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### **Octavio Paz Remembered in India**

Four decades after Mexico's Nobel Laureate Octavio Paz's time in India, he was honoured once again in India with a colloquium at the Mexican embassy and new editions of his work in Hindi and Bengali. Conrado Tostado, Cultural Attache of Mexican Embassy in Delhi, said that Paz's poetry and thought experienced a profound transformation upon coming into contact with Indian culture during his 1962-1968 stay as Mexico's Ambassador in New Delhi". On the 10th anniversary of his death, the Mexican embassy late last year organized an exhibition of his work and a colloquium in which Paz's friends from that period, scholars and other esteemed guests took part. This year, an anthology of 50 poems by Paz was published in Bengali and some of the Hindi translations were compiled in one volume, as part of an effort to disseminate his poetry in India.

### **Welcome Foray of Cinepolis in India**

Mexico's Cinepolis, the fifth largest international multiplex chain, plans to invest an estimated US \$ 70 m to build 110 movie screens in the next 2-3 years in India, making it the first international multiplex brand to foray into the country. In the long run, Cinepolis plans to build 500 screens in 40 Indian cities by 2016. Unlike existing cinema chains which typically have 3-4 screens per multiplex, Cinepolis will only focus on opening megaplexes with 10 or more screens at a single location. Cinepolis expected to launch its first multiplex in the second half of this year and had already signed 110 screens across 8 cities with various real estate developers. Cinepolis reportedly believes that India is likely to become its fastest growing market in a short span of time. The company will also target the mid-market multiplex segment and luxury cinema concept with Cinepolis VIP initially. Cinepolis strategy head, Javier Sotomayer added that the company would invest a significant percentage of funds earmarked for global expansions in India.

### **Bilateral Air Services Agreement**

The Agreement between India and Mexico will come into force on June 19, with both sides now having completed their constitutional processes in this regard. The agreement was signed in April 2008 during the State Visit of President (Mrs.) Pratibha Patil to Mexico.

### **Ambassador Visits Acapulco, Guadalajara; Meets Bancomer**

Since his arrival last February, Ambassador Dinesh K Jain made his first visit to the States of Guerrero and Jalisco, taking him to Acapulco, Guadalajara (including Zapopan) and Tequila. During his visits he called on the Governor of Guerrero, Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo, Municipal Presidents of Acapulco, Dr. Manuel Anorbe Bano, and of Zapopan, Juan Sanchez Aldana Ramirez, and had meetings with a large number of business representatives, particularly in Guadalajara, under the aegis of India-Mexico Business Chamber,

Guadalajara Chamber of Commerce, and Bancomer. These discussions reconfirmed numerous attractive possibilities, and mutual strong interest, for further strengthening and expanding India-Mexico trade, business and economic cooperation, which has already been advancing rapidly in recent years. In addition, a proposal has been initiated for Acapulco, and India's popular sea resort, Goa, to be made 'sister cities'. Acapulco authorities invited Ambassador for India's participation in the popular cultural festival in Acapulco 'Nao de China'.

Separately, in Mexico D.F., at a meeting of Bancomer's, top executives and regional council's presidents, where Ambassador Jain was invited, he, in his address, spoke about the large similarities and complementarities between the two countries, identifying the specific areas of possible mutual business interests, and invited Bancomer to take initiatives and use its good offices and international network in forging closer business ties between India and Mexico, two large emerging and friendly economies. In responding positively, Bancomer announced sending a 35-member business delegation to India later this year.

### **Congress-Led UPA Voted to Power Again**

Following the five-phase general election spread over April-May, the results were swift in coming on 16 May with the incumbent Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) being the clear winner. UPA won 262 seats in the 543 member House of People (Lok Sabha). The opposition BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 157 seats and immediately conceded defeat. Dr. Manmohan Singh was once again elected the leader of the UPA and took oath as Prime Minister of India for the second consecutive term on 22 May. Some of the key Ministers in the new cabinet are: S. M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs; Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of Finance; A. K. Antony, Minister of Defence; P. Chidambaram, Minister of Home Affairs; and Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry. In all there are 34 Cabinet Ministers and 45 Minister of State, including two Ministers of State for External Affairs, (Mrs.) Preneet Kaur and Shashi Tharoor, the latter to oversee India's relations and interactions with Latin American Countries, including Mexico, Guatemala and Belize.

### **India-US to Join Hands on Global Issues**

US President Barack Obama spoke to Manmohan Singh on May 23 to congratulate him on his re-election as Prime Minister and invited him to pay an early visit to Washington. Obama said that the electoral verdict in India was an endorsement of the policies pursued by Singh's previous government. The two leaders "recalled their warm meeting" in London on April 2 on the sidelines of G-20 summit, and "discussed their mutual desire to strengthen US-India relations and work together to address common global challenges such as the

economic downturn, climate change and counter-terrorism. Singh reiterated his invitation to Obama and his family to visit India, which the President said was a priority for him.

### **"Peace with Neighbours Top Priority"**

After taking over as India's Minister of External Affairs, S.M. Krishna said that he was deeply honoured to assume the high office, and observed: "We are at a moment in history when the world situation is rapidly changing, and India, as a responsible power, must engage actively with the world. I am deeply conscious of the opportunities available to us and the difficulties that we face as we continue to pursue our independent foreign policy of peace and development, and strengthen our strategic autonomy... Our primary objective is to sustain high rates of economic growth in the range of 9 to 10% during the coming decades for which we require peace and tranquility in our extended neighbourhood and a supportive international environment. I accord highest priority to strengthen our political, economic and cultural relations with our neighbours ... to strengthen our policy and developmental options we will consolidate further our existing strategic partnership with major powers like USA, Russia, China, Japan and EU. Our strong and traditional ties with countries in Africa, West Asia and Latin America will be furthered and our Look East Policy strengthened. I look forward to these challenging tasks in the pursuit of India's non-aligned foreign policy."

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also called up External Affairs Minister S M Krishna to congratulate him on assumption of office, and discussed ways to take the bilateral strategic relationship to a "new level". French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner also called up Krishna to congratulate him on assumption of office and discussed ways to take the bilateral cooperation forward.

Also US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the Obama administration was "strengthening and deepening" its bilateral ties with emerging regional leaders of the world, including India, as part of a comprehensive approach to solve global problems. Clinton said that none of the great problems facing the world could be solved without the US, but Washington on its own could not solve any of these problems. She added that USA was strengthening and deepening its bilateral ties with emerging regional leaders like Indonesia, Brazil, Turkey, Mexico and India.

