

Made In India, Stamp Of Quality

Union commerce and industry minister argues good governance ensures quality products, and consumers and voters recognise this

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India is on a mission to become a world leader in providing top-quality products that meet the highest global standards. This is in line with PM Modi's call for 'zero defect, zero effect' in manufacturing.

Supply of quality products at competitive rates is a key part of PM's mission to make India a developed country by 2047. GOI is taking determined steps to ensure 'Made in India' branding is a stamp of quality, a branding that both Indian and foreign consumers will delight in equally.

Interests at heart | PM emphasised that a profitable market can be sustained when there is a balance of interests of producers and consumers. A key plank of this strategy is a thrust on Quality Control Orders (QCOs), which mandate that specified products conform to prescribed norms of Bureau of Indian Standards.

This is a boon both for consumers, who are assured reliable, safe and high-quality products, and businesses, which have to deal with increasingly demanding and discerning consumers in domestic and international markets.

Pulse of consumer | Digital India initiative has helped 140 crore Indians connect with the world and know about best products and practices. They routinely check customer reviews for performance, durability and dependability before buying a product. They publicly highlight deficiencies if dissatisfied with any given product. Therefore, striking a balance between product quality, price, and innovation is the need of the hour.

Expanding quality net | Modi government is focused on developing a robust-quality ecosystem to provide safe, reliable and superior-quality goods, and promoting exports of Indian products.

Prior to May 2014, only 14

QCOs covering 106 products had been issued. The list has now been expanded to 148 QCOs covering 653 products. These include household products like ACs, toys and footwear.

Exporting quality | QCOs have accelerated the mission of 'Make in India for the World'. Many products under QCOs are exported. Cast iron products, solar DC cables, door fittings, ceiling fans, helmets, smart meters, hinges, air coolers and air filters are quality-controlled products exported at higher levels than they are imported.

Cast iron products covered by QCOs had exports of \$535 million last year, while imports were barely \$68 million. About 25 QCOs are applied to products where exports exceed imports.

Quality is safety | This clearly demonstrates that QCOs are focused on building robust-quality consciousness in India. This also helps reduce dumping of poor-quality goods into the country. Access to the best-quality goods is the right of

every Indian citizen in *amrit kaal*.

