

**Sical Logistics Ltd.**

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Chennai 600 001 India

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**SICAL**

December 26, 2024

BSE Limited  
Phiroze Jeejeebhoy Towers,  
Dalal Street,  
Mumbai – 400 001

National Stock Exchange of India Limited  
Exchange Plaza, C-1, Block G,  
Bandra Kurla Complex,  
Bandra (E), Mumbai –400 051

Scrip Code: 520086

Symbol: SICALLOG  
Series: BE

**Sub: Newspaper publication - Information regarding 01<sup>st</sup> Extra Ordinary General Meeting to be held through video conferencing ("VC") / other audio visual means ("OAVM")**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Pursuant to Regulations 30 and 47 of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, as amended, please find enclosed herewith the copy of newspaper clippings containing the public notice issued for the attention of the shareholders of Sical Logistics Limited ("Company"), after completing the dispatched of notice of the 01<sup>st</sup> Extra Ordinary General Meeting of the Company to be held on Thursday, the 16<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2025 at 02:00 p.m. through VC/ OAVM.

The details of the newspaper publications are as follows:

1. Business Standard (English language)-published on December 26, 2024; and
2. Makkal Kural (Tamil (vernacular) language)-published on December 26, 2024.

The above information will also be hosted on the website of the Company at [www.sical.in](http://www.sical.in)

You are hereby requested to take the above information on record.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

For Sical Logistics Limited

(Vaishali Jain)  
Company Secretary and Compliance Officer  
ICSI Membership No. A58607



*Encl. as above*

**Registered Office :** South India House 73 Armenian Street Chennai 600001 India  
**CIN :** L 51909 TN 1955 PLC 002431

# SURETY VS GUARANTEE

SUBHOMOY BHATTACHARJEE  
New Delhi, 25 December

A few years ago, there was a scare in India's banking sector because of a surge in non-performing assets (NPAs), with the combined figure for banks rising from 2.3 per cent in 2011 to 11.2 by 2018. The result was a grave concern about the health of the sector. And it bore quick lessons all around.

One of those lessons led to the creation of the bankruptcy mechanism and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India in October 2016. The other was the rollout of the surety bonds by the insurance regulator, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), in February 2022, which work as an insurance against project failure or under delivery.

Both the Irdai and surety bonds seek to ring fence banks from the horrors of loans gone bad. They also make a business case.

"The surety bonds market in India has the potential to generate billions of dollars in premiums over the coming years. With a project pipeline of almost \$2.4 trillion, even a modest 10 per cent penetration would translate into substantial market size," says Akshay Bhardwaj, Senior Vice President and Practice Leader—Credit Specialities, Marsh McLennan, a global leader in risk advisory.

However, the issuers of surety bonds, predominantly the non-life insurance companies, expect sops from the Budget for 2025-26, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is slated to present in Parliament on February 1 next year.

Unlike a conventional bank guarantee, issuers of surety bonds do not figure as financial creditors in a bankruptcy. But they want to be counted in the waterfall mechanism, which is a system that decides the preference order and percentages in which these creditors would receive their payables from the defaulting company.

## Rapid transformation

The markets in India took their time to embrace surety bonds, though they were already a familiar instrument in the more developed markets overseas. After the Irdai's approval, the first surety bond was issued by Bajaj Allianz in December 2022. However, by March 31, 2024, fewer than 100 surety bonds had

Surety bonds have begun to outshine bank guarantees. But did they come in too late?

