

India News

Revista Mensual de la India y
Sus Relaciones Internacionales



Embajada de la India, México

December, 2009

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Mexican Victim of Mumbai Terrorist Attack Remembered

India

suffered a brutal terrorist attack on the city of Mumbai, on 26-29 November 2008, that claimed 165 innocent lives and injured 304 persons. This was an attack on India's sovereignty, and on the values of democracy, freedom, secularism, and human dignity that India and the civilized world hold dear. India was particularly pained at the spilling on its soil of the blood of its foreign guests, 26 of whom were among those killed in the dastardly act. On December 16, Indian Embassy solemnly remembered Sra. Norma Shvarzblat Ravinovich, the Mexican national who lost her life in the attack. While no compensation could measure to the human life and dignity, the Prime Minister of India, as a token of India's empathy and support, announced an amount of Rs.200,000 in compensation to the next-of-the-kin of each victim. Ambassador Dinesh K Jain handed over a cheque of the amount to Sr. Miguel Horacio Horta Cepeda, husband of deceased Norma, accompanied by their daughter, at a brief ceremony at the Indian Embassy, witnessed by representatives from the Jewish community in Mexico, the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, and the media.

Indian Women's Donation to Mexico Charity

Indian Women's

Association of Mexico (IWAM) is a voluntary association of Indian women in Mexico City, including women of Indian origin, a non-profit organization, with the main objectives to promote India-Mexico relations through social and cultural interchanges between the two peoples, and to reach out to the Mexican society by presenting the Indian culture and traditions in all their colours and vibrancy. An important element is philanthropy, which is integral to Indian character. On the eve of Christmas, IWAM members visited and presented to the Sisters of Charity Paz y Alegria in Mexico City a donation cheque of \$50,000, in a conscious effort to bringing joy to its many members coming from various sections of the Mexican society and inflicted by the vagaries of the nature. IWAM President, Mrs. Alka Jain handed over the cheque to Sister Cyriac of the Charity. IWAM had earlier organized, in October, a Diwali Mela, at India House, to celebrate Diwali, the popular Indian festival of lights, attended by numerous Mexican, Indian and third country nationals, offering Indian cuisine and snacks, artefacts and other entertainment features integral with the celebration of Diwali. The donation amount represented the charity collection made at the Diwali Mela.

Humanitarian Assistance to Guatemala

In view of the

national calamity declared by the Government of Guatemala due to prolonged drought and depleting food reserves, the Government of India extended, as a token of solidarity with the people of Guatemala, a cash donation of US \$ 2,50,000 to Guatemala Government, as humanitarian assistance for the drought victims.

Cinopolis Opens First Theatre in India

Mexican multiplex

theatre chain, Cinopolis launched its operations in India on December 18 with the opening of its first, a four-screen multiplex, in Amritsar, Punjab. The theatre, able to show 3D pics, bowed with a screening of James Cameron's "Avatar". Cinopolis, which runs 1,983 screens in Mexico and 91 screens in neighbouring Central American countries, aims to make India the biggest presence for its chain outside Mexico, with plans to set up 500 screens in the country by 2016. The company would spend \$700,000 on each screen making a total investment of \$350 million. The expansion would focus on adding screens in new shopping mall developments. The company is in talks with 200 mall developers and has reportedly inked pacts to open a further 110 screens in eight cities, mainly in south India.

JK Tyres to Sell Tornel Radials in India

Delhi-based JK

Tyres is to sell from January 2010 in the Indian market radial tyres manufactured at its Tornel facility in Mexico. The tyres would come with the specifications that JK Tyres did not have otherwise, JK Tyres & Industries marketing director A S Mehta said. JK Tyres had acquired Tornel in 2008, for Rs.2,700 m, in an effort to expand its operations overseas. Around 70% of Tornel's tyres cater to customers in Mexico and Brazil. Tornel's three plants in Azcapotzalco, Tultitlan and Hidalgo together have a production capacity of 290 tonne per day, while JK Tyres at its four plants in India has a combined capacity of 650 tonne per day.

India-Latin America Cooperation on Food Security

Speaking at

the Valedictory Function of the India-Latin American & Caribbean Conference on Cooperation for Sustainable Food Security, in New Delhi on December 1, Minister of State of External Affairs, Dr. Shashi Tharoor referred to the deteriorating food situation in the face of mounting challenges of high food prices and climate change variations, and noted that India and Latin America were today faced with common prospects and challenges in their endeavour to achieve food security. Both regions are however endowed with rich bio-diversity, fertile lands, variable cropping patterns, and abundant rainfall, but equally, hunger, poverty, diminishing returns on land, erratic climate patterns and access to capital are common problems. It would only be natural for the two regions to come together to cooperate and collaborate in fulfilling the long term objective of food security. India is home to nearly 1/5th of the world's population. About two-thirds of India's population, nearly 700 million people, are directly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The Green Revolution of the sixties had tripled food production and had helped India achieve a food surplus. Some of the agricultural research and practices currently prevalent in Latin America and the Caribbean are widely acknowledged to be highly efficient, enabling some of them to achieve higher agricultural growth rates. The bilateral cooperation mechanisms with individual countries in agriculture and agricultural research should look into exchanging best practices for our mutual benefit, and both sides should also encourage their entrepreneurs to explore the possibility of joint farming in those regions where large surplus land-tracts are awaiting investments. India could be an important market for agricultural products from Latin America for cereals, pulses, vegetable oils, and other commodities. The demand will only grow with projected higher economic growth rates. Keeping this in view, governments in the region could beneficially reorient their investment policies so as to permit and facilitate greater Indian investments in agriculture. India's Ministry of External Affairs supports all initiatives to strengthen linkages with this important region, and would be committed to heightened cooperation in joint agricultural development as well.

India at Climate Change Copenhagen Conference

Addressing the

Informal Plenary of HOS/Gs at the 15th COP at Copenhagen on December 18, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh acknowledged that trying to build a global consensus on highly complex issues, involved in climate change, attempting to balance divergent and varied interests, was difficult, and therefore despite hard work by all to reconcile their different points of view, the outcome might fall short of expectations. He therefore supported calls for subsequent negotiations towards building a truly global and genuinely collaborative response to climate change being concluded during 2010. In this they would do well to take stock of what they had learnt from their efforts so far, in particular the three lessons, to guide in the task ahead. First, the vast majority of countries do not support any renegotiation or dilution of the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC, in particular the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective

was envisaged at the time of the Rio Convention or the Kyoto Protocol. That is why the Bali Action Plan commits us to enhancing the implementation of the UNFCCC. To settle for something that would be seen as diminished expectations and diminished implementation would be the wrong message to emerge from this Conference. All should therefore reaffirm categorically that their negotiations will continue on the basis of the Bali Mandate. Secondly, the Kyoto Protocol should continue to stand as a valid legal instrument. Parties to the Protocol should deliver on their solemn commitments under the Protocol. It would go against international public opinion if we acquiesced in its replacement by a new and weaker set of commitments. Finally, it is clear that any agreement on climate change should respect the need for development and growth in developing countries. Equitable burden sharing should underlie any effective global climate change regime. Any new regime will have moral authority and credibility only if it acknowledges that every citizen of the globe has an equal entitlement to the global atmospheric space. India has a vital stake in the success of the negotiations as being among the countries most likely to be severely impacted by climate change. India has therefore adopted and started to implement a major National Action Plan on Climate Change, relying upon its own resources. The targets include installation of 20,000 MW of solar energy capacity by 2022, improving energy efficiency by 20% by 2020 and adding an additional 6 m hectare of forests over the next several years. Each one gathered at Copenhagen acknowledged that those worst affected by climate change were the least responsible for it. Whatever emerges from their negotiations must address this glaring injustice, injustice to countries of Africa, injustice to the Least Developed Countries, and injustice to the Small Developing States whose very survival as viable nation states is in jeopardy. India, too, is vulnerable, but nevertheless as responsible citizens of the globe, India had agreed to take on a voluntary target of reducing the emission intensity of its GDP growth by around 20% by 2020 in comparison to 2005. India would deliver on this goal regardless of the outcome of the Conference. India can do even more if a supportive global climate change regime is put in place. PM hoped all would play a positive and constructive role so as to bridge differences and come up with a balanced and also an equitable outcome during the coming year, concluding by extending an assurance that India would not be found wanting in this regard.

Earlier too, prior to leaving for Copenhagen, PM had echoed similar views, commenting that, "Every citizen of the globe has equal entitlement of the global atmospheric space. It is in keeping with this principle that I had earlier announced in Heiligendamm in 2007 that we will maintain our per capita emissions at a level lower than the average per capita emissions of developed countries...We are willing to do more provided there are credible arrangements to provide both additional financial support as well as technological transfers from developed to developing countries...I look forward to constructive deliberations in Copenhagen which meet the collective aspirations of all humankind and enable us to move forward in the global efforts to combat climate change."

