics Performance Index (LPI)**
- Operate at a logistics cost of **below 8% of GDP**

- Provide **24-hour delivery timelines** across key urban centers
- Offer **paperless, contactless, and seamless** logistics transactions
- Function with **net-zero carbon emissions** as the guiding principle

Contribute significantly to **\$30 trillion GDP ambition** of Viksit Bharat

The Road Ahead: A Call to Action

Realizing this vision demands a **whole-of-nation approach**—with cooperation between central and state governments, private sector, academia, and international partners. Key action areas include:

- **Public - Private Partnerships (PPPs)** for rapid infrastructure rollouts
- **State logistics policies** aligned with national priorities
- **Global collaboration** with Quad, ASEAN, EU, and others to secure supply chains

- **Community-driven development** to ensure inclusion and sustainability

In this journey, logistics is not just a technical sector—it is a **strategic capability**. It is how India will ensure food security, enable industrialization, power exports, and respond to global disruptions. It is also how India will project its soft and hard power in a contested world.

Conclusion

Geopolitics is increasingly defined by the competition for control over supply chains, trade routes, and connectivity corridors. In this new era, logistics is no longer a backend support function—it is the **frontline of national strategy**. For India to realize the Viksit Bharat @ 2047 dream, building a robust, multimodal logistics ecosystem is non-negotiable.

Through a geopolitically informed, digitally empowered, and sustainability-driven logistics strategy, India can not only weather the global storms ahead but emerge as a **logistics powerhouse**—respected, resilient, and ready to lead.

Trivia Bill of Lading (B/L)

The Bill of Lading is a critical document in international trade, serving as a receipt for goods and a contract of carriage. The Bill of Lading can be negotiable, allowing the transfer of ownership of the goods during transit.



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Imagine India's colorful markets, where succulent mangoes, life-saving drugs, and frozen delights zip from farms and factories to millions of homes daily. Behind the colorful backdrop is the supply chain, the key factor driving India's rise as a fast-moving economy. One segment of this system has actually stolen the limelight over the past decade: reefer warehousing—those huge, high-tech refrigerators that preserve everything in tip-top condition. The saga heated up during the early 2010s but went through the roof after 2017 with the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). GST eased out the logistical woes, facilitating easy transportation of goods across states and unleashing a series of larger, smarter, temperature-controlled warehouses. Driven by the boom in internet shopping, urban dwellers with a hunger for fresh vegetables and frozen pizzas, and the increasing demands of pharma firms and farmers, reefer warehousing became the next big thing. Government initiatives to increase infrastructure, combined with a drive towards greener, electric-based solutions, have created a platform for a healthy, sustainable future for this industry.

Reefer Warehousing: Revolutionizing India's Supply Chain

As of 2025, India ranks fourth in the global economy and requires advanced storage facilities to support its supply chain. Enter reefer warehousing, the driving force behind supply chain perfection. These temperature-controlled centers are revolutionizing the way companies plan, make, and distribute everything from vaccines to strawberries, so nothing goes bad and shelves remain full. What's more, India's new focus on eco-friendly practices is making these warehouses even smarter, with electric-powered systems cutting carbon footprints and supporting a cleaner tomorrow.

Powering and Pharma Agriculture

Two major sectors are reaping impeccable profits from reefer warehousing: agricultural and pharmaceuticals. Research from a key market source values the cold chain warehousing industry at \$129.8 billion in 2021, with projections to reach \$412.9 billion by 2031, driven by a 12.5% annual increase.

Pharma: Keeping Medicines Safe

With new vaccines, cancer therapies, and gene treatments hitting the market, the demand for reefer warehousing is through the roof—especially in India. Medicines are super picky about temperature, and reefer warehouses keep them safe and effective. Remember the race to distribute COVID-19 vaccines? Those cold storage facilities were lifesavers. These warehouses also save money by cutting the high costs of reefer containers that need constant power. By ensuring medicines are available everywhere, reefer warehousing helps pharma companies and patients alike.

Boosting India's Pharma Power

Cold storage in India is taking off with more drugs, vaccine programs, and cool tech investments. This grows business and makes India's medicine industry shine globally.

Cold chain logistics keeps temperature-sensitive medicines safe and effective from the lab to clinical trials with smart packaging, real-time tracking, and strict adherence to global

as well as Indian regulations.

Agriculture: Saving the Harvest

From apples to zucchinis, India's farms cover 16.77 million hectares and produce around 282 million tons of fruits and vegetables each year—with steady growth year after year.

- **Reducing Waste:** As per ICAR-CIPHET, post-harvest losses in fruits and vegetables account for 3.5% of the agriculture sector's gross value added (GVA), with 1.52% attributed directly to these perishable goods.

Reefer warehouses with temperature control feature ensures zero spoilage by keeping bacteria and other environmental factors at bay, saving farmers' hard-earned produce.

