

STATE OF THE STATES NEWSLETTER

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REDEFINING DIPLOMACY, ONE STATE
AT A TIME

EDITOR'S NOTE

In recent years, paradiplomacy—where subnational governments directly engage in international relations—has gained traction in India, allowing states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala to forge foreign ties, attract investment, and participate in global networks on trade, climate, and public health. This decentralized approach is reshaping India's diplomatic landscape by enhancing economic profiles, fostering cultural exchange, and promoting development while complementing national objectives.

Therefore, to explore this exciting new world of international relations, the issue delves into the various dimensions of paradiplomacy within India—its origins, current dynamics, and future prospects. We explore how Indian states are leveraging paradiplomacy to foster new models and ideals for development and federalism.

We hope this edition provides a valuable perspective on the evolving landscape of paradiplomacy in India and encourages further dialogue on its implications for the country's global engagement.

CHANDRABABU NAIDU AT DAVOS AND ANDHRA PRADESH'S INVESTMENT PUSH

On 20th January 2026, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu attended the World Economic Forum (WEF), Davos, projecting the state as a global investment hub. He announced 25 new industrial policies, prioritising AI, digital media, virtual production, and creative industries, alongside pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, heavy machinery, electronics, rail components, textiles, and research, with emphasis on youth skill development.

Naidu met India's Ambassador to Switzerland, Mridul Kumar, to seek Swiss investments and engaged Eros Innovations Chairman Kishore Lulla to promote AI-driven film technology, gaming, animation, and virtual production. Eros showcased Eros Gen AI, an AI-enabled Film City, and VR tourism under 'Discover Andhra Pradesh 360', with Lulla calling him the "Davos Man Chandrababu."

Addressing the Telugu diaspora from 20+ countries, Naidu announced a Rs 50-crore corpus fund, support via the Rata Tata Innovation Hub, and the AP First research centre in Tirupati, reiterating targets of Rs 22 lakh crore investment and 20 lakh jobs.

At a CII breakfast, he noted Andhra Pradesh has secured 25% of India's total investments, citing Google's AI data centre (Visakhapatnam), Green Ammonia projects (Kakinada), and the expansion of ports, airports, and space cities. Inaugurating the India Lounge, he projected India as the world's third-largest economy within two years, aiming for leadership by 2047, and promoted the 'one family, one entrepreneur' policy with IBM and Google collaborations. On 21st January, Naidu discussed tourism investments, highlighting Godavari River cruises, Konaseema, Gandikota, Araku, and Lambasingi, announced an AI Centre of Excellence at IT SEZ Visakhapatnam with Calibo AI Academy, the ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel Plant at Anakapalli post-15th February with Rs 60,000 crore, and a Dubai food cluster with UAE Minister Thani Bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi.

On 22nd January, concluding his four-day visit, Naidu cited 36+ meetings with global leaders and discussions with Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran on tourism, sports cities, Quantum Valley Amaravati, and solar power in Kurnool, reinforcing Andhra Pradesh's technology-led investment strategy. From Davos to Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh's pitch mirrors India's foreign policy turn where states become instruments of economic diplomacy in a multipolar world.

Source : <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.ndtv.com/india-news/chief-minister-chandrababu-naidu-showcases-andhra-pradesh-as-hub-for-global-investments-at-davos-world-economic-forum-10877307/amp/1>

INDIA TO PLAY PROMINENT ROLE AT WEF ANNUAL MEETING IN DAVOS

India is set to make a significant and wide-ranging showing at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting in Davos, beginning January 19. Global leaders will convene for five days under the theme “a spirit of dialogue.” India’s delegation will include at least four Union ministers: Ashwini Vaishnaw, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Pralhad Joshi and K. Rammohan Naidu. Six chief ministers will also attend, including Devendra Fadnavis, N. Chandrababu Naidu, Himanta Biswa Sarma, Mohan Yadav, A. Revanth Reddy and Hemant Soren. Senior delegations from Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala will be present. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar is expected to opt out due to domestic commitments.

Indian leaders are expected to participate in several high-level discussions, including a panel examining whether India can emerge as the world’s third-largest economy. WEF President and CEO Børge Brende highlighted the extraordinary level of global uncertainty and stressed that dialogue is an urgent necessity. Key discussions are expected to focus on Ukraine, Gaza and developments in Latin America.

India's corporate presence will also be substantial, with more than 100 CEOs in attendance. These include Mukesh Ambani, N. Chandrasekaran, Sanjiv Bajaj, Sunil Bharti Mittal, Nandan Nilekani, Salil Parekh, Rishad Premji, Anish Shah, Vijay Shekhar Sharma, Sajjan Jindal and Nikhil Kamath. Former Union minister Smriti Zubin Irani will also attend. The summit will be prominently marked by US President Donald Trump, who will lead the largest-ever US delegation and inaugurate a first-ever "USA House." At least 64 heads of state or government are set to attend. Six G7 nations will be represented at the highest level. Large delegations from China and Pakistan will also be present. More than 3,000 leaders from over 130 countries are expected, including 1,700 business leaders and a record 400 political leaders. The meeting will also host dozens of finance and trade ministers and the heads of major global institutions. Pakistan will make a cultural debut with a "Sufi Night." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is also scheduled to attend.