Also, at the Copenhagen Meet, India's Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh articulated India's position, saying, "We continue to derive inspiration from the Father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who is an icon for the environmental movement everywhere...In many ways, India has the highest vulnerability on multiple dimensions. We have a tremendous obligation to our own people by way of both adaptation and mitigation policies and programmes. That is why we have already announced a number of ambitious measures proactively...national missions for accelerating afforestation, for promoting sustainable habitats, for expanding sustainable agriculture and for protecting the crucial Himalayan ecosystem...New GHG emission-reducing technologies in coal-based power generation are being

sector will soon become a reality...more than 120 of our leading scientific and technological institutions to continuously measure, monitor and model the impacts of climate change on different sectors and in different regions of our country. In addition to establishing a nation-wide climate observatory network, we are going to launch our own satellite in 2011 to monitor GHG and aerosol emissions globally. Derived from our detailed National Action Plan on Climate Change, we are now considering nationally accountable mitigation outcomes in different sectors like industry, energy, transport, building and forests. Over the last decade we have added over 3 m hectare to our forest cover and today our forest cover is sequestering close to 10% of our annual greenhouse gas emissions...our projects are approved and implemented as scheduled by 2012, carbon credits amounting to a further 10% of our annual GHG emissions will be available to developed countries to enable them to meet their KP commitments. We are convinced that a low-carbon strategy is an essential aspect of sustainable development...Aware of the need for enhanced transparency, we have suggested using the National Communication process, in a format and frequency to be agreed to, as a mechanism to reflect internationally the nature and impact of actions taken domestically...India has probably the most rigorous MRV system that any government can go through with its democratic Parliament, activist judiciary, vigilant NGOs and watchful media. We are transforming environmental governance systems. A judicial National Green Tribunal and an executive National Environmental Protection Agency is on the anvil. We have just announced a new generation of national ambient air quality standards that is on par with the strictest in the world...As a global goal, India subscribes to the view that the temperature increase ought not to exceed 2 degrees Celsius by 2050 from mid-19th century levels. But this objective must be firmly embedded in a demonstrably equitable access to atmospheric space, with adequate finance and technology available to all developing countries."

Terror Attacks Foiled, Troops Withdrawal in J&K Planned

Home

Minister of India, Mr.P Chidambaram noted that the security situation in the country had improved vastly after 26/11 as a result of which no single terror attack or incident of communal violence had occurred in the country in the last one year. "The security agencies have successfully foiled more than a dozen terror attacks in the past few months," he said, adding India's response to any terror attack would be 'swift and stern'. Home Minister reiterated the Government's zero tolerance stance towards any kind of religion inspired terrorism, be it Hindu or Jihadi. He said that the epicentre of terrorism in the world today is Pakistan and Afghanistan. "Terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba might have forged alliances with Al-Qaida, we remain vulnerable," he said, but..."We have revamped intelligence sharing, gathering capacities and have built confidence that we can foil any type of attack on our land." He said that the situation in Kashmir had improved vastly in the past one year and Kashmiri groups have responded positively to the Centre's initiative of "quiet talks" and hoped a solution would emerge. The Government announced its intention to draw down a "significant number of battalions" from J&K and reiterated its commitment to hold "quiet talks with all Kashmiri groups" far away from the media. Speaking in the Parliament, Chidamabaram said he would not specify the number of battalions that would be pulled out from the State. Increasingly, the Central police forces were already transferring the task of maintaining law and order to the J&K police. However, as infiltration continued, vigil could not be lowered. On the "quiet talks with every shade of political opinion", he said that there were encouraging responses", adding that a new generation of leaders had taken over many of the Kashmiri groups.

PM Visits Russia; Agreement on N-Cooperation

Prime Minister

Dr.Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to Russia at the invitation of President

Declaration 'on Deepening the Strategic Partnership to meet Global Challenges', issued at the end of the visit, they reiterated their aim of deepening and strengthening in every way the close, friendly and historic India-Russia bilateral relationship. The excerpts follow:

"The **Strategic Partnership** between India and Russia is the culmination of the long and multifaceted bilateral relations that have flourished between the two countries since the establishment of diplomatic relations in April 1947 and is a key foreign policy priority for both Sides. This deepening partnership is not impacted in any way by the engagement of the two countries with the rest of the world. It is a time-tested and enduring friendship which is mutually beneficial and which has emerged as a factor of peace and stability in the region and the world...They undertake to take steps to deepen bilateral cooperation and raise their Strategic Partnership to the next level...India and Russia share the common commitment to **reform the global economic governance** system based on the principles of equity and justice, taking into account the need to ensure the full-fledged participation of major economies and developing countries in reforming the world's financial and economic system in line with the new economic realities...based on the principle of indivisible security, have a universal character and encompass all states and all major spheres of international relations...The security of some states should not be achieved at the expense of the security of others...The Sides are convinced that only collective efforts by the international community as a whole, can successfully meet challenges such as overcoming the **global financial crisis**, ensuring energy and food security and addressing an issue of global concern such as climate change...India and Russia stress that the **proliferation of nuclear weapons** and its possible link to terrorism poses a threat to international peace and security...The Sides are convinced that the international community should enhance efforts to **combat terrorism** in all its forms and manifestations...The Sides strongly call for an early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism...Russia expressed solidarity and support to the Government and people of India in connection with terrorist attacks in Mumbai on November 26-29, 2008 and both Sides underscore the need to bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice...The Sides emphasize that the resurgence of the **Al Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan** threatens the progress made over the last few years. In this regard, they condemn the terrorist attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul on October 8, 2009. They agree that the fight against terrorism cannot be selective, and drawing false distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' Taliban, would be counter-productive...India and Russia agree to enhance **bilateral cooperation in the energy sector**, including joint projects by Indian and Russian hydrocarbon companies...India and Russia welcome the finalisation of the Agreement on **Cooperation in the Use of Atomic Energy for Peaceful Purposes** and look forward to developing and intensifying broad-based cooperation between the two countries in the area of nuclear energy including such areas as joint scientific research, implementation of nuclear power projects and setting up of fuel supply arrangements...The Sides agree to further strengthen their cooperation on issues related to the **reform of the UN and its Security Council**...in a manner that reflects contemporary realities and makes it more representative and effective in dealing with both present-day and emerging challenges. Russia considers India a deserving and strong candidate for a permanent seat in an expanded UN Security Council...The Sides consider the interaction in **BRIC and RIC** formats to be an effective tool...Russia is confident that engagement of India in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (**APEC**) will enhance capacity-building and effectiveness of the APEC mechanism, and encourage enhanced trade and investment cooperation in the region. Russia supports India's membership in the APEC and will work towards lifting the moratorium on expanding the APEC's membership..."

On the occasion Dr.Singh said that he was "most satisfied with our discussions... I conveyed to President Medvedev the special importance we attach to strengthening the economic dimension of our ties...We have decided to set a trade target of 20 billion US dollars by 2015. We have identified the areas of energy, Information Technology and Communications, and pharmaceuticals as the new thrust areas for cooperation...The successful conclusion of an Agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy is a major step forward in strengthening our existing cooperation in this field." The breakthrough long-term pact for expanding civil nuclear cooperation is free from any restriction on India and guarantees it against any curb in the future. Under the agreement, Russia will set up more nuclear reactors in India, transfer the full range of nuclear energy technologies and ensure uninterrupted supply of fuel. The two sides also signed 5 other bilateral agreements during the visit, including on defence cooperation. PM also had intensive discussions with Prime Minister Putin.

India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership to Deepen Further At the invitation of Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of Japan, Mr.Yukio Hatoyama paid an official visit to India from December 27–29, accompanied by his wife Mrs.Miyuki Hatoyama. They visited Mumbai and Delhi. This was the 4th Annual Summit between the two PMs since 2006. At the conclusion of the visit, the two leaders issued a Joint Statement. Dr.Singh said that the visit had succeeded in taking their partnership to a new stage. The two PMs reaffirmed that India and Japan, as partners which share common values and strategic interests, will develop the Strategic and Global Partnership further for the deepening of their bilateral relations as well as peace and prosperity of the region and the world. They expressed their satisfaction at the finalization of the Action Plan with specific measures to advance security cooperation...They took note of the current status of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) / Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations and instructed their relevant officials to accelerate the negotiations by energetically working towards resolving the remaining issues with a view to concluding a mutually beneficial agreement at the earliest...The two PMs welcomed the commencement of India-Japan cooperation on the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) Project...and reaffirmed their commitment to the early realization...The two Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the steady development of the collaboration in the establishment of Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IITH)...They welcomed the enhanced bilateral cooperation on energy under the India-Japan Ministerial-level Energy Dialogue, particularly in energy efficiency and conservation sectors as well as the coal and power sectors...the two leaders decided to step up efforts to facilitate (high technology) trade by addressing respective concerns, including export controls.