Helping Farmers Thrive

Government programs like the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) scheme are pushing for more reefer warehousing at the farm level, cutting waste and boosting farmers' incomes. Farmers can use these warehouses to hold their crops and sell when the market is favorable, not right after harvesting.

Opening New Markets for Farmers

For exports, refrigerated logistics keep produce fresh and safe on long journeys. Reefer warehousing makes this possible, opening doors for farmers to sell to new countries and customers, growing their wallets and their reach.

Freshness Without Borders

Reefer warehousing enables farmers to transport their goods across long distances while preserving peak freshness. This means they can sell beyond local towns, tap into new markets, and pocket more profit.

Empowering Rural Communities with Reefer Warehousing

Reefer warehouses are showing up alongside farms, allowing villagers to store perishable produce such as tomatoes and mangoes without embarking on long journeys to far-off markets. They provide local employment—technicians, reefer drivers, and operators—providing locals with regular incomes and skills.

Women are shining in roles like inventory tracking and quality checks, boosting family earnings. Electric-powered reefer warehouses, with solar panels and clean tech, cut pollution, making villages healthier.

Going Green with Electric Initiatives

The go-green initiative by the government with the backing of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) and Smart Cities Mission is strongly pushing electric-run reefer warehouses. Solar panels, electric coolers, and battery-run forklifts are reducing fossil fuel usage and emissions of greenhouse gases. These systems coupled with smart technology for energy optimization keep products chilled while saving power. In alignment with India's 2070 net-zero vision, reefer warehousing is at the forefront of green logistics—demonstrating that it is possible to cool products without warming the world.

A Smooth, Secure System

Reefer facilities tie together the cold chain, handling both storage and transport. Strict rules and top-notch security keep products safe, while companies innovate with flexible solutions and partnerships to tackle market demands.

Meeting Modern Demands

As city life gets busier, more frozen and processed food is being used, which means more cold storage is needed. Companies are also reaching smaller towns (Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities) for new customers. Government subsidies for tough areas are giving reefer warehousing a huge boost.

Bringing Products to Everyone

India's fast-growing economy is driving a big rise in the need for cold storage. Expanding reefer warehousing, especially with electric systems, means new-age medicines and farm-fresh goods reach people who never had access before. From rural farmers to urban shoppers, this is about making life better.

A Sustainable, Inclusive Future

Reefer warehousing is more than logistics—it's a story of progress. By blending high-tech cooling with green initiatives, India's building a supply chain that's efficient and planet-friendly. Rural communities are thriving with jobs and better incomes, while urbanites enjoy fresher products. As electric-powered reefer warehouses spread, they're paving the way for a cleaner, connected India, where every vaccine and vegetable arrives just right.



Mr. Prashant Popat

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India stands at a pivotal juncture in its journey towards becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) by 2047. This ambitious vision necessitates transformative changes across all sectors, and the logistics industry is no exception. As the backbone of economic activity, a robust, efficient, and technologically advanced logistics ecosystem is crucial for achieving this national aspiration. This article delves into the key challenges and opportunities within the Indian logistics landscape and outlines the strategic imperatives for shaping it into a driver of Viksit Bharat.

The Current State: A Landscape of Paradoxes

The Indian logistics sector is a complex tapestry of traditional practices and emerging modernization. While it has witnessed significant growth in recent years, it continues to grapple with inherent inefficiencies. High logistics costs, estimated to be around 13-14% of GDP, significantly impede India's global competitiveness. This is in stark contrast to developed economies where these costs hover around 8-9%.

Several factors contribute to this disparity. Fragmented transportation networks, with a

heavy reliance on road transport (over 60%), lead to congestion, delays, and higher fuel consumption. Underdeveloped multi-modal infrastructure, including inadequate railway lines for freight, underutilized inland waterways, and limited air cargo capacity, further exacerbates these issues.

Moreover, the sector is characterized by a large number of small, unorganized players, leading to a lack of standardization, limited technology adoption, and operational inefficiencies. Bureaucratic hurdles, complex documentation processes, and inconsistent regulatory frameworks across states add to the complexity and cost of logistics operations.

However, amidst these challenges lie significant opportunities. India's burgeoning economy, coupled with a growing manufacturing sector and increasing domestic consumption, presents a massive demand for efficient logistics services. The government's proactive initiatives, such as the National Logistics Policy (NLP) and the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, signal a strong commitment to transforming the sector.