**External Affairs Minister: S.M. Krishna** (b. 1932) has a Degree in Law from Bangalore, and was a Fulbright scholar at George Washington University. He briefly worked as a Professor of International Law in Bangalore, before being elected to the Karnataka State Legislative Assembly in 1962. He was first elected as a Member of Lok Sabha in 1968, and he served as Minister of State for Industry

(1983-84) and Minister of State for Finance (1984-85). He was the Chief Minister of the State of Karnataka from 1999-2004, and Governor of the State of Maharashtra from 2004-2008. He is married and has two daughters. His hobbies include tennis & yoga.

**Minister of State For External Affairs: Mrs. Preneet Kaur** (b. 1944) has been thrice elected as Member of Lok Sabha since 1999, and has served as member of several parliamentary committees. She has been actively involved in social works. She is married to Amarinder Singh, former Maharajah of Patiala and former Chief Minister of the State of Punjab.

**Minister of State For External Affairs: Dr. Shashi Tharoor** (b. 1956) got his PhD from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. He was India's candidate to succeed United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2006, and finished a close second. His UN career began in 1978, and over the years he held various key responsibilities, including UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. In 1998, Dr. Tharoor was named a "Global Leader of Tomorrow" by the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. He is also the award-winning author of eleven books as well as hundreds of articles. Some of his books are: From Midnight to the Millennium (1997), The Elephant, the Tiger and the Cellphone: Reflections on India in the 21st Century (2007), The Great Indian Novel (1989), Show Business (1992) and Nehru: The Invention of India (2003).

A compelling and effective speaker, he is fluent in English, French, Malayalam and Hindi. He was elected as a Member of Indian Parliament for the first time in May 2009. He is married and has two sons.

### **Pakistan Urged to Target Militants**

Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna said that Pakistan "should take determined and credible action to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism operating from their territory that has been the stumbling block." He ruled out talks with Pakistan unless it moved against militants. Krishna added: "Generally we would like to live in peace with our neighbours. This has been our desire and we are pursuing it..... and we stand ready to extend our hand of friendship and partnership to Pakistan."

India's Home Minister, P. Chidambaram, said Pakistan had been given enough evidence to prosecute those behind last November's attack in Mumbai that killed 166 people that led to renewed tensions between the two neighbours. Chidambaram said this after India gave Pakistan new information relating to the attack which, he said, was carried out by Pakistan-based militants who must also have had the backing of some official Pakistani agencies. Islamabad has acknowledged that

the raid had been launched and partly planned from Pakistan. India gave Pakistan a dossier of information shortly after the attack and followed it up with what it said was more evidence that Pakistan could use to prosecute the guilty.

India's army chief, General Deepak Kapoor, said that the world must put pressure on Pakistan to restrict its nuclear capabilities and added that reports of Pakistan stockpiling nuclear arsenal was a matter of serious concern. As Pakistan battles a growing Taliban insurgency, reports in U.S. media have raised the concern of its nuclear weapons falling into militant hands.

### **Concern over N. Korea Nuclear Test**

Reacting to the nuclear test conducted by North Korea on 25 May, Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna said that India, like others in the international community, was concerned at the adverse effect on peace and security in the region of such tests. He added it was unfortunate that DPRK had conducted such a test in violation of its international commitments and India was monitoring the situation.

### **Dalai Lama Thanks, Speaks on India**

In his tours around the world, the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner, recently spoke to a group of about 200 Indian Americans packed in a small room at The Waldorf Astoria Hotel, in New York City, to thank his host country by connecting with Indians living in the US. The Dalai Lama said, in what appeared to be an ex-tempore speech delivered in his warm and grandfatherly voice, peppered with his trademark sense of humour, "...we found India as our second home, and because of the support, we had the opportunity to carry on the preservation of the Tibetan Buddhist culture, including our own language." He added, "it is important and it is my duty to thank India for what it has done for us in the last 50 years". He added, "The tradition of ahimsa is central to India's being. I consider myself to be a messenger of Indian values and I try and make those values known in the world. I know I have made a small impact in the world."

### **Indian Navy Thwarts Pirates**

An Indian warship thwarted a piracy attempt near the Gulf of Aden on May 28 after commandos from its helicopter intercepted eight gun-wielding men trying to board a cargo vessel from a skiff. An Indian Navy spokesperson said this could be the first instance of pirates being thwarted when they were in the process of boarding a merchant ship. Two of the pirates were missing at sea in this action and six were picked up by a patrol in the waters off Somalia where many countries, including India, have been engaged in anti-piracy missions.

**“India Grew 6.7 % in FY 09”**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that India achieved the second-highest growth rate among major economies as it grew at 6.7 percent in the just-ended 2008/09 fiscal year. He added that the wholesale price inflation was already down to around 1 percent, and the consumer price inflation would also fall soon.

**Economy Rebound, High Growth to be Regained**

India's new Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee said he would take steps to protect the economy from the adverse impacts of the global slump and promised to return the country to a high growth path. Growth was expected to slow to less than 7 % in 2009-10 from rates of 9 % or more in the previous three years.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor D Subbarao predicted that India's economic recovery would be sharper and swifter than many others, once the world economy started to recover from the global financial crisis of 2008. He said that some sectors of the economy had shown incipient signs of recovery and the recovery would be backed by strong fundamentals and untapped growth potential. Subbarao clarified that the Indian economy was not constrained by demand, but by supply. He said: “In my view, demand is there, but we need to invest more in infrastructure, manufacturing and services sectors to achieve rapid recovery.”

According to Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Indian economy is expected to witness a GDP growth rate of 6.1% in 2009-10 if government took to monetary easing by cutting repo and reverse repo rates by at least 50 basis points, implemented large infrastructure projects and revived confidence by ensuring a business-friendly environment. The state-of-economy report by CII stated that the economy should be driven by factors such as the moderation in the prices of essential commodities like food and fuel as well as reduction in indirect tax rates.

Goldman Sachs said that the Indian economy would recover from the slowdown in the second half of 2009-10, backed by strong domestic market, excess liquidity in the system, a substantial easing of financial conditions, declines in some key interest rate spreads, and the removal of election uncertainty. It said that the positive signs were reflected in the stock markets too.

Core sector growth is back on track with six core industries—crude oil, petroleum refinery products, coal, electricity, cement and finished carbon steel - registering a growth of 2.9% in March this year over March last year. This has been the highest growth rate in the last six months, and higher than the average of 2.7% during last year. The

biggest surprise was in electricity generation, which touched a 13-month high.