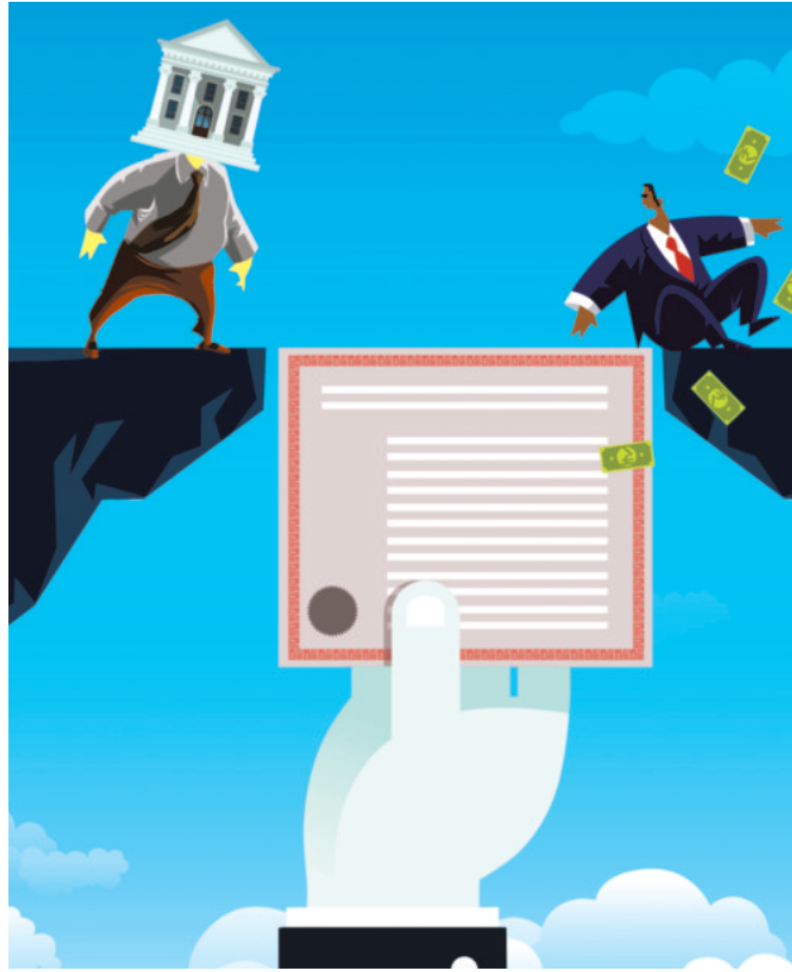


ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA

been issued.

Then things got galvanised. In a rapid transformation, insurance companies have been issuing an average of 25 such bonds every week. At this rate, the market for the paper could hit ₹1 trillion by FY30.

But there are naysayers, too, who say surety bonds came to India a tad too late.

## How surety bonds work

When a contractor bids to build a project for an agency, say a government or a private party, there is the risk of failure. A bank guarantee offered by the contractor keeps the agency asking for the

project to be built safely. If the project does not come through because, say, the contractor goes bankrupt, the payment defrayed by the agency is safe. The vanilla version of this mechanism is a financial bank guarantee. On behalf of the contractor, the bank offers to stand in with the money. The sophisticated version of it is a performance guarantee, where the agency can seek reparations from the bank for non-performance of the obligations.

A surety bond does all of that but as an insurance. They are usually issued by insurance companies instead of banks. If a contractor builds a shoddy bridge or abandons it midway, the surety com-

## BOND STREET

■ **Surety bonds can be issued by companies** subject to 10% premium cap of the total gross written premium that year, subject to a maximum of ₹500 crore (monoline surety insurance companies excepted)

■ **Upto 100%** of a project value can be offered as a bond

■ **Types of surety bonds:** Advance payment bonds, bid bonds, contract bonds, customs bonds,

performance bonds

■ **Some of the companies accepting surety bonds:** AAI, DMRC, GAIL, ONGC, IOC, NHAI, RVNL

■ **The upfront rates are higher for surety bonds** than on bank guarantees, but there is no demand for a collateral, which bank guarantees require

■ **This allows** the buyers of the bonds (in this case, the contractor) to bid on more tenders and contracts,

enhancing their business prospects.