They confirmed their commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons...Hatoyama stressed the importance of bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty at an early date...Singh reiterated India's commitment to a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. The two PMs supported...an early conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). They also supported the strengthening of international cooperation with a view to addressing the challenges of nuclear terrorism and clandestine proliferation. The two PMs welcomed the Copenhagen Accord. They reaffirmed their determination to work closely together in the negotiations under the UNFCCC towards an Agreed Outcome, to be adopted at the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties, realize a comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council, especially its expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories. They decided to accelerate their efforts, in close cooperation with the G4 and other like-minded countries, with a view to achieving a meaningful result during the 64th Session of

effective for meeting the challenges of the new century. The leaders reaffirmed that an ambitious and balanced conclusion of the WTO Doha Round in 2010 will play an important role in responding to the global economic crisis and committed to working together towards this end. They also valued the G-20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation...Both sides welcomed the Pittsburgh Summit's focus to address reforms of the international financial institutions...and looked forward to its implementation within the agreed timelines. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to eschewing protectionism in all its forms covering trade in goods and services as well as investment and financial flows. In a spirit of friendship and cooperation, they looked forward to further working closely together, as well as with others.

The two PMs reiterated the condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose...affirmed to continue working towards the finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism...Hatoyama expressed strong condemnation of the terror attacks in Mumbai last year. The two Prime Ministers emphasized the utmost importance of bringing the perpetrators of the terrorist attack to justice.

Progress in Bilateral Relationship With China

Inaugurating an Exhibition of Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy in New Delhi, with works of more than 30 outstanding artists from China on display, External Minister of Affairs S.M.Krishna said he was very happy to see the tremendous progress being made in the overall bilateral relationship. Leaders of both countries continue to have frequent contacts and the trade and economic relations also have seen rapid development. The bilateral trade crossed US\$ 50 billion last year and China has become one of India's largest trading partners. Minister said he was very optimistic about the future of the relationship and they should continue to work to further enhance cooperation in all fields and strengthen our strategic and cooperative partnership. As two ancient civilizations and close neighbors, both countries have a long history of cultural contacts and exchanges. In the last 60 years, exchanges in the fields of culture and arts have continued to play a vital role in increasing the mutual understanding between our peoples.

"We Need India" – OECD

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has identified India, China, Brazil, South Africa and Indonesia, together called the E-5, as countries with which it wants to enhance its level of engagement with a view to rope them in as members. The agency's Secretary-General, Angel Gurría of Mexico, who was in India, said that it is for India to decide when it wants to join the OECD, often referred to as a club of rich countries. He said they were in India to discuss the role of India, given the international economic recovery, to release the first OECD Investment Policy Review of India, and to discuss e-government, besides meeting all key members of the government, adding that enhanced engagement is alive and very vibrant. Gurría said regardless of what India gets from becoming a member, OECD needs India. Their mandate is to enhance the engagement with India with a view to a possible membership. India did not knock on its doors, like many others. India is now a systemic player and it has to play a very important role in the stability, growth and welfare of the world. He said, "India has every condition (to become OECD member). We will be willing to start the process of India's accession anytime it decides. It is up to India to decide the pace."

India at the WTO Ministerial Conference

Addressing the Seventh Ministerial Conference of the WTO. Minister of Industry & Trade. Mr.Anand

Sharma recalled that for over a year the global economy is reeling under the worst crisis of last 7 decades. It is developing countries which have borne a disproportionate impact of the crisis in terms of employment, livelihood and food scarcity. For India, this Ministerial Conference holds a special significance, coming close on the heels of the informal Ministerial meeting in New Delhi, which saw a unanimous affirmation of the need to conclude the Doha Round within 2010 and a clear recognition that intensifying negotiations based on progress already made was the first step towards bridging the differences that persist on many issues. The Minister suggested specific ways to break the impasse, and move forward quickly. Earlier India had made a submission containing proposals to improve the functioning and efficiency of WTO as a rules-based system. An overwhelming majority of Members have supported this initiative, and now the need was to operationalise these ideas.

India Development Partner With Developing World

Leading the

Indian delegation to the high level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation, at Nairobi, Kenya, Ms. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs, in her plenary statement welcomed this as a valuable opportunity for a comprehensive review and to explore ways and means to further strengthen South-South Cooperation. She continued, "India has a unique experience in nation-building given our large, complex and most diverse setting...we have developed many capacities and capabilities that are critical for development and nation building. It has been our endeavour to share our experiences and knowledge with fellow developing countries. India has partnered to mutual benefit many of the countries in our region for infrastructure development. We have been in the forefront of pushing for removal of trade barriers in our region and better connectivity. We are happy to be able to contribute to the nation-building process underway in Afghanistan. Recognizing that upgradation of skills, empowerment and capacity building are key development needs, India established the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme as early as 1964. ITEC is today a major instrument and flagship programme of the Government of India for extending our technical cooperation and assistance to developing countries. It is demand-driven and response-oriented. The ITEC Programme has, since its inception, expanded manifold and today covers 158 partner countries spread across Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and CIS countries. As part of the ITEC Programme, India allocates and funds 5,000 vocational training slots every year in over 200 short, medium and long-term courses at 42 Institutes of eminence considered as leading facilities in their field of specialization with many of them gravitating towards hi-tech areas like IT. ITEC is also a platform for India's partnership for feasibility studies, infrastructure projects and deputation of experts. ITEC has very wide coverage and has acquired a brand image across the developing world. The ITEC Programme fully symbolizes the true spirit of India's commitment and endeavour for South-South Cooperation...India has always remained steadfast in its commitment and efforts to advance the collective cause of the South, bilaterally and within the framework of regional and multilateral groupings.

Indian Navy Foils Piracy Attempt in Gulf of Aden

The Indian Navy

foiled a piracy attempt in the Gulf of Aden by stopping a suspected pirate skiff from taking over a merchant vessel. "Indian Naval Ship (INS) Godavari received a distress call from a Cayman Island registered vessel 'MV Soderling Ace' about sighting a white skiff approaching her. Located around two miles from the vessel, the ship immediately launched a 'Chetak' helicopter towards it," Navy officials said. After reaching the area, the 'Chetak' sighted the suspected white skiff with around seven men on it and fired warning shots, which made the skiff stop

released the seven suspected pirates. Meanwhile, after completing its stipulated tenure in the pirate-infested gulf, the 'INS Godavari' will be heading back to India and will be replaced by another Godavari-class guided missile frigate 'INS Ganga', officials said. Earlier this month, the Navy had thwarted an attempt by pirates to hijack a US-owned tanker in the area off Somalia's coast. For more than a year now, the Indian Navy has deployed its assets in the Gulf of Aden from anti-piracy operations and has escorted over 700 merchant vessels from 45 countries there during this period.

"India is the Next Big Story"

Jonathan Power, a veteran commentator on foreign affairs, writing in his column, "Power's World", said, "What India wants India will get...as India has emerged faster than China, from the great recession, and as its huge anti-poverty programmes begin to bite...This is India resurgent...India is well on its way to overtake China, but with a type of development more coherent than China's winner-take-all capitalism. As one banker put it to me: "China was ahead because it had no rule of law. But now India will go ahead because it has rule of law." High speed economic growth needs civic walls if society is not to crack under the strain and its innards poured out onto the streets. India has them - elections, human rights standards and courts. No one goes to prison for their beliefs and contracts are enforced. China's civic walls barely exist. On the world stage, India is showing its muscle. It persuaded President George W. Bush to lift the prohibition on providing India with enriched uranium and to drop its sanctions on supplying nuclear materials. Its nuclear armoury is now accepted as well protected and there has been no proliferation of its technology. India is now pushing for the charter of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to be revised next year so that it is recognised as one of the six established nuclear powers, which will give it added responsibilities. Its relationship with China has improved beyond measure. Its economic power puts it as one of the leading powers in the newly constituted Group of 20 which now overshadows the G8...India not only will continue with its Singh-devised economic policies but with its burgeoning tax revenues will spend increasing amounts on giving the poor incomes, jobs, health and educational services. Within 10 years, India will have effectively banished the worst poverty. What India wants India will get. Within a decade India will be the world's No.1 economic power. And its social policies will be witness to its success." *(The view expressed here is entirely Mr. Power's own - Ed.)*

"The World Banks on India" – World Bank

Robert Zoellick, the World Bank President, thinks that perhaps the most startling change is in the way the world views India. "The outside world's image of India now is of cutting-edge competitive companies that are going to take jobs away from the developed world. I get more and more voices coming from Europe and North America saying, 'Why should we give money to India when they're going to be a threat to our businesses?' I have to constantly explain the huge income diversity of India and the fact that a lot of development work still needs to be done," he chuckles. Zoellick also dwelt on how the growing strength of India-US ties has proved helpful to him. "I'm eventually going to have to go to the US Congress to seek its support for an increase in the World Bank's capital. I spoke to the CII and said, 'Maybe you can help me because I know there's a strong India Caucus in Washington. Together we can make a case that an increase in the Bank's capital would help India's development.'" Wrapping up a 4-day visit to India, Zoellick praised India's "strong crisis management" and said it was playing an important role in leading a global recovery. "We all look to India now as a rising global economic power and in our interconnected world it has played a helpful role over the tough moments of the past year," he said. "Two centuries ago, India and China probably accounted for

dramatically thereafter. It's natural that their share will increase again...There has been a greater distribution of growth and opportunity in recent times, which is great...You have some of the world's finest minds, impressive companies and dynamic entrepreneurs. There are still huge challenges, but India has made impressive progress in developing programs that reach poor people. I believe the world has a lot to learn from India."