According to an ETIG study, two out of every five companies in India Inc generated better growth in revenues for the year ending in March'09 compared to 2007-08 bucking the overall slowdown in the economy and one in six companies accelerated profit growth. The study, which looked at financials of 1,050 companies, showed as many as 400 firms reported higher growth rate of net sales for FY09. The outperformers span diverse sectors such as information technology, auto, sugar, agricultural inputs, cement, FMCG and pharmaceuticals.

Riding a high demand, Indian cement industry witnessed robust growth since the start of FY10 (1.4.2009 -31.3.2010) with the despatch growth in April reaching a five-year high. At a time when other manufacturing sectors are showing poor growth, cement sector has been an outperformer since November last year. The 212-million-tonne cement industry, world's second largest after China, despatched 16.65 million tonne during April, registering a growth of 13.03 %, the highest since February 2008.

World Steel Association (World Steel) forecast a 2% growth in the India's steel consumption in 2009, making it the only major economy to post an increase in a year that will see global consumption of the metal fall by around 15%. India, which accounts for around 5% of the global steel consumption, will use 53.5 million tonne of the metal in 2009.

Passenger vehicle makers in India appear to have bucked the general trend of slowing demand, registering an overall sales growth of over 14 per cent in April to 1,38,772 units over the same month a year ago. Healthy export growth, driven by incentives offered by European governments to consumers buying new cars, saw Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Motors India record a 13 % rise in domestic and overseas sales in April. The two car makers account for over 60 % of car sales in India. Exports for the two companies grew 36 % against a 7.5 % growth for domestic sales. Honda Sael Cars India (HSCI) saw a 7.5 % surge in April while Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) also reported a strong sales growth on the back of robust demand for Xylo, a multi-utility vehicle launched in January.

With the domestic auto market showing signs of recovery, Japanese carmaker Toyota will increase its vehicle production to full capacity in India in the next two months. The company, which operates in India through a joint venture with Kirloskar Group, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM), had cut its production to 3,500 units a month in November. It will produce 3,800 units in May and gradually increase it to 5,000

units by July. Besides, the company will introduce two models in the current year and add 65 new dealerships by 2010 in its efforts to expand its presence in the country.

Despite the uncertainty in the global economy, India's top three IT majors (TCS, Infosys and Wipro) saw revenue growth from all important sources of income: from the North American and European regions, in the financial services vertical and from application maintenance and development (ADM) offerings between fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

### **Stocks Create History**

India's main stock index leapt more than 17 percent on 18 May for its biggest single-day gain in almost two decades, after the Congress-led ruling coalition won a decisive election victory that calmed fears of political uncertainty. The day's percentage rise was the biggest since a 20.8 % jump on March 2, 1992 when Manmohan Singh, who was then finance minister, unveiled reforms that opened the economy to foreigners. The Indian rupee also soared more than 3 percent to five-month high against the dollar, its best one-day rise in more than a decade as the win boosted hopes of a strong coalition which would be able to push through economic reforms that would boost foreign investment.

### **"Indian Banks are Sound & Healthy"**

Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Rakesh Mohan said that Indian banks were sound and healthy unlike their counterparts in the West. This was established by the stress test of Indian banks conducted by a government-appointed committee on financial sector assessment in view of the ongoing economic crisis. He said that the capital adequacy ratio (the minimum amount of capital that banks have to set aside when lending ) of Indian banks would continue to remain higher than the minimum regulatory requirement of 9% even if sticky loans, or NPAs, were to more than double. Even a recent study by ratings agency Crisil noted that while bank NPAs would rise in light of the slowdown, the impact of rising delinquencies was likely to be within the stress tolerance levels.

### **India's FDI Growth Highest Globally**

The findings of a UNCTAD study revealed that India achieved a stunning 85.1% increase in Foreign Direct Investment flows in 2008, highest increase across all countries, even as global flows declined by 14.5%. The study estimated that the FDI investments into India went up from US \$ 25.1 b in 2007 to US \$ 46.5 b in 2008 even as global flows declined from US \$1.9 t to US \$ 1.7 t. India's achievement in mobilizing FDI is all the more significant because the inflows into the developed countries declined by 25.3% in 2008.

Indian corporates raised US \$1.1 b during March, more than double the figure in February, through external commercial borrowings (ECBs), both in automatic and approval route. During February India Inc raised US \$ 452 m.

### **“Strategic Shift to Renewable Sources Required”**

In an interview, Shyam Saran, Prime Minister’s Special Envoy on Climate Change issues, said that the fact Prime Minister of India appointed a special envoy on climate change reflected the priority which the Prime Minister accorded to the issue. He added that the ongoing negotiations prior to the UN climate change talks to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009 were complex. Responding to the question of blame that developed countries were putting on developing countries like India for not committing to targets for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, Saran said that the Bali Action Plan said that there should be enhanced implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), particularly in respect of mitigation and adaptation supported by the two pillars of technology transfer and financial support. Even from a legal perspective, the UNFCCC said the reduction in GHG emissions was the responsibility of developed countries because they had a historical responsibility for their accumulation in the atmosphere. Saran said that India was committed to a path of sustainable development and was making a strategic shift from reliance on fossil fuels to developing renewable sources. He underlined that India’s 8-9% GDP growth for the last few years was achieved with an increase in energy use by only 4%. While the US and China each contribute about 20% of global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, India emits only 4%. India’s per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emission is 1.8 tonne against 20 tonne for the US.

A McKinsey report projected that India would continue to be one of the Least Carbon Intensive Countries in the world despite an economic growth rate of 7.5%. This report reiterated India's stand that the current climate change negotiations under the auspices of UNFCCC were being skewed in favour of the industrialized. This second endorsement followed the recent report by the World Bank saying that India was right in resisting the mandatory emissions reduction. The carbon intensity, also called per capita annual emissions, is a measure of how much carbon equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e) are emitted per capita of GDP. Last year the carbon intensity of United States and Russia was 21.5 and 15.9 respectively compared to 5.7 and 1.9 for China and India respectively. According to McKinsey the World's sustainable carbon intensity average should be around 2.2.