■ **At the same time,** surety bonds offer less financial cover to the agency or beneficiary, since the insurance company will pay back the money only after it is satisfied that the project has failed because of the contractor

■ **A bank guarantee,** on the other hand, is almost available "on tap" and can be encashed at any time by the agency

pany steps in to assume the financial responsibility.

The upfront rates are higher for surety bonds than on bank guarantees, but there is no demand for collateral, which bank guarantees require. This allows the buyers of the bonds (in this case, the contractor) to bid on more tenders and contracts, enhancing their business prospects.

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## Changing the game

"Surety Bonds are emerging as a game-changing alternative to bank guarantees.

They offer significant advantages, particularly in fostering financial flexibility for businesses. Unlike bank guarantees, surety bonds do not require as much collateral or impact working capital, allowing businesses to deploy their resources more effectively," says Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.

The market for surety bonds has expanded because banks are now reluc-

tant to offer bank guarantees. At the height of the NPA crisis, banks were saddled with huge exposure on their guarantees as contractors for a host of projects, particularly infrastructure ventures, turned turtle.

Surety bonds shift the risk to insurance companies. An industry estimate notes that a bank guarantee costs about 1.5 per cent of the total sum asked for, and a surety bond can go anywhere up to 6 per cent.

Currently, the bonds being issued are on demand, as unconditional irrevocable bonds. There is a commitment of capital from the underwriters that makes them costly.

"So, the underwriters are slightly more cautious. Yet they realise the market is potentially huge. But that potential can only be realised with adequate reinsurance capacity," Bhardwaj says.

The demand for other products with project-specific terms and conditions, such as advance payment bonds, bid bonds, contract bonds, customs and court bonds, and performance bonds, are slow to pick up. The big issuers are SBI General, Bajaj Allianz, New India, and HDFC Ergo.

Backing the issues will be the global reinsurance players. Bharadwaj explains that the big reinsurance players have the capacity to absorb the

losses but will not wish to get bogged down in a long recovery process through the courts. "The reason why the insurers and reinsurers remain hesitant to loosen their purse strings is because there is a lingering concern about enforceability of indemnity. The ask from the industry is that since surety underwriting is a financial product, it should be given the same status as a financial creditor. In its absence the concern for large reinsurers is not the volume of the potential loss but that a recovery is only possible through long term litigation," he says.

According to Sanjay Agarwal, head of BFSI Ratings at CareEdge Ratings, this is a genuine demand. He also says that the market for these bonds was opened up a bit late, almost by a decade. Banks have cleaned up the mess in their guarantee business and will soon be keen to participate in the market vigorously. "A surety bond has a limited scope compared to bank guarantees, as those are unconditional, which means the attraction for them is always going to be higher," he says.

Bhardwaj is more hopeful. He expects things will move faster if the challenges are addressed. "These will not only enhance the role of sureties in the market but also position them as vital contributors to India's ambition for world-class infrastructure development," he says.

**FORM NO. CAA. 2**  
(Pursuant to Section 230(3) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rules 6 and 7 of the Companies (Compromises, Arrangements, and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016)  
**BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, BENCH AT AHMEDABAD**  
C.A.(CAA) No. 53 (AHM) 2024  
IN THE MATTER OF SECTIONS 230 TO 232 AND OTHER APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013

AND  
IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF AMALGAMATION AMONGST GUJARAT FOILS LIMITED, KOELEMAN INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED, NOBLE TECH INDUSTRIES PRIVATE LIMITED, OAGRI FARM PRIVATE LIMITED, OFG MANUFACTURING BUSINESSES PRIVATE LIMITED, OMAT BUSINESS PRIVATE LIMITED, OMAT WEST LIMITED, SAIVANA GARMENTS PRIVATE LIMITED, SRI MUKHA ROAD PRODUCTS & CIVIL LABS PRIVATE LIMITED, TANGERINE SKIES PRIVATE LIMITED, WONDERBLUES APPARELS PRIVATE LIMITED AND OFB TECH PRIVATE LIMITED AND THEIR RESPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS AND CREDITORS