The Vision for 2047: A Logistics

Ecosystem for Viksit Bharat

For India to achieve its Viksit Bharat goals, its logistics sector must undergo a paradigm shift. By 2047, the vision should encompass:

- Reduced Logistics Costs:** Aiming for a significant reduction in logistics costs to single digits as a percentage of GDP, aligning with global benchmarks. This will enhance the competitiveness of Indian goods in both domestic and international markets.
- Seamless Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Developing a truly integrated multi-modal transportation network, leveraging railways, roadways, waterways, and airways optimally. This will involve building dedicated freight corridors, expanding inland waterways, modernizing ports and airports, and establishing efficient intermodal transfer hubs.
- Digital Transformation:** Embracing cutting-edge technologies such as IoT, AI, blockchain, and big data analytics to enhance visibility, optimize routes, automate processes, improve inventory

management, and provide real-time tracking.

- **Standardization and Interoperability:** Implementing uniform standards for documentation, warehousing, and transportation across the country. Fostering interoperability between different modes of transport and IT systems will streamline operations and reduce friction.
- **Skilled Workforce:** Developing a highly skilled workforce equipped to handle the demands of a technologically advanced logistics sector through targeted training programs and skill development initiatives.
- **Sustainable Logistics:** Promoting environmentally friendly logistics practices, including the adoption of electric vehicles, the development of green corridors, and the optimization of fuel consumption.
- **Enhanced Regulatory Environment:** Creating a streamlined and transparent regulatory framework with seamless coordination between different government agencies. This includes simplifying documentation, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and ensuring consistent policy implementation across states.

Strategic Imperatives for Shaping the Future

Realizing this ambitious vision requires a multi-pronged approach focusing on the following strategic imperatives:

1. **Accelerating Infrastructure Development:** Continued and accelerated investment in building and modernizing logistics infrastructure is paramount. This includes the timely completion of projects under the PM GatiShakti plan, expansion of dedicated freight corridors, development of inland waterways for cargo movement, and the creation of modern warehousing and cold chain facilities. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can play a crucial role in mobilizing the necessary capital and expertise.
2. **Driving Digital Adoption:** The government and industry players must actively promote the adoption of digital technologies across the logistics value chain. This includes incentivizing the use of digital platforms for freight booking, tracking, and payment; investing in data analytics capabilities for predictive logistics; and fostering the development of indigenous technology solutions tailored to the Indian context.
3. **Fostering Skill Development:** Addressing the skill gap in the logistics sector is critical. This requires collaboration between industry, academia, and government to design and implement vocational training programs, upskilling initiatives, and specialized courses in areas like supply chain management, data analytics, and logistics technology.
4. **Promoting Standardization and Interoperability:** The government needs

to take a proactive role in setting and enforcing uniform standards for documentation, warehousing, and transportation. The development of open APIs and data exchange protocols will facilitate seamless interoperability between different logistics stakeholders and IT systems.

5. **Creating a Conducive Regulatory Environment:** Simplifying and rationalizing the regulatory landscape is crucial for reducing compliance burdens and improving ease of doing business in the logistics sector. This includes streamlining permit processes, harmonizing tax structures, and ensuring consistent enforcement across states. The National Logistics Policy provides a strong framework, and its effective implementation is key.
6. **Encouraging Sustainable Practices:** Promoting sustainable logistics is not just an environmental imperative but also an economic opportunity. Incentivizing the adoption of electric vehicles for last-mile delivery, developing green corridors, and promoting energy-efficient warehousing practices will contribute to a cleaner and more cost-effective logistics ecosystem.
7. **Strengthening Collaboration and Coordination:** Effective collaboration between government agencies, industry associations, logistics service providers, and end-users is essential for driving holistic transformation.

Platforms for regular dialogue and information sharing will help in identifying challenges, formulating solutions, and ensuring coordinated action.

The Road Ahead: A Collective Responsibility

Shaping Indian logistics for Viksit Bharat @ 2047 is a monumental task that requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders. The government must continue its

policy push and infrastructure investments. The industry needs to embrace innovation, adopt technology, and invest in skill development. Academia and research institutions must contribute by providing cutting-edge knowledge and solutions.

By working together with a shared vision and unwavering commitment, India can transform its logistics sector into a powerful engine for economic

growth, enhancing its global competitiveness and ensuring the realization of its ambitious Viksit Bharat goals. The journey will be challenging, but the potential rewards — a more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable logistics ecosystem — are immense and crucial for India's ascent on the global stage. The time for decisive action is now to lay the foundation for a logistics sector that truly powers a developed India by 2047.

Feature 7

The End of De Minimis for China: What It Means for Global E-Commerce and Lessons for India



Dr. Joshua Ebenezer

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In a bold move that is reshaping global e-commerce logistics, former President Donald Trump has ordered an end to duty-free treatment under the de minimis threshold for small-dollar shipments from China and Hong Kong, effective May 2.

For years, U.S. law has allowed packages under \$800 to enter duty-free under the de minimis exemption, enabling fast, low-cost cross-border shipping. This has powered the rise of platforms like Temu and Shein, allowing direct-to-consumer shipments from Chinese factories to U.S. buyers, without duties or heavy paperwork. In 2024 alone, over 1.4 billion shipments entered the U.S. this way, valued at \$64.6 billion, with China accounting for

nearly 60%. But this window is closing fast.