"Economy to Grow by 7.75% Despite Poor Agriculture"

Indian

economy will grow between 7-7.75% during the current financial year (1 April 2009-31 March 2010) despite poor performance of the agriculture sector on account of drought and floods, which may fall by 1 to 2%," said Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC) Chairman C Rangarajan, while speaking on the challenges before the Indian economy. He flagged food inflation as a major concern. Although the economy did well during the second quarter (Jul-Sep) recording a growth of 7.9%, the output of agriculture and allied sector slipped to below 1%. Food inflation in the first week of December soared to a decade's high of 20%, driven by rising prices of pulses, potato and other vegetables.

Economy is likely to grow by 7% or a "little more" in the current fiscal, returning to a fast expansion pace after a sluggish 2008 due to the global economic crisis, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said. "The momentum (of growth) was ...interrupted by the global economic crisis in 2008 and we slowed down to 6.7% in 2008-09 and are likely to achieve 7% or a little more in 2009-10," Singh said. Joining the debate on the impact of reforms on poverty, Singh said "There is no evidence that the new economic policies have had an adverse effect on the poor. However, I would readily agree that what has been achieved is not enough. Much more needs to be done and the decline should have been faster than we have experienced," he said. He said that the country had an average economic growth of 6.8% between 1992-93 and 2009-10. It was likely to be 8.5% between 2004-05 and 2009-10. "We can therefore claim that we have entered the target range for growth set by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru long ago...We moved away from the earlier paradigm of extensive government control, a suspicion of market forces and an extensive reliance on protection of domestic industry to an economy with much greater acceptance of the beneficial role of markets and greater openness to trade and foreign investment."

Amid concern over spiraling inflation, due mainly to galloping food prices, India has projected a 7.75% growth for this fiscal. "The remarkable turnaround of the Indian economy has been widely commented upon in India and internationally," said the mid-year fiscal review for 2009-10, tabled in parliament by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee. "With the growth in real gross domestic product at 7.9% in second quarter and its broad-based nature, the clouds of uncertainty have lifted," said the 126-page review, listing the economic achievements so far and the challenges ahead. "The growth outlook for the next two quarters and for the whole year is likely to be in the upper bound of the range predicted and may even exceed it," said the review, while recalling the finance ministry's best-case prediction of 7.75% in July. The review also lists the government's concerns. "The rise in the prices of primary articles of consumption of the common man that has been occurring in recent times is, indeed, a cause of concern. This needs to be attended on an urgent basis," it says. The other areas of concern expressed by the review include: high fiscal deficit due to steps taken to counter the global slowdown, negative impact of capital inflows on rupee valuation and export competitiveness, stagnation in farm output since 1990s after the Green Revolution, and the dilemma of the central bank in balancing between growth and inflation. The review, nevertheless, says the government and the central bank have not only taken timely steps to contain the

fallout of global slowdown on the Indian economy but the measures have also worked.

India's economy may grow as much as 8% in the current financial year, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee later said, adding he will consider removing some fiscal stimulus steps in the next two months. "Recent economic data confirm that the green shoots are now finally taking root," Mukherjee told a business conference. "At this rate, in the next two-to-three years, our economy will resume the spectacular growth rate of 9% experienced during the pre-downturn period." India injected fiscal and monetary stimulus worth more than 12% of GDP between September 2008 and April this year as the world slid into a recession. That helped Asia's third-largest economy to grow 7.9% last quarter, the fastest pace in 1-1/2 years. A strong rebound in manufacturing can see the economy overcome the impact of global recession and bad rain to grow 8% in this fiscal.

According to Moody's Economy.com's latest report titled, 'Asia-Pacific Outlook 2010: Returning Towards Normality', boosted by the fillip from infrastructure and expected tourism spending ahead of the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, India will expand by more than 8% in 2010. The two emerging giants, namely China and India, will drive the regional economy. Moody's Economy.com also expects the Reserve Bank of India to commence raising interest rates in the first half of 2010.

India's Exports Recover, Grow 18% in Nov

India's exports turned around in November after falling for 13 straight months, posting a growth of 18% to touch \$13.2 b, but the expansion was attributed to base effect. There is no "great shift in demand, it (growth) is because of base effect," Commerce Secretary Rahul Khullar said. Among the sectors that performed well during November were gems & jewellery, which grew over 40% to \$2.15 b, and readymade garments, besides man-made fibre and petroleum products. Analysts said there was an up tick in revival of some demand in the overseas markets and hoped that the forthcoming Christmas festivities would further push Indian exports. The US and other major markets coming out of the recession in July-September quarter also augur well.

Industrial Growth Crossed 10% in Oct

Indian industry registered a growth rate of 10.3% in October, providing further evidence of a sustained recovery under way since the second quarter of the current fiscal. But even after the base effect is factored in, the pick-up trend is perceptible since around June, following almost three successive quarters of virtual stagnation in the wake of the global economic crisis. Among the major constituents of the IIP, the index for 'manufacturing' recorded a growth of 11.1% in October, with the rates correspondingly being 8.2% for 'mining' and 4.7% for 'electricity'. Production of capital goods, which is a proxy for investment demand in the economy, was up 12.2% in October and 6.3% for the seven months of the current fiscal. According to a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) survey, too, India's manufacturing sector is on an upswing and posted higher growth in the first half of the current fiscal.

Improvement in India's Currency Rating

India's currency rating outlook has been raised to 'positive' from 'stable' by Moody's Investors Service on the back of the country's demonstrated resilience during the global crisis. The economy witnessed high growth, large domestic savings, favourable debt structure, domestic monetary confidence and a strong external position. The agency also highlighted the possibility of upgrading the local currency bond rating in the wake of the positive currency rating. Also, Moody's upgraded the long-term foreign currency (FC) deposit ratings of 14 Indian banks to Ba1

Indian Entrepreneurs Oozing Confidence

According to a survey commissioned by London-based independent think-tank Legatum Institute, India is poised to at the top of the heap in the global economic league by 2030. The survey, which questioned nearly 2,400 Indian senior managers, entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs said the levels of confidence among the country's wealth-creators is very high, with nearly 9 in 10 saying they expected India to be in a stronger economic position in the next 5 years. More than half of the respondents (53%) said India is likely to be the world's most important economic power by 2030. As per the World Bank, India is already moving up the league as the 12th largest economy in the world. About two-thirds of the respondents said Indians were more entrepreneurial and 84% said their country was going in the right direction. Beyond making money, Indian entrepreneurs are also highly motivated by the broader social impact of their work. Over half (54%) of respondents say the social effects of their business, such as improving the quality of life in their communities or developing people, are a main motivation for what they do. Strong family connections are a key to India's business dynamism. Just over a third (36%) of respondents said that the country's entrepreneurial spirit was rooted in the family, with 30% citing the example set by other business people and 11% citing social networks or friends. This finding squares with the 2009 Legatum Prosperity Index, which rated India 5th out of 104 nations in social capital. Business start-ups in India in 2007 numbered 20,000 and the evidence for India's economic optimism is vast:

- India's automobile industry is one of the fastest growing in the world, boasting exports greater in number than China.
- India is one of the world's leading outsourcing destinations for many of the world's top businesses, with annual revenues of nearly \$60 billion.
- It is home to a \$52-billion textile manufacturing sector.
- Mumbai is a recognized global financial centre.
- India is also a world leader in innovation from ultra-inexpensive cars to pioneering computer software.

Indian Consumers Optimistic, Says Survey

Consumers in India continued to be optimistic, still more than what they were 6 months ago (68.0%), and a year ago (63.9), according to a latest MasterCard Worldwide Index of Consumer Confidence survey. Both Mumbai (79.1 vs. 61.7) and Chennai (95.2 vs. 61.3) consumers have become more optimistic than they were 6 months ago. Now in its 17th year, the MasterCard Index is the region's most comprehensive and longest running consumer confidence survey. Released twice a year, the Index is based on a survey which measures consumer confidence on prevailing expectations in the market for the next 6 months based on 5 economic indicators: economy, employment, stock market, regular income, and quality of life. The index score is calculated on a 0 to 100 scale.

Auto Sector Surges; New Beetle in India

The buoyancy in the automobile industry continued in November with Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Motor India reporting their highest ever monthly sales at 87,807 and 55,265 units respectively. Tata Motors' passenger vehicles segment reported 29% growth at 18,480 units, the highest for any month this fiscal. The company delivered 3,406 Nanos in November. Maruti showed 67% growth while Hyundai registered 29% growth. The small car segment continues to surge, and Maruti and Hyundai with their array of models are making the most of it. "One noticeable thing for the car industry in November is that the A2 segment (cars of 3.5-4 m length) clocked sales of close to 100,000 units, which is unprecedented," said Shashank Srivastava, Chief General Manager, Maruti Suzuki. At Mahindra & Mahindra, the top utility

vehicle maker, sales doubled to 15,193 units. Maruti's exports more than doubled to 11,448 units. The country's largest car exporters Hyundai however said overseas sales dropped 5% to 27,100 units. In the two-wheeler segment, market leader Hero Honda's sales crossed the 300,000 mark for the 11th consecutive month. It reported 32% growth to post sales of 381,000 units.