The second annual survey conducted by the National Geographic Society and international polling firm GlobeScan on environmentally sustainable behaviour, showed that Indian consumers had overtaken

Brazilians to take the top spot with a "Greendex" score of 59.5. The Chinese retained the third spot with 55.2. At the bottom of the ladder in the 17-country survey are Americans (43.7), Canadians (43.5) and Japanese (49.3). Indians are the most frequent consumers of self-grown food, with 35% eating what they grow several times a week or daily. They are also the least frequent consumers of beef, which requires greater energy to grow, with only 22% consuming beef weekly, compared to an average of 63% for the 17 countries surveyed. Factors contributing to their high ranking include a low incidence of home heating (41%) and hot running water (38%) and a high incidence of using on-demand electric water heating (45% among those with hot running water), and using solar energy to heat water (15%).

Bangalore-based NuAlgi Nanobiotech has devised a way to treat sewage and effluents through a patented product, called NuAlgi, which not only cleans a polluted water body like pond, lake or river without affecting its ecology, but also adds nutrients to it, increasing the food content for fish. NuAlgi is available in powder form which needs to be dissolved in water in a container before draining into the water body. Chief Executive T. Sampath Kumar recommends using 1-2kg of NuAlgi per four million litre of water. A 1kg pack of NuAlgi is priced at US \$ 5.5. Within 15 minutes of dissolving NuAlgi in the water, diatom algae is released which absorb nutrients and carbon dioxide from the water and produce oxygen by photosynthesis. The oxygen released helps aerobic bacteria break down the organics and convert the pollutants to base constituents, all this minus the stink that anaerobic decomposition generates.

### **India Second Cheapest Manufacturing Destination**

Global business advisory firm AlixPartners in its report '2009 Manufacturing-Outsourcing Cost Index' said that India, for long considered good for only services, had overtaken China to become the second cheapest manufacturing destination after Mexico. The report said that China's cost advantage had eroded over time largely because of a wide range of cost increases, while India's currency had turned weak against the US dollar which in turn had offset increase in internal cost and freight rates. Meanwhile, Mexico saw the biggest improvement driven by a favourable exchange rate, relatively low transportation costs and free trade status.

### **Massive Response for Tata Nano**

Tata Nano, world's cheapest car, received over 203,000 fully paid bookings amounting to nearly US\$ 500 m. The company said that 610,000 forms were purchased from the booking centres. The first 100,000 allottees from among the applicants will be chosen through a computerised random selection procedure. Deliveries will start in July 2009, and are expected to be completed in the last quarter of 2010.

After offering Nano as the world's cheapest "people's car" priced at US \$ 2,000, the Tatas unveiled a low-cost realty project which offered a house for less than US\$ 8,000. Tata Housing, the real estate development arm of the Tatas, will build one-room-kitchen flats in a township being developed at Boisar, 100 km from Mumbai. The township was expected to be completed within 24 months and allotment of flats would be made through lottery.

Tata Motors, India's largest automobile company by size, launched a new range of premium trucks called the 'World Truck', which was expected to give its commercial vehicles business a much-needed push in an attempt to transform itself into a global auto power. At present, Mercedes and Volvo are in the higher end truck segment. The product has been jointly developed by Tata Motors and its two subsidiaries, Tata Daewoo Commercial Vehicle Company in South Korea and the Tata Motors European Technical Centre in the UK. The company made an investment of US\$ 200 m in developing the world truck. The new trucks will have a capacity that ranges from 10 to 75 tons and is expected to be priced at a premium compared to its current range.

### **WHO Turns to India for Flu Vaccine**

India could soon be part of a global hunt to create the world's first pandemic vaccine against the deadly H1N1 influenza virus. The World Health Organisation was planning to contact Pune-based vaccine makers, Serum Institute of India, to see whether it would have the capacity to produce in mass scale a vaccine against H1N1, once the technology was ready. On the other hand, **Indian pharmaceutical company, Cipla, agreed to sell significant quantities of its Antiflu preparation to Mexico** following the outbreak of swine flu in Mexico. Cipla developed a cheap version of Tamiflu for emerging economies in a move that would pit intellectual property rights against affordable access to drugs. The agreement came only after the WHO said the drug was as effective as Tamiflu. Cipla said it would offer Anti-flu for sale at about US\$10 per course of treatment against Roche's price US\$15.

### **World's largest Oil Complex**

Reliance Industries imported nearly 47 % more crude in April than a year ago, after operationalization of its new plant in Jamnagar. The new refinery, after full commissioning, and the old 660,000 bpd plant have turned Jamnagar in the western Indian State of Gujarat into the world's largest oil complex.

After D6 in Krishna Godavari basin, Reliance Industries has struck big in two nearby blocks with estimates putting natural gas

reserves at 20 trillion cubic feet. It was estimated that D-3 and D-9 blocks in the same KG basin may hold 9.5 Tcf and 10.8 Tcf of gas reserves respectively. Hardy has 10 per cent stake each in the two blocks where Reliance is the operator with 90 per cent interest. D6, which may hold upto 50 Tcf of gas reserves, began producing last month and is slated to double India's natural gas production by year end when it reaches 80 million cubic meter per day.

### **Indian Companies Look Overseas, Form JVs**

**ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd** (OMEL) has got the approval of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for its plan to set up a refinery in Nigeria. OMEL had committed to building a 1,80,000-barrel-a-day refinery, a 2,000-MW power plant and a railway line connecting eastern and western Nigeria. OMEL is the joint venture between Mittal Investments Sarl, the private investment company of the Mittal family, and ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), the overseas investment arm of ONGC. The joint venture had in 2005 won rights to explore in OPL-279 and OPL-285 (deepwater offshore exploration blocks) after committing to invest \$6 billion in the core sector of Nigeria. It paid a signature bonus of \$50 million for OPL-285 and \$75 million for OPL-279.

India's top engineering conglomerate, **Larsen & Toubro** said its Oman unit had won three orders worth US \$109 million.

India's **Bharti Airtel** and South Africa's MTN revived merger talks to create a US \$ 61 b telecom giant spanning Africa, Asia and the Middle East. They hoped the merger would create the world's third biggest cell phone group by subscribers through the combination of India's biggest operator, and MTN which runs networks across 21 markets in Africa and the Middle East.

India's Religare Enterprises and Australia's Macquarie Group have jointly bid around US \$500 m to buy AIG Investments, which manages US \$100 b in client funds globally. The two firms, which have a wealth management joint venture in India, were earlier pursuing the unit of American International Group separately.

India's largest information technology (IT) firm, **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)**, signed a five-year contract with UK-based automobile maker Volkswagen Group to deliver IT transformation and support services. TCS will support Volkswagen in its business transformation programme to meet its aim to "sell more cars, sell more parts, drive down costs". The IT major will support all the brands — Audi, SEAT, Škoda, Volkswagen Passenger Cars and Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles — within the group as they move to a consolidated, standardised business platform. This will increase the geographic mobility of Volkswagen Group's UK employees, increase

flexibility and lead to cost reduction. For TCS, the Volkswagen Group is yet another client in its growing auto segment. The IT major already does work with Nissan, Ferrari, Chrysler and Ducati.