The new order imposes full tariffs on low-value goods, including a 34% penalty tariff, layered atop previous rounds, pushing the total U.S. tariff on Chinese exports above 50%. Carriers are now responsible for duty collection, and the U.S. Postal Service is tasked with enforcing this transformation in trade policy. The rationale? Combat fentanyl smuggling, tackle data gaps in customs declarations, and level the playing field for domestic retailers.

India has been a growing exporter to the U.S., especially in textiles, electronics, and consumer goods. While India currently benefits

from the de minimis exemption, the U.S. may revisit this policy country-by-country. The recent tariffs on Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia (36—49%) suggest that India must remain vigilant.

However, this shift creates opportunity. As U.S. buyers seek alternatives to China's disrupted e-commerce supply chains, India can position itself as a trusted sourcing hub, but only if it builds the right infrastructure:

- Indian exporters must explore near-market inventory models to serve U.S. customers faster and at scale.
- Invest in digital infrastructure for harmonized classification, advance shipping notices, and CBP-compliant declarations.

- Direct-to-consumer logistics is shifting to business-to-business-to-consumer (B2B2C)—India must be ready.

Globally, de minimis thresholds were created to streamline trade for low-value goods and reduce administrative burdens. But as volumes exploded, so did risks: counterfeits, narcotics, and revenue leakage. The U.S. action signals a growing consensus—the future of trade facilitation must be balanced with enforcement.

India, too, may need to reassess its de minimis policies. Is our postal and courier clearance ecosystem robust enough? Are we collecting accurate trade data from informal imports? How do we protect our MSMEs from unfair competition while still promoting ease of doing business?

China's dominance in e-commerce logistics is being tested like never before. While this creates short-term disruption for global air cargo and cross-

border retailers, it opens doors for countries like India—provided we act fast.

As U.S. policies shift from facilitation to control, nations that can adapt their export models, strengthen compliance, and build trust will rise in the new global trade order.

Let's ensure India is among them.

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Feature 8

The Evolving Landscape of Multimodal Logistics: Global Influences and Strategic Adaptations



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In today's interconnected global economy, multimodal logistics—the coordinated use of multiple transportation methods to move goods—stands as the backbone of international trade. This complex system faces continuous evolution driven by geopolitical shifts, economic policies, technological innovations, and changing consumption patterns. As businesses strive for resilience while maintaining efficiency, understanding the multifaceted forces reshaping multimodal logistics networks has become essential for stakeholders across the supply chain spectrum.

The Shifting Terrain of Trade Barriers

Trade barriers significantly impact how goods move across borders and which transportation modes prove most viable. Recent years, and more so recent months, have witnessed an unprecedented resurgence in protectionist measures globally, with average tariff rates increasing across major economies, most notably USA. These financial impediments will force logistics providers to recalculate optimal routes and transportation combinations to minimize costs.

Beyond tariffs, non-tariff barriers including complex regulatory requirements, technical standards, and licensing procedures create additional friction. A single shipment moving through multiple

countries via different transport modes may need to comply with dozens of different regulatory frameworks. Logistics providers increasingly invest in regulatory expertise and digital solutions to navigate these complexities efficiently.

Economic nationalism policies have introduced unpredictability into global supply chains, compelling multimodal logistics operators to develop contingency plans and alternative routing options. This often involves maintaining flexibility between maritime, rail, road, and air transport options to quickly adapt when access to certain markets becomes restricted or prohibitively expensive.

Free Trade Agreements: Reshaping Logistics Flows

Conversely, free trade agreements (FTAs) create opportunities for streamlined multimodal operations. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), covering approximately 30% of global GDP, has simplified customs procedures across Asia-Pacific countries, enabling more efficient intermodal transfers. Similarly, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) has strengthened trade corridors between North America, Asia, and Oceania.

These agreements influence transportation mode selection by reducing barriers at specific border crossings or ports. For instance, the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement) has reinforced the importance of rail and road connections across North America, while simultaneously influencing maritime routes linking these markets to global supply chains.

FTAs also drive strategic decisions about hub locations. Singapore's position as a multimodal logistics centre has been reinforced by its participation in multiple trade agreements, allowing it to serve as an efficient transfer point between different regional blocs.

Vulnerabilities in Critical Maritime Pathways

Maritime chokepoints remain crucial vulnerabilities in global logistics networks. The blockage of the Suez Canal by the "MV Ever Given" in 2021 demonstrated how disruption at a single point can cascade throughout global supply

chains. Similar risks exist at the Panama Canal, Strait of Malacca, Strait of Hormuz, and other narrow passages that handle significant percentages of global shipping.