German car-maker **Volkswagen** has launched its new vehicle, christened the **New Beetle**, in India. "The Beetle is the very first Volkswagen car people remember about, with its unique shape and reliability. We are excited to bring this iconic Beetle to India after its success across the world for decades," Volkswagen's Director Neeraj Garg said. The car would be imported from Mexico in the CBU format, he said. The company has 150 confirmed bookings for the New Beetle and its deliveries would start immediately, he said. Volkswagen also launched its Touareg, its sports utility vehicle, which was earlier available only on order.

Nissan Motor India Private Limited (NMIPL), a 100% subsidiary of Nissan Motor, Japan, is all set to launch its compact car Micra in May 2010. It also plans to line up 9 models in India by 2012 starting with its sports car C702 to be launched in January 2010. Kiminobu Tokuyama, MD & CEO of NMIPL, talking about the company's plans to develop India as a global manufacturing and sourcing hub, said that they plan to roll out in 2011 from their Chennai plant a sedan and then a compact multi-purpose vehicle. They plan to start exporting cars from the Chennai plant from end-2010, around 110,000 units in one year, to be gradually scaled up to 180,000 units to over 100 countries in Europe, Africa, West Asia, among others. The manufacturing unit will initially have the capacity to produce 2,00,000 cars per annum that would be later scaled up to 4,00,000 units. The Chennai plant would be used as a global export hub for the Micra. The local content in these cars will be around 85%. They also plan to export production parts worth \$20 m in 2010-11 from India, and are looking at taking that figure up to \$40 m by 2012. Eventually Nissan would line up nine models in all for India in the coming years, of which five would be manufactured in India.

Top Cement Firms Post Strong Dispatches

The domestic cement industry has once again shown a healthy growth, due to the surge in demand for the building material. The top five cement makers have indicated a likely double-digit growth rate in November. The Aditya Birla Group companies (UltraTech & Samruddhi), Holcim group companies (ACC & Ambuja), Shree Cement and Jaiprakash Associates have come up with positive numbers in November. The dispatches of Birla companies were up 15.3% at 2.92 m tonne. Two northern cement majors continued to get the benefits of high demand due to the coming Commonwealth Games in New Delhi; Shree's dispatches were up 15.25% cent, whereas Jaiprakash crossed the 1 m tonne-mark, with its dispatches rising 49%.

Indian Pharma Industry Value Over US\$ 20 B

India's pharma industry is now the third largest in terms of volume, ranks 14th in terms of value, and accounts for 10% of the world's production in terms of volume. Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State in the Chemicals and Fertilisers Ministry Srikant Kumar Jena said, "The Indian pharmaceutical industry, now over US\$ 20 billion industry, has shown tremendous progress in terms of infrastructure development, technology base creation and a wide range of products...Globally, it ranks fourth in terms of generic production and 17th in terms of export value of bulk actives and dosage forms." Indian companies export pharmaceuticals to more than 200 countries including tightly regulated markets of W.Europe, Japan, USA, and Australia.

India Discovers More Gas in Krishna Basin

Reliance Industries of India, a regular oil importer from Mexico, has struck gas for the third successive time at its exploration block in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin, the company has said. RIL holds a 90% stake in the block, while the remaining 10% is with Britain-based Hardy Oil and Gas. "The deep water block KG-DWN-2003/1 is located in the Krishna basin, about 45 km off the coast in the Bay of Bengal," said RIL in a statement. The two companies had made two discoveries in May, a 9.5 trillion cubic feet of gas in the D-3 block of the KG basin and another 10.8 trillion cubic feet in the D-9 block of the KG basin. The potential of the new discovery named "Dhirubhai 44" is still being ascertained, the statement added.

India Cracks Human Genome, Joins Elite Science Club

India has joined an elite group of six countries which have successfully decoded the human genome indigenously. US, UK, China, Canada and S.Korea are the five other countries to map the genetic code. The discovery, announced by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), will bring pharmaceutical companies a step closer to designing drugs accounting for the specific characteristics of the Indian physiology. The genome, as the bases, DNA and other hereditary molecules are collectively referred to, consists of around 3.1 billion base-pairs and 25,000 known genes. If all the DNA from every cell in the body were taken out and laid out end to end, it would stretch from the earth to sun 70 times and back. Sequencing the entire genome essentially means photographing this chain of base pairs several times over, to accurately estimate an individual's unique structure. "Genetic sequencing will help in early diagnosis and management of diseases, including cancer. Persons with genetic profiling will get an indication of diseases to come. It is significant because the ability to assemble the genome shows our capability to study the variations in genes and, thus, will revolutionise future disease predictions and treatment methodologies," said the CSIR chief, Brahmachari. CSIR's endeavour cost around \$30,000. "The good news is that just six years ago it cost a billion dollars to get a sequence done," said Arjuna Reddy, who co-chairs the genetic engineering approval committee at the environment ministry. "When a lot of people sequence their genes, it will help scientists reliably predict disease probabilities." According to Swati Piramal, the global face of India's drug research and director of Piramal Healthcare "It is a great development as genomics has the potential to bring down the cost of healthcare by offering specific drugs by identifying the gene mutation, and can also predict the onset of a disease. Companies can make more accurate drugs for specific populations."

India A Top Supporting Research Government

India is now among the top five government supporters of research into third-world diseases, according to a study issued recently, which found that middle-income nations are taking on more of the burden of ills afflicting their poorest citizens. The study, by the George Institute for International Health, based in Australia, found that nearly \$3 billion was spent last year on new drugs or products for such diseases. India (and Brazil) took the lead on leprosy and dengue fever and, with South Africa, supported much of the research for meningitis and pneumonia. "For some neglected diseases, the traditional reliance on charitable funding and donor aid is being replaced by a market and domestically driven R & D," said Dr. Mary Moran, the report's chief author. Americans are still by far the largest backers, followed by the European Commission, Britain, Brazil, India, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Australia, Canada and Norway. Just three diseases - AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis - received 73% of the research money.

India to be Motorola's R&D Hub

Motorola of US is gearing up to make its Indian research activities a global hub for wireless

broadband technology. The company is drawing up a blueprint which will entail a significant expansion in investment, research capabilities and headcount for such research in India. At present, Motorola has a dedicated team of around 500 engineers at its R&D centres in Bangalore and Hyderabad and invests \$30-40 million annually in India for development and deployment of fourth generation (4G) wireless broadband technologies like WiMAX and Long Term Evolution (LTE). Motorola's corporate VP Sudhakar Ramakrishna said since the Indian market for wireless broadband is now going to open up with WiMAX auctions, the company sees huge scope to expand its research activities. "The Indian labs are also supporting our current global trials for LTE in China and Japan," said Ramakrishna, adding that Motorola is also open to the idea of manufacturing network equipment for WiMAX and LTE in India.

India will Cut Carbon Intensity by 20%

India announced its willingness to cut its carbon intensity, or the amount of carbon dioxide emitted for every unit of GDP, by between 20-25% by 2020 compared with 2005 levels, the Environment Minister, Mr Jairam Ramesh, said. "This we will do regardless of Copenhagen," Ramesh said in the Lok Sabha, laying out India's position ahead of the Copenhagen global climate talks. The proposed cuts would not be legally binding, he said in his reply to a 4-hour debate on the issue. Ramesh reiterated that India will not accept a legally binding emission cut, or a peak year of carbon emissions at the global climate talks in Copenhagen. He said while India could accept international verification of reductions if supported by international financing and technology transfers, "when mitigation action is unsupported, we will not want it to be subject to the same kind of scrutiny."

The Indian government has approved more than 1,400 projects as part of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). India is expected to attract around US\$ 6 billion by 2012. Meanwhile, companies such as HUL and ITC, have earned voluntary emission reduction (VERs) and certified emission reduction (CERs) credits for measures to reduce their carbon footprint.

IndusInd Bank Launches First Solar-powered ATM

IndusInd Bank, a new generation Indian private sector bank, inaugurated Mumbai's first solar-powered automated teller machine (ATM) as part of its Green Office Project campaign "Hum aur Hariyali". It also unveiled a "Green Office Manual - A Guide to Sustainable Practices," prepared in association with the Centre for Environmental Research and Education (CARE). IndusInd Bank has a comprehensive plan to reduce its carbon footprint. Some of the initiatives being undertaken under this plan are solar powered ATMs, thin computing, e-archiving, e-learning, e-waste management, paperless fax, energy conservation, CNG cars and also supporting finance programs with incentives to go green.