Gujarat Foils Limited ...Applicant Company 1 / Transferor Company 1  
Koeleman India Private Limited ...Applicant Company 2 / Transferor Company 2  
Noble Tech Industries Private Limited ...Applicant Company 3 / Transferor Company 3  
OAGRI Farm Private Limited ...Applicant Company 4 / Transferor Company 4  
OFG Manufacturing Businesses Private Limited ...Applicant Company 5 / Transferor Company 5  
OMAT Business Private Limited ...Applicant Company 6 / Transferor Company 6  
OMAT West Limited ...Applicant Company 7 / Transferor Company 7  
Saivana Garments Private Limited ...Applicant Company 8 / Transferor Company 8  
Sri Mukha Road Products & Civil Labs Private Limited ...Applicant Company 9 / Transferor Company 9

Tangerine Skies Private Limited ...Applicant Company 10 / Transferor Company 10  
Wonderblues Apparels Private Limited ...Applicant Company 11 / Transferor Company 11  
OFB Tech Private Limited ...Applicant Company 12 / Transferor Company 12  
(hereinafter collectively referred to as 'the Applicant Companies' and all the Transferor Company collectively referred to as 'the Transferor Companies')

**ADVERTISEMENT OF NOTICE OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUITY SHAREHOLDERS, PREFERENCE SHAREHOLDERS, SECURED CREDITORS AND UNSECURED CREDITORS OF THE APPLICANT COMPANIES**  
Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the order dated December 16, 2024 ("Tribunal Order"), passed by the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Ahmedabad Bench ("Tribunal"), has directed for convening separate meetings of the shareholders & creditors of the Applicant Companies as on June 30, 2024 ("Cut-off Date") for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modifications, the proposed Scheme of Amalgamation amongst the Applicant Companies & their respective shareholders & creditors ("Scheme") under Sections 230 to 232 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 ("Act") in the below mentioned manner:

Particulars of Meeting	Date and Time	Remote e-voting period
Meeting of Equity Shareholders of Transferor Company	January 29, 2025 04:00 P.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Preference Shareholders of Transferor Company	January 30, 2025 10:30 A.M. (IST)	Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Secured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 7	January 29, 2025 11:00 A.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Secured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 11	January 29, 2025 03:00 P.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 2	January 29, 2025 10:00 A.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 3	January 29, 2025 10:30 A.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 8	January 29, 2025 11:30 A.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 10	January 29, 2025 12:15 P.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company No. 11	January 29, 2025 03:30 P.M. (IST)	Friday, January 24, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)
Meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Transferor Company	January 30, 2025 11:30 A.M. (IST)	Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. (IST) to Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 5:00 P.M. (IST)

In pursuance of the Tribunal Order and as directed therein, and in compliance with the applicable provisions of the Act and the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, further notice is hereby given that separate meetings of the shareholders or creditors of the aforesaid Applicant Companies are scheduled to be held on the aforesaid dates and time through Video Conferencing ("VC") or Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM"), at which the respective shareholders or creditors are requested to attend.

Copies of Notice of the Meetings along with the Scheme, explanatory statement under Section 230(3) of the Act and the Companies (Compromises, Arrangements and Amalgamations) Rules, 2016, and other applicable provisions, if any, and other documents, if any, are being sent to all the shareholders and creditors of the aforesaid respective Applicant Companies as on Cut-off Date through e-mail to all the shareholders and creditors whose registered email-id is available with the respective Applicant Companies. Shareholders and creditors whose email id is not registered with the respective Applicant Companies, Notice of Meetings shall be sent physically as directed in Tribunal Order.