These vulnerabilities have accelerated interest in alternative routes. The Northern Sea Route above Russia, though seasonal and environmentally sensitive, has seen increased traffic as climate change makes it more navigable. Rail connections between Asia and Europe have expanded as a partial alternative to maritime routes dependent on vulnerable chokepoints.

Logistics providers now emphasize resilience by developing multimodal options that can bypass single points of failure. This might include the capability to shift from sea to air freight during canal disruptions or maintaining relationships with rail operators who can provide alternatives to vulnerable maritime segments.

Demographic Forces Reshaping Demand Patterns

Population dynamics significantly influence both the volume and nature of goods movement. Aging populations in developed economies are shifting consumption patterns toward healthcare products, specialized services, and different housing needs—all requiring adapted logistics solutions.

Urbanization trends, particularly strong in developing regions, create concentrated demand centres and last-mile delivery challenges. The growth of megacities necessitates sophisticated urban logistics incorporating smaller vehicles, alternative delivery methods, and

strategically positioned distribution centres interconnected through multimodal networks.

Labor demographics present another challenge as many countries face shortages of truck drivers, warehouse workers, and other logistics professionals. This has accelerated interest in automation across transportation modes and at intermodal transfer points, though full implementation remains gradual and uneven across regions.

China's Belt and Road Initiative: New Corridors and Connections

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) represents one of the most ambitious infrastructure development programs in history, with profound implications for multimodal logistics. China's investments in ports, railways, and highways across Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe have created new transportation corridors and capabilities.

The China-Europe Railway Express now connects dozens of Chinese cities with European destinations, providing a middle-ground option between slow sea freight and expensive air cargo. This rail network has proven particularly valuable for time-sensitive goods like electronics and fashion items that benefit from the 12–15-day transit times compared to 30+ days by sea.

Port developments under the BRI framework have also reshaped maritime logistics. Investments in facilities like Piraeus (Greece), Gwadar (Pakistan), and Hambantota (Sri Lanka) have altered shipping patterns and created new transshipment hubs.

These ports often serve as crucial connection points between maritime and land-based transport modes.

Trade Alliances and Supply Chain Regionalization

Recent geopolitical tensions have accelerated “friend-shoring” and “near-shoring” trends, with companies reconfiguring supply chains to prioritize politically aligned or geographically proximate partners. This shift toward regionalization has significant implications for multimodal logistics networks.

For example, Mexico has seen increased manufacturing investment as companies seek alternatives to Asian production while maintaining proximity to North American markets. This has boosted demand for integrated rail, road, and maritime services connecting Mexican industrial centres with U.S. distribution networks.

Similarly, European companies are strengthening supply chain connections with nearby manufacturing bases in Eastern Europe and North Africa, creating denser regional multimodal networks while reducing dependence on distant suppliers.

Technological Transformation of Logistics Systems

Digital technology is perhaps the most transformative factor in modern multimodal logistics. Visibility solutions that track shipments across different transportation modes have become essential, allowing dynamic routing decisions and better coordination between

modal transfers.

Blockchain applications are addressing documentation challenges by creating secure, accessible records that can be shared across multiple transport providers, customs authorities, and financial institutions. This reduces paperwork delays at modal transfer points and international crossings.

Autonomous technology is advancing across transportation modes, though at different paces. Automated terminal equipment, semi-autonomous trucks, and smart port systems are already operational in advanced markets, gradually changing labour requirements and operational capabilities.

Environmental sustainability has become a crucial consideration, with regulations on emissions and customer demands for greener transportation reshaping modal choices. Electric trucking, biofuels for shipping, and optimization algorithms that reduce empty miles are all contributing to a gradual decarbonization of multimodal networks.

Integration and Optimization in Complex Networks

Successful multimodal logistics increasingly depends on seamless integration between transportation modes. Advanced transportation management systems now optimize performance across entire networks rather than individual segments, allowing for intelligent mode selection based on real-time conditions.

Documentation harmonization initiatives like the World Customs Organization’s standards are

reducing friction at modal transfer points. Digital freight platforms connect previously fragmented transportation markets, enabling more efficient matching of capacity with demand across modes.

Financial innovations including multimodal insurance products and blockchain-based payment systems are addressing the complexity of managing risk and financial flows across interconnected transportation networks involving multiple parties.

Conclusion: Navigating an Evolving Landscape

The future of multimodal logistics will be characterized by continued complexity and change. Successful participants will need to balance competing priorities: network resilience versus cost efficiency, globalization versus regionalization, and environmental sustainability versus economic viability.

For logistics providers, this environment demands greater flexibility, technological sophistication, and strategic foresight. For manufacturers and retailers, it necessitates careful analysis of transportation options and supply chain configurations. For policymakers, it highlights the crucial importance of infrastructure investments, regulatory harmonization, and trade facilitation.