Destination India, Say Surging Japan Inc Numbers

India has become the most sought destination for investment by Japanese companies, ahead of other Asian countries and emerging economies. According to a recent survey by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) covering 620 leading Japanese manufacturing companies, 278, or 58%, wanted to do business with India in the medium term. The next best destination for Japanese manufacturers after India is Vietnam, with 31% support. The survey reflects Japanese companies' mounting interests in Indian businesses, especially in sectors such as automobiles, IT, infrastructure, steel, power and pharmaceuticals. Japan now ranks sixth in the list of foreign direct investments (FDI) in India. Japanese companies invested only Rs 3,820 m in India in 2006-07, but this rose to Rs 33,860 m in 2007-08. Up to this September, the FDI inflow from Japan has touched Rs 38,570 m, the highest ever

in a year. Besides, Japan's advanced technologies are also flowing to India. Of the 8,000-plus foreign technology transfers (FTC) so far approved by the Indian government, Japan accounts for 10.88%, with 879 approvals, in third position behind the US and Germany. Automobiles, pharmaceuticals and infrastructure development are the leading areas for Japan's growing interest in India, just as India's leading IT players have significant presence in Japan. have been attracting huge investments from Japan.

Indian Inc's Global Forays, JVs

Dynamatic Technologies, a Bangalore-based manufacturer of precision engineering products, is set to become a single source supplier of flap-track beams to **Airbus** for its single aisle A-320 family of aircraft. European aircraft manufacturer Airbus has decided to source its requirements of flap-track beams from Dynamatic by June next as part of its cost reduction initiatives with the company facing stiff competition from American aircraft manufacturer Boeing in terms of pricing. Dynamatic already supplies flap-track beams for Airbus A-320 as per a tripartite agreement between Airbus, Spirit and Dynamatic. Udayant Malhoutra, CEO and MD of Dynamatic, confirmed this move. "In the next nine months, we will be the single source supplier of flap-track beams in the world for Airbus A-320 family of aircraft. This is for the first time that the flap-track beams of an Airbus aircraft will be made outside Europe completely, and will be manufactured by an Indian manufacturer," he added.

Automobile major **Mahindra & Mahindra** (M&M) has forayed into the **aerospace** business by acquiring majority stakes in two Australian companies, Aerostaff Australia and Gippsland Aeronautics. Mahindra Aerospace Pvt Ltd (MAPL), in which Kotak Private Equity has also invested Rs.1.5 b, will hold 75% stake in each of the two Aussie companies. The remaining will be held by the existing managements. Anand Mahindra, vice-chairman and MD of the Mahindra Group, said, "M&M's move into the aerospace segment is supported by a renewed demand for economical air transport around the world. Our investment in component capability addresses the growing needs of both civic and defence markets." M&M will retain the management of both companies. The auto major is setting up a plant in Bangalore to provide dual-shoring cost benefits to customers.

Kotak Investment Banking, a subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank, has entered into an exclusive alliance with Renaissance Capital, Russia's biggest home-grown investment bank. The alliance aims to use Renaissance's franchise in Russia, Africa and the former Soviet Union and Kotak's Indian experience to help big companies from those countries buy into each other's markets, the two companies said. This is Kotak's second such tie-up since it parted ways with Goldman Sachs three years ago. Moscow-based Renaissance Capital, backed by Russian billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov, specialises in resources industries, particularly mining and oil & gas. Uday Kotak, executive vice-chairman and MD of Kotak Mahindra Bank, said, "To meet consumption demand, India will have to find ways to have greater access to resources and the place for these resources is CIS and Africa. So, we have tied up with Renaissance Capital, which has a deep presence in these markets."

Varun Energy Corporation, a group company of steel exporter Varun Industries Limited, has acquired uranium mines in Madagascar, a large island nation in the Indian Ocean. Varun Energy is one of the first private Indian companies to acquire rights directly in this business. Madagascar has high concentration of uranium, besides thorium and gold. The group acquired 1,111 blocks covering 6,900 sq km with estimated reserves of 1,700,000 tonne of uranium, 4,350,000 tonne of thorium and traces of gold for exploration, exploitation and output sale. The group's foray into uranium offers tremendous growth potential. as current demand for the

heavy metal as a commercially viable alternative fuel for generation of nuclear energy far outstrips supply.

Kolkata-based Pawan Kumar **Ruia Group**, which owns Dunlop India, said that it had acquired a 60% stake in Germany's Henniges Automotive Grefrath GmbH, a supplier of automotive sealing systems to leading carmakers, for an undisclosed sum. The German firm, which had a turnover of Euro 83.5 m last year and counts Daimler, BMW, Audi and Volkswagen amongst its clients, is the group's largest overseas buy, so far. The acquisition was undertaken by a Mauritius-based special purpose vehicle (SPV) of the Ruia group, Wealth Sea, which bought a 60% share in Draftex, a German-registered company.

Sembmarine Kakinada Limited (SKL), a joint venture of Singapore-based Sembawang Shipyard Pvt Ltd, and Kakinada Seaports Ltd, has announced the establishment of a shipyard at Kakinada port at an estimated cost of \$375 m to cater to offshore units and merchant vessels operating in Indian waters. The shipyard, which is expected to commence operations by the end of 2010, will offer integrated services to offshore vessels and merchant ships for construction, conversion, repair and servicing works. Ong Poh Kwee, MD of Sembawang said, "The Krishna-Godavari and Mahanadi basin areas are exploration hotspots. We are optimistic of the region's growth in terms of shipping and offshore activities, which will provide sustainable growth to our company."

Maersk India, part of the A.P.Moller-Maersk Group of Denmark, inaugurated its container freight station (CFS) at Ponneri, around 25 km north off Chennai. It has invested around \$10 m in the CFS, which will provide storage and 'stripping' of laden import containers and consolidation of export cargo, according to Hans-Henrik Skonning Hansen, South Asia Cluster Manager, Maersk India. This is the fourth CFS for Maersk in India. It has two in Mumbai and one at Dadri. "In the next two years we plan to set up inland container depots and CFSs in a few other places to cover the country," he said. The first private CFS in India was built by Maersk nearly 16 years ago, he said.

German pharma and chemical company **Bayer group's** unit Bayer MaterialScience (BMS) has entered into an agreement with Ahmedabad-based Malibu Plastica, in order to supply polycarbonate sheets to the Indian market. Bayer MaterialScience intends to further grow its business in the country and strengthen its global position as a complete solutions provider to its customers. The alliance will enable BMS to bring more of its products to the Indian market through leveraging Malibu's production capacities, marketing expertise and sales and distribution channels. "The new alliance combines Malibu's over two decades of experience in India with Bayer's high knowledge levels to create a comprehensive portfolio of products and services that will be beneficial to customers in this region", said Janak Parikh, former MD of Malibu Plastica, who will retain this position in the new JV.

India Number-One in Cricket

India has achieved the coveted number-one position in the global cricket Test Championship for the first time after winning its three-Test series against Sri Lanka 2-0. India is only the third team after Australia and South Africa to surge to the top of the ladder since the Test Championship was first introduced in May 2001. India also finished 2009 as the number-one ranked side. President Ms. Pratibha Patil congratulated the Indian cricket team, "It is well deserved and reflects the depth of talent of our cricketers". The Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha, also congratulated the Indian cricket team. Sneaker Meira Kumar said the team had achieved "an enviable feat of being

the No.1 team in the ICC Test rankings, an accomplishment the country has achieved for the first time in the history of Indian cricket. The tremendous achievement which has won the hearts of every Indian has been made possible by the grit and determination displayed by our team under the able captainship of M.S. Dhoni and the splendid performances by Virender Sehwag and others." The MPs echoed the praise by thumping on their desks. The players of the victorious Indian cricket team were awarded Rs.2.5 m each for the laurels. The Board of Cricket Control in India (BCCI) also said that the support staff, including coach Gary Kirsten, would get Rs.1 m each.

Mukesh Ambani World's 5th Best CEO

Mukesh Ambani, who heads India's most valuable company Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), has been ranked among top five best performing CEOs in the world by the prestigious Harvard Business Review. Ambani, the only Indian to feature among top 50 CEOs, is also ranked number two among the top 10 emerging market CEOs. K V Kamath of ICICI Bank is the other Indian in the latter list, at number 9. The Harvard Business Review said it ranked CEOs of large public traded companies in a study conducted over 2000 CEOs worldwide. The entire group represented 48 nationalities and companies based in 33 countries. "Among the up-through-the-ranks leaders on our list is Mukesh Ambani, who joined RIL in 1981, when it was still a textile company run by his father," HBR said, ranking Apple's Steve Jobs as the top CEO in the world.

Lata Mangeshkar Awarded Legion d'Honneur

Lata Mangeshkar, referred to as the 'Nightingale of India', has been honoured with the Insignia of 'Officier de la Legion d'Honneur' (Officer of the Legion of Honour), France's highest civilian award. The award was conferred on the 80-year-old singer during an official ceremony in Mumbai hosted by Jerome Bonnafont, Ambassador of France to India, who said, "France has a tradition of supporting artists from all over the world. Bestowing the insignia of Officer of the Legion of Honour on Lata Mangeshkar, is a recognition of her incomparable singing career, and to a personality who has stayed at the top range in her field for over 60 years." The Officer of the Legion of Honour has earlier been bestowed on Indian director Satyajit Ray, who had also been awarded the Oscar, and Indian superstar Amitabh Bachchan.