Indian engineering and construction firm **Larsen & Toubro** said it signed a MoU with GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy for the construction of nuclear power plants in India. GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy is a joint venture between U.S conglomerate General Electric Co and Japan's Hitachi

### **Foreign Companies & Investments in India**

**US-based Alexandria**, the world's largest lab space provider, will invest around US\$200 m in Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) SEZ Genome Valley, Hyderabad in a phased manner. This life science infrastructure company will create a 'plug and play' lab space to cater to the needs of global, as well as local, biotech and pharmaceutical companies.

**IMAC** announced plans for a \$100 million investment in a Livestock Biotech Park and SEZ, Pulivendula focusing on diseases such as H1N1 (swine) flu and other life stock areas.

The **Russian government** will pick up equity amounting to US\$670-700 m in Sistema Shyam TeleServices Ltd (SSTL), a joint venture between Russia-based telecom major Sistema and Shyam Group in India, by the end of this financial year. The JV company, which aims to have at least a 10 per cent market share in mobile services in the next five years, has prepared a capital expenditure plan of about \$5.5 billion over the period in India. So far, the company has invested about \$1.2 b in India for spectrum allocation and other infrastructure. Sistema Shyam is hoping to have a pan-India presence by the middle of next year.

**Nortel** opened a new Global Network Operations Center (GNOC) in Bangalore to help remotely manage and support communications networks for enterprise and carrier customers across Asia, Europe and the Americas. This is Nortel's fifth Network Operations Center (NOC) opened around the world and the second in India. The GNOC in Bangalore is already servicing more than 50 customers across the world, including numerous Fortune 500 companies.

**Honeywell International** inaugurated its largest global research centre in Bangalore and expanded its India workforce of software professionals and aerospace researchers to 11,000 from around 500 some six years ago, and expected business in India unit to rise at double the pace of its growth in developed markets. Chairman and CEO David Cote said that Honeywell, which operated in four business segments—aerospace, automation and control solutions,

transportation systems and speciality materials—expected revenue from India to be US \$600 million in 2009.

**Lerros**, a premium apparel brand from Germany, was planning to open at least 15 stores by the end of the current fiscal. The company, which operates through seven standalone stores and 40 shop-in-shops, will invest around US\$ 12 m in the Indian market over the next five years. The investment will go into opening 100 stand-alone stores and over 300 shop-in-shops by 2012-13. Lerros India is a joint venture between Lerros Modern GmbH and House of Pearl Fashions.

**Dow Jones and Co. Inc.**, a unit of Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. and provider of global business news and information services, plans to double its investment in India over each of the next two years, making it one of its largest operating centres outside of the US. Dow Jones India has been scaling up its business in recent months, starting with the Enterprise Media Group, which includes Dow Jones Newswires, Factiva, Client Solutions, Dow Jones Indexes and Financial Information Services.

**Bharti-Wal-Mart Private Ltd.**, a joint venture between India's Bharti Enterprises and Wal-Mart Stores Inc., opened its first wholesale outlet called "Best Price Modern Wholesale" in Amritsar in the northern state of Punjab. The company plans to invest US\$100 m over the next three years to open 10 to 15 more wholesale outlets, which would employ 5,000 people across India. The opening comes at a crucial time for foreign firms eager to tap India's US\$430 b retail market.

### **India "A Good Place To Be"**

Carl-Henric Svanberg, President and CEO of Ericsson, said that they were investing in India as it (India) was a very good place to be for them. He said that the company would double its employee strength (280) in India in another few years, and added that Ericsson was moving towards making India the hub for some of its global activities.

### **India's Most Reputed Firms**

The US-based brand and reputation management agency, Reputation Institute, mentioned five Indian firms among the top-50 in its annual list of the world's most reputed companies, noting that the world looks to "corporate India to find trust, admiration and good feeling". The list was created on the basis of admiration, trust and good feeling that consumers have towards a company. It rated Tatas as more reputed than majors such as Google, Microsoft, Coca-Cola, GE and Walt Disney. The Tata group is at the 11th spot in the global list, which has been topped by Italy's chocolate maker Ferrero, Sweden's retailer IKEA and Johnson & Johnson of the US. Among other Indian companies, Tatas are followed by SBI (29), Infosys (39), Larsen &

Toubro (47) and Maruti Suzuki (49th). There are 22 other Indian companies on the list of 600 largest companies, ranked in terms of their reputation, including Hindustan Unilever (70th rank), ITC (96), Canara Bank (103), HPCL (112), Indian Oil (113), Wipro (117), Reliance Group (133), Mahindra & Mahindra (138), Bharti Airtel (164), Bank of Baroda (175), BPCL (176) and Punjab National Bank (178).

### **Key Facts on India's Software Sector**

Indian software writing skills won recognition in the late 1990s and helped companies overcome the "Y2K" problem. Cheaper salaries, a fifth of those paid to U.S. and European IT workers, and a large pool of English-speaking graduates have helped outsourcers such as Tata Consultancy Services Infosys, and Wipro ride an outsourcing boom. The export-driven companies offer services ranging from managing complex computer networks and call centres to software coding to maintaining technology operations. General Electric, BT Group Plc, Citigroup, General Motors, and Qantas Airways are among their clients. Global IT firms such as IBM, Accenture, and Microsoft have large service centres employing thousands of workers to serve global customers and bid for deals also in the local market. IBM has more than 70,000 staff in India. According to National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), India's exports of software and services in the year ending March 31 was estimated to have grown 16-17 percent to about US\$ 47 b. Total revenue of the software and back-office outsourcing sector, including sales from the domestic market, was estimated to have risen to US\$ 60 b in the financial year 2008-09. According to a study by NASSCOM and McKinsey, IT sector, which accounted for five percent of the India's GDP, was projected to earn US\$175 b in exports by 2020.

Motorola, the biggest US mobile phone maker, is leveraging its Indian R&D capabilities to not only develop products for the local market, but also help the company identify newer avenues for business globally. Frederick Kitson, Corporate Vice-President, Applied Research and Technology Centre, said that almost 40% of software in each Motorola mobile handset came from Bangalore. He said that around 6-7 patents filed for their 'beep box' product came from Bangalore. Motorola has five R&D centres in India.