The Notice of the aforesaid Meetings and the accompanying documents of the respective Applicant Companies are placed on the website of National Securities Depository Limited ("NSDL") at <https://www.evoting.nsdl.com/> being the agency appointed by the respective Applicant Companies through M&S Services Limited ("Facilitator") to provide e-voting and other facilities for the Meetings. In case of any difficulty in e-voting or attending the Meetings through VC/OAVM, etc. please contact Mr. Sharwan Mangla at +91 9811742828 or write an e-mail at [sm@masserv.com](mailto:sm@masserv.com)

Since the Meetings are being held through VC/OAVM, option of attending the Meetings through proxy is not applicable/available. However, it is clarified that corporate bodies/institutions will be eligible to cast their votes through their representative duly authorised by Board Resolutions/Affidavits as the case may be.

The respective shareholders and creditors shall have the facility and option of voting on the resolution for approval of the Scheme by casting their votes (a) through e-voting system available at the Meeting to be held virtually ("e-voting") or (b) by remote e-voting ("Remote e-voting"). At the end of the remote e-voting period (as mentioned above), the remote e-voting module shall be disabled by NSDL for voting thereafter. The respective shareholders and creditors attending the Meeting who have not already cast their vote by remote e-voting shall be able to exercise their vote at the Meeting. Further, instructions for attending the Meeting and e-voting are provided in the Notice of the Meeting. The shareholders and creditors of the respective Applicant Companies are requested to carefully read all the notes set out in the Notice.

The Tribunal has appointed Mrs. R. Sucharita, Advocate as Chairperson and Mr. Vinit Nagar, Practising Company Secretary ("PCS") as the Scrutinizer for the Meetings. The above-mentioned Scheme, if approved at the Meetings, will be subject to the subsequent approval of the Tribunal.

The respective shareholders and creditors of Transferor Companies and Transferee Company seeking any information with regard to the Scheme or the matter proposed to be considered at the meeting, are requested to write to the respective Applicant Company at least 7 (seven) days before the date of the meeting through email at [pmcompliance@business.in](mailto:pmcompliance@business.in) for transferor companies and [ofcompliance@business.in](mailto:ofcompliance@business.in) for transferee company.

Sd/-  
Date: 25.12.2024  
Mrs. R. Sucharita  
Chairperson  
Appointed by the Tribunal for the Meetings

## SICAL LOGISTICS LIMITED

CIN L51909TN1955PLC002431

Registered Office: South India House, 73, Armenian Street, Chennai - 600 001, Tamil Nadu.  
Telephone: 044-66157071 Website: [www.sical.in](http://www.sical.in) E-mail: [cs@pristinelogistics.com](mailto:cs@pristinelogistics.com)

## NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the 01<sup>st</sup> Extra-Ordinary General Meeting ("EGM") of the members of the Sical Logistics Limited ("Company") will be held on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. (IST) through Video Conferencing ("VC") or Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM") to transact the business as stated in the Notice of EGM with respect to convening the said meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the general circular nos. 14/2020 dated April 8, 2020, 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020, 20/2020 dated May 5, 2020, 10/2022 dated December 28, 2022, issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (collectively referred to as "MCA Circulars") and circulars dated May 12, 2020, January 15, 2021, May 13, 2022 and January 5, 2023 issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI") (collectively referred to as "SEBI Circulars").

The Company has sent the notice for convening EGM on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> December, 2024, through electronic mode to the members whose email addresses are registered with the Company/ Depositories in accordance with aforesaid MCA Circulars and SEBI Circulars. The requirement of sending physical copies have been dispensed with, vide the relevant MCA Circulars and SEBI Circulars. Notice of EGM is also available and can be downloaded from the Company's website at [www.sical.in](http://www.sical.in), and the website of Central Depository Services (India) Limited ("CDSL") at [www.evotingindia.com](http://www.evotingindia.com). BSE Ltd at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and National Stock Exchange of India Limited at [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com).

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 (as amended), the Secretarial Standard on General Meetings issued by Institute of Company Secretaries of India and Regulation 44 of the Listing Regulations, as amended and the MCA Circulars, the Company is providing the facility of remote e-voting to its members in respect of the business to be transacted at the EGM and for this purpose, appointed CDSL to facilitate voting through electronic means. Accordingly, the facility of casting votes by a member using remote e-voting system before the EGM as well as remote e-voting during the EGM will be provided by CDSL.

