



FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT

My Dear Members,

In an increasingly interconnected world, trade deals have become powerful instruments of growth, collaboration, and competitiveness. They are no longer limited to tariff reductions; they now shape market access, supply chains, technology exchange, and sustainable business practices.

For South Gujarat, with its strong presence in textiles, diamonds, chemicals, ports, and MSMEs, trade partnerships open new global avenues. Strategic trade deals help our businesses enter new markets, improve efficiency, and integrate with global value chains while managing regulatory and operational challenges.

However, real success lies in execution - understanding standards, logistics, compliance, and emerging digital and green trade norms. SGCCI continues to support members through policy guidance, global linkages, and trade facilitation platforms to enable informed and confident participation in international trade.

Trade is not merely transactional; it is transformational. As we focus on the theme of Trade Deals in this issue of Infozine, I encourage members to view partnerships as long-term growth enablers and position South Gujarat as a trusted hub in the global business ecosystem.

Warm regards,



NIKHIL MADRASI
PRESIDENT, SGCCI

FROM THE DESK OF EDITOR

India's global trade landscape is entering an exciting phase. Recent developments such as the proposed **India-EU agreement, often termed the "mother of all deals,"** the US tariff rationalisation, and several Free Trade Agreements at advanced negotiation stages indicate strong momentum for international partnerships.

The first quarter of 2026 looks promising, as these trade deals are expected to improve market access, reduce barriers, and enhance competitiveness for Indian businesses. From manufacturing to services and exports, new agreements will open fresh opportunities on the global stage.

For South Gujarat's vibrant industrial ecosystem, these are not just policy updates but strategic gateways to expansion, investment, and integration with global value chains. Through this issue of Infozine, SGCCI encourages members to stay informed and prepared to leverage the benefits of evolving trade partnerships.

- Sanjay Punjabi, Editor, Infozine

TEXTILE

Textile sector to generate 6-7 million new jobs as India-EU FTA unlocks massive opportunities,' says Piyush Goyal

Describing the agreement as a landmark achievement, Goyal congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi and European leaders for what he called "visionary leadership" in shaping the partnership.

"Congratulations to PM Modi, Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission, and Antonio Costa, the President of the European Council. They have provided visionary leadership which has further been strengthened with colleagues from almost all parts of government in both the European Union and India," Piyush Goyal said.



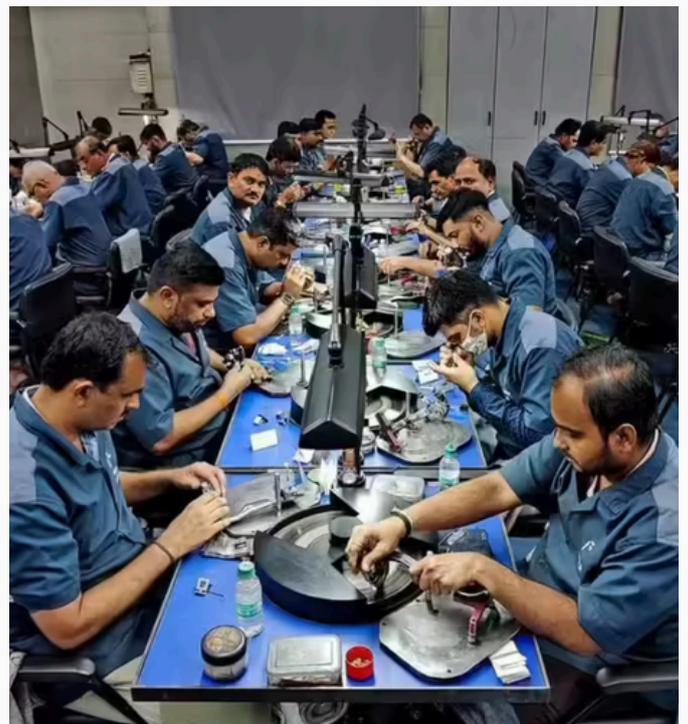
DIAMOND

US-India trade deal rekindles hope for diamond manufacturing...

US is India's largest exporter of gems & Jewellery, accounting for 31%, about \$9.23B of total exports in FY 2024-2025. Duties on polished diamonds and coloured gemstones 0% to 10% in April 25 to 50% in August 2025, tightening liquidity and margins.

Exports to the US plunged 44% between April and Dec 2025, dropping from \$8.6 billion to \$3.8 billion. Cut and polished diamond exports fell over 60%, from \$3.6 billion to \$1.4 Billion.