As the forces reshaping multimodal logistics continue to evolve, those who can anticipate changes, adapt operations intelligently, and leverage emerging opportunities will gain competitive advantage

in an increasingly complex global marketplace. The art of moving

goods efficiently across borders and between transportation

modes remains as challenging—and as essential—as ever.

Feature 9

How Logistics Can Shape Viksit Bharat Vision @ 2047



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Cofounder and Managing Director - Thomas Global Logistics Private Limited

Viksit Bharat @ 2047 envisions a developed, self-reliant, and inclusive India by its centenary of independence. Logistics—particularly international freight forwarding by air and sea—will be a central pillar in this transformation, acting as a strategic enabler of growth, global integration, and economic resilience.

Logistics as a Strategic Driver of Viksit Bharat

1. Global Trade Integration via Air & Sea Freight

- International Freight Forwarding by air and sea is vital for enhancing India's global trade footprint.
- Leveraging air cargo in high-value and time-sensitive sectors (e.g., pharma, electronics) will diversify export capabilities and de-risk supply chains. India must develop world class transshipment hubs to capture regional cargo flows and reduce reliance on foreign gateways. Strategic investments in air

freight infrastructure can position India as a preferred logistics hub in Asia.

- Expanding port infrastructure, modernizing cargo terminals, improving customs clearance process and policies to increase global competitiveness. Strengthening the AEO program will build trust-based trade facilitation, reduce clearance times, and incentivize compliance.

2. Reducing Logistics Costs & Improving Efficiency

Reducing costs through multi-modal logistics, better first-mile/last-mile connectivity, and digital freight matching platforms will make Indian exports more competitive.

Role of MSME Logistics Service Providers

1. **Decentralized Reach, Scalable Innovation**
- MSMEs dominate the Indian logistics ecosystem. Their agility and adaptability allow

them to serve remote areas, boost rural logistics, and support last-mile delivery critical for inclusivity.

2. Digital Adoption and Skill Development

- MSMEs can accelerate India's logistics modernization by adopting AI, IoT, TMS (Transport Management Systems), and cloud-based freight solutions.
- Upskilling drivers, handlers, and coordinators will be key to improving service quality and job creation.

Collaboration: The New Competitive Edge

- Collaboration between startups, traditional logistics firms, tech enablers, and government can drive innovation and efficiency.
- Family-owned logistics businesses — common in India — must shift towards professionalization, succession planning, and investment in tech

to remain competitive.

air freight stations.

asset financing for MSME logistics operators through targeted credit schemes and government-backed guarantees at lower interest rates.

Navigating the Geopolitical Landscape

- Global tensions and supply chain realignments create new opportunities for India. Logistics will help position India as a supply chain alternative, provided there is resilience in air and sea freight capacity, container availability, and risk diversification.
- Strengthening India's trade logistics corridors with Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East (e.g., IMEC - India-Middle East-Europe Corridor) can create geopolitical leverage.

Key Steps Required

1. Infrastructure Development

- Fastrack completion of the Bharatmala, Sagarmala, and Dedicated Freight Corridors on schedule and upgradation of dry ports, ICDs (Inland Container Depots) and

2. Digitization and Interoperability

- Promote paperless trade, blockchain-based documentation, and AI-led route optimization.

3. Policy & Regulatory Reform keeping in mind Ease of doing business

- Ease of Doing Business should empower, not penalize. For logistics and MSMEs, compliance must be made simple, digital, and trust-based — shifting the government's role from enforcer to enabler.
- Encourage cluster-based logistics parks with shared infrastructure for MSMEs.

4. MSME Finance and Institutional Support

- Facilitate easy access to working capital and

- Encourage credit-linked incentives for tech adoption and quality certification to make MSMEs globally competitive.

Conclusion

India's vision to become a developed nation by 2047 hinges on a modern, cost-effective, and globally integrated logistics ecosystem. MSMEs, family-owned logistics firms, and freight forwarders — particularly in air and sea — can be powerful agents of this transformation through collaboration, innovation, and strategic global positioning. With the right policy environment and industry leadership, logistics will not just move goods but move India into the future.

Trivia

Hague Rules

- The Hague Rules, established in 1924, set out the responsibilities and liabilities of carriers in the international transport of goods by sea.
- The Hague Rules were later amended by the Hague-Visby Rules to address evolving maritime practices. The Hague-Visby Rules introduced provisions on the carrier's liability and the period of responsibility.
- These conventions have influenced the development of maritime law and international trade regulations.

Photo Gallery



AAROHAN — International Maritime Conference in Dehradun on 22nd March 2025 attended by Mr. Biju Shivkumar as a panelist discussion on academic-industry collaboration, challenges faced by the Indian maritime industry, AI in shipping, and investment opportunities in tech startups.



Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar was a distinguished speaker and moderator at the premier 'CargoNXT Conference Mumbai- 2025'. He shared his valuable insights on embracing change and innovation in freight forwarding, making waves at this exciting event focused on the future of India's global trade. On 25th April 2025

Photo Gallery



Invitation from Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for an interactive seminar "Gateway to Growth: Exploring Business & Investment Opportunities in Hong Kong," which was attended by IPP Mr. Xerrxes Master on 23rd April, 2025, on behalf of AMTOI at IMARA, Mahalakshmi Racecourse, Royal Western India Turf Club, Mumbai.



Mr. Prashant Popat attended The Indo- Djibouti Chamber Meeting on 23rd April 2025, on behalf of AMTOI at Sahyadri Guest House, Mumbai organized under the esteemed leadership of the Honorary Consul of Djibouti in India. This meeting was chaired by the Hon'ble Minister of Protocol and Marketing of Maharashtra, Shri Jaykumar Rawal.

Photo Gallery



Invitation for KING'S DAY 2025 from Netherland Consulate General Mumbai which was attended by Mr. Vasant Pathak on 24th April 2025, on behalf of AMTOI at Blue Sea Banquets, Worli Sea Face, Worli, Mumbai.



Hosur Trade Meet organized by V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority, Tuticorin was attended by Mr. V. Chandra Kumar on 25th April 2025 on behalf of AMTOI at Hotel Fortune (ITC), Hosur.



Mr. Haresh Lalwani attended the India Maritime University Alumni and Industry meet 2025, on behalf of AMTOI held on 8th May 2025 at Mumbai Cricket Association Recreation Centre, Bandra



Mr. Haresh Lalwani Hon Secretary of AMTOI has been invited to moderate the panel session on "Multimodal Logistics Parks: Connecting Ports to a Global Trade Network" as a speaker at the 3rd Edition of the India Ports Conference 2025, held on 9th May 2025 at Hotel Four Seasons, Worli, Mumbai

PRESS RELEASE

Date: April 24, 2025

AMTOI Condemns the Cowardly Terrorist Attack on Innocent Civilians in Pahalgam

The Association of Multimodal Transport Operators of India (AMTOI) strongly condemns the barbaric terrorist attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam, which has tragically claimed the lives of 27 innocent civilians. This inhuman act is one of the most cowardly displays of violence witnessed in recent times. To target unarmed and unsuspecting civilians is a crime that reflects a sick and twisted mindset — such perpetrators have no place in any civilized society.

This incident has shaken the collective conscience of the nation. The grief of those who have lost their loved ones is immeasurable, and we, along with every Indian, share in this profound sorrow and anguish. It is reminiscent of the dark days of the Mumbai attacks — a painful reminder of the cost of hatred and extremism.

The entire logistics community stands united in solidarity with the Government of India and all security agencies in their resolve to bring those responsible for this heinous crime to justice. We have full faith in the capabilities and judgment of our national security apparatus, and we are confident that appropriate and informed steps will be taken.

At this time, we urge all our members and fellow citizens to exercise restraint in their words and actions. Let us not allow our emotional responses to lend validation to the very objectives that terrorists seek to achieve — spreading fear, division, and chaos.

We reaffirm our unshakable support to the government in this moment of national mourning and outrage. The logistics fraternity stands rock solid with the country in the fight against terror, and we will continue to contribute towards building a safer, united, and resilient India.

Jai Hind.

For **Multimodal Transport Operators of India**

Arun Kumar

President (+91 98107 26566 / president@amtoi.org)

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2.	Mr. Devpal Menon	Vice President
3.	Mr. Haresh Lalwani	Hon Secretary
4.	Mr. Vasant Pathak	Hon Treasurer
5.	Mr. Xerrxes Master	Immediate Past President
6.	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar	Executive Committee Member
7.	Mrs. Priya Thomas	Executive Committee Member
8.	Mr. George Abrao	Special Invitee
9.	Mr. Shankar Shinde	Special Invitee
10.	Mrs. Anjali Bhide	Special Invitee
11.	Mr. Ravindra Gandhi	Special Invitee
12.	Mr. R.K. Rubin:	Special Advisor
13.	Mr. Nailesh Gandhi	Advisor
14.	Mr. Vivek Kele	Advisor
15.	Mr. Tushar Jani	Advisor
16.	Mr. Anand Sheth	Advisor
17.	Mr. Shashi Tanna	Advisor
18.	Mr. Sailesh Bhatia	Advisor
19.	Mr. Prashant Popat	Convenor WRC
20.	Dr. Sharmila H Amin	Co-Convenor WRC
21.	Mr. Ramesh Varadarajan	Convenor NRC
22.	Mr. Supratim Majumdar	Co-Convenor NRC
23.	Mr. Brij Lakhota	ERC Convenor
24.	Mr. Vivek Choudhury	Co-Convenor ERC
25.	Mr. Naveen Prakash	Convenor SRC
26.	Mr. V John Christopher	Co-Convenor SRC
27.	Mr. Biju Sivakumar	Co-Convenor NVOCC Council
28.	Mr. Ramakrishna	Convenor Taxation
29.	Mr. Clarence Xavier	Information Security - Convenor
30.	Ms. Nishita Modi	Women's Wing- Co-Convenor