The remote e-voting facility would be available for the following period:

Period of remote e-voting	Monday, the 13 <sup>th</sup> January, 2025 - 9:00 AM (IST) to Wednesday, the 15 <sup>th</sup> January, 2025 - 5:00 PM (IST)
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The voting rights of the members shall be in proportion to the equity shares held by them in the paid-up equity share capital of the Company as on Thursday, 09<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. During this period member may cast their vote electronically. The remote e-voting module shall be disabled by CDSL thereafter. Those members who shall be present in the EGM through VC/OAVM facility and had not cast their votes on the resolutions through remote e-voting and are otherwise not barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote through e-voting systems during the EGM.

The Company has appointed M/s KRA & Associates, Company Secretaries (Firm Registration Number P2020TN082800) to act as scrutineer for conducting the entire e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner.

Any person, who acquires shares of the Company and become a member of the Company after the notice has been sent electronically by the Company and holds shares as of the cut-off date (i.e., Thursday, 09<sup>th</sup> January, 2024) may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request to [www.evotingindia.com](http://www.evotingindia.com). However, if he/she is already registered with CDSL for remote e-voting then he/she can use his/her existing user ID and password for casting their votes.

Physical shareholders are requested to send below mentioned documents to the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent of the Company i.e., M/s Cameo Corporate Services Limited at [info@wisdom.cameoindia.com](mailto:info@wisdom.cameoindia.com), or dispatch at Subramanian Building, 5th Floor, 1, Club House Road, Chennai-600002.

S.No.	Type of change	Physical Holding	Demat Holding
1.	Change/Registered-Email Address/Phone No.	Request letter along with self-attested copy of Permanent Account Number (PAN)	Demat holders are requested to contact their depository participants.
2.	Updating Address	Request letter, old address proof, new address proof (Aadhaar card/Electricity Bill etc.)	
3.	Updating Bank details/ Receiving Dividend directly in Bank Account	Request letter along with cancelled cheque (bearing Name of Holder) and self-attested copy of PAN	

As the EGM is being conducted through VC/OAVM, for the smooth conduct of proceedings of the EGM, members are encouraged to express their questions/queries in advance mentioning their name, demat account number/folio number, email ID, mobile number at [cs@pristinelogistics.com](mailto:cs@pristinelogistics.com). The questions/queries received by the Company till 5:00 P.M. (IST) on Thursday, 09<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 shall be considered and responded during the EGM.

In case of any queries/grievances pertaining to e-voting, you may refer to the Notice of the EGM or Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for members and e-voting user manual for members available at the downloads section of [www.cdsindia.com](http://www.cdsindia.com) or contact/call at toll free number- 1800-22-5533.

For Sical Logistics Limited

Sd/-  
Vaishali Jain  
Company Secretary  
ICSI Membership No. AS8607

Place: Chennai  
Date : 05.12.2024

## OPINION

# AI to D2M – DPG 2.0 needs deep-tech action now



SHASHI SHEKHAR VEMPATI

From artificial intelligence to direct-to-mobile broadcasting, India faces a technology strategy dilemma on whether to develop indigenous deep-tech ecosystems or to follow the lead on technologies developed outside India. From chips to platforms, India's dependence on foreign deep-tech ecosystems points to a long-term strategic vulnerability. An emphasis on services over core technology, applications over platforms and use cases over foundational capabilities has marked India's technology evolution since the 1990s.