GJEPC is optimistic about the deal and revival of the sector with US-India revised deal.



GLOBAL TRADE

Surat has been selected as one of six cities in India for the establishment of Textile Export Facilitation Centres (TEFCs).

The other centres will come up in Karur (Tamil Nadu), Ichalkaranji (Maharashtra), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and Ludhiana (Punjab).



ENERGY / RENEWABLE ENERGY

Solar energy companies in Surat saw a nearly 4,700% rise in equity funding in, totaling over \$250 million across eight rounds.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Dedicated Freight Corridor: A new East-West DFC connecting Dankuni (West Bengal) to Surat has been announced in the Union Budget 2026, aiming to boost sustainable cargo movement.

Water Infrastructure: The Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) plans a ₹77 crore project near the airport for new tanks and pipelines, plus a ₹600 crore budget for new areas

Urban Development: The city received a ₹342 crore boost with new development projects in early 2026, focusing on public housing, digital services, and infrastructure.

Record Budget: SMC's ₹10,593 crore budget for 2026-27 focuses heavily on capital expenditure (₹5,073 crore)



ENGINEERING

Robotic Manufacturing: Encore-Alcom inaugurated India's first auto-robotic aluminum manufacturing plant. The 184,000 sq. ft. facility features a dedicated R&D wing developed with Italian designers.

Specialized Cooling Fluids: A new ₹120 crore facility for producing Opteon two-phase immersion cooling fluid is under development, with operations expected by mid-2026.



HAZIRA

NTPC commissioned India's first green hydrogen blending project in the piped natural gas (PNG) network at Kawas, Surat

India's first Green Hydrogen blending operation in PNG network.



NTPC Kawas at Surat, Gujarat

STARTUP

The person you are likely thinking of is Kevin Coutinho (not Costino), a tech entrepreneur and founder of the blockchain platform Layer-One.X (L1X). **He is recognized as one of the youngest self-made billionaires from India.**

Born on October 26, 1994, in **Silvassa, India**, Coutinho has earned global recognition in the tech industry for his pioneering work in blockchain interoperability. His company, Layer-One.X, is a decentralized ledger solution designed to solve key blockchain challenges such as scalability, security, and the ability for different blockchains to interact with each other (interoperability).

Youngest & Richest Billionaire from India: The Rise of Kevin Coutinho

Born on October 26, 1994, in Silvassa, India, Kevin Coutinho has emerged as one of the youngest and wealthiest billionaires in the country.

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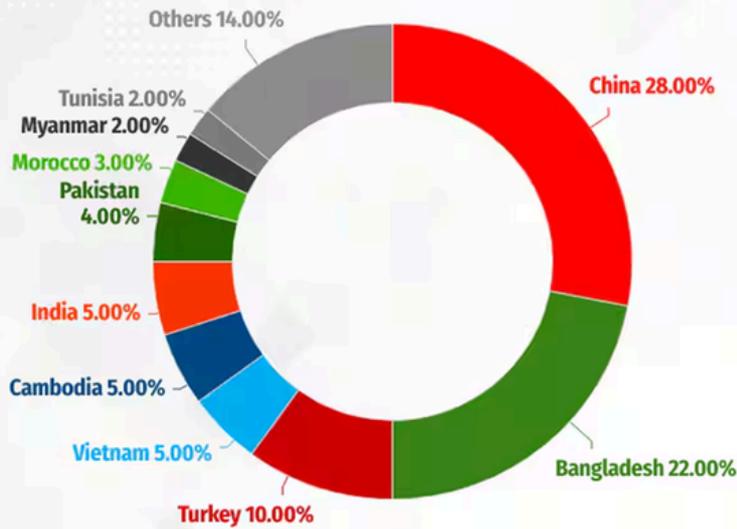
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Youngest & Richest Billionaire from India: The Rise of Kevin Coutinho | Image: Kevin Coutinho
In the rapidly evolving world of technology and blockchain, few names command as much respect as Kevin Coutinho.

SHARE (%) OF APPAREL IMPORTS INTO EU

Room for growing India's exports to EU following the India-EU trade-deal



GREETINGS



Leadership

Recognition: President **Nikhil Madrasi** was nominated as the representative for trade in the Regional Direct Tax Advisory Committee (RDATAC) on January 8, enhancing the Chamber's influence on tax policy



Philanthropic Honor:

On January 25, the Chamber held a felicitation ceremony for **Nishesh Mandlewala**, an SGCCI member and **Padma Shri** awardee, recognizing his life-saving contributions to organ donation awareness.



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