

## Background

India operates on the British-derived parliament system, where the executive power is really with the Prime Minister and Ruling Party/Coalition. The electorate is over 600 million distributed across 29 States and 7 Union Territories. In the May 2014 General Elections, Shri Narendra Modi's National Democratic Alliance, with unprecedented voter turn-out, was elected to power with a large majority and an apparent mandate for economic growth, driving out corruption, recovering illegal funds stashed abroad, and reforming the bureaucracy – qualities he had demonstrated to be re-elected thrice as Chief Minister of Gujarat. He appears to be operating from a very clear and well-planned “playbook”, with both grassroots reform and international deals. His first initiative was called “Swachh Bharat” or Clean India, literally demanding that people clean up the neighborhoods, and improve sanitation in schools and public places. Next he got the banks to open 170 million new bank accounts, each accompanied by government-backed catastrophic insurance. They tied this to the Aadhar National Identity Document project, bringing new meaning to that huge project. Now other grand dreams are looking increasingly realistic. He moved to improve ties with India's South Asia neighbors, then “looked east” to China, Japan, Korea and Australia, visited Europe, and is now returning for a second visit to the US, this time starting on the West Coast and then coming to DC. His emphasis is clearly and urgently on economic collaborations, sustainable development and all-inclusive empowerment.

This visit is crucial. The word from Indian Consular officers is that a major Education collaboration deal with President Obama is in the works. There are several other initiatives on opening up the Defence sector to foreign investment, a welcome mat for technology collaboration (we need to worry about ITAR, sure), and emphasis on rural energy and water projects. Some of the news items below are very eye-opening: for instance how he is getting the rarely-cleaned coaches of Indian Railways to sparkle by enabling passengers to text complaints to the Cabinet Minister. The bank account scheme too has very real and urgent objectives beyond the obvious. The government-backed insurance is unprecedented security. Besides that, it revolutionizes how government payments to the most needy citizens is routed. The present leaky and tardy route via state and local governments and bureaucracies, is replaced with direct deposits to the citizen's bank account, with mobile phones enabling immediate access. These are thoughtful innovations that recognize human ground realities and bring workable solutions to problems that have frustrated decades of attempted solutions.

1. [First online railway recruitment exams in progress in 242 cities across country](#)
2. [Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit US West Coast in September](#)  
“Narendra Modi, who will be the **first Indian PM to visit the US West Coast after several decades**, would not only perform at yet another diaspora show on September 27 but will also try attracting investments and expertise for Digital India, innovation projects and clean energy initiatives with meetings lined up with top IT CEOs of Silicon Valley and startups besides visit to Google labs,”
3. EconomicTimes: 38% of the 970-odd investment plans in execution mode  
<http://ow.ly/RqNJU>

4. [770 million street lights to be replaced with LEDs, to save 9000 GWh/ year.](https://pibindia.wordpress.com/)  
<https://pibindia.wordpress.com/>
5. [August 27, 2015: GOI list of 98 'Smart Cities for infrastructure and governance development.](#)
6. [file://localhost/August 27/ Indian GSLV Launches With GSAT-6.](file://localhost/August 27/ Indian GSLV Launches With GSAT-6)  
<http://www.nasaspaceflight.com/2015/08/indian-gslv-launch-gsat-6/>
7. [Over 415,000 modern toilets built and installed in public schools in one year.](#)
8. [Over 170 MILLION bank accounts, with catastrophic Insurance, opened in the past year.](#)
9. [Anti-corruption laws: Over 65 Billion Indian rupees recovered. But a long way to go.](#)
10. [National Career Service Portal Is Now Live; 4.5 Cr Job Seekers Across 959 Employment Exchanges Can Apply for Govt As Well As Private Jobs](#)
11. [August 1, 2015: Digital India: Online Police Verification for Passport Applications to start soon](#)  
[Modi govt signs historic peace accord with Nagaland's NSCN\(IM\)](#)
12. **Centre to develop 15,000 km of national highway at Rs 1.9 lakh crore**  
<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/new ... 329569.cms>
13. [March 3, 2015, NDTV: Indian Railways Launches First Customer Complaint App](#)
14. [PM Modi reflects on his visit to Myanmar, Fiji and Australia:](#)
15. [September 28: 10 takeaways from the prime minister's UN speech: Rediff.com](#)
16. [September 24: MangalYaan reaches Mars orbit](#)
17. [August 28, 2014: 15 Million Bank Accounts Opened in a Day](#)
18. [August 15, 2014: Full Text of Shri Modi's 1st Independence Day Speech](#)
19. [August 13, 2014: Govt starts removing archaic laws](#)