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## **Speech by Amb. Abhishek Singh, High Commissioner of India to Nigeria on Indian Business Community in Abuja on 11.09.2026 at 04:00 PM**

Members of the Indian Business Community, Distinguished Guests, Colleagues from the High Commission, Friends, Good evening.

It is a great pleasure to meet all of you today. You are the true ambassadors of Brand India in Nigeria. I would like to applaud our Indian companies for being the 2nd largest employer of Nigerian nationals after the Federal Government of Nigeria. Every job created by you strengthens the India–Nigeria partnership.

India and Nigeria share a relationship built on trust, history, and shared aspirations. Economically, India is one of Nigeria's largest trading partners, and Indian companies are among the top investors here with over \$30 billion invested. Over the period you have grown in numbers and we can proudly say that today more than 200 companies are either owned or run by Indians across pharma, manufacturing, steel, plastics, telecom, IT, and services. Many of you have been here for decades and have made Nigeria your second home. As I always say that though India is your mother land, you have with your efforts made Nigeria your second home and those who are here for decades call it their father's land.

But we are at an important moment. Nigeria is undergoing major economic reforms. The focus on local manufacturing, ease of doing business, infrastructure development, and the African Continental Free Trade Area **(AfCFTA)** creates new opportunities. And India has the products, technology, and experience that Nigeria needs right now.

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In this fast changing scenario, you can always rely on Indian High Commission, which is also your **home away from home** to always be your trusted partner. Our Commercial Wing is here to help you with market access, policy issues, regulatory clearances with NAFDAC, SON, Customs, and to connect you with the right Nigerian partners. In fact, we are already hosting dedicated **Trade Webinars Series** on potential sectors twice a month, which has been greatly appreciated and attended by a large number of participants from both India and Nigeria. Adding to our efforts, we have recently launched a India-Nigeria Business Connect **WhatsApp Group**. This group provide a platform that will serve as a direct bridge between Indian exporters, Nigerian importers, industry associations, and policymakers. I am sure that most of you have already join this WhatsApp group and those who have not, please visit our website and join the WhatsApp. I urge you to proactively use this forum to forge partnerships, resolve challenges, showcase your capabilities, and be a guide for Indian companies in India to collectively take India-Nigeria bilateral trade to new heights.

Now, let's talk about another important aspect of trade, which is the value chain. Beyond trading, we need more Indian investment in manufacturing in Nigeria. Make in Nigeria, for Nigeria and for Africa which also align with the current policy of Nigeria of domestic manufacturing and value addition. This will help with Forex, create jobs, and give you better market access under AfCFTA. We will support you with government liaison, financing through EXIM bank, Bank of Industry and ease of doing business through structured Mou/agreements with the Federal Government of Nigeria.

I know there are concerns regarding Foreign Exchange repatriation, port delays, multiple taxation, and competition. We are also aware of the

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market access issues, trade NTBs and CERPAC charges. We are regularly engaging with the Nigerian government at the highest levels to resolve them. Your feedback helps us advocate better.

Another point which I would like to discuss is Project Brand India. Quality, reliability, and affordability are India's strengths. Let us maintain high standards, comply with all local regulations, and build goodwill. The community welfare activities and skill training for local staff also go a long way. Many Indian business groups are already involved in community welfare activities in areas like medical, education and climate change with active engagement with local Nigerians partners. I would like applaud them for the community welfare work they are doing, specifically for the **KYAN Smart Class** digital education technology by School-net India, endorsed by the Federal Government for nationwide deployment and Edtech initiative of SIMBA Group.

I would recommend that as part of your engagement with local government, you can also leverage the training course, High Commission is providing through ITEC, a capacity building programme of Indian Government, under which every year India offers about 250 training slots. These courses are fully funded by the Indian Government which include airfare, accommodation and visa.

**In Conclusion**, The High Commission's doors are always open to you. We see ourselves as facilitators for your success. A successful Indian business community means a stronger India–Nigeria economic relationship. I urge you to use this interaction today to network with each other, share best practices, and tell us frankly what support you need.

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Let us work together to make the coming years the most productive chapter yet in India–Nigeria economic ties.

Thank you for your commitment for showcasing and promoting **Made in India** products abroad. I wish you continued success.

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