From Future Market to Future Technology and Business Leader

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*The real emergence of India
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India is projected by the world as the 'future market'. This view has recently been expressed by the world leaders while exploring business opportunities in India. It is the second largest country in the world in terms of the size of population. The average age of Indian population, projected in 2020, is around 29 years (youngest as compared to the leading countries), and the GDP growth rate is reasonably high (8 to 9% per year) over the last more than a decade. This has resulted into the emergence of a growing young middle class which can act as a huge customer base in future.

The growing demand pattern and increasing paying capacity of a large class of consumers has generated unprecedented market opportunities. These opportunities are going to multiply in future, thereby attracting more business opportunities in the country.

The first wave of globalization had been more inward in character bringing in new technology, products and services in the market. The liberalization of Indian economy in early 90s has given a fillip to the industrial growth and foreign direct investment. Almost in every sector of economy global players have made their presence either on their own or through joint ventures/acquisitions.

This led to the growth of MNCs in India and multiplicity of globally branded products/services in almost all spheres contributing to the emergence of India as a future market. A number of leading global brands such as GM, Ford, Sony, Toyota, Honda, Suzuki, Samsung, Nokia, Whirlpool, IBM, Apple, GE, LG, Vodafone, Nestle, BP, Shell and so on are already in operation in the Indian market and many more are intending to enter.

With the introduction of globally branded products/services the Indian customer is getting a vast range of competitive choices and models so as to get a world-class experience and value in the domestic market. However, this alone need not be a matter of pride for Indian business that we are able to attract global players in this market.

The tide need to be reversed and India should move ahead from simply being considered as 'future market' to 'future technology and business leader'. The key lies with the growing young middle class, which not only is a growing customer base but, with inputs of higher technical education, also be treated as growing skills and capabilities base. This is resulting into the creation of largest scientific and technical manpower base in the country. If this qualified manpower is effectively deployed for generating the technological and business competitiveness, the country can emerge as a technological and business leader of tomorrow.

Though the R&D intensity and investment of Indian industry is currently below par, there is a silver lining. Some of the leading global corporations such as General Motors have already started taking advantage of such technically qualified and low cost manpower by opening up global R&D centers in India. This might induce a R&D and innovation culture in the country and the Indian corporations may, in due course, be guided by that to generate higher technological competitiveness.

The real emergence of India as a business hub would be a two way exercise. On the one hand, it would attract global players to find business opportunities in Indian market, whereas on the other it would generate higher technological and business competitiveness by developments, both within the country and through global collaborations/acquisitions. This is expected to transform Indian economy from simply being a future market to a future technology and business leader.

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