

**CONSULATE GENERAL OF INDIA**  
**SAN FRANCISCO**  
**MONTHLY COMMERCIAL REPORT MARCH-APRIL 2017**

**Trade News Highlights- March-April 2017**

**1. Indian IT Companies Need To Communicate Mutual Benefits To US: Nasscom**

Indian IT industry body Nasscom had taken a delegation to Washington DC in early March to discuss issues like clampdown on work visas and flow of skilled manpower between the two nations. "From recent meetings, it is clear that IT sector has more work to do in educating US policymakers on the mutual benefits of strong India-US trade in IT services... In some cases, those benefits and the actual workings of the visa programs are not well understood," Mr Chandrasekhar said. The delegation met officials like Darrell Issa and Zoe Lofgren, influential members of Congress who have sponsored legislation on the issue. Nasscom also pushed for a level-playing field, saying any new requirements aimed at protecting US workers should be applied to all visa sponsors.

**2. India may be hit by US trade review.**

India is among the 16 target countries in a review of trade ties that President Donald Trump was scheduled to order on 31st March. The President would also sign a second order to strictly enforce anti-dumping and countervailing duties, U.S Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said. The report will identify "every form of trade abuse and every non-reciprocal practice that now contributes to the U.S. trade deficit," Mr. Ross said.

**3. Uber Reviews India Leasing Scheme as Driver Incomes Drop.**

Global ride-hailing firm Uber Technologies is rethinking its car leasing strategy in India, its second-biggest market, as drivers have returned dozens of leased cars early after the company cut incentives, people familiar with the matter told Reuters. Uber had planned to buy 15,000 new cars last year and lease them out in a bid to attract more drivers - a strategy it has used in other markets - but it suspended the scheme for a while in December after leasing just a third of that total. After burning through millions of dollars over three years in a battle for market share with local rival Ola, backed by Japan's Softbank, Uber has cut the incentives it gives to drivers and raised the fares it charges passengers.

**4. India Takes US To World Trade Organisation Over Visa Fee Hike**

India has taken the issue of hike in visa fees by the US to the dispute settlement agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply that the government has taken up with the new

American administration the visa issues being faced by Indian services companies.

"The government of India continues to engage the US administration for better access of its professionals in the US," the minister said.

"H-1B and L-1 visa issues, including increase in visa processing fees, high rejection rates and other difficulties faced by the Indian services companies have been raised with the US government at various levels," Ms Sitharaman said. "India has also taken up the matter on US visa fee hike in the dispute settlement body of the World Trade Organization," she added.

#### **5. US keeps India on intellectual property priority watch list**

The US today retained India on its priority watch list this year for "lack of improvement" in the intellectual property (IP) framework. "India remains on the priority watch list this year for lack of sufficient measurable improvements to its IP framework on long-standing challenges and new issues that have negatively affected US right holders over the past year, particularly with respect to patents, copyrights, trade secrets, and enforcement," the US Trade Representative (USTR) said in a report. The 'Special 301' report is an annual review of the global state of IP protection and enforcement. The USTR's priority watch list names those countries which it considers are not properly protecting the US copyrights and patents. However, India has never participated in this exercise and has termed this report as an unilateral move.

#### **6. India moving forward to become major destination for FDI: US trade official.**

India, with a young skilled workforce, high growth rate and deregulation being undertaken by the government, is set to become an important destination for foreign investment, a former top US trade official has said. "With the young skilled workforce, its growth rate that is going to surpass China for the coming years, as well as the market opening and deregulation undertaken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will make this a really important destination for foreign investment," Wendy Cutler, who was the Acting Deputy US Trade Representative under Obama administration told a Washington audience in April.

#### **7. US Commerce Secretary talks of the possibility of India-US FTA**

US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, whomet Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in April, signaled that an India-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is not out of the question, even though no such negotiations have commenced.

"I don't believe that there have been any serious discussions with India of late on the topic of a free trade agreement. But there's no inherent negative attitude on our part on that," Ross said in a press conference, about the view of President Donald Trump administration on the idea of an India-US FTA.

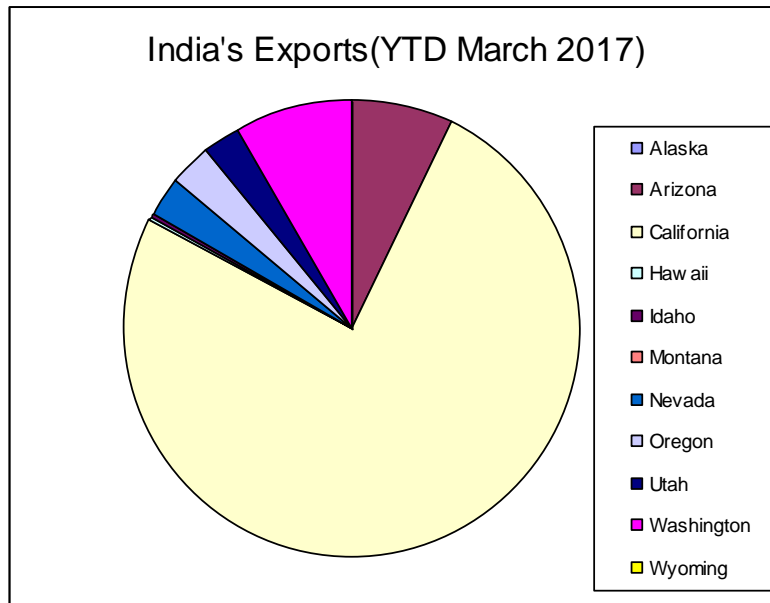
Currently, the US-India bilateral trade is governed by the mandate of WTO. No exclusive trade pact exists between the Western superpower and the Asian giant.

**Trade Figures:**

Given below are the trade figures for the states in this Post’s jurisdiction for the first quarter of 2017(Jan 2017- March 2017).

States	India's Exports	India's Imports
Alaska	321,820	504,727
Arizona	82,954,417	44,340,676
California	869,232,382	1,024,715,059
Hawaii	2,058,961	129,750
Idaho	3,648,875	4,523,727
Montana	953,716	3,783,423
Nevada	29,791,916	365,684,213
Oregon	34,923,365	26,066,035
Utah	29,225,353	12,274,714
Washington	96,347,705	207,168,164
Wyoming	403,358	208,679

Here is a chart depicting the strength of India’s exports to the states in this Post’s jurisdiction:



## Trade Delegations

### **1. Secretary of Textiles Visit to Las Vegas- March 2017**

A delegation led by Secretary of Textiles visited Las Vegas to hold road-shows during late March as preparation for the international exhibition set to occur in June in Gujarat.

### **2. Delegation from Ministry of Finance- April 2017**

Dr. Saurabh Garg, Joint Secretary (Investment), Shri Sujoy Bose, CEO, NIIFL(National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited) and Shri Vinod Giri, Sr. Principal (NIIFL) visited the Bay Area and had meetings with Global Projects Center at Stanford and other financial organizations in the area.

## Trade Enquiries

Here are some of the trade enquiries that this post received during these months and they have been attended to appropriately.

Kolka Hair Extensions	Hair Extensions
Isainila International	Millets
Medisiddh Pharma Pvt. Ltd.	Siddha and Ayurveda medicines
Golden White Industries	Hardware fittings, furniture
Parvathi Exports	Hats and Handfans
Secure global services	Paper, paper products
Vidya Textiles	Readymade garments
Saro Muttha	Footwear