Ratan Tata Receives Italian Honour

Tata Group Chairman, Ratan Tata, has been bestowed with the rank of 'Grand Officer' of the Order of Merit, in recognition of the Tata conglomerate's service to Italy. Tata was conferred the rank by Claudio Scajola, Italian Minister for Economic Development, who expressed his hope for increased trade between the countries. On receiving the honor, Tata said, "It is a continuous effort to increase awareness in each country and this has happened over a period of time. The trade between the two countries is still very little and much has to be done about it." Trade between India and Italy currently stands at US\$ 8 billion and is forecast to double in the next seven years.

Prof Rao Awarded Highest International Medal in Chemistry

Professor C N R Rao has been awarded the August-Wilhelm-von-Hofmann Medal in chemistry, the highest international medal in chemistry, becoming the first Indian to be awarded the prestigious medal, instituted by the German Chemical Society, for his outstanding contributions to the field. The award is awarded once in 2-3 years, according to the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research.

Indian, at 36, is Germany's Youngest University Chief

Joybrato Mukherjee, a 36-year professor of English, whose parents emigrated from India, has become Germany's youngest chief executive of a university. He was inducted

as president, or vice-chancellor, of the University of Giessen, which in central Germany has 24,100 students. Mukherjee said his 6-year term would focus on improving teacher skills and research into education. He was appointed deputy president of the university in April 2008, five years after being appointed a professor in its English department. He is a specialist in applied linguistics and in South Asian variants of English.

Indian New Head of Amnesty International

48-year old

Indian anti-poverty campaigner, Salil Shetty has been appointed the next Secretary General of Amnesty International, the human rights organisation announced in London. Shetty, from Bangalore, is a former director of the UN's Millennium Campaign and chief executive of ActionAid, an international anti-poverty organisation. He is the first Indian national to head Amnesty in its 50-year-history and will take up his post in June 2010 to succeed Irene Khan, who steps down after eight years. Amnesty described Shetty as "absolutely the right person" to take the organization "into the next stage of our work".

TRADE ENQUIRIES FROM INDIA

Company	Commercial interest
<p>ABS Food Ingredients B-801, "Wall Street 2", Near Gujarat College, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad - 380006, Gujarat Tel: (91-79) 30026211 Fax: (91- 79) 26401619 Contact Person: Avadh B. Sharma Email: abs.india@vsnl.net, absfood@vsnl.net, absgroup@eth.net Website: www.absfoodingredients.com, www.absingredients.in</p>	<p>Dehydrated vegetables and spices</p>
<p>Kranti Plastics 26, Gopinath Estate, Part 2, B/h.Swaminarayan Chambers, Near Soni's Chawl, N.H. No. 8, Odhav, Ahmedabad - 382415, Gujarat Tel: (91-79) 22877427 , 22877127 Fax: (91-79) 22877427 Contact Person: Nilesh Jivani Email: info@krantivalve.com Website: www.krantivalve.com</p>	<p>PVC valves, Pipe fittings & Sprinkler for irrigation</p>
<p>Tata International Limited Block 'A', Shivsagar Estates, Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai - 400018, Maharashtra Tel: (91-22) 66652200 to 10 Fax: (91-22) 66612833 , 66612832 , 66612836 Contact Person: Virendra S Gupte, Chief & Trade Services Email: VGupte@tatainternational.com Website: www.tatainternational.com</p>	<p>Chemicals</p>
<p>Padam Plastic Industries C-1-35, Selvassa Road. G.I.D.C., Vapi, Gujarat - 369195 Tel: (91-260) 6534984 Fax: (91-260) 2420754 Contact Person: Mr. Jamboo Motha Email: inmotha@gmail.com</p>	<p>Raincoats</p>

<p>M. G. RockMin India Private Limited N.H. 8, Hawa Magri, Sukher, Udaipur, Rajasthan Tel: (91-294) 2440406 Fax: (91-294) 2440174 Contact Perosn: Dr. M. S. Rao Email: mgripl@hotmail.com, vskumpawat@yahoo.com Website: www.rockmin.com</p>	<p>Natural Stones and Handicrafts</p>
<p>Gujarat Ambuja Exports Limited "Ambuja Tower", Opposite Memnagar Fire Station, Post Navjivan, Navarangpura, Ahmedabad - 380014, Gujarat Tel: (91-79) 26423316 Ext. 408 Fax: (91-79) 26423076 Contact Person: Rahul Kurup, Executive & International Marketing Email: rkurup@ambujagroup.com Website: www.ambujagroup.com, www.ambujaglobal.com</p>	<p>Maize Starch, Dextrose Monohydrate (Glucose Powder), Yellow / White Dextrin, Defatted Soya Flour (Toasted / Un-toasted), Full Fat Soya Flour (Enzyme Active/Enzyme Inactive), Soya Grits</p>
<p>Lion Industries B-XXIX-97, St. No. 1, Daba Road, G.T. Road, Ludhiana - 141003, Punjab Tel: (91-161) 5015556 Fax: (91-161) 5051129 Contact Person: Raja Rupinder Singh Email: lion.industries@gmail.com Website: www.lionindustries.co.in</p>	<p>Tractor Parts</p>
<p>Okasa Pharma Private Limited 12 Gunbow Street, Fort, Mumbai - 400001, Maharashtra Tel: (91-22) 23004551 Fax: (91-22) 23002200 Contact Person: Disha Lamba, International Marketing Email: disha@okasa.com Website: www.okasa.com</p>	<p>Pharmaceutical Products (Formulations / API / OTC)</p>
<p>Gayatri Global 106, 2nd Floor, Classic Centre, 575 M.G. Road, Indore - 452001, Madhya Pradesh Tel: (91-731) 4009391 Contact Person: Yogendra Rathore Email: gayatriex@yahoo.com, gayatriex@ gmail.com</p>	<p>Agro and Soya Products</p>
<p>Ashish Life Science Private Limited 213, Laxmi Plaza, Laxmi Industrial Estate, New Link Road, Andheri (West), Mumbai - 400053, Maharashtra Tel: (91-22) 42105000 Fax: (91-22) 42105050 Contact Person: Manoj M. Pillai, Manager (Exports) Email: export2@ashishlifescience.com Website: www.ashishlifescience.com</p>	<p>Veterinary Medicines</p>
<p>Kalai Exports North Street, Azhichikudi PO 608601, Chidambaram (Tk) Cuddalore - District, Tamil Nadu Contact Person: E. Sarathi Email: kalaiexports@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Indian Commodities, Bricks, Candle and Sea Food</p>

<p>Ahuja Exports TA-107/2, 1st Floor, Main Road Tughlakabad Extension, New Delhi - 110019, Delhi Tel: (91-11) 29816763, 51727151, 26094127 Fax: (91-11) 29816763, 26094127 Contact Person: Ramesh Chadda, Senior Manager Exports Email: rameshchadda10@yahoo.co.in</p>	<p>Automotive Spare Parts</p>
<p>V&V Pharma Industries 5/504, Tulsi Vihar Cooperative Society, S.V. Road, Thane (West) - 400607, Maharashtra Tel: (91-22) 25368261 Fax: (91-22)25434546 Contact Person: Aarti Email: digvijaypharma@dishnetdsl.net</p>	<p>Pharma Products (formulations / tablets / injectible)</p>
<p>Uniphos Agro Industries Limited Readymoney Terrace No. 167, Dr. A.B. Road, Worli, Mumbai - 400018, Maharashtra Tel: (91-22) 66602229 Fax: (91-22) 66606689 Contact Person: Ramchandra G. Nair, Executive & Export (Engineering Division) Email: narrg@uniphos.com, rgnar30@yahoo.in Website: www.uniphosagroindustries.com</p>	<p>Aluminium Bottles, Cans, etc.</p>
<p>Niveda International 11-A, Tara Road, Kolkata - 700026 Tel: (91-33) 24654315, 24633752 Fax: (91-33) 24653903 Contact Person: Naveen Mehta Email: niveda@vsnl.com</p>	<p>Industrial beltings</p>
<p>Cipla Limited Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400008 Tel: (91-22) 23025763 Fax: (91-22) 23015309 Contact Person: Ketan M. Pashte Email: ketan.pashte@cipla.com Website: www.cipla.com</p>	<p>Master Batches, fillers & Compunds, Printing Inks, and Various dyes and chemicals for plastic, paint & ink industries</p>
<p>A. Damiano & Company 133, Canning Street, Kolkata - 700001, West Bengal Tel: (91-33) 22424918 Fax: (91-33) 22421138 Contact Person: Ajay Chopra Email: chopra_ajay@vsnl.net</p>	<p>Electrical Transmission & Distributionline Materials</p>
<p>Matha Exports International B/1-B/1, 3rd Floor, Behind Shalimar Cinema, Hari Nagar, Ashram, New Delhi - 110014 Tel: (91-11) 26347100, 26347022 Fax: (91-11) 26347022 Contact Person: Bineesh Joseph, President Email: info@mathaexports.com, info@mathaherbs.com Website: www.mathaexports.com, www.mathaherbs.com, www.naturalhaircolours.com, www.indianherbalhenna.com, www.indigopowder.com</p>	<p>100% Natural Hair Dyes</p>