### **Bharti Airtel Crosses 100 m Customers**

Bharti Airtel, India's largest telecom operator, crossed 100 million customers, making it the third-largest telecom company in the world in terms of in-country subscribers. Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman and Group CEO said, "It took us 15 years to get our first 100 million subscribers, but we are looking at acquiring our next 100 million customers in India within the next three years." Bharti Airtel enjoys

25 per cent subscriber share and 30 per cent market share in terms of revenue, nationally.

Managing Director Moon B Shin of South Korea's LG Mobile said that India could overtake China and become its largest market in terms of size and demand for handsets in the near future. In the background of a sharp economic slowdown in the US and Europe, the company identified India as a strategic market for investment for its GSM and IT verticals. Shin said India was an important market for it due to the opportunities it presented and the company would double its investment this year and spend about US\$ 80 m on advertising alone. Additionally, US\$ 40 m would be invested in R&D to study market dynamics and consumer behaviour in India. LG is rapidly gaining market share in India's GSM market, despite being a late entrant and is already the fifth-largest player in the segment.

### **"IBM's biggest Non-Linear Growth Came from India", VP**

Richard A Patterson, Vice-President, Global Delivery at IBM Global Services, said IBM's approach of integrating around 170 local markets worldwide with a global service delivery network had helped the company achieve leadership in emerging markets such as India. Patterson said that IBM's biggest non-linear growth came from India, from around 2,000 people in the year 2000 to almost 73,000 professionals by end-2007. He said that some of the best practices that evolved from IBM-Bharti relationship were being applied elsewhere and many capabilities evolved in India on operational support system and business support system, were being used in other markets.

### **Indian Nuclear Reactors Exports**

India may soon export its indigenous 220-MWe Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) to Kazakhstan, possibly the first overseas buyer. Discussions between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) and Kazakhstan's nuclear utility Kazatomprom are at an advanced stage and a feasibility study on using Indian PHWR designs is underway for an unspecified number of nuclear reactors. India has been exploring the possibility of exporting indigenous PHWRs to developing nations that are eyeing nuclear power generation but are constrained by small-sized electricity grids.

### **They Said it**

"...India is a major player in world economy and we intend to grow with it and for it." **Christian Scherer, Executive Vice-President, Airbus**

"India is much less affected (by the global slowdown) than other global markets and represents a huge opportunity to not only grow

sales in India, but even develop products..." **Gottfried Dutine, Executive Vice-President, Philips, The Netherlands**

### **International Recognition for Indians**

Ms Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairman and Managing Director of Biocon Ltd, was chosen for the **Nikkei Asia Prize 2009** for Regional Growth for her pioneering work in biotechnology in India. Former recipients include Dr Manmohan Singh, Mr N.R. Narayana Murthy and Prof Mohammed Yunus of the Bangladesh Grameen Bank fame.

Dr M D Madhusudan, a well-known Indian wildlife conservationist and Director of Nature Conservation Foundation, has been awarded the prestigious Whitley Award, popularly known as the 'Green Oscar'. Madhusudan is recognised mainly for his work to reduce human-wildlife conflict in the Western Ghats in Karnataka. Two Indian conservationists, Sudipto Chatterjee (for developing an action plan to conserve wild rhododendrons in the Eastern Himalayas) and Supraja Dharini (for her community-based initiative to protect sea turtles and dolphins in Kancheepuram in Tamil Nadu), also won Associate Awards.

The new centre at Christ's College, University of Cambridge, has been named after Dr Yusuf Hamied, chairman of Indian pharmaceutical major, Cipla. Hamied was earlier honoured with an Honorary Fellowship of the College for his efforts and contribution to the pharmaceutical industry.

Indra Nooyi, Indian-American CEO of Pepsico, was ranked fourth in the Fortune 500 Women CEOs list among "15 women who show what it takes to lead" the biggest companies.

### **Indians amongst Time's 100 Most Influential**

Two Indians, Nandan Nilekani, co-founder of Infosys, one of India's largest IT companies and A R Rahman, the Oscar-winning music director of the film *Slumdog Millionaire*, have been named in the Time 100 list of the World's Most Influential People.

### **Yoga Guru Passes Away**

Krishna Pattabhi Jois, the modern guru of ashtanga yoga popularized by celebrities such as Sting and Madonna, died at the age of 93. Jois, is credited with popularizing ashtanga yoga, one of the most rigorous forms of yogas, in the West.

### **India Attractive Destination For Old Age Care**

India is increasingly becoming an attractive destination for professional, qualitative and cost-effective care of old people. Steve Herzfeld, who came from Florida to Puducherry (formerly

Pondicherry) in south India for the care of his old parents, was impressed by the high level care in India that he could never have afforded at home as the cheapest acceptable home available would have cost US \$ 6,000 a month. US \$ 2,000 a month In India paid for their rent, a team of caretakers - a cook, a valet for his father, nurses to be with his mother 12 hours a day, six days a week, a physiotherapist and a masseuse - and drugs (costing a fifth of US prices), and also allowed them to put some money away. Steve Herzfeld said that India could teach the US and UK a lot about care of the elderly. "In America, healthcare is done for profit, so that skews the whole thing and makes it very inhuman in its values," he said.

### **Low Cost Health Care in India**

Indian doctors are innovating and breaking new grounds in the field of high quality healthcare at amazingly affordable prices. At Bangalore's Wockhardt hospital, Dr. Vivek Jawali and his team have developed the method of heart bypass that does not require general anaesthesia. The "beating heart" surgery not only avoids general anaesthesia and blood thinners, but causes little pain and patients are back on their feet much faster than usual. This approach, pioneered by Wockhardt, an Indian hospital chain, has proved so safe and successful that medical tourists come to Bangalore from all over the world.

It is just one of many innovations in health care that have been devised in India. Indian entrepreneurs are channelling the country's rich technological and medical talent towards frugal approaches that have much to teach the rich world's bloated health-care systems. Dr Jawali is feted today as a pioneer, but he remembers how Western colleagues ridiculed him for years for advocating his inventive "awake surgery". He thinks that snub reflects an innate cultural advantage enjoyed by India.

Unlike the hidebound health systems of the rich world, he says, "in our country's patient-centric health system you must innovate." This does not mean adopting every fancy new piece of equipment. Over the years he has rejected surgical robots and "keyhole surgery" kit because the costs did not justify the benefits. Instead, he has looked for tools and techniques that spare resources and improve outcomes.