Taken together, the scale and diversity of India's political and corporate delegation underline New Delhi's effort to position itself as both an economic heavyweight and a diplomatic stakeholder at a time of heightened global volatility. The prominence of India at Davos reflects not only its growth ambitions, but also its desire to shape conversations on geopolitics, global governance and the evolving international order. It also signals an attempt to project policy stability and investor confidence amid shifting global supply chains and economic realignments.

At a moment when major powers are reassessing alliances and economic strategies, India's visible engagement at Davos reinforces its bid to be seen as a central player in the reconfiguration of the global economic and political landscape.



Source : <https://assamtribune.com/amp/national/from-ministers-to-cms-india-sends-heavyweights-to-davos-wef-summit-1604783>

CM HIMANTA BISWA SARMA BECOMING THE FIRST CM OF ASSAM TO ATTEND THE WEF SUMMIT 2026

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has become the first Chief Minister from Assam to attend the World Economic Forum (WEF) 56th Annual Meeting in Switzerland marking a historic milestone in the history of the state. This meeting is being held from 19th to 23rd January 2026 which is bringing together approximately 3000 leaders from over 130 countries amidst times of geopolitical tension, economic uncertainty and rapid technological shift around the world. The theme of this year's summit is “A Spirit of Dialogue” focusing on discussions about the ongoing geopolitical realignments, slowing global growth, trade frictions and accelerating technological change.

CM Sarma's participation in the summit plays a major role in positioning Assam on the global economic and policy-making stage in the international forum. CM Sarma was welcomed by Ambassador Mridul Kumar and during the summit, he met numerous global leaders, including World Bank President Ajay Banga, Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu, and Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu.

At WEF, Sarma engaged in various discussions related to global partnerships, workforce transformation, innovation, and future-ready growth. He showcased Assam's presence in many sectors such as tea, infrastructure, green energy, tourism, health care and sustainable development. These key discussions placed Assam on the global path of innovation and opportunity. Several MoUs are will soon be signed by Assam which will strengthen Assam's investor-friendly ecosystem. Assam's debut in Davos clearly aligns with the vision of Viksit Bharat, which focuses on states role in widening India's global economic presence. The Annual Meeting is expected to see a huge amount of government participation with around 400 top political leaders, including 65 heads of state and government and six leaders from G7 who will be a part of the summit. This milestone strengthens India's position in the world forum as states like Assam are stepping up increasing the overall investment and driving economic diplomacy making India one of the leading contenders in global investment while shaping international economic partnerships.

Source : https://m.economictimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/himanta-biswa-sarma-becomes-first-assam-cm-to-attend-davos-set-to-showcase-states-potential/amp_articleshow/126674116.cms

MEET THE TEAM



**Professor Tridivesh
Singh Maini**

Prof. Tridivesh Singh Maini, currently Assistant Professor, has been a faculty member of the Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA) since August 2014. He was also a Public Policy Scholar with The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy, Chennai (November 2013-March 2014), and an Asia Society India-Pakistan Regional Young Leaders Initiative (IPRYLI) Fellow (2013-2014). His research interests include — India's ties with its extended neighbourhood (with a focus on Gulf and Iran), Geo-economics in South Asia, The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the role of India's states in the country's external relations.



Sonakshi Garg

Sonakshi Garg is a Third - year law student at Jindal Global Law School. She is one of the hosts of The Interlinked Podcast and leads the Conversations in Developmental Studies (CIDS). She is deeply passionate about the subjects of History, Psychology and Gender Studies and is an International Relations enthusiast.



Tarinee

Tarinee is a Third-year B.A. LL.B. student with a strong interest in international relations, law, and global policy. As a columnist for the International Relations cluster at Nickelled and Dimed, she writes on how diplomacy, conflict, and international law intersect with contemporary global challenges.



Hansin Kapoor

Hansin Kapoor is a final-year Criminology student at Jindal Global Law School who believes that crime, law, and power are best understood far beyond police files and courtrooms. A columnist for Nickeled and Dimed, he writes on history and culture as well as international relations and public policy, tracing how ideas, institutions, and interests collide to shape societies. His work has been published in Aazad.com and other media platforms, where he engages with questions of justice, governance, and global change through a sharp, interdisciplinary lens.



The author of this piece is a second-year BA LLB (Hons.) student at Jindal Global Law School. Her research interests lie in public policy, global politics and the way legal systems intersect with political and social issues.