The development of the IT services opportunity saw India emerge as the manpower capital of the world to service the Y2K problem at the dawn of the new century. Subsequent phases of technology development saw India emerge first as the software services capital to go on to become the back-office capital to global firms. This global trend of outsourcing has since evolved into Global Capability Centers being located in India, sucking away the remaining Indian talent that hadn't already migrated to the more developed economies. Between migrant Indian talent servicing the hi-tech sector in global hotspots such as Silicon Valley in California and the native Indian talent under the employment of GCCs, the much-acclaimed Indian talent prowess in emerging technologies is largely deployed towards strengthening and enhancing foreign technology systems and platforms.

Since 2014, a key course correction has occurred with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government prioritising Digital Public Goods. Starting with taking Aadhaar universal to opening up banking through mobile phones, the DPG wave prioritised technology-led socio-economic development.

This DPG wave received its greatest boost in the aftermath of demonetisation with UPI for digital payments radically transforming

commerce. With even the smallest of street vendors being able to participate in the digital economy, the DPG wave saw the widening of the digital base in India with almost every stratum of society participating in the emerging digital economy.

The DPG wave played a pivotal role during the Covid-19 pandemic from digital delivery of vaccine certificates to paving the way for a new wave of digital quick commerce. From ONDC to Sahmati the next set of DPGs have widened the scope of potential applications while India under PM Modi made a bold pitch to the world on adopting its DPG-led developmental model. During the 2024 general elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi once again demonstrated that he is a leader who is not shy of experimenting with new technologies with his adoption of artificial intelligence for delivering his speeches in multiple languages.

With Bhashini and Anuvadini, India is witnessing the first set of AI DPGs making their mark to transcend the language diversity and deepen the impact of the digital-led development model of PM Modi. The rollout of 5G across India has accelerated digital growth while the market for smartphones continues to rise in India. It is to PM Modi's credit that concerted efforts to bring hi-tech manufacturing to India are bearing fruit starting with smartphones and related electronics while the first set of semiconductor projects have broken ground. This is an inflexion point in the evolution of the Indian economy with a convergence between domestic demand, native talent pool and indigenous technology.

It would be extremely short-sighted to let this moment fritter away by giving in to arguments that India must not invest in development of foundational technologies and instead prioritise building use cases, applications and related services. From AI to D2M, India has both the opportunity and the intellectual property base to develop indigenous foundational technologies that can not only drive the next wave of DPGs but also create a virtuous cycle of demand for the nascent semiconductor ecosystem in India. To let this moment slip

away would be to further increase dependence on foreign platforms and to lose out to China which dominates the technology standards landscape such as the 5G/6G standards at 3GPP and is accelerating native development of AI chips and platforms.

India imports nearly \$40 billion worth of semiconductors annually, heavily relying on China for low-cost chips that power everything from feature phones to IoT devices. Through state-supported entities, China gained a significant foothold in the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), ensuring its technologies became globally adopted. This early dominance allowed Chinese companies to corner the market in 5G-enabled devices and related chipsets. For example, of the approximately 800 documents submitted by 3GPP members (companies, educational and research institutions) to the 3GPP Radio Access Network (RAN) working group, Chinese entities have solo or multi-authored 240 contributions dealing with technology advances that will create new standards in 5G and 6G over the next five to 10 years. This represents about 25 per cent of the contributions. Huawei alone is named in 90, and ZTE in 65.

India's experience with D2M is eerily similar. While the country has pioneered trials and use cases

for D2M through Prasar Bharati and IIT Kanpur, it risks losing the advantage if it fails to define and own global standards for D2M technology. Without leadership in standards, India could once again find itself importing Chinese D2M chipsets, losing billions

in potential downstream manufacturing and eroding its self-reliance goal. India's DPG strategy, celebrated for platforms like Aadhaar and UPI, now requires a deeper pivot toward deep-tech and hardware ecosystems where platforms drive demand for chips, and chips, in turn, fuel innovation. The path forward requires bold policy, coordinated execution, and an unwavering focus on deep-tech. From AI to D2M, India has the talent, vision, and ambition for a chips-to-platforms strategy that can be the catalyst for India to take a global leadership position.

The author is former CEO, Prasar Bharati