Shivinder Singh, head of Fortis, a hospital chain based in New Delhi, says that most of the new, expensive imaging machines are only a little better than older models. Meanwhile, vast markets for poorer patients go unserved. "We got out of this arms race a few years ago," he says. Fortis now promises only that its scanners are "world class", not the newest.

Mr Singh is not alone in thinking that many firms in the rich world are looking at innovation the wrong way. Paul Yock, head of the bio-design laboratory at Stanford University, which develops medical devices, thinks amid growing concern about runaway health spending, that the industry can find inspiration in India.

Technopak Healthcare, a consulting firm, expects spending on health care in India to grow from US \$40 billion in 2008 to US \$ 323 billion in 2023. In part, that is the result of the growing affluence of India's emerging middle classes. Another cause is the nascent boom in health insurance, now offered both by private firms and, in some cases, by the state. In addition, the government has recently liberalised the industry, easing restrictions on lending and foreign investment in health care, encouraging public-private partnerships and offering tax breaks for health investments in smaller cities and rural areas.

This has attracted a wave of investment from some of India's biggest corporate groups, including Ranbaxy (the generic-drugs pioneer behind Fortis) and Reliance (one of India's biggest conglomerates). The happy collision of need and greed has produced a cauldron of innovation, as Indian entrepreneurs have devised new business models. Some just set out to do things cheaply, but others are more radical, and have helped India leapfrog the rich world.

For years India's private-health providers, such as Apollo Hospitals, focused on the affluent upper classes, but they are now racing down the pyramid. Vishal Bali, Wockhardt's boss, plans to take advantage of tax breaks to build hospitals in small and medium-sized cities (which, in India, means those with up to 3 m inhabitants). Prathap Reddy, Apollo's founder, plans to do the same. He thinks he can cut costs in half for patients: a quarter saved through lower overheads, and another quarter by eliminating travel to bigger cities.

Columbia Asia, a privately held American firm with over a dozen hospitals across Asia, is also making a big push into India. His model involves building no-frills hospitals using standardised designs, connected like spokes to a hub that can handle more complex ailments. His firm offers modestly priced services to those earning US \$10,000-20,000 a year within wealthy cities, thereby going after customers overlooked by fancier chains. Its small hospital on the fringes of Bangalore lacks a marble foyer and expensive imaging machines—but it does have fully integrated health information-technology (HIT) systems, including electronic health records (EHRs).

New competitors are also emerging. A recent report from Monitor, a consultancy, points to LifeSpring Hospitals, a chain of small maternity hospitals around Hyderabad. This for-profit outfit offers normal

deliveries attended by private doctors for just US \$40 in its general ward, and Caesarean sections for about US \$140—as little as one-fifth of the price at the big private hospitals. It has cut costs with a basic approach: it has no canteens and outsources laboratory tests and pharmacy services.

It also achieves economies of scale by attracting large numbers of patients using marketing. Monitor estimates that its operating theatres accommodate 22-27 procedures a week, compared with four to six in other private clinics.

But there is more to India's approach than cutting costs. Its health-care providers also make better use of HIT. According to a recent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, fewer than 20% of doctors' surgeries in America use HIT. In contrast, according to Technopak, nearly 60% of Indian hospitals do so. Apollo's integrated approach to HIT has enabled the chain to increase efficiency while cutting medical errors and labour, and it is already selling its expertise to American hospitals.

A vibrant medieval-temple town in southern India, Madurai, has the world's biggest eye-hospital chain called Aravind. There are perhaps 12 m blind people in India, with most cases arising from treatable or preventable causes such as cataracts. Rather than rely on government handouts or charity, Aravind's founders use a tiered pricing structure that charges wealthier patients more (for example, for fancy meals or air-conditioned rooms), letting the firm cross-subsidise free care for the poorest. Aravind also benefits from its scale. Its staff screen over 2.7m patients a year via clinics in remote areas, referring 285,000 of them for surgery at its hospitals. Monitor's new report argues that Aravind's model does not just depend on pricing, scale, technology or process, but on a clever combination of all of them.

Many studies show that America's spending on health care is soaring, yet its medical outcomes remain mediocre. Mark McClellan of the Brookings Institution, an American think-tank, says that a big problem is the overuse of technology. That is why Stanford's Dr Yock wants to turn innovation upside down. He has extended his bio-design programme to India, in part to instil an understanding of the benefits of frugality in his students. He believes that India's combination of poverty and outstanding medical and engineering talents will produce a world-class medical-devices industry. Tim Brown, the head of Ideo, a design consultancy, agrees. In the past, he notes, health bosses thought all devices had to be Rolls-Royces or Ferraris. But cost matters, too. Pointing to another recent example of India's frugal engineering, he says: **"In health care, as in life, there is need for both Ferraris and Tata Nanos."**

*The above write-up is an abridged version of Tom Pietrasik`s article "Lessons from a Frugal Innovator" published in The Economist, April 18-24, 2009.*

### Trade Enquiries From India

Company	Interest Areas
<p><b>S. Y. Exports</b> S. Y. Compound, Jigar Road, Diwan Bazar, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh - 244 001, India Tel: 91 591 24 70 983, Fax: 91 591 24 70 259 Contact Person: Mr. Zaheer Ahmad Khan - Manager Email: info@syexports.com Website: www.syexports.com</p>	Handicrafts
<p><b>Cipla Ltd.</b> Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008, India Tel: 91 22 23 02 52 27 Fax: (91 22) 23 07 00 13/23 07 03 93 Contact Person: Mr. Samir Dorugade Email: samir.dorugade@cipla.com Website: www.cipla.com/www.lamarnatural.com</p>	Spa, Cosmetics, and Perfumes
<p><b>Adventa Export Private Limited</b> 102 - 103 Akik Complex, Opp. Rajpath Club, S.G. Road, Bodakdev, Ahmedabad - 380 054, Gujarat, India Tel: 91 79 26 87 24 89 Fax: 91 79 26 87 24 88 Contact Person: Mr. Tulsi Lunagariya - Director Email: adventaexport@gmail.com</p>	Agro Products
<p><b>M.D. Exports</b> C - 111, Shivalik, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi - 110 017, India, Tel: 91 11 41 83 90 82 Contact Person: Mahesh Sharma Email: mdexport2000@hotmail.com, mdexports2003@rediffmail.com</p>	Jewelley and Leather products
<p><b>Sidh International</b> H. No. 529, 2nd Floor, Sec. - 4, Vaishali, Distt. Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201 010, India Mobile: 91 98 99 49 82 87 Contact Person: S.K. Jain Email: sarwan27@yahoo.co.in</p>	Semi- Precious Stones