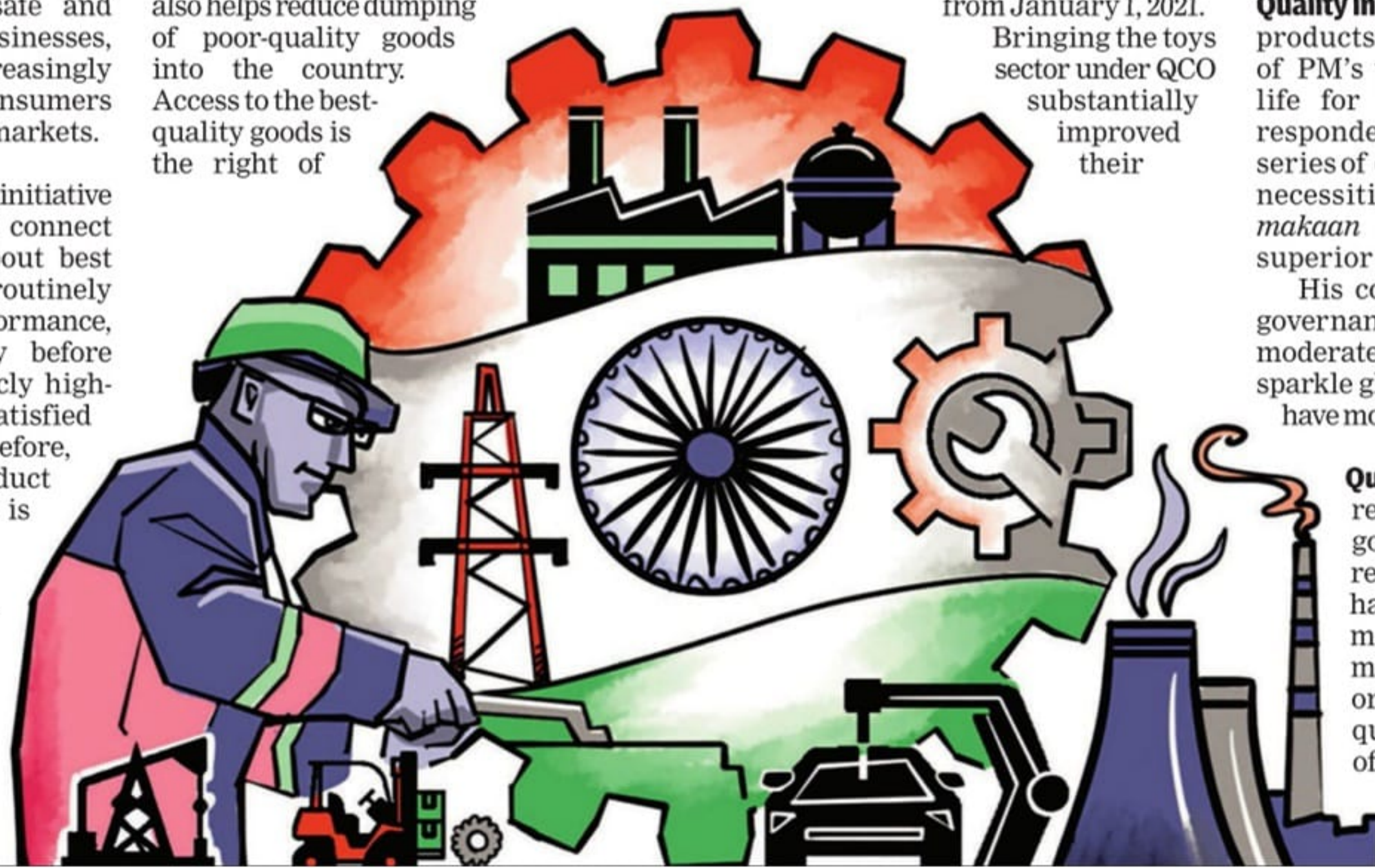
QCOs are also critical for people's health and safety. Substandard products can be hazardous for households because of risks such as fires due to cheap electronics, and also hospitalisation of children because of toxic chemicals in toys and electrical short-circuits.

Control on quality | A good example of how quality control can dramatically upgrade manufacturing to help consumers and manufacturers is the toy industry. Prior to QCO implementation, the Indian toy market was plagued by cheap, substandard products.

A Quality Council of India survey in 2019 showed that barely one-third of toys adhered to relevant BIS norms. Most of them were hazardous for children. This was completely unacceptable. GOI responded swiftly with a QCO for the sector from January 1, 2021.

Bringing the toys sector under QCO substantially improved their

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quality. A recent survey showed 84% of toys in the Indian market adhered to BIS norms. QCO has not only provided Indian children with safe, high-quality toys, but has also increased their exports by 60% in 2022-23 compared with 2018-19.

Quality at home | Several quality norms have been enforced on consumer durables and other products used in households. These include smart meters, bolts, nuts and fasteners, ceiling fans, fire extinguishers, cookware, utensils, water bottles, domestic gas stoves for use with piped natural gas, wood-based boards, insulated flask, and insulated containers, among others.

Government consults all stakeholders, including industry representatives to make sure their feedback, technical inputs and suggestions are considered before implementing QCOs. Interests of micro and small units are protected by giving them a longer transition period. GOI is always ready to help industry become more competitive and support manufacturers to upgrade quality.

Quality in governance | Drive to upgrade products to global standards is a subset of PM's vision to improve quality of life for 140 crore Indians. He has responded to their aspirations with a series of decisive steps to provide basic necessities such as *roti, kapda aur makaan* along with healthcare, and superior infrastructure.

His compassionate, corruption-free governance has accelerated growth, moderated inflation and made India sparkle globally. About 13.5 crore people have moved out of poverty in five years.

Quality of vote | People have responded to PM's high-quality governance with their vote in recent assembly elections. This has a strong message for Indian manufacturers. When people make a selection – with their vote or their wallet – they choose top quality. As Philip Crosby, author of *Quality is Free* once said: "If you're out of quality, you're out of business."