<p>Vijay Constro Chemicals Private Limited 25 7/2-B, 9th Cross Street, Sankarankovil Road, Rajapalayam - 626117, Tamil Nadu Tel: (91-563) 257314 Fax: (91-563) 257504 Contact Person: S. Renganathan, Director Email: vijcon2k2@sancharnet.in Website: www.vijayconstrochemicals.com</p>	<p>Construction Chemicals</p>
<p>Advance Surfactants India Limited 511/2/1, Rajokri, New Delhi - 110038 Tel: (91-11) 25060803, 4, 5 Fax: (91-11) 25063060 Contact Person: Tanvi Singh Email: tanvis@advanceindia.com Website: www.advanceindia.com</p>	<p>Surfactant LABSA (Linear Alkyl benzene sulphonic acid)</p>
<p>Gopal Chemicals 563, Phase-II, G.I.D.C., Near Vatva Railway Station, Vatva, Ahmedabad - 382445, Gujarat Tel: (91-79) 25830796 Fax: (91-79) 25890749 Contact Person: Dipak Manohar Email: gopalchemicals@yahoo.com Website: www.gopalchemicals.com</p>	<p>Dye & Dyes Intermediates and Chemicals</p>
<p>Shiba Handicrafts 3B, Lal Bazar Street, Sir RNM House, Room No. 17B, Kolkata - 700001, West Bengal Tel: (91-33) 22104227, 23355523 Contact Person: Mr. Shibaji Banerjee, Proprietor Email: shibacrafts@gmail.com, shibacrafts@yahoo.co.in Website: www.shibacrafts.com</p>	<p>Handicrafts</p>
<p>Ritu Gems 3828, 'Shree Ratnam'-103, 2nd Crossing, M.S.B. Ka Rasta, Johari Bazar, Jaipur - 302003, Rajasthan Tel: (91-141) 2574071 Fax: (91-141) 2565843 Contact Person: Rajesh Toshniwal Email: ritu_gems@rediffmail.com</p>	<p>Precious and semiprecious stones (Gemstones and jewellery)</p>
<p>Mukesh Udyog Limited Village Budhewal, Near Kohara, Ludhiana, Punjab Tel: (91-161) 2511254, 5065121, 2843425 Fax: (91-161) 2848742, 5065121 Contact Person: Pardeep Gupta, Executive Director Email: mukeshudyoglimited@gmail.com, mukeshinfosy@sify.com Website: www.mukeshgroupindia.com</p>	<p>Cotton (Combed & Carded)/ Polyester/Acrylic Yarn</p>
<p>Debananda Enterprises 6/10 Kali Charan Ghosh Road, P.O. Sinthee, Ground Floor, Kolkata - 700050, West Bengal Contact Person: Samit Ray Barman Email: debananda.enterprises@gmail.com</p>	<p>Textile Machinery</p>

<p>Indian Connections Tel: (91-11) 27297808 Contact Person: Neel K. Seth Email: indianconnections.neel@yahoo.com, indianconnections.neel@gmail.com Website: www.indianconnections.co.in</p>	<p>Building & Furniture Hardware, Automobile & Bicycle Parts and Accessories, Handicrafts, Costume Jewerely, and Kitchenware merchandise</p>
<p>Face Ceramics Private Limited Lakhdhirpur Road, 8-A National Highway, MORBI - 363642, District: Rajkot, Gujarat Tel: (91-2822) 240028, 242330 Fax: (91-2822) 240720 Contact Person: Vimal M Pitrola, Export Manager Email: rg_face@yahoo.com, mail@faceceramic.com Website: www.faceceramic.com, www.sorisoceramic.com</p>	<p>Ceramic Glazed Wall Tiles - Floor, Tiles - Roof, Tiles - Porcelain Floor, Tiles - Sanitary Ware - Granite - Marble</p>
<p>Universal Exports No. 7/3, Manicka Vinayakar Koil Street, Sembium, Perambur, Chennai - 600011, Tamil Nadu Contact Person: S. Sivakumar Email: sivakumarsubramanian70@yahoo.in</p>	<p>Ayurvedic Products, Paper products, cotton waste, plastic products, candles, water treatment plant and machinery parts, imitation jewerely, cosmetics, artificial flowers and stone crafts</p>
<p>Tempsens Instruments India Private Limited B-188 A, Road No. 5, MIA, Udaipur - 313001, Rajasthan Tel: (91-294) 2492447, 3057750 (100 lines), 3057723 (Direct) Fax: (91-294) 2492447, 3057750 Contact Person: Seema Krishna, Business Executive Email: seema@tempsensindia.com, info@tempsensindia.com Website: www.tempsensindia.com</p>	<p>Temperature Sensors</p>
<p>Scan Holdings Private Limited No. F-4, Shopping Complex, A-Block Meera Bagh, New Delhi - 110087, Delhi Tel: (91-11) 25279000, 25261217 Fax: (91-11) 25279003 Contact Person: Nabanita Bhattacharya Email: nabanita@scanholdings.com, scan@scanholdings.com Website: www.scanholdings.com</p>	<p>Easy Open Ends</p>
<p>Pine Tree International J520, Sainik Farms, New Delhi - 62, Delhi Contact Person: Satish Kumra, Marketing Manager Email: pinetreeintl@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Garments, Home Furnishings, Scarves and Accessories Ladies Fashion</p>

Nobel-laureate Octavio Paz was Mexico's Ambassador to India from 1962-68. His various writings and poetry bear a clear influence of his long association with India. Beginning from the July 2009 issue, India News is carrying a series of excerpts from his well-known book, *In Light of India*. This does not however imply any endorsement of his opinion, assessment, or even factual accuracy.

The first thing that surprised me about India, as it has surprised so many others, was the diversity created by extreme contrast: modernity and antiquity, luxury and poverty, sensuality and asceticism, carelessness and efficiency, gentleness and violence; a multiplicity of castes and languages, gods and rites, customs and ideas, rivers and deserts, plains and mountains, cities and villages, rural and industrial life, centuries apart in time and neighbours in space. But the most remarkable aspect of India and the one that defines it, is neither political nor economic, but religious: the coexistence of Hinduism and Islam. The presence of the strictest and most extreme form of monotheism alongside the richest and most varied polytheism is, more than a historical paradox, a deep wound. Between Islam and Hinduism there is not only an opposition, but an incompatibility. In one, the theology is rigid and simple; in the other, the variety of doctrines and sects induces a kind of vertigo. A minimum of rites among the Muslims; a proliferation of ceremonies among the Hindus. Hinduism is a conjunction of complicated rituals, while Islam is a clear and simple faith. Islamic monotheism categorically affirms the preeminence of the One: one God, one doctrine, and one brotherhood of believers. Of course, Islam has experienced divisions within itself, but these have been neither as profound nor as numerous as those within Hinduism, which accepts not only a plurality of gods but also of doctrines (*darshanas*), sectors, and congregations of believers. Some of these brotherhoods of believers – true religions themselves within the great pluralistic religion of Hinduism – approach Christian monotheism; for example, among the followers of Krishna. Others recall the original polytheism of the Indo-Europeans: worshipping deities who are the guardians of cosmic order, warrior gods, and gods of agriculture and commerce. In one case, a creator god; in the other, the wheel of successive cosmic eras with its procession of gods and civilizations.

The great religious, poetic, legal, and historical books of the Hindus could not be more different from those of the Indian Muslims; nor is there anything similar in their architectural, artistic, and literary styles. Are they two civilizations occupying a single territory, or are they two civilizations occupying a single territory, or are they two religions nurtured by a single civilization? Is it possible to say Hinduism began in India, and it holds an intimate and filial relation with the Vedic religion of the Aryan tribes who settled in the subcontinent in the second millennium before Christ. In contrast, Islam is a religion that came from abroad fully formed, with a theology to which nothing be added. It came, moreover, as the faith of the foreign armies who, beginning in the eight century, invaded India. Islam was imposed, but it took root in India and has remained the religion of millions for a thousand years. Despite these centuries of living side by side, the two communities have preserved their separate identifies; there has been no fusion of the two. Nevertheless, many things unite them: similar customs, languages, love of the land, cuisine, music, popular art, clothing, and – to cut short a list that could become interminable – history. A history that unites them but also separates them. They have lived together, but their coexistence has been one of rivalry, full of suspicions, threats, and silent resentments that frequently have turned into bloodshed.

India Celebrates 61st Republic day – 26 January 2010

On the occasion of the 61st Republic Day of India, the Embassy of India in Mexico City will be organising a Flag-hoisting ceremony, at 8 AM, on 26th January 2010, at the Embassy lawns.

All Indians, India's friends and well-wishers, and those interested are cordially invited