<p><b>Sagar Exports</b>  14, Shakti Industrial Premises, Piramal Industrial Estate,  Piramal Nagar, OFF. S. V. Road, Goregaon (W),  Mumbai - 400 062, India.  Tel: (91 22) 28 78 26 81, 82, 83  Fax: (91 22) 28 75 64 20, 28 74 15 97  Contact Person: Raju Patel - Manager Exports  Email: sagarexp@vsnl.com  Website: www.sagarexports.com</p>	<p>Stationary  Products</p>
<p><b>Mahindra &amp; Mahindra Ltd.</b>  Mahindra Towers, G.M. Bhosale Marg, Worli, Mumbai -  400 018, India. Mobile: 91 99 30 67 42 51  Contact Person: Anirban Das - Senior Manager  Website: www.mahindractorworld.com</p>	<p>Mexican  Distributors  for  Tractors</p>
<p><b>Pelican Carbon Brush Pvt. Ltd.</b>  7C &amp; 8C, Parekh Nagar Industrial Estate, Parekh Nagar,  S. V. Road, Kandivil (West), Mumbai - 400 067,  India, Tel:(91 22) 28 05 03 77, 28 05 55 76  Fax: (91 22) 28 05 67 48  Email: pelicancarbon@vsnl.com</p>	<p>Carbon  Brushes</p>
<p><b>Shruti Bulk Drugs Pvt. Ltd.</b>  5/4/187/7/3 M.G. Road, Secunderabad - 500 003,  Andhra Pradesh, India. Tel: 91 40 27 54 45 07, Fax: 91  40 66 32 22 69, Contact Person: Prakash  Email:nishitk@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Pharma  Products and  mfrs of  Pharma  Finisehd</p>
<p><b>Ashish Life Science Pvt. Ltd.</b>  213, Laxmi Ind. Estate, New Link Road, Andheri (W);  Mumbai - 400 053, India.  Tel: (91 22) 26 34 59 69, Fax: (91 22) 26 39 92 88  Contact Person: Manoj M. Pillai  Email: export2@ashishlifescience.com  Website: www.ashishlifescience.com</p>	<p>Veterinary  Products</p>
<p><b>Bhiwadi Cylinders (P) Limited</b>  331, Ansal Chambers II, Bhikaji Cama Place New Delhi -  110 066. Tel: (91 11) 41 65 83 58 / 41 65 87 08  Fax: (91 11) 41 65 84 58  Contact Person: R. K. Raina - Marketing &amp; Exports  Email: info@bhiwadicylinders.com  Website:www. Bhiwadicylinders.com</p>	<p>LPG Cylinders</p>
<p><b>Mischika Exports</b>  Unit No. 842, IJMIMA Complex, Malad West.,  Mumbai - 400 064, India Tel: (91 22) 28 44 24 71 / 28  44 24 71, Fax: (91 22) 28 44 24 73</p>	<p>Ladies  Scarves,  Costume  Jewellery and</p>

### **Mexican's Reflections on India Experience**

The following is a letter written by a Mexican who went to India under **India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of Government of India**. (Currently India offers 15 seats for Mexico, 10 for Guatemala and 7 for Belize every year. For more details, please visit the website: <http://itec.nic.in>)

"It is a great pleasure for me to give you a brief report about the results of the Diploma in Development Journalism Course that I was granted to attend as part of the ITEC program during the period January-May 2009 at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) in New Delhi.

"First of all I must state that the program itself was a perfect opportunity for me to learn a lot about development issues in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is very interesting to learn how the world is seen from the Indian subcontinent perspective. We had great professors, and also a very nice group. The direction of this program performed by Dr. Sunetra Sen Narayan was outstanding. She was able to create a harmonic environment that provided us all the resources to learn and to be creative. The result was that all the 20 participants of 14 different countries had great achievements in their skills, and moreover, we became very good friends at the end of the Diploma course. We had also three marvelous trips to Agra-Jaipur, Nainital, and Orchha, where we had a submersion in some of the rich aspects of Indian culture.

"As part of the achievements of this course, I was part of the ECHO Magazine team, as the layout designer, which delivers an issue of it every semester. We also created a TV capsule about the cultural aspects of Delhi. Among the activities, apart from the academic issues, I created an amateur choir made up by my fellow classmates, and we performed three concerts in different places of New Delhi, including Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). At the end, we were invited by DJ Narain, Director of the section of Drama and Popular Arts to make a joint recording with a nice result (which it is attached herewith). In the graduation ceremony, I was granted with the award of International Understanding by the IIMC. Then, the director asked me to invite other Mexicans to apply to this program. She also encouraged me to continue my studies in international-related issues.

"During my stay at the IIMC, I was treated with great courtesy and nice attention from all the workers of the institute. The hostel room was nice and clean, and also the meals at the IIMC. The best thing happened to me in India was the possibility to make friends everywhere. It was a great opportunity to dialogue and make friends of people from every corner of India. I confirmed there, that Indian people are very warm, open to foreign

people and also proud of their heritage. I witnessed the hospitality rendered to me by many friends from Kerala, Delhi, Assam, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Uttaranchal.

"I met also Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Buddhists. I had the opportunity to make a special cultural service in a primary school (Birla Vidya Niketan) where I had the opportunity to make a "Mexico Day", and I worked with the kids in the performance of dances and songs from Mexico, with great results as well.

"My vision of the world and humanity is now wider thanks to this learning experience. I am deeply grateful with the Government of India and the Embassy of India in Mexico for giving me this opportunity. I have India's culture deep in my heart, and in my senses. I was deeply touched by so many delicious flavors, visions, smells, and feelings inside of my soul in so many ways. Fortunately, I didn't face any problem and my journey lacked of bad experiences.

"For all of this, and because of the gratefulness I feel towards India, I am open to collaborate with the Embassy of India in any case where my experience is required or any other kind of help. I hope to be given with the opportunity to write an editorial in your "India News" bulletin or to share my experiences for promoting India as a tourist spot, or whatever kind of cooperation you need. I will be always ready and willing to help as well as in other cultural experiences or exchange programs.

**Cuernavaca, May 31, 2009**

**Jesús Héctor Betancourt Del Castillo**  
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**President  
 Pratibha Patil  
 administering  
 the oath of  
 office of the  
 Prime Minister  
 of India to Dr.  
 Manmohan  
 Singh, New  
 Delhi, 22 May  
 2009.**