AMTOI SUB - COMMITTEE LIST FOR THE TERM 2024 – 25

	Sub — Committee	Convenor / Co—Convenor	Coordinator
1.	Taxation (Direct & Indirect) (TAX)	Mr. Ramakrishna — Convenor Ms. Arun Kumar — Co-Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
2.	Training Programs (TRN)	Mr. Vasant Pathak — Convenor Ms. Priya Anil Thomas — Co - Convenor	Mr. Haresh Lalwani
3.	New MTO License Application / Renewal (MTO)	Mr. R. K. Rubin — Convenor Mr. Xerrxes Master — Co-Convenor	Mr. George Abrao
4.	Events Committee (EVN)	Mr. Ravindra J Gandhi — Convenor Mr. Vasant Pathak — Co-Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
5.	Publications	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar — Editor Ms. Priya Anil Thomas — Co - Editor	Mr. Anand Sheth
6.	International Relations (INT)	Mr. Haresh Lalwani — Convenor Mr. Vasant Pathak — Co-Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
7.	Northern Regional Chapter (NRC)	Mr. Ramesh Varadarajan — Convenor Mr. Supratim Majumdar — Co-Convenor	Ms. Priya Anil Thomas
8.	Western Regional Chapter (WRC)	Mr. Prashant Popat — Convenor Ms. Sharmila Amin — Co-Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
9.	Eastern Regional Chapter (ERC)	Mr. Brij Mohan Lakhotia — Convenor Mr. Vivek Chaudhary — Co-Convenor	Mr. Devpal Menon
10.	Southern Regional Chapter (SRC)	Mr. Naveen Prakash — Convenor Mr. V John Christopher — Co-Convenor	Mr. Devpal Menon
11.	NVOCC Council (NVO)	Mr. Xerrxes Master — Convenor Mr. Biju Shivkumar — Co-Convenor	Mr. George Abrao
12.	Liquid Logistics Council (LLC)	Mr. Haresh Lalwani — Convenor Mr. R.K. Rubin — Co-Convenor	Mr. Anand Sheth
13.	Eastern Regional Chapter (ERC)	Mr. Brij Mohan Lakhotia — Convenor Mr. Vivek Chaudhary — Co-Convenor	Mr. Devpal Menon
14.	AMTOI Women's Wing (WOW)	Ms. Sharmila Amin — Convenor Ms. Nishita Modi — Co-Convenor	Mr. Xerrxes Master
15.	SRO Committee (Self-Regulatory Organization) (SRO)	Mr. Sailesh Bhatia — Convenor Mr. Anand Sheth — Co-Convenor	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar
16.	ACT Committee (AMTOI Cricket Tournament) (ACT)	Ms. Anjali Bhide — Convenor Mr. Nishant Bhide — Co-Convenor	Mr. George Abrao
17.	Information Technology Security and Social Media Cell (ITM)	Mr. Clarence Xavier — Convenor Ms. Nishita Modi — Co-Convenor	Mr. Haresh Lalwani
18.	Grievance Redressal Forum (GRF)	Mr. Shantanu Bhadkamkar — Convenor Mr. Sailesh Bhatia — Co-Convenor	Mr. Anand Sheth
19.	Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Council	Mr. Vivek Kele — Convenor Ms. Anjali Bhide — Co-Convenor	Mr. Nailesh Gandhi

AMTOI Membership Benefits

Recognition in the Industry as a certified AMTOI member, AMTOI is known for commitment to the cause of promoting Multimodal Transport

- AMTOI membership certificate can be prominently displayed in the office and AMTOI logo can be used on your stationary, website and other collaterals
- Participation in various Training sessions and seminars organized by AMTOI (Dangerous goods handling and transportation being one of them)
- AMTOI Dialogues - A monthly virtual event where an eminent personality is

invited for a short interview followed by Q&A session

- Weekly updates on Shipping Industry through AMTOI Weekly bulletin.
- Participation in Annual AMTOI event and get to meet who's who in the industry which is an excellent platform for networking.
- Assistance in registration/renewal of MTO License.
- GRF (Grievance Redressal Forum), a platform to air your grievances with various private and Govt authorities and

AMTOI organizational support to resolve them

- Differences / problems between members are amicably resolved by the intervention of Managing Committee Members hence the need to approach the regulators is reduced
- Have a say in drafting and amendment of various Maritime related laws
- Become a part of the only trade body which caters to the benefits of the MTO's
- Promote / growth of Indian flag ships and